



The Leelanau VOTER

February 2016

2015-2016 Board of Directors

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MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters,
a non-partisan political organization,
encourages informed and active
participation in government, works
to increase understanding of major
public policy issues and influences
public policy through education and
advocacy.

From the President

"If you don't like the weather in Michigan, wait five minutes." Admit it; we have no control over nature. Storms can be much stronger or weaker than predicted. Emergency weather events occur without warning. Unlike weather events, however, we have some ability to forestall man-made disasters, especially those we are warned about or, with due diligence, should have seen coming.

One big one comes to mind: Line 5 is 62-year-old pipeline that carries light crude oil and natural gas under the Straits of Mackinac. The Coast Guard has admitted that it would be unable to respond effectively to an open water oil spill and that there no plan for how to recover oil when the lakes are covered with ice. Attorney General Schuette has said "The [pipeline] days are numbered, the clock's ticking, because we wouldn't build that pipeline today underneath the Great Lakes."

Ten government bodies in Michigan have passed local resolutions urging stopping the transportation of oil under the Great Lakes and shutting down Line 5. The Traverse City Commission will consider such a resolution on February 1st. Unfortunately, on January 12th, not enough members of our Leelanau Board of Commissioners felt compelled to act and adopt Commissioner Wessell's simple resolution "urging the Attorney General and Governor to act responsibly to protect our water and beaches."

The LWVLC Natural Resources position supports local governments promoting environmentally sound practices and communicating local concerns to the regional planners. We must be wise stewards of our state waters. Contact your Leelanau Commissioners asking that they be our voice to Lansing. Protection of Michigan's water is better accomplished by prevention than an after the fact clean up. Flint, another case in point.

*Best regards,
Marian*

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY IN LEELANAU COUNTY?

Join us for a panel presentation by

**Matt Ansorge, Director of Emergency Management
Sheriff Mike Borkovich
April Missais, Director Senior Services,
Jim Reardon, Benzie/Leelanau Health Department,**



**Wednesday, February 3, 2016
at 12 noon**

Our dear friend Barbara Reinert passed away on January 2nd. In honor of her memory and her commitment to the League of Women Voters for more than 60 years, the LWV Board has created the Barbara Reiner Memorial Fund. The monies given to this fund will help provide membership fees for younger people and others. It will also be used to offset expenses incurred by members who attend League conferences and workshops.



Checks may be mailed to LWVLC, P.O. Box 519, Suttons Bay, MI 49682.
Please put Barbara Reinert in the memo line.

CONTRIBUTORS

Nancy and Berkley Duck
Barbara Abbott and Larry Hauser
Marian Kromkowski and Matt Posner
Kathryn and Mike May
Ann and Doug McInnis
Vina and Phil Mikesell
Mary Tonneberger

LEELANAU CALENDAR

**February 3 at noon
MEMBER MEETING**

**“Are you Prepared for an Emergency
in Leelanau County?”**

GOVERNMENT CENTER

**February 22 at 10 am
LWVLC BOARD MEETING
GOVERNMENT CENTER**

**March 2 at noon
MEMBER MEETING
“Challenges Faced by
Leelanau County Schools”
GOVERNMENT CENTER**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**Age-Friendly Leelanau
February 3 at 10:30 am
GOVERNMENT CENTER**

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Early Childhood Needs and Services

**February 18 at noon
LELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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Energy and Natural Resources

**February 3 at 10 am
GOVERNMENT CENTER – Conf. Room 2**

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Farm Labor Task Force

**February 8 at 9:30 am
GOVERNMENT CENTER, Library**



PROGRAM PLANNING FOR LWVUS

In the coming months the boards of state and local Leagues and ILOs (Inter-League Organizations) across the nation will have the opportunity to offer input for the League’s program for the 2016-2018 biennium. The program planning process is one of the important ways through which the League focuses its grassroots work to align each part of the organization with the others and with the League’s mission.

Program planning will culminate with adoption of a program of education and action at LWVUS Convention 2016 in Washington, DC. The input of League boards will help shape the proposed program of study and action that will be submitted to convention delegates for debate and adoption.

An email with further details will be sent to LWVLC members in February. Please review

<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/guide-program-planning-2016-2018> or watch the LWVUS

Program Planning video

<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/program-planning-2016-webinar>

To Local League Presidents:

Sue and I wanted to thank you for all of your work to help educate Michigan citizens about redistricting. We are still assembling our reports, but we reached over 2400 people and have about 500 sign up sheets and a few more speeches are scheduled. The organizations that have been working on the education plan have agreed that we should not try to put a proposal on the 2016 ballot. Polling has demonstrated here is not enough public understanding about redistricting and why it matters.

While this is disappointing, it is also another opportunity for the LWV and other organizations to continue to educate on the issue and raise public awareness. We plan to continue our efforts and as soon as we know more from the work we are doing with our coalition partners, we will share that information with you.

Again thank you for your work and support. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let us know.

Judy Karandjeff, President LWVMI
Sue Smith, Program Vice President

**There is no movie in
February. The Big Picture
will resume in March.**

**WELCOME OUR NEWEST
MEMBER**

**Joan Hunault
FROM SUTTONS BAY**

**The LWVLC numbers 126
members with 30 households.**

FLINT WATER CRISIS

news from Linda Hoff,
LWVLMR Vice-President for Advocacy

Linda has been posting articles on the LWV Flint Area facebook page to help keep people informed. This audio report from NPR is, in her opinion, "the most comprehensive one stop article we've heard yet. The public policy decisions that put these people in crisis were poorly made, but the lack of infrastructure investment is what made them vulnerable."

Linda "doesn't know of any communities that are voluntarily and proactively rebuilding their infrastructure. Then again, people are so shortsighted (as a whole) they don't tend to favor spending money to do so."

<http://onpoint.wbur.org/2016/01/11/flint-water-crisis-lead-water-rick-snyder>

Do you know what is in YOUR tap water?

If you own your own well, or are on city water, you are responsible for making sure that your water is safe to drink. Your tap water should be tested regularly at least for nitrates and bacteria. At any time there is a change in taste, odor, or there seem to be recurrent incidents of gastrointestinal illnesses you should have your water tested. Some of the contaminants could be coliform bacteria, pesticides, solvents, and other chemicals, metals such as mercury, lead, nitrites, sodium, nitrates, chloride, fluoride, iron, sulfates, and a variety of natural minerals....some of which are associated with a variety of health problems.

For more information check with the Leelanau/Benzie County Health Department: 231-256-0200

Did you know that **radon**, according to the US government, is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States responsible for an estimated 15,000-22,000 lung cancer deaths each year. Learn more ...check <http://epa.gov/radon>and call Tom Rademacher at the Benzie-Leelanau Health Department (256-0216) for more information. **Free radon test kits** are available for the month of **January** at the Environmental Health window in the Connie Binsfeld Building in Lake Leelanau. They cost \$12 the rest of the year.



VOTING RIGHTS SUMMARIES FROM LWVMI

In December the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law two bills that the state League opposed. Each will directly impact voters in 2016. SB 13 eliminates the **straight party ticket voting**. This legislation will increase the length of time to vote as well as require more voting equipment. SB 571 establishes a **"gag rule"** for certain elected officials 60 days prior to the election. The League is concerned about whether or not this new law will adversely impact our candidate forums aired on school or city cable television and placement of voter guides in libraries or other public buildings. The state League board will continue to gather information.

We continue to see more attempts to erode voting rights in Michigan. The Governor, and some legislators are talking about passing HB 4724 to establish **"no-reason" absentee voting**. This would be good; however, the bill requires voters who don't meet the existing requirements for voting absentee to go to the clerk's office and show a valid photo ID in order to obtain an absentee ballot. There is no provision allowing a person to sign an affidavit if they don't have a photo ID and *it requires going to the clerk's office every election*. LWVMI supports simpler version of "no reason absentee" voting such as in SB 59.

LWVMI also opposes SB 639 that will **regulate clerks' office hours for absentee voting**, and SB 638 that will permit **unlimited campaign contributions** through the creation of independent expenditure committees that are not subject to the Michigan Campaign Finance Act. SB 638 passed the Senate and is in the House Elections Committee. SB 639 is in the Senate Elections and Government Oversight Committee. Stay tuned. The LWVLC encourages League members to contact Rep. Franz and Sen. Booher to express your individual thoughts on these bills. Ray Franz RayFranz@house.mi.gov and Darwin Booher SenDBooher@senate.michigan.gov

MARCH 8TH ELECTION

The last date to register to vote for the March 8th election is February 8th.
Absentee ballots will be available January 23rd.

Michigan's Presidential Primary is a "Closed" Primary. Voters in closed primaries must state the party they wish to vote for before being issued a ballot. The ballot given to voters only has candidates of the party that corresponds to the voter's choice.

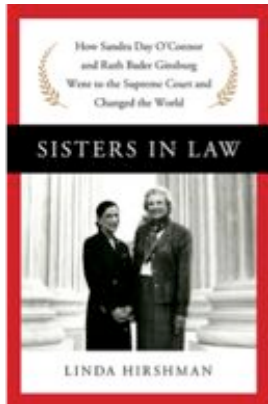
- ❖ Any registered Michigan voter can participate in the Presidential Primary.
- ❖ You do not need to be a registered Republican or Democrat.
- ❖ You must choose the party in whose Presidential Primary you want to vote when you fill out the Application to Vote/Ballot Selection Form on Election Day or the Absent Voter Ballot Application Form if voting absentee. This requirement is only in place for a Presidential Primary; you will not need to choose a party in any other election, nor will you need to vote for candidates only in that party in other elections.
- ❖ Your Presidential Primary political party ballot selection – Republican or Democrat – is a matter of public record. The candidate you vote for will NOT be made public. The vote is by secret ballot, so the candidate you vote for is never disclosed.
- ❖ There are 13 Republican and 4 Democratic candidates for President on the ballot.
- ❖ You may choose to vote for no candidate by selecting "uncommitted," a choice that appears on each party's ballot. If enough voters cast "uncommitted" votes, the party may send delegates to the national nominating convention who are not committed to a specific candidate
- ❖ www.VOTE411.org has information on upcoming Presidential Candidate Forum dates and will have candidate response information for Michigan's Presidential candidates closer to the March 8th election.

ONE LOCAL ISSUE FOR LEELANAU TOWNSHIP/NORTHPORT SCHOOL VOTERS

- ❖ Voters who do NOT wish to cast a vote in the Presidential Primary but want to vote in the local special election have the option of selecting a ballot containing only the local contests. The following proposal will be on a separate ballot for LeelanauTownship/ Northport School voters only:

MILLAGE PROPOSAL, BUILDING AND SITE - SINKING FUND TAX LEVY

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Northport Public School, Leelanau County, Michigan, be increased by and the board of education be authorized to levy not to exceed 1.25 mills (\$1.25 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 5 years, 2016 to 2020 inclusive, to create a sinking fund for the construction or repair of school buildings and all other purposes authorized by law; the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2016 is approximately \$491,000?



LWVLC Book Read April 20 at 3:30 pm

Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World
by Linda Hirshman

RSVP to Martha Shaver.

Book is at local libraries and bookstores. Shop Local!

Early Childhood Needs and Services Committee

is meeting on February 18 at noon in the Munnecke Room at the Leland Township Public Library. The committee thanks all of you who made a special point of watching WCMU's showing of "Raising of America", sponsored by our League and other local groups advocating for young children. This collaboration was new for our League and provided an opportunity to accomplish a goal that would have been out of reach without partners.



If you missed the excellent presentation by Dan O'Neil at our January meeting, watch it on our website under video links. Many of our previous programs may be viewed at LWVLeelanau.org.

Energy and Natural Resources Committee

The committee is currently exploring the relationship of global warming/climate change to agriculture and how best practices could serve to draw carbon from the atmosphere and return it to the soil while proactively decreasing the usage of fossil fuels and their by-products. The goal is to promote future long-term access to safe, health, sufficient food for local communities. The Energy and Natural Resources program in June will not only feature a panel of experts on various agricultural perspectives but will also host a "Corridor of Future Food Ideas" before and after the program.



WHAT IS THE LAKE MICHIGAN INTERLEAGUE?

Did you know that your League along with all the other Leagues in Michigan are members of the LWV Lake Michigan Region? This Inter-League organization is made up of 48 local Leagues within the Lake Michigan watershed and regional planning areas. In addition, the four state Leagues of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin pay dues, entitling all of their individual Leagues to receive information and to take part in LWVLMR events. Each state League also appoints two delegates and two alternates to serve on the LWVLMR Board that meets quarterly.

WHO REPRESENTS MICHIGAN ON THE LWVLMR BOARD?

RUTH CAPUTO, delegate from Kalamazoo, has a PhD in Physical Chemistry. She currently chairs the City of Portage's Environmental Board and the Programs Committee for the Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones, a group that promotes the use of native plants. A Master Gardner, Ruth enjoys giving tours of her backyard which contains different types of gardens.

VINA MIKESELL, delegate from Leelanau County, joined the League in Crawfordsville, IN and served as its President and on the LWVIN Board. Vina was instrumental in forming a new League in Leelanau County. She is past president and current editor of the Leelanau *VOTER*. She is also president of ShareCare of Leelanau, an organization that keeps seniors in their own homes as long as possible.

SUZANNE DIXON, alternate from Holland, served as past Treasurer and Board member for LWVLMR. Currently in her third term as LWVMI Director of Natural Resources and a Board member, she also holds the same offices in the Holland League. Suzanne is a founding board member of the Allegan County Brownfield Authority and is president of a helping agency for the needy.

CHRIS ZILKE, alternate from Berrien and Cass Counties, lived outside of the country for 8 ½ years during her children's early years. Chris participated in three "Global Volunteers" vacations in Viet Nam, Ecuador and Hawaii. Passionate about education, she served on the Bridgman Board of Education for 8 years, 2 of them as President. Currently Chris is President of the Berrien/Cass League.

LWV Lake Michigan Region is an integral part of and operates under the Natural Resources position of the LWVUS. The mission of LWVLMR is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and acts on selected governmental issues affecting the Lake Michigan watershed. The group is happy to provide speakers on a variety of topics affecting Lake Michigan. Contact us at lwvlakemichigan@gmail.com and like us on facebook.

VOTE ON MARCH 8. Visit VOTE411.org for information about candidates.