



# The Leelanau VOTER

## January 2015

**2014-2015  
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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.....*

Another year begins. Thank you to all our committees that are working to make their studies relevant to our members and to the greater Leelanau community.

Last week, the Farm Labor Task Force spent hours discussing and crafting a position on Agricultural Migrant Workers. Taking the notes from the consensus meeting held January 7<sup>th</sup>, the group came up with a two-page position covering Law Enforcement, Public Education, Health Care, Housing and Publicly Funded Agencies.

The Farm Labor Task Force's work continues as it decides how to encourage other Leagues in the state to join with us in moving the position's concurrence at the state convention in May. The State Board will also decide whether or not to support the concurrence.

This study has taken four years and countless hours to arrive at this point. Not all studies have this kind of result. Thanks to the dedication and perseverance of the Farm Labor Task Force, we will have a position, and we will be able to talk to local elected officials about our concerns and hopes for the seasonal/migrant worker community in Leelanau County.

Our next meeting has been planned by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Come and hear a very interesting program about how all of us can benefit from using less fossil fuels while earning money back at the same time.

February will also see a showing of another part of the PBS series "The Raising of America." The Early Childhood Needs and Services study committee invites you to attend.

*Vina*

## LEELANAU WINTER CALENDAR

Wednesday, February 4, 2015

**Member Meeting at noon**

**“Goal: a sustainable planet for everyone!”  
COMMUNITY ROOM, GOVERNMENT CENTER**



Monday, February 9

**Big Picture Society Film at 4 pm**

*Mad, Hot Ballroom*

OLD ART BUILDING IN LELAND



Monday, February 16

**LWVLC Board Meeting at 10 am**

MUNNECKE ROOM IN LELAND

**Volunteering at the State Theater**



Monday, February 23

*Once Upon A Time: When Childcare for All Wasn't Just a Fairytale*

COMMUNITY ROOM, GOVERNMENT CENTER



Wednesday, March 4, 2015

**Member Meeting at noon**

**“Women in Politics”**

## WANTED

Volunteers for the State Theater

Contact Sandy Zwemer to help. We provide volunteers the third Monday of each month at the mid-afternoon show. It's lots of fun and you get a pass to another movie, plus refreshments.

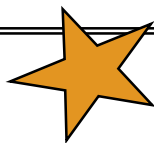
## Who doesn't want a sustainable future for their children, grandchildren and all the other creatures with whom we share the planet?

Come to the League of Women Voters Leelanau County noontime presentation on Wednesday, Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> at the Leelanau County Government Center. Find out about the proposal of the non-partisan Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) for a market based carbon fee and dividend paid to citizens (FAD) that would address this important issue.

The science is settled. We now know for sure that we have a big problem... and it is related to our excessive consumption of fossil fuels in order to power just about everything we do and provide the feed stock for the manufacturing of plastics, pharmaceuticals, synthetics, fertilizers...you name it! The choice: do something ASAP **OR** continue with business as usual with the predictable serious consequences. So what CAN we do?

Recent studies have shown that this proposal would not only address climate chaos, economic decline, fossil fuel depletion and loss of biodiversity but would actually put money (in the form of a dividend) regularly in YOUR pocket while positively affecting our economy. **Presenting this proposal will be Lisa Del Buono of the Northern Michigan Chapter of CCL as well as Elizabeth Dell who is Michigan's CCL chairperson.** They are especially excited to share the details of this proposal with you along with suggestions for things you can do to address these critical issues.

Bring a brown bag lunch and learn the details. A League business meeting will follow.



### VOTER SERVICES MEETING

Voter Services will meet at 10:30 am Wednesday, February 4 in the community meeting room before our general meeting. The next election will be Tuesday, May 4. League members will once again accompany someone from the County Clerk's office in late March and early April as she registers high school students who will be 18 on or before May 4. The deadline for voter registration is 30 days prior.

The highlight of the May ballot is the proposal for increasing the state sales tax from 6 to 7%, according to Governor Snyder in his state of the state address.

All League members are encouraged to attend the meeting



## OTHER COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### February 4 .....

**Energy and Natural Resources Study Committee** meets at 10:00 a.m. in the Law Library Room of the Government Center.

The **Opportunities and Challenges of a Changing Leelanau Study Group** meets at 10:30 a.m., in Conference Room 2 of the Government Center. Ty Wessell will provide a review of recent Leelanau County-oriented presentations on housing in the area. Additionally, the group will discuss questions from the Michigan League of Women Voters regarding League positions on social service issues. Interested parties are always welcome to attend these sessions.

### February 16 .....

**Early Childhood Needs and Services Study Group** will meet at 12:30 pm in the Munnecke Room at the Leland Township Library.

### February 23 .....

**Farm Labor Task Force** will meet at 10 am in Conference Room 1 at the Government Center.

### League Of Women Voters Consider Redistricting Ballot Proposal

The President of the League of Women Voters (LWVMI) confirmed her group is launching a public education process aimed at revamping the methodology for drawing voting district lines and the effort could lead to a statewide petition drive to change the current system of allowing legislators to finalize reapportionment maps.

Susan Smith reported any talk of a petition drive is premature, but clearly her group is interested in recruiting community groups and other interested parties to make the system "fairer."

Democrats received more votes than Republicans in legislative races, but they ended up with fewer legislative seats. She concluded this feeds into the public notion that a citizen's vote does not count because there are so few competitive districts in the House, Senate and Congressional races.

Smith has looked at other states, including California, Oregon and Iowa, which have switched to a different redistricting process and she thinks Michigan should look at possibly establishing an independent commission to draw the district lines. Of course, the debate will focus on who appoints the members and what data they use to accomplish a "fairer" drawing of the lines. She does not rule out a petition drive to let the voters decide this issue, but she admitted it will take an education process to explain to them what redistricting is and why changes are needed.

Early rumors that the Michigan Democratic Party was considering a petition drive have now been debunked. A source told MIRS that to involve one political party or the other in a drive would hurt the "messaging" on why these reforms are needed.

On January 7, through ice and snow, thirty-eight intrepid League members and guests attended the Farm Labor Task Force study presentation on the agricultural migrant/seasonal worker and employer challenges in Leelanau County. Twenty-six members stayed for the required and very valuable consensus discussion. From the discussion led by Vina Mikesell, the recorder, Sharon Golm, produced a discussion summary then used by the Task Force to formulate a position statement. It took four hours of lively discussion, but the Task Force met the challenge.

The LWVLC Board adopted the position on January 26<sup>th</sup> allowing us to advocate for action with our local elected officials. The LWVMI Board will review the position statement on February 14, and will decide whether or not it can support recommending the position to the May state convention for adoption by concurrence.

It has been four years, two position statements, one state convention, more than four public programs, several guest appearances on community panels, radio interviews, and thousands of hours devoted to interviewing, researching and studying the challenges faced by our local agricultural employers and the migrant/-seasonal workers and their families.

*Congratulations and a job well done to the Farm Labor Task Force Committee!!*



Sharon Golm recording comments at the LWVLC consensus meeting

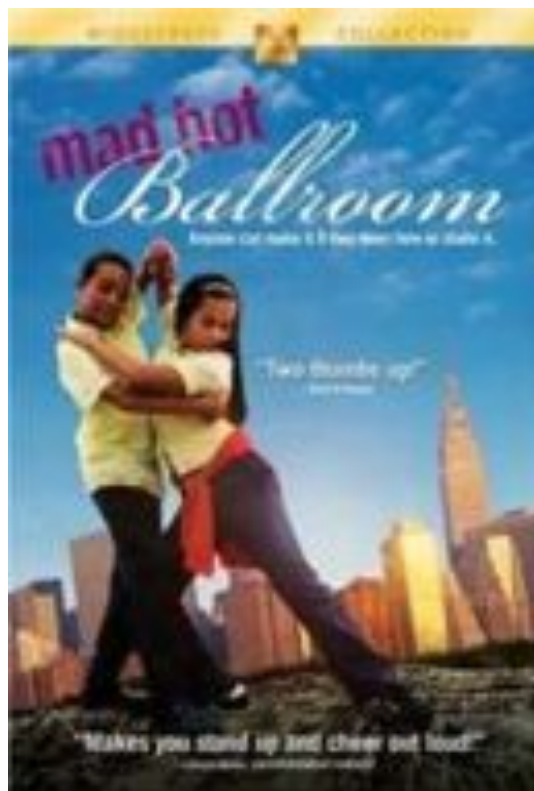


FLTF presenters: Suzanne Hoff, BJ Christensen, Christi Bardenhagen and Steve Morse



Creating the Position Statement: Barbara Krause, Marian Kromkowski, Christi Bardenhagen, Steve Morse, Suzanne Hoff and Vina Mikesell. Not pictured: BJ Christensen

*The Big Picture Society  
presents  
Mad Hot Ballroom*



Based on a feature article written by Sewell, *Mad Hot Ballroom* looks inside the lives of 11-year-old New York City public school kids who journey into the world of ballroom dancing and reveal pieces of themselves along the way. Told from the students' perspectives as the children strive toward the final citywide competition, the film chronicles the experiences of students at three schools in the neighborhoods of Tribeca, Bensonhurst and Washington Heights.

**Monday, February 9, 2015  
4:00 pm  
Old Art Building in Leland**

**No admission charge but donations  
are welcome.**

**Some people bring snacks to share.**

**Did you know.....**

that heating and cooling accounts for almost **half** of your energy bill. Simple steps like changing air filters regularly; properly using a programmable thermostat; reducing the temperature settings a couple of degrees & wearing a sweater in winter; reducing air leaks and stopping drafts by using caulk, weather stripping, and insulation to seal your home's envelope; adding more insulation to your attic to block out heat and cold; and even using inexpensive (transparent) window wrap..... are a few things that would benefit your budget and the environment.

*Some suggestions are from the WPA website.  
<http://epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/home.html>*

**Thank you**

Sue Miller, Vina Mikesell and  
Mary Tonneberger  
for making year end donations to the  
LWVLC Education Fund.

Ty Wessell for donating a signed copy  
of Elizabeth Warren's book, Fighting  
Chance, to our silent auction at the  
December meeting.

**League Submits Nearly  
30,000 Comments to the FEC**

Thanks to your support LWVUS was able to submit nearly 30,000 comments to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) in support of stricter disclosure regulations as well as tightening the definition of coordination between candidates and outside groups. Your comments to the FEC underscore that you believe that Americans have a right to know who is funding our nation's political campaigns in the wake of the 5-year anniversary of the *Citizens United* decision this past week.

**The Michigan Legislature used the lame duck session to work on a number of controversial issues. The League of Women Voters monitored events on a daily basis, and used its positions to oppose or support legislation that was being voted on during this 9-day session, including:**

1. **Electoral College:** On November 17, 2014, LWVMI President Sue Smith delivered testimony before the Michigan House Elections and Ethics Committee in opposition of HB 5974: "We have had the "winner take all" system in Michigan since 1836. Changes to something as important as how we elect the President should be made by the citizens of Michigan, not the Legislature. Citizens should have the opportunity to decide whether we should change from our current system of "winner takes all" to a proportional system where the Electoral College Votes are divided among the top two candidates." *(Update: this bill failed to advance, but may be initiated again in the next Session).*

2. **Road Repair Funding:** League members were urged to contact their legislators, urging them to protect the funding for schools and local government as a road repair funding proposal is negotiated. It is important that the money to pay for road repairs not be taken from education and local governments. Diverting money from one priority to another only creates new problems. Adequate funding for education and local government is crucial to the future of the state. *(Update: A multi-bill spending package was approved, which included a proposed constitutional amendment wherein voters will need to decide whether or not to increase the 6 percent sales tax to 7 percent at the May 2015 general election.)*

3. **Management of Natural Resources:** On December 9th, President Sue Smith sent a letter to the members of the House Natural Resources Committee urging them to oppose SB78, parts of which would undermine existing good management plans regarding the biodiversity of state lands. *(Update: SB 78 did pass, and now awaits the Governor's signature. LWVMI sent out an Action Alert on January 2nd to urge the Governor to veto this bill that would end biological diversity. The Governor vetoed the bill on January 15, 2015).*

4. **Religious Freedom Restoration:** League members were urged to contact their state senators to urge a no vote on HB 5958. The U.S. and Michigan Constitutions provide freedom of worship and religious beliefs, but HB 5958, goes much further. Religious beliefs could be used by employees to discriminate against whom they offer services as well as what information they provide. For example, a school teacher could refuse to teach a subject because it is against his/her beliefs; another employee could decide not to provide medically accurate information based on his/her religious beliefs, etc. This bill would give people, based on their religious beliefs, the right to harm others. The League urges a NO vote so that one's religious beliefs cannot be used to take away an individual's right to be treated fairly. *(Update: This bill failed to advance, but may be initiated again in the next Session.)*

**During the next few months, the Nominating Committee and the Finance Drive Committee will be asking for your help.**

The **Nominating Committee** (Mary Tonneberger, Sharon Golm and Fran Eckerson) would like your suggestions for Board members and officers. The slate will be presented at the annual meeting in May.

Jacquie Johnson and Nancy Duck, **Finance Drive** Co-Chairs, will be asking for the names of friends and businesses to solicit for the April Finance Drive.



***Once Upon a Time: When Childcare For All Wasn't Just a Fairytale***

The Early Childhood Needs and Services Study Committee will show *“Once Upon a Time: When Childcare For All Wasn't Just a Fairytale,”* another episode of *“The Raising of America”* series. The documentary will be shown at 7:00 pm on Monday, February 23, 2015 in the Community Room of the Government Center. The committee is contacting other groups in the county to help sponsor the event.

**We invite you to attend and encourage you to bring interested friends.**

The committee will also be sharing a list of resources and informational sites that can add to your knowledge of early childhood needs and services. This will be sent to all League members in a future email.

**APRIL 8, 2015**

Mark your Calendar for the Book Group at Martha and Tom Shaver's home. The book is [A Fighting Chance](#) written by Elizabeth Warren. We meet from 3-5 pm.

**DO SOMETHING --ACTION PLAN for 2015**

*compiled by BJ Christensen*

**I KEEP THIS LIST BY MY PHONE.**

***If you have an extra 5 minutes make a phone call and leave a message:***

**White House Comment Line 202-456-1111  
Available 9 am - 5 pm Monday through Friday.**

Phone list for US House

Speaker John Boehner 202-225-0600  
Rep. Dan Benishek 202-225-1904 or  
TVC = 877-376-5613

Phone list for US Senate

Senator Mitch McConnell 202-224-2541  
Senator Debbie Stabenow 202-224-4822  
Senator Gary Peters 202-224-6221

**MICHIGAN**

Governor Rick Snyder 517-335-7858  
<https://sombgovweb.state.mi.us/GovRelations/ShareOpinion.aspx>  
Sen. Darwin Boohar 517-373-1725  
Sen. Wayne Schmidt 517-373-2413  
[SenWSchmidt@senate.mi.gov](mailto:SenWSchmidt@senate.mi.gov)  
GOP Leader Arlan Meekhof 517-373-6920  
[SenAMeekhof@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:SenAMeekhof@senate.michigan.gov)  
Dem Leader Jim Ananich 517-373-0142  
[senjananich@senate.mi.gov](mailto:senjananich@senate.mi.gov)  
101st District Ray Franz 517-373-0825  
[RayFranz@house.mi.gov](mailto:RayFranz@house.mi.gov)

**March 8<sup>th</sup> movie**  
***Inequality For All***