



# The Midland Voter

The League of Women Voters of the Midland Area

October 2012 (Vol. 45, Number 2)

[www.lwv-midland.org](http://www.lwv-midland.org)

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**January 2, 2013:**

Board meeting: 1 p.m. Grace A. Dow library  
- basement conference rooms.

*You are invited!*

## Midland LWV 2012 Calendar

**October 10:** Senior Expo, Midland Mall – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**October 22:**  
Candidates forum 7 p.m. City Council Chambers.

**November 6:** Election Day



**November 7:**  
“The Day After” brunch: 11:30 a.m. at M’s Cafe, 5103 Eastman.  
**Board meeting:** 1 p.m. Grace A. Dow library – basement conference rooms.

**December 5:**  
**Board meeting:** 4 pm. at Rosemary Wilson’s home, 4113 Cruz Drive.  
**Midland LWV Annual Christmas dinner** at 6 p.m. at Rosemary Wilson’s home, 4113 Cruz Drive.

## Candidates Forum – October 22

Local candidates will speak at the Midland LWV candidates forum Monday October 22 at 7 p.m. in the Midland City Council Chambers at City Hall, 333 W. Ellsworth. The forum will highlight state house representative hopefuls, challenger Joan Brausch and incumbent Jim Stamas. The two competitive county commissioner races will also be shown: District 1 with candidates Mark Authier (D) and Nicholas J. Finley (R); and District 7 with Richard M Fairley (D) and Dan J. McGillivray (R). The forum will be broadcast live on MCTV (Charter cable TV channel 99) and will be replayed until the election. It will also be streaming on the MCTV computer web site.

Carole Swinehart

**Printed Voter Guide – week of October 15**

Web Voter Guide information is already available at VOTE411.org. Be sure and tell everyone you know about this wonderful computer resource! In addition, a printed Voter Guide will be issued with the Midland Daily News in mid-October. Watch for a notice in that newspaper for the exact date. .... Carole Swinehart

**From our President:**

**Pay Attention to those Ballot Proposals**

Six state ballot proposals will be decided November 6:

- 12-1 A referendum on Public Act 4 of 2011 – the emergency manager law.
- 12-2 A proposal to amend the state constitution regarding collective bargaining.
- 12-3 A proposal to amend the state constitution to establish a standard of 25% renewable energy by 2025.
- 12-4 A proposal to amend the state constitution to establish the Michigan Quality Home Care Council and provide collective bargaining for in-home care workers.
- 12-5 A proposal to amend the state constitution to require a 2/3 vote to increase taxes.
- 12-6 A proposal to amend the state constitution regarding construction of international bridges and tunnels.

The League of Women Voters of Michigan has taken a position on three of them. We **oppose 12- 1, support 12-3, and oppose 12-5.**

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*Opposition to proposal 12-1* reflects our national position on Representative Government:

**“Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.”**

According to the House Fiscal Agency’s analysis of PA 4 of 2011, “The new act ... would increase the power and authority of the appointed emergency financial manager, changing the appointee’s title to emergency manager (EM) to indicate the expansion of that authority beyond financial matters.” One of the new provisions allows the emergency manager to determine the powers of elected officials upon the declaration of receivership and during the period in which it is in effect.

**Local elected officials are essentially removed from the governing process by the EM.** Elected government officials in Benton Harbor, Ecorse and Pontiac as well as the Detroit School District, have been denied the power to function by the EM.

A detailed analysis of PA 4 done by the Citizens Research Council can be found at [www.crcmi.org](http://www.crcmi.org).

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**Support for proposal 12-3** reflects the League’s national position on energy to support:

**“Predominant reliance on renewable resources...”**

Michigan’s current standard is 10% renewables by 2015. Over 30 other states, including the Midwestern states of Ohio, Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota have passed new standards of 25% renewables by 2025. Using more wind and solar energy is expected to reduce pollution and give Michigan cleaner, healthier air and water. It is also likely to create thousands of jobs and \$10 billion in investments.

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**Opposition to proposal 12-5** comes from the state League position on Taxation and Budgeting, especially Section II:

**“The Legislature should have broad and fundamental taxing powers, free of constitutional restrictions except for constitutional provisions requiring**

**a balanced budget and property tax millage limits.”**

Proposal 12-5 would amend the constitution and require a supermajority vote for new taxes. Majority rule has been the foundation of our democracy. This proposal would actually allow a minority of legislators to thwart the majority. The result could make it more difficult to fund public services such as roads, schools and state police.

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The LWV of Michigan has compiled the most complete discussion of each of these proposals that I have found. The document gives the official wording of each proposal, then discusses the pros and cons of each. References for the information on each proposal are also given in this document. You can locate this excellent document on our website at [www.lwv-midland.org](http://www.lwv-midland.org) by clicking on the Voter Information tab. It's a worthwhile read!

Karen Sherwood

**School Board Forum a Success**

Our Midland Public Schools Board of Education candidates' forum featured three of the four candidates for the two openings on that board. The forum, sponsored by the Midland LWV, the Midland Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and our local MCTV, was held Sept. 20 and televised on MPS-TV, Charter cable channel 98. If you missed the live forum, channel 98 is re-running the program many times until Election Day. You can also watch it streaming on your computer at <http://mpstv.mps.k12.mi.us/Cablecast/public/Schedule.aspx?ChannelID=1>. The participating candidates were Scott McFarland, Joyce Perry and Kimberly Vanderkelen. Samantha Watson was not able to attend for personal reasons. Betty Chenoweth of AAUW, moderated the forum. About 24 people attended. Many thanks to committee members for 2012: Betty Chenoweth and Jodie Gardner for AAUW; Karen Sherwood and Carole Swinehart for

LWV; Terry Townley and Jane Wirth, both AAUW and LWV. The committee wrote questions in advance. Thank you's also go to Billie Oliver from Midland Public Schools for videotaping and showing the forum. Cathy Heng wrote an article and Karen Sherwood wrote a letter to the editor in advance for the Midland Daily News. The Midland Daily News gave front-page coverage to the forum.

Terry Townley

**Making Democracy Work**

"Making Democracy Work" will begin its second season on November 28. It will be taped bimonthly rather than monthly, with a total of 12 shows for the year. Invitations are being extended to potential speakers. Ideas are being gathered for programs on subjects other than K-12 funding, the topic of discussion for much of our first year. Topics the LWV is considering include environmental responsibility, corporate partnerships with nonprofits or government agencies to fund support services; early learning/intervention and family court, women candidates for office, open meetings and the Sunshine Laws, the importance of government boards, commissions and committees, police and public safety and how a bill becomes law.

If you have an idea for a program or a speaker you would like to hear, please call or email Cathy Nelson Price, 488-2418, [bobthesh@pipeline.com](mailto:bobthesh@pipeline.com). Season one was a huge community hit and we have requests for copies of the programs.

Cathy Nelson Price

**Save these 2013 Dates!**

**January 15**, 12 p.m. - noon - "The Economic Status of Women in the Great Lakes Bay Region", Lisa Grills and Ann Coburn-Collins, presenters. The lunch and meeting location will be announced at a later date.

**February 20**, 1 p.m. - "Voices from the Midland Home Front: Women's Contributions in WWI and WWII" presented

by Tawny Nelb. Meeting at the Whiting Forest.

**March** - (date -to be set) 7 p.m. - A program discussing fracking. Location - Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S. Badour Road, Midland.

**April 17**, 10 a.m. - Meridian Public Schools "Instructional Technology Plan". Location - Sanford Meridian High School, 3303 N. Meridian Road, Sanford. There will be an opportunity for discussion following the presentation and we will meet for lunch at noon. ....Sharron Such

#### Great Decisions 2013

In January the Midland LWV will initiate a new Great Decisions season. This is a national, civic-education program of the Foreign Policy Association. Our league has sponsored Great Decisions study groups for thirty five years.

A video and briefing book written by experts on each topic is used in the discussions. Topics are:

The Future of the Euro  
Egypt  
NATO  
Myanmar and Southeast Asia  
Intervention  
Iran  
China in Africa  
Threat assessment

The study groups are now being organized.  
For more information phone:  
Sandy Burmester 832-3079

#### **Our LWV election site: [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org)**

Click on [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org). Type in your address. Click away. Build your ballot! See your local candidates. Check out your ballot proposals. Candidates' positions can be compared side-by-side, and you may print out a "ballot" indicating your preferences as a reminder and take it with you to the polls on Election Day.

Be sure to spread the word - ours is the best election site on the web!