



The Midland Voter

The League of Women Voters of the Midland
Area

November 2013 (Vol. 46, Number 2)

www.lwv-midland.org

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You are invited!

Midland LWV Calendar

Tues. Nov. 5: Election Day, city council elections.

Wed. Nov. 6: LWV Board meeting at 1 p.m. in the Grace A. Dow Library conference room A;
all Midland LWV members welcome.

Tues. Nov. 19: Taping for "Making Democracy Work," at 3 and 4 p.m. at the MCTV Studios,
in the basement of the Grace A. Dow Library. Details on page 4.

Tues. Nov. 19: Human Trafficking; joint meeting with AAUW and Zonta at the Griswold Center,
Northwood University 7 p.m. Details on page 3.

Wed. Dec. 4: Holiday Party for all Midland LWV members at 6 p.m. at Rosemary Wilson's home,
4113 Cruz Drive, Midland at 6 p.m. (LWV board meeting at 4 p.m. at Rosemary's,
just before the party.) Details on page 3.

In January: 2014 Great Decisions groups begin. Details on page 4.

January 8: LWV Board meeting at 1 p.m. in the Grace A. Dow Library conference room A;
Guest: Dick Dolinski to discuss the needs of Midland County.

February 6: Agriculture; joint meeting with the Chippewa Nature Center at the Chippewa Nature
Center. Details on page 3.

Feb. 14: Happy 94th Birthday to the League of Women Voters of the U.S.A.!

In March: LWVUS Agriculture Position Update consensus meetings.

During March/April: LWVMI Education Update consensus meetings.

May 14: Annual Meeting: speaker Bridgette Grandsen, Midland County Administrator/Controller.

GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Our October 1st reception for MPS Superintendent **Michael Sharrow** was a great event to kick off the 2013–14 year. It was a treat for the 30+ attendees to hear his ideas for Midland Public schools. His outlook is positive and optimistic while acknowledging the challenges of funding decreases.

Our Board has been busy the past two months. We continue to develop this year's programs and projects – see articles in this issue for updates. We've been working to further define action plans toward our Goal II: "In cooperation with community groups, seek to identify local issues of common concern. Identify ways the League can partner with other groups to inform the public on these concerns." We should have more to report before too long, so stay tuned!

October 9 found us at the Senior Expo at Midland Mall. Many thanks to our "booth attendants" Membership Chair **Donna DeVinney, Judy McDowell, Fran Hamburg, Jean Treadway, Karen Sherwood and Dorothy Follette**, who talked to many folks checking out the exhibits and snacking on freebees. We found that even when our local election activity is minimal, our residents are still interested and concerned about the direction that our elected officials are taking us.

Speaking of our elected officials... There's no point in rehashing the 16-day shutdown of our federal government. But it is a striking reminder that the work of the League is more important than ever to guarantee the voting rights of all citizens, to inform voters of candidates' backgrounds and positions, to influence our political decision-makers, and to educate our communities about public policy issues. The National LWV has a Position on Congress, which states in part: "The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that structures and practices of the U.S. Congress must be characterized by openness, accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance...." Enough said!

Sue McCallister

Elections On November 5

(Thanks to the Michigan Grosse Pointe League president for much of this information!)

Tuesday, Nov. 5 Midland City residents will elect City Council members. At this time, only Ward 1 has a contested seat. Why vote in an uncontested election?

For one thing, it may not actually be an uncontested election. Write-in candidates have until the Friday before the election to declare their candidacy—a mere 3 days. The smaller the voter turnout, the easier it would be to elect a write-in candidate, a person who has never publicly campaigned for office and whose views and qualifications are unknown to the public. In fact, unless you are one of the write-in candidate's supporters, you probably won't know there's a valid write-in candidate until after the election.

Also, elected officials need the support of the citizenry as they make their decisions. The people we elect to carry this responsibility make a huge personal commitment. They deserve to know that the public they serve cares and supports them. Voting shows this.

Another reason to vote is that, in some cases, the threshold for the number of signatures it takes to put an issue on the ballot in the next election is determined by

the number of voters in a certain election.

Finally, voting is your civic duty. Voting in uncontested elections maintains your personal voting history. You'll be able to say, "I've voted in every election since I was old enough to vote"—a record we should all seek to emulate.

See you at the polls!

Voter Service Chair

Carole Swinehart,

Human Trafficking
Tuesday, November 19, 7:00 pm
Griswold Center, Northwood University

This program, co-sponsored by AAUW Midland Branch, LWV of the Midland Area and Zonta Club of Midland, will feature **Michigan State Senator Judy Emmons** speaking about human trafficking, which is described as modern-day slavery. Michigan has significant exposure to this problem because of the state's international borders and waterways.

Sen. Emmons is leading efforts to raise public awareness about human trafficking in Michigan. She has introduced a 19-bill Senate package designed to crack down on human trafficking and to support victims. She reports that "Human trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar global criminal enterprise that devastates the lives of thousands of women and children every year - and it's happening right here in our state. With up to 150 girls being sold into sex trafficking monthly in Michigan, it is a problem that requires a comprehensive solution."

This program is an excellent opportunity to hear from an expert on this issue. Refreshments will be served following the presentation. Plan to attend, and bring a friend!

Here are directions to the Griswold Center:

Go out Main Street just past the History Museum to the Northwood entrance on the left. Turn right on Whiting Drive at the gatehouse. Follow Whiting Drive around until you see Griswold Center on the right:



Holiday Get-together December 4

TIME: gather from 6 to 6:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

PLACE: Home of Rosemary Wilson, 4113 Cruz Drive.

A lovely dinner will be provided; cost is \$5/person, which can be paid that night

Advance reservations are needed: call 631-4152 or rwilson100@chartermi.net.

Current Issues in Agriculture

February 6, 2014

Chippewa Nature Center

Mark your calendars to hear about current issues in agriculture! We're collaborating on this program with the Chippewa Nature Center (at their lovely site) and are in the process of scheduling speakers and time, so we'll have more details soon. This program will be of interest to our community as well as League members and will specifically address some topics to be covered in the Agriculture update study. Meanwhile, save the date!

Agriculture Update Study:

We expect to hear soon from the National LWV Study Committee with background materials and consensus questions to update the current national position on agriculture. We're planning on consensus meeting(s) in March and will set the date once we have that information in hand. Meanwhile the committee has given us links to YouTube videos, which provide really good overviews of a number of the study topics. The Study Committee tells us that "these are not meant to endorse any particular practice or viewpoint, but to give you an indication of the breadth of the topics." We will forward the links in our November e-newsletter so that you can directly access the videos.

Great Decisions 2014

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 Midland LWV has sponsored Great Decisions study for thirty-five years. A video and briefing book written by experts on each topic is used in the discussions. Topics are:

Defense technology

Israel

Turkey

Islamic awakening

Energy independence

Food and climate

China's foreign policy

U.S. trade policy

The four study groups are now being organized. They will meet on Tuesday afternoons, Wednesday mornings, Thursday mornings and Thursday evenings. If you do not already belong to a group and would like to join, call Sandy Burmester: 832-3079 or email afburm@charter.net.

New Members

Welcome to **Al and Sara Bailey**, 615 East Chapel Lane, Midland MI 48642, phone: 989-835-3364, email: askmb@sbcglobal.net.

The Baileys have been in Midland since July 2011. Sara is operations manager for Cabot Chemical; this company does toll processing for Dow Corning. Tolling means that Corning has waste streams Cabot can use and Cabot can send other waste streams back for Corning to use. The Baileys came to Midland from Champaign-Urbana, Illinois. Al has had 31-years of experience in nuclear power, serving as project manager and consultant. In the last four years he ran his own business. The couple has two daughters, one a senior at Dow High School and one an eighth grader at Jefferson Middle School. Al also has three grown boys.

During the last election Al researched candidates and came across our publications. The education study we did also interested him. This fall he attended a board meeting of our League and the Bailey's decided they would join.

Watch our Program!

"Making Democracy Work" shows on MCTV

Our scheduled guests for the two November 19 tapings of "Making Democracy Work" are:

Michigan State LWV President Sue Smith, "Update From Lansing" legislative issues on which the League has either education, consensus or advocacy; and **Michigan State House Rep. Stacy Erwin Oakes** (D-95th District) and **Michigan State Sen. Judy Emmons** (R-33rd District), who we expect will tell everyone how important it is for women to run for office, and to make themselves heard when they get there.

Tapings take place at 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. in the MCTV Studios. League Members are invited to attend; please be there 15 minutes before the taping you wish to attend. Seating is limited.

Watch us on MCTV Channel 99 or by streaming video on demand.

Programs already broadcast on MCTV can be viewed online by following these five steps:

1. Visit MCTV Network's homepage at WWW.midland-mi.org/mctv. Select "MCTV-99 Videos" link.
2. Select "Search" in the menu under "99 MCTV Community Voices" within the black area.
3. In the "Show Search" box for "Title Contains" type in "Making Democracy Work."
4. Click on "Submit Search"
5. Click "(view)" following the program you wish to watch in the list of shows.

Cathy Nelson Price

Our State LWV at Work: Advocacy

Advocacy is a key component of the LWV. As a local League we conduct advocacy activities such as pleading for or against issues based on League Positions, but we don't often get directly involved in lobbying, which is an attempt to influence specific legislation. However, the LWV of Michigan (as well as the national League) commits significant efforts to these activities. The Advocacy Committee of the LWVMI recently reported decisions to support the following bills:

- HB 4899 – HB 4905 bills to regulate fracking.

- HB 4103 a bill to permit early voting.

- HR 138, 139, 4067, HB 4722, 4721 and 4360. A package of bills called the Women's Health Care package.

We are all members of the LWV of Michigan and should be proud of the important work of the State League.

*Thank you to all who have paid your dues!
If you have not yet done so, please send in your dues today!
You may use the form on this website*