



The Voter Newsletter December 2021

*Serving the communities of
Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park,
Grosse Pointe Shores, Grosse Pointe Woods, and Harper Woods
Since 1950*

Calendar

December 15: Holiday cookie exchange
January 11: Annual Program Planning Meeting
February 9: Program - What History Are Students Learning

President's Message

Thankfulness and Joy. It's a perfect time of year to pause and reflect on the things for which we are grateful and consider the things that bring us joy. I'm lucky enough this year to acknowledge that the LWVGP brings both to me.

I am thankful that I am connected to more than 100 men and women who shine in our local community. Together, we are community leaders making a difference. Whether we govern, observe, moderate, mentor, serve, or learn, we are all better citizens because of the League. We are interested in our candidates, informed on issues, and prepared to speak out. This League has taken to heart, "Making Democracy Work."

I see joy in our members who have been the most active. I heard a collective "WOW" following our fall events. Those who are serving LWVGP with joy, know that we appreciate the efforts of your service, as we are working toward the same goals of growing more connected as a community.

Because connections matter, I encourage you to mark December 15 and January 11 on your calendars. We are sharing our joy in two "just for members" events. In December, we'll be outside (because we are community minded, vaccinated, and know how to dress warmly). The cookie exchange is just for fun; we have balance in our lives and take time to celebrate creativity and each other. In January we will be meeting for our traditional dinner, issue focused, learning about local achievements and the connections we have with LWVMI and LWVUS.

Thankfulness and Joy. I wish you both in abundance.

Sue Acton, President LWVGP
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313 434-5768

Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC) Update

After conducting the required 5 Public Hearings, the MICRC approved their proposed collaborative maps by majority vote. Nine collaborative proposed maps (3 U.S. Congress, 3 MI Senate, and 3 MI House), have been published. An additional 6 maps were submitted by MICRC commissioners. These district lines will be used for the next ten years until the next Census and redistricting process. We're now entering the home stretch!



All 15 published maps can be viewed on the MICRC website, www.michigan.gov/micrc, under "Proposed Maps." They include legal descriptions, census data, etc. We encourage members to go to this website, view the maps and provide input during the 45 public comment period. The deadline to do so is December 27.

We were fortunate to have several League members attend the public hearing in Detroit in October at the TCF Center (Sue Acton, Judy Masserang (pictured above right), Mary Rouleau, and Marge Freundl). This has been a historic process, with the Commission voting on the final maps on December 28.

Share the Joy of the Season

Join us for a cookie exchange on Wednesday, December 15, from 7-8 p.m. in Sue Acton's backyard, by the fire pit. Be sure to dress warmly!

Bring 2-3 dozen cookies, and take home an assortment of the same amount. To plan for this

event, [please register at this link.](#)

NOTE: You will receive another reminder about this event, via email, on December 8, one week in advance, along with Sue's address.



New Program Director Appointed to Fill Vacancy

We are sorry to report that Carol Todd, Director, Programs, has taken a leave of absence due to health reasons. We send Carol our sincere thanks for serving in this capacity for the past year and a half and wish her a speedy and complete recovery.

At its November 17, 2021 meeting, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the appointment of Catherine Dumke Derbyshire to serve the remaining term of office through June 30, 2022. Please welcome Catherine and assist her as she navigates her new role.

Upcoming Programs for Members Only

In addition to our December 15 cookie exchange, we are planning a second members' only event in January.

On Tuesday, January 11, LWVGP will meet at the GP Unitarian Church Annex for our Annual dinner and program planning meeting. We hope to be in person, but are ready to go to Zoom if needed due to Covid numbers. We will send more information after January 1.

Our Wednesday, February 9 program, *What History are Students Learning?* Will explore how decisions are made regarding the state's American history standards and how local school districts enact those standards. Location and time TBD. You will receive more information in January.

After Elections, Voter Services Pivots

to Voter Registration and More

Student Voter Registration

We are hoping/planning for in-person voting registration events at the area high schools this spring. This is always an exciting event as we register high school students who are at least seventeen and a half.

Your Government Officials

Now that the election results are finalized, Mary Garlough has contacted City Clerks to get the official results to edit our annual brochure, Your Government Officials (YGO). The goal is to have them printed by the end of December or early January so they can be distributed to city halls, libraries, churches, and other public places. Volunteers will be asked to help with distribution.

Please contact Mary Garlough if you are interested in participating in the high school registration or YGO distribution events. Mary Garlough, Director Voter Services 313-530-4698 marygarlough@gmail.com

Vote411.org

Voter Services welcomes Sarah Coats as the new Vote411 Coordinator. This position, previously held by Steve Trowbridge, had been folded into the tasks for the Voter Services Vice President. It is once again a separate position. Vote411 is being redesigned and is reputed to be much more user-friendly. Both Sarah and Mary Zahler will be attending a December 7 training on the newly designed software.

Observer Corps Members Ready to Attend, Take Note at Local Meetings

Our newly revitalized LWVGP Observer Corps met on Thursday, November 18, at Grosse Pointe United Methodist Church, for 90 minutes of training. Led by Lauri Kingsbury, LWVGP Observer Corps Co-Chair, the group learned about parliamentary procedures, the Open Meetings Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and more.

Newly-trained observers include:

- Dawn Drozd
- Catherine Dumke Derbyshire
- Marge Freundl
- Connie Frey * has been an Observer at the GP School Board, available to mentor
- Joan Hall
- Melissa Levasseur
- Deb Sloss
- Laura VerBeek

The group will begin observing at our local council meetings, school and library board meetings, and the Great Lakes Water Authority Board meetings. A special thanks to Joan Richardson for arranging the training site.

The Observer Corps is a VITAL part of our LWWGP mission. Observers will meet at least quarterly and share observations. We will hold another training session after the holidays. If you think you would like to become an Observer, contact Lauri Kingsbury. lauri.kingsbury@icloud.com



At Observer Corps Training on November 18. Pictured (left to right)
 Back row: Marge Freundl, Melissa Levasseur, Deb Sloss, Laura VerBeek, Dawn Drozd and Joan Hall.
 Front row: Catherine Dumke Derbyshire, Vicki Granger, Lauri Kingsbury, Sue Acton and Connie Frey.

DEI Committee Discusses Highlights of *How We Show Up*

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee discussed highlights from the Grosse Pointe Library Thoughts to Action book club, *How We Show Up*.

This book describes "what separates us aren't only the ever present injustices built around race, class, gender, values and beliefs, but also the denial of our interdependence and need for belonging. Fear and discomfort of others cause us to build walls; and instead of leaning on one another, we find ourselves leaning on concrete. Connectedness helps us to find strength, safety and support from our friends and community."

The Committee is reviewing a list of possible books for their next discussion.

Contact DEI Committee Chair Wilhelmina Giblin for more information.

Membership News

Our goals for membership are to do our best to retain members and to maintain our numbers year to year. This has been a good year so far.

We currently have 4 lifetime members and 99 paid members for the 2021-2022 year for a total of 103.

Welcome to our new members

We added 3 new members in September and October: Cheryl Denman, Laura VerBeek, and Melissa Levasseur.

We added 5 new members in November: Joan Hall and Richard Hall, Peggy Hart, Maureen Juip, and Claire P. Brown.

Marge Freundl, Membership Director, reaches out to new members to welcome them and learn about their interests in LWV.

- Melissa Levasseur is a retired, stay-at-home mom who has had an interest in LWV for some time and is looking for an opportunity to meet people. She is following the GPP City Council, among other meetings, and wants to monitor global warming concerns. She is also a volunteer docent with the Detroit Historical Society. Melissa has joined our Observer Corps and will follow the Great Lakes Water Authority.
- Laura VerBeek has met LWV members through her church, Grosse Pointe Memorial. She is a retired nurse and pilates teacher and now volunteers with the Grosse Pointe Theater. Her interest is in GPP City Council proceedings. She has joined the Observer Corps.

On November 9, 2021, Marge and Membership Director Diana Domin led a new member orientation via Zoom with support and presentations from Sue Acton, Mary Zahler, Lauri Kingsbury, Vicki Granger, Wilhelmina Giblin, Joan Morris, and Connie Frey. Five new members attended. The orientation was a great introduction to the way the League operates and to the opportunities within our local League.

On November 10, 2021 Diana attended a State membership Zoom meeting of membership leaders from around the state. These meetings occur monthly and allow leagues around the state to share membership ideas, challenges and successes. The task for December is to try to implement an idea shared at the November meeting and share the results.

With Sympathy

Longtime Lifetime Member and past LWVGP President Frances Schonenberg passed away on November 21 in Connecticut, where she had moved to be closer to her family. The following is taken from an obituary we received from her son Eric.

“Fran had a passion for helping her community and the environment. She was active in a variety of community organizations, including the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, Services for Older Citizens, Inc., the Michigan Recycling Coalition, the St. John Hospital Home Care Advisory Committee, the Interfaith Center for Racial Justice, and the Detroit Area Agency on Aging. Fran, along with other like-minded Grosse Pointers, founded the Grosse Pointe Citizens for Recycling in the late 1980s, which led to Fran being referred to as the “Recycling Queen.” Fran also worked for a solar energy company and served on the Grosse Pointe Farms City Council. She was very proud of hosting a weekly cable television show (the SOC Show), interviewing people on the topics she was passionate about—aging and recycling. In the summers, Fran spent as much time as she could with loved ones at her family’s vacation home on Isle au Haut, MA.”

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Smithsonian Exhibit on *Voice and Votes* at GP War Memorial

The traveling version of a major exhibition at the Smithsonian, *Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* is coming to the GP War Memorial for a limited engagement, November 30 through January 8. The exhibit sections explore the origins of American democracy, the struggles to obtain and keep the vote, the machinery of democracy, the right to petition and protest beyond the ballot and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. *Voices and Votes* features historical and contemporary photos; educational and archival video; engaging multimedia interactives with short games; and historical objects like campaign souvenirs, voter memorabilia, and protest material. The exhibit is free, but you must register for a specific time. Go this link: <https://www.warmemorial.org/voicesandvotes>

Consider Supporting LWVGP

Our League is celebrating 71 years of promoting good government through political responsibility. We do this by being, and encouraging others to become, informed and active participants in our government. We want to be involved – but always in a non-partisan way, without supporting or opposing political parties or candidates.

The financial success of the League depends on donations above and beyond membership dues in order to produce the educational programming and materials the community has come to depend upon. Our local League receives just \$5 of a member’s annual dues, with the remainder supporting LWV state and national organizations. That’s why your financial support, regardless of the amount, is extremely important to assist us with our mission of voter education.

The League of Women Voters is a 501(c)(3) organization, so your donation is tax-deductible as permitted by law.

Check our website for [Donation](#) details.

Seeking Members for Board Positions

Contact Nominating Committee Chair Lauri Kingsbury, lauri.kingsbury@icloud.com, if you are interested in serving on the board as an elected officer or director.

Our LWVGP needs YOU to consider taking on a more active role in ensuring we meet our mission.

Board - through June 30, 2022

Executive Board Elected

- President: Sue Acton *term to expire June 30, 2023*
- Vice President: Program Joan Richardson *term to expire June 30, 2023*
- Vice President: Voter Services Mary Zahler *term to expire June 30, 2022*
- Secretary: Judy Masserang *term to expire June 30, 2023*
- Treasurer: Carol Lufburrow *term to expire June 30, 2022*

On-Board Directors Elected

- Director (Voter Services) Mary Garlough *term to expire June 30, 2023*
- Director (Membership) Diana Domin *term to expire June 30, 2022*
- Director (Membership) Marge Freundl *term to expire June 30, 2023*
- Director (Program) Catherine Dumke Derbyshire *term to expire June 30, 2022*

On-Board Directors Appointed by the President for one-year terms

- Sandy Barrett - Assistant Treasurer
- Wilhelmina Giblin - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Chair
- Vicki Granger - Communications, Voter Co-Editor, Observer Corps Co-Chair
- Lauri Kingsbury - Nominating Committee Chair, Observer Corps Co-Chair

Off-Board Directors Appointed by the President for one-year terms

- Judy Florian- Publicity, Voter Co-Editor
- Connie Frey - Education (Observer Corps)
- Kathy Gardner - Webmaster
- Ann Nicholson - Historian
- Steve Trowbridge - Phone

Nominating Committee Lauri Kingsbury (chair), Mary Garlough, Joan Morris

LWVGP Mission

The League of Women Voters encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government; works to increase understanding of major public policy

issues; and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League is strictly nonpartisan, neither endorsing candidates nor supporting political parties.

The LWVGP, in both its values and its practices, reaffirms its commitment to diversity.

Membership is open to men and women **ages 16 and older**.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy
Non-Partisan Policy

League of Women Voters, Grosse Pointe
32 Lake Shore Drive, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236

Email: lwgrossepointe@gmail.com

Website: lwgrossepointe.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVGP/>

Twitter: [@LWVofGP](https://twitter.com/LWVofGP)

Blog: <https://leagueofwomenvotersgrossepointe.blogspot.com/>

LWVGP on YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCloWa1Hw9PPhDvUY_2SB30w

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