



The Voter Newsletter March 2022

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

Calendar

- March 7 Membership Committee Meets
- March 8 Voting Accessibility: The Disability Experience, 6 p.m.
- March 9 Climate Change Meeting
- March 16 LWVGP Board Meeting
- March 23 Program: Women Leading in the Pointes and Harper Woods
- March 28 DEI Committee Meets
- April 30 LWVMI Spring Workshop (information in next issue)

President's Message

Difference. We make a difference in the world every day. Sometimes that difference seems small: "I made a meal/wrote a letter/balanced the checkbook." But over time, each one of those small differences added up to something way bigger: "I raised a kid/got a promotion/saved for a dream trip."

Celebrate today that your individual efforts matter today and over a lifetime. LWV members make a difference too. Sometimes that difference seems small: "I talked with a new member/distributed some YGOs/helped with voter registration." Over time and over our whole membership, small differences have created BIG changes:

- Our Promote The Vote Efforts in 2018 resulted in a change to the Michigan Constitution.
- Our Gerrymandering Education sessions resulted in the MICRC and fair maps.
- Our Forums, Programs, Studies, YGOs, and Vote411 resulted in an informed local electorate.
- Our DEI, Communications, Finance, and Membership teams resulted in strong local leadership.
- Our commitment to female civic leadership contributed to three female mayors elected this year in our six-city service area.

Celebrate today that our group efforts matter now and into the future.

Below you will find other ways in which we are asking again to both celebrate our collective achievements and make a difference in the future.

Your contribution will be a small piece of the much-greater-whole that is the League of Women Voters, but a difference in this world will not happen without you. Will you plan or attend a program, register some new voters, circulate a petition, advocate for action on climate change, be a delegate at a convention, join the Observer Corps, or recruit a friend to join us? The need is great. I invite you to make a difference.

Sue Acton, President, LWVGP. shacton@gmail.com 313 434-5768



Promote the Vote 2022 (PTV2022)

<https://promotethevote2022.com/>

PTV2022 is a ballot initiative sponsored by LWVMI and **14 partners** to change the Michigan Constitution. This ballot proposal will enshrine in our constitution some of the things that make our elections secure and fair already, especially some rights that some current voter suppression bills and petitions are trying to take away this year.

The February 2022 edition of League Links, the LWVMI monthly newsletter, outlined the features of PTV2022.

- Gives voters more options by creating a right to in-person early voting for nine days before the election;
- Ensures in-person and absentee voting remains accessible and secure by providing funding for postage, drop boxes and ballot tracking;
- Ensures the results of elections in Michigan are determined by the voters casting their ballot in elections, not by legislators.
- Provides a robust absentee tracking system and allows for military and overseas voters to have their ballots counted if postmarked by Election Day and received within 6 days following the election.

The petition language was approved by the Board of Canvassers in mid-February. Petitions are now being printed and LWVMI is organizing the

educational campaign a ballot proposal entails.

This is a multi-step process and one we followed in 2018 when LWVGP and LWVMI successfully supported Promote the Vote 2018. LWVMI has agreed to assist by gathering signatures for the ballot proposal as soon as petitions are printed and are available. Because this proposal is a constitutional amendment, it will require 425,059 valid signatures by July 11, 2022.

You will be hearing much more about PTV2022 over the next few weeks. As soon as LWVMI provides more information, we will invite YOU to help. Every signature will make a difference.

– Vicki Granger, LWVMI Chair Promote the Vote 2022

Board Approves Climate Change Resolution

The LWVGP Board voted in support of the LWVMI Climate Change Resolution at its February meeting. Our League has done several things to recognize the change and its cost.

- Support of the [League of Women Voters, Lake Michigan Region](#), a coalition of LWV leagues from Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana.
- Support through the LWV Program Planning Process.
- Support through our upcoming program in April on infrastructure.

What will we do next to give weight to that support? It's TBD how we will make a difference in this arena, but if you care about climate change and want to be part of a group to discuss it, you are invited to a meeting on March 9, at 7:15 p.m. Email [Sue Acton](#) if you are interested. The meeting will be at her home.

Program Notes

Our February 9, 2022 program: *What U.S. History Do We Teach in our Schools* was quite successful. We had a good partnership with the Grosse Pointes-Harper Woods NAACP and look forward to working with them again on future events. We had 72 attendees during the live event and 144 more have watched the recording of the program on our **YouTube** channel. Both high school newspapers and the GPNews wrote stories about it, extending the program's reach. One event result is the GP South teacher on the panel has already been in touch to ask if we would work with him on a voter registration drive at South High School.

March Program: Wednesday, March 23, *Women Leading in the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods* at 7 p.m., GP United Methodist Church, 211 Moross Rd., Grosse Pointe Farms.

Join us for a fireside chat with the three female mayors in our communities: Grosse Pointe Mayor Sheila Tomkowiak, Harper Woods Mayor Valerie Kindle, and Grosse Pointe Park Mayor Michele Hodges. We will hear from them about the opportunities and challenges in leading local municipalities and glean ideas for developing future female leaders for this community — and beyond! Please register so we can send you a reminder about this informative program, open to the public. [Register at this link.](#)

– Joan Richardson, VP Program
and Catherine Dumke Derbyshire, Director Program

Membership Continues to Grow

Our current membership (as of February 8) is 109.

Welcome New Members:

- **John Brooks** joined the LWV after participating in our January Sunrise Rotary presentation. He lives in Grosse Pointe Park and is a 33 year Allstate office owner in Roseville. Previously, he was active in his now-grown childrens' sports and GPPSS activities. John feels it is time to advocate for the right to vote and hold people accountable.
- **Eva Habib** was born in Egypt, lived in Detroit for 30 years, then moved to Grosse Pointe Woods in 2014. She is retired from the Detroit City Water Department and active in the American Association of University WomenGP, serving as their Diversity Co-Chair. She is interested in many LWVGP activities and has joined our DEI Committee.
- **Christine Kaiser** is a long-time resident of Grosse Pointe, has been following our recent programs and book readings, with an interest in the topic of white fragility. She is a retired teacher from GPPSS and was also involved with curriculum development. Due to current family health concerns, she will join in activities when able.
- **Kathryn Poremski** is from Grosse Pointe Park.
- **Julie Rayes** lives in St. Clair Shores and is looking forward to activities in our chapter, particularly Voter Services efforts with schools and young people. She believes in everyone being able to vote and is excited to see that the LWVGP is engaged with Harper Woods.
- **Deb Vorhees** is “retired” but an active book club participant and online student during COVID. She joined our January new member orientation and promptly signed up for our Thoughts to Action Grosse Pointe Public Library collaborative book study group.
- **Tonya Wells** attended the February program about what history is taught in GPPSS, was impressed with how well it was done, so went ahead and joined the League! She is also a member of the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church.

-- Marge Freundl and Diana Domin, Directors Membership

DEI Highlights

Our member, Cathy McAdam, is making a difference. She will be a panelist in *Voting Accessibility: The Disability Experience* presented by LWV Detroit on March 8, at 6 p.m. Cathy is joining other strong advocates in a panel discussion. The public is welcome; you can register for this program [at this link](#)

A recording will be posted on the Detroit Public Library YouTube channel and on lwvdetroit.org after the program.

Observer Corps

LWVGP Observer Corps members now attend city council, school board, library board, and water board meetings. Members describe council meetings as “generally well-run” and “could be better attended by residents.”



Discussions center on “mundane,” “nuts and bolts” issues. There are interesting developments we are keeping our eyes on: master plan reviews, redevelopment discussions, stormwater management, and ongoing discussions at GP School Board meetings.

City Clerk thanks the League: The City Clerk in Grosse Pointe Farms personally thanked Observer Joan Hall for LWVGP assistance in the Grosse Pointe Farms elections.

Transparency and good governance:

- Marge Freundl observes the Grosse Pointe Library Board of Trustees. After an in-person meeting at Ewald Library, she mentioned to the trustees that it was difficult to hear and asked them to consider using a microphone and speakers at their meetings. This is a great example of a “small detail” that fosters transparency.
- Observer Dawn Drozd reported that the Harper Woods Council Zoom link was three lines long, but not clickable. She questioned the link and asked if it could be made clickable. Now it is!

Zoom links that work and microphones at public meetings are small successes but important steps to ensure our local governments and civic bodies are open and transparent.

Master Plan Reviews now in progress:

- Observer Joan Hall reported that Grosse Pointe Farms will start the state-mandated review of its Master Plan. Michigan law requires communities to review their Master Plan every five years. Updates are not required, but they must at least look at the plan in its current form.
- Observer Melissa Levausseau reported that Grosse Pointe Park is also reviewing its Master Plan.
- Observer Dawn Drozd reported that Harper Woods will review plans for redeveloping the old Eastland Mall property, a project that will impact all six of our communities.

The Observer Corps will be having a special session soon for observers to learn more about what is involved in Master Plan reviews and ask questions.

Masks and COVID: Connie Frey and Wendy Saigh observe GPPSS school board meetings where these two topics often dominate discussions. They also report the prevalence of mis- and dis-information.

Stormwater management: Melissa Levausseau observes the Great Lakes Water Authority meetings where she learned that the system is generally well-built and intact after the flooding last summer. She emphasized that meetings are truly interesting and more details are yet to emerge.

The Observer Corps is looking for more observers. We would like to observe meetings at all city councils, with enough observers so that we can continue observing during vacations and other “time off.”

Join our dynamic Corps! Contact Observer Corps Co-Chair Lauri Kingsbury at lauri.kingsbury@icloud.com or 313.854-0147.

– Observer Corps Co-Chairs Vicki Granger and Lauri Kingsbury



Sunshine Week is Almost Here!

Sunshine Week, March 13-19, is a celebration of open government. Established in 2005 by the [News Leaders Association](#), Sunshine Week celebrates our “right to know.” It occurs each year in mid-March, coinciding with the birthday of James Madison and National Freedom of Information Day on the 16th.

How can you note Sunshine Week? Here are some suggestions

- Attend at least one local government meeting this week, either virtually or in person.
- Consider joining the LWVGP Observer Corps.
- **Learn more about the Freedom of Information Act-FOIA.** This means citizens can request information from a government body, via a “FOIA request.” There are some exceptions.
- Visit the **News Leaders Association website** for information on Sunshine Week events, including an interesting webinar on March 16 sponsored by the National Press Club.

Voter Services

Student Voter Registration

Hopefully, we will be holding voter registration events at the area high schools this spring. This is always an exciting event as we register students who are at least seventeen and a half.

Please contact Mary Garlough if you are interested in participating in the registration process (313) 530-4698 marygarlough@gmail.com

National Convention

The LWV Convention is June 23-26 in Denver, Colorado. The convention is hybrid this year, meaning it will be offered both in-person and virtually; more information will be available soon regarding registration and costs. LWVGP is allowed a certain number of delegates, who can vote on nominations, bylaws, budgets, and program focus, but anyone attending can be present for the various speakers and panels. Contact Sue Acton if interested. shacton@gmail.com 313 434-5768

State News

LWVMI Has a New Website lwvmi.org

The website is better than ever as LWVMI is a very active state league. We invite you to learn more about Defending Democracy with these three links:

- [What petition drives are happening in MI in 2022 – note: not all will make it to the ballot.](#)
- [Current Status of 39 MI Senate Voter Suppression Bills and LWVMI position on each.](#)
- [Fact Sheet – Election November 2020 in Michigan.](#)

State News: Spring Workshop is April 30

LWVMI will be presenting a Spring Workshop on the afternoon of Saturday, April 30. More details will be available soon in the state monthly newsletter, League Links, and on the lwvmi.org website

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

- Sue Stanley - 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

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)

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

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