



*The Voter Newsletter*  
May 2024

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

### Calendar

**May 8** LWVGP Program: *Assessing Risks to American Democracy*, 7 p.m., GP United Methodist Church, 211 Moross, GPF [Map](#)

**May 13** Voter Registration Event at GP South High School, 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

**May 21** LWVGP Board Meeting, 7 p.m. GP Public Library Central Branch

**May 22** Observer Corps Quarterly Meeting: 7 p.m., Sue Acton's home, 8 Lakeside Court, GP

**June 18** LWVGP Annual Meeting, GP Memorial Church, 7 p.m. (Board meeting immediately preceding at 6 p.m.)

### President's Message

As the weather continues to improve, we will have many options to volunteer. Many of these events are one-day commitments, and I encourage you to participate.

One of our goals this summer is to register as many new voters as possible before the fall election.

We will be attending a myriad of public events putting out our materials and encouraging people to register to vote if they have not.

Our Engage Democracy team will be following up with those we register, to remind them to vote. We are also focusing on areas that have low voting turnout to see how we can improve their participation in the election process. If you would like to help, contact me or any member of the board. We can help you find the right volunteer opportunity for you.

Speaking of volunteers, I continue to be amazed at all we do! We have an incredibly committed, hard-working Board of Directors. Any task thrown at them is done efficiently, comprehensively, and with total focus.

- Our Voter Services Team (Lauri Read and Julianne Phillips) organizes and conducts all of our candidate forums and voter outreach activities. It takes a massive amount of time and effort, and many volunteers. Thank you for your commitment to our League.
- Our Membership Team (Jamie Rae Turnbull, Catherine Dumke and Marge Freundl) do an incredible job attracting new members, engaging our new members, and keeping track of the records required to do the job right. Thank you for all your hard work.
- Our Communications Team (Vicki Granger, Judy Florian and Sue Acton) keeps us up to date on our media platforms, emails, newsletters, etc. It's a never-ending job, but SO important. Thank you! (We could use some new volunteers for this group; let me know if you are interested.)
- Our Advocacy and Observer Corps Team (Lauri Kingsbury, Sue Action, and Liz Martin) has grown to be the largest in the state. Our position against book banning has now reached the national level and we will be presenting a session at the LWVUS convention. All of this takes research, development, and action by our team. Thank you for your commitment to our mission.
- Our Diversity Director Cathy McAdam and her committee have kept us focused on how we can continue to improve our commitment to being as inclusive as possible. Thank you, Cathy.
- Our Program Team (Dawn Drozd, Joan Richardson and their committee) has brought us some exciting, timely, and interesting programs. These programs are always "mission focused" and help us educate our members and the public on important issues. Thank you for these great events!
- Our Nominating Committee (Laura Larson (chair), Judy Gafa, Anastasia Koutsopoulos and Julianne Phillips) for their hard work assembling an excellent slate of candidates for our open board positions. Great job!
- Our unsung heroes are Judy Masserang (Secretary), Connie Frey (Finance), Carol Lufburrow (Treasurer), Sue Stanley (Assistant Treasurer), Melissa Levasseur (Environment), Sarah Coats (Vote 411), Annie Spence (Historian) and Loren Mannino (Bylaws). They quietly go about doing their very important jobs with little fanfare or recognition. We couldn't operate without you!! Thank you!

Well, that's all for now. Hope to see you at our *Assessing Risks to American Democracy* event on May 8th! Be sure to register! It should be an interesting program!

Lynne Pierce, President

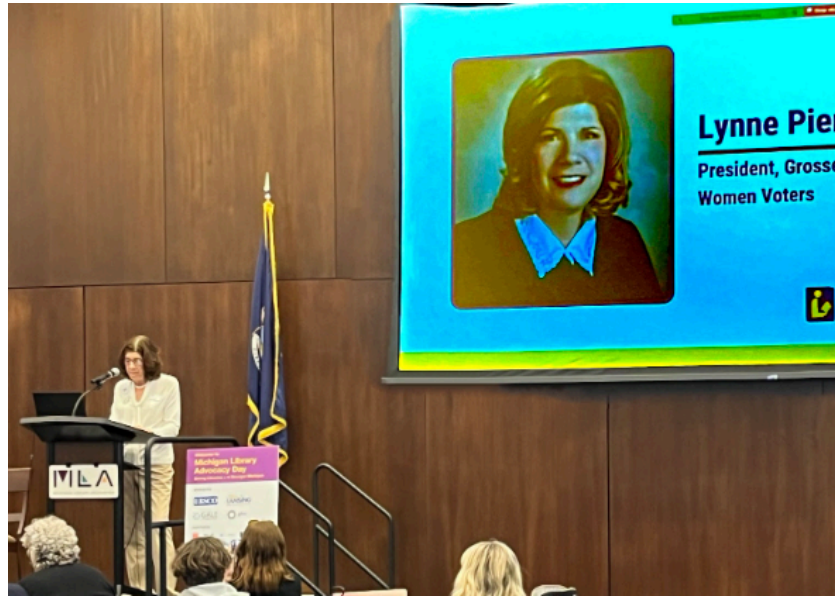
President Lynne Pierce spoke at the April 16 meeting of the Michigan Library Association Advocacy Day and received the following "thank you" from the GP Public Libraries.

Thank you so much for speaking at the Michigan Library Association Library Advocacy Day! You represented the Grosse Pointe League of Women Voters beautifully, and several colleagues expressed appreciation that they now know they can turn to the League for support if they face

book banning challenges in the future. I really appreciate your time and dedication to intellectual freedom.

Gratefully yours,  
Jessica Keyser, Director  
Grosse Pointe Public Library

Pictured below: President Lynne Pierce speaking at the  
Michigan Library Association Advocacy Day



### **May 8 Program: Assessing Risks to American Democracy**

There is still limited space available for our May 8th program. Join two Michigan political insiders for a frank discussion about what lies ahead in this extraordinary election year. This is an in-person event on Wednesday, May 8, at 7 pm at the Grosse Pointe United Methodist Church, 211 Moross, GPF.

Our speakers are former Democratic Party Chair Mark Brewer and former Republican Party Executive Director Jeff Timmer, who host the weekly podcast *A Republic, If You Can Keep It*. In their podcast, Brewer and Timmer provide a steady diet of analysis about politics from two men who know it inside and out.

At our program, they will explore current political topics, including what happens if one of the two presidential nominees is unable to run or unable to serve and what events could signal threats to American democracy.

The program is free of charge, but we ask you to [register here](#).

**Annual Membership Meeting June 18**

Mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting on June 18 at the Grosse Pointe Memorial Church. Our annual meeting is a time to reflect on our successes this past year, review and approve the **fiscal year budget**, elect new board members (see article below for slate of nominees), and look ahead to the many activities planned during this very important election year. We hope you will join us!

### **Advocacy Committee Recommends Support of GP City Millage**

At its April 16, 2024 meeting, the LWVGP Board of Directors took unanimous action to support the Grosse Pointe City sewer separation millage, which will be placed on the August 6th Primary Election ballot.

This support is consistent with our existing advocacy position on Environmental and Natural Resources related to Solid Waste Management.

President Lynne Pierce sent a letter to the GP City Mayor and Council members, indicating the League's support of the millage.

LWVGP will send an Op-Ed to the Grosse Pointe News in July, as we get closer to Election Day.

### **LWVGP Leads Way with LWVMI Observer Corps Training**

On March 27, LWV Grosse Pointe member Lauri Kingsbury conducted an Observer Corps training session via Zoom.

This session, sponsored by the LWVMI Observer Corps Network, provided over 50 attendees with the tools they need to start up or enhance their own local League Observer Corps. Lauri was instrumental in resurrecting our local Observer Corps, and we applaud her efforts in sharing her knowledge and our local League's experience with this process.

### **Membership News**

#### **Lifetime Recognition - Suzanne Suski**

We are pleased to recognize Suzanne Suski, Grosse Pointe Park, as our newest Lifetime Member! She has maintained continuous membership since January 1974. Suzanne met now deceased League member Myrtle Everett at a local card shop, and was promptly recruited to attend the next League meeting at the home of the late Fran Higbie. The rest, as they say, is history!

When her son was just a toddler, Suzanne remembers being active with an LWVGP study group on government issues and receiving calls from LWVMI for needed member actions (similar to today's LWVM action alert emails). Suzanne served as LWVGP President from 1981-83, and as a delegate to the LWVUS national convention in Houston.

A graduate with honors from both Northern Michigan University and Wayne State University, Suzanne is now retired from teaching. Although her health prevents her from attending meetings, she loves receiving *The Voter* newsletter to stay current on LWVGP activities and events.

Suzanne will be presented the LWVUS Certificate of Recognition for her service at our Annual Meeting on June 18. Congratulations, Suzanne!

### **Welcome to the following new members**

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Kellie Egan, Grosse Pointe
- Carol Klenow, Grosse Pointe Shores
- Mary Kosmalski, Grosse Pointe Park

We currently have 134 members. The Committee continues to conduct New Member Orientation sessions to familiarize new members with the League structure, Governing Board and activities/events in which they can become involved.

### **Voting and Elections Town Hall**

State Senator Kevin Hertel from Michigan's 12th District hosted a Voting & Elections Town hall on April 22 at the Woods Branch of the GP Public Library.

Panelists included:

- Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson
- State Representative Veronica Paiz (State House District 11)
- Grosse Pointe Woods City Clerk Paul Antolin
- Vice President of Voter Service, League of Women Voters of Michigan and GP League member, Judy Florian

The panel provided information on Michigan's new voting rights with the passage of Proposal 2 of 2022 and responded to many questions from the 60+ people in attendance.

Secretary Benson emphasized the security of our elections in Michigan, the availability of at least 9 days of early voting across the state and the Permanent Mail Ballot List. She also warned people about the mis-dis-information circulating around the state.

League member Judy Florian encouraged voters to research their ballots before Election Day by citing two important LWVMI resources for the General Election: Vote411.org and the LWVMI print Voter Guide. The town hall panel, with Senator Hertel, is pictured below.



## High School Voter Registration Events in Full Swing

The Voter Services team has been busy conducting voter registration events at our local high schools. University Liggett and Harper Woods were the locations recently completed, with a great turnout. We had significant support from teachers at both schools. At University Liggett, a total of 38 students were registered and 43 pre-registered (those 16-17 years old), for a total of 81.

At Harper Woods, 150 students attended the voter registration program. Some students were already registered and were provided with information on early voting and absentee voting. Many students completed paper applications and / *Pledge to Vote cards*, with others registering online with a QR code linked to the Secretary of State's website.

Two more registration events will be held in May: Grosse Pointe North and Grosse Pointe South.

A special thanks to Julianne Phillips for coordinating the University Liggett and Harper Woods events, along with volunteers Sue Acton, Paul Antonlin, (Clerk, City of Grosse Pointe Woods), Judy Florian, Marge Freundl, Martha Hutting, Anastasia Koutsopoulos, Gerianne LaPratt, Jan Scallen, Carrie Thompson, (Deputy Clerk, City of Harper Woods), Jaime Rae Turnbull and Micki Verderbar.



University Liggett  
Volunteers (l to r):  
Julianne Phillips, Jaime  
Rae Turnbull, Micki  
Verderbar and Martha  
Hutting.



League volunteers  
assist University  
Liggett students at the  
registration table



League volunteers at Harper  
Woods HS: (l to r): Carrie  
Thompson (Deputy Clerk,  
HW), Gerianne LaPratt,  
Julianne Phillips, Marge  
Freundl, and Jan Scallen.

**President Biden Visits Harper Woods  
by Gerianne LaPratt, LWVGP  
Harper Woods City Councilmember**

On February 1, I received a surprise text message, asking for the Harper Woods City Council's presence at They Say Restaurant (on Vernier near Kelly Rd.) in Harper Woods. We had less than one hour before the President of the United States would arrive.

I was at work, and after a moment of hesitation, locked the door and made the 31-mile trip to They Say in record time. The Secret Service was very, very present at the restaurant.

President Biden arrived around 2:25 p.m. He came into the restaurant and could not have been more cordial. He made time to take selfies and chat with many patrons. He made his way over to the booth I shared with Council members Regina Williams and Ivery Toussant.

We introduced ourselves and the President said, "Being a City Council member is the hardest job, and everyone knows where you live and asks for things you may not be able to do."

I said, "Mr President, Harper Woods needs your help. We need things like a community center for our kids and a place for our seniors to gather." The President asked a member of his staff to get my business card.

A few days later, I received a call from a senior staff member from the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, followed by a Zoom meeting with

several government officials, Mayor Valerie Kindle and myself. We are anxiously awaiting further meetings.

I was honored to be a part of this once-in-a-lifetime event: Joe Biden is the first sitting President to ever make a stop in Harper Woods!

Top: President Biden with Harper Woods Mayor Valerie Kindle and John Szymanski, Harper Woods Acting City Manager

Bottom: Harper Woods City Council members Regina Williams, Gerianne LaPratt, and Ivery Toussant with President Biden.







### **Nominating Committee Presents 2024-2025 LWVGP Slate**

The Nominating Committee has completed its work and will present the following slate of candidates at the June 18 LWVGP Annual Meeting.

- President-Elect: Dawn Drozd (*term to expire June 30, 2025*) \*\*
- Vice-President Voter Services: Sue Acton (*term to expire June 30, 2026*)
- Treasurer: Carol Lufburrow (*term to expire June 30, 2026*)
- Director Membership: Catherine Dumke (*term to expire June 30, 2026*)
- Director: Gerianne LaPratt (*term to expire June 30, 2026*)
- Nominating Committee Chair: Vicki Granger (*term to expire June 30, 2025*)
- Nominating Committee Member: Anastasia Koutsopoulos (*term to expire June 30, 2025*)

\*\* Dawn has agreed to continue as VP of Programs and President-Elect concurrently, with the understanding that she and Lynne Pierce will be Co-Presidents the following two years, 2025-2027. Lynne has agreed to serve a second term as President.

Read more about the candidates in the [blog post](#) on our LWVGP website

Many thanks to the Nominating Committee! Chair Laura Larson, Judy Gafa, Anastasia Koutsopoulos and Julianne Phillips.

**Contact LWVGP!** To reach anyone on the board, with a question or a suggestion, or to volunteer, use the [lvvgrossepointe@gmail.com](mailto:lvvgrossepointe@gmail.com) email address - your email will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

## Board through June 30, 2024

### Executive Board (Elected)

- President: Lynne Pierce
- Vice President Programs: Dawn Drozd
- Vice President Voter Services: Lauri Read
- Secretary: Judy Masserang
- Treasurer: Carol Lufburrow

### On-Board Directors (Elected)

- Director (Voter Services): Julianne Phillips
- Director (Membership): Catherine Dumke
- Director (Membership): Jaime Rae Turnbull
- Director (Program): Joan Richardson

### On-Board Positions (Appointed by the President)

- Advocacy Director: Lauri Kingsbury
- Assistant Treasurer: Sue Stanley
- Communications Director, *The Voter* Co-Editor: Vicki Granger
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director: Cathy McAdam
- Environmental Network Chair: Melissa Levasseur
- Observer Corps Co-Directors: Sue Acton and Liz Martin

### Off-Board Positions (Appointed by the President)

- Finance Review Coordinator: Connie Frey
- Historian: Annie Spence
- Parliamentarian: Judy Florian
- Publicity, *The Voter* Co-Editor, Facebook: Judy Florian
- Vote411 Coordinator: Sarah Coats
- Webmaster: Sue Acton

**Nominating Committee** Laura Larson (chair), Judy Gafa, Anastasia Koutsopoulos and Julianne Phillips

## 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**

**32 Lake Shore Drive, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236**

**Email:** [lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com](mailto:lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com)

**Website:** [lwvgrossepointe.org](http://lwvgrossepointe.org)

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

**LWVGP on YouTube - no subscription necessary**  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIoWa1Hw9PPhDvUY\\_2SB30w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIoWa1Hw9PPhDvUY_2SB30w)

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

[Unsubscribe lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!