



The Voter Newsletter
July 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

- July 29: New Member Orientation via Zoom, 7 pm
- July 30: New Member Orientation via Zoom, 2 pm
- August 20: Board meeting, 7 pm, via Zoom
- August 24: After 6 on Kercheval, 6 pm-10 pm, West Park, GPP
- August 26: New Member Orientation via Zoom, 7 pm
- August 26: Observer Corps Quarterly Meeting, 7 pm, GP Central Library
- August 27: Annual Member Picnic, 6 pm, Neff Park
- August 28: New Member Orientation via Zoom, 2 pm
- August 30: Racing for Kids on the Hill, 11 am-3:30 pm, The Hill GP Farms
- September 10: Membership Meeting via Zoom, Vote on Senior Position, 7 pm
- September 17: National Voter Registration Day
- September 22: National Banned Books Week

President's Message

It is always energizing and informative to attend the national convention and this year was no exception! Over 1400 League members across the country attended

in person or virtually. The convention was held in Washington, DC and also allowed us an opportunity to lobby our representatives.

The agenda was jam-packed with important items to discuss. As always, there was spirited debate, but we left the convention with our overall theme of “the League speaks with One Voice”. We voted to reaffirm our primary focus on the Campaign for Making Democracy Work. This includes redistricting reform, voting rights protection, improving elections, money in politics and direct election of the president.

All our current positions were retained, and we voted to concur with resolutions to support Washington, DC statehood, Ethics in Government, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Fair and Humane Immigration reform, support of public libraries and reproductive rights. In addition, we approved a new accelerated study on the federal judiciary (I will probably end up assisting on this study once the election is over).

I was very excited to hear that the LWVUS has a new partnership with the Girl Scouts of America! This will hopefully be a pipeline for new, younger members. These types of coalitions will help us grow and improve our organization to stay viable in the future. Speaking of younger members, there were many at our convention. They are engaged and spoke up about the things they care about. Part of their message to the greater group is that they want to belong, not just fit in. This means we must be open to change! Not easy for us old folks!

We were also introduced to our new president, Dianna Wynn, and our new CEO, Celina Stewart. I was very impressed with both women and feel confident our League is in good hands going forward. They told us the League is the most trusted group in politics! What an honor! This is because we have dedicated ourselves to nonpartisanship since the beginning and people listen to what we have to say.

Our book banning workshop was a huge success! Sue Acton and I gave the presentation, with the help of Dawn Drozd, Judy Florian, Julianne Phillips, Carol Luftburrow, Lauri Kingsbury, and Vicki Granger (and our IT guy, Ray Andary). As anticipated, it was well attended – over 150 people. Across the nation, Leagues are tackling this issue. The feedback was very positive, and attendees appreciated the step-by-step process we provided them. A special thanks to

Carol and Lauri, who purchased almost 100 banned books to give away at the session. We also had book bags and pins for the attendees, which were very popular! You can view the presentation [here](#).

See our [website](#) for a recap from our League's Convention delegates.

Lynne Pierce, President

LWVUS Convention Highlights

LWVGP was well represented at the LWVUS Convention in Washington, DC June 26-30. Lynne Pierce, President and Sue Acton, Past President, presented an excellent workshop on *Book Banning: How to Fight Against it* (see related article below). There were many positive comments from attendees throughout the Convention.

Another highlight was lobby day, where convention attendees visited Capitol Hill to meet with their elected representatives. Although Congress was not in session during that time, there were several Michigan Leagues that were able to visit their representatives. The Michigan Convention delegation visited with Senator Gary Peters' aide, Eli Schooly, who was very knowledgeable about Senator Peters' stance on many issues. In addition, the Grosse Pointe contingent of Lynne Pierce, Dawn Drozd, Sue Acton, Julianne Phillips, Judy Florian and Sara Weertz (Detroit League) visited with Representative Shri Thanedar's aide, Valeria Postigo, who was very receptive to our comments related to the Congressman's support of the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. She also explained his priorities on mental health (addressing the epidemics of suicide and drug overdose) and his continuous effort to provide small business resources in our community.

Photo below: Michigan had a total of 91 attendees, the largest delegation at the Convention (36 in-person, 35 virtual and 20 observers).

Success at the LWVUS Convention

One hundred fifty-eight delegates - 90 in-person, 68 via Zoom - attended our workshop: *Book Banning: How to Fight It* on the first day of LWV's National Convention. They left energized and equipped with the tools to fight back against book challenges and bans.

We approved our public library and school libraries advocacy positions in 2022. In 2023, LWVGP took our public library to the state convention where it was unanimously approved as a state-wide League position. This year, LWVUS invited us to give a workshop on the national level.

President Lynne Pierce discussed the scope of the problem, the organized groups orchestrating local book bans and their tactics. Past President Sue Acton, who led the effort to get the advocacy positions accepted locally, illustrated the study and approval process. She highlighted the work of our DEI Committee and Observer Corps, who did so much to bring this to our attention in 2022. Lynne wrapped up the 30-minute presentation with ideas and resources for advocating on local and state levels.

Lynne and Sue fielded questions and comments from the in-person delegates. Lauri Kingsbury, (a virtual delegate), answered chat questions from the virtual delegates on Zoom.

Several giveaway items—book bags and 96 books that were challenged or banned in local libraries during the past 10 years—were provided to attendees, along with bookmarks, buttons and various resources from the American Library Association (ALA). An 8-year-old girl attended the workshop with her mother and was very excited to receive copies of books! We collected \$215 in donations. One generous delegate put \$40 in the donation box!

Along with Lynne and Sue, this presentation was a collaborative effort by other members, including Judy Florian, Marge Freundl, Vicki Granger, Carol Lufburrow, Lauri Kingsbury, Julianne Phillips, and Annie Spence, who developed topics and put together a dynamite slide presentation.

The Maine League is working on a state position; their school libraries are under attack. New Jersey is also pursuing legislation. In Louisiana, a local parish (a governmental unit equivalent to our counties) appointed book ban adherents to the local library board. Virginia now is partners with their state library association

and ties their efforts to VOTE411.org. A delegate from the Greenville, NC local League called their situation “a nightmare” and is working hard to form a coalition with like-minded non-partisan organizations. We are pleased our local League could provide this information to those delegates who are encountering problems in their states.

LWVGP was proud to represent LWVMI at the Convention and provide information on this very important topic!

Photo below: Sue Acton, Judy Florian, Lynne Pierce, Juliianne Phillips, and Carol Lufburrow at the book banning display table.

Annual LWVGP Picnic is August 27

Please mark your calendar for our Annual Picnic Social on Tuesday, August 27, at 6 pm, at beautiful **Neff Park**. We welcome both our seasoned members and especially hope new members will attend.

During the picnic, you'll have the opportunity to socialize, meet the new board, hear about our exciting upcoming events, and learn more about how you can become involved with our various committees.

We'll provide the entrée (probably ham), drinks (tea, lemonade, wine,) and paper products. We just ask each person to bring a dish to pass and a \$10 donation to cover the cost of the main dish (cash & checks accepted.) One of the traditions at our annual picnic is a group picture with members.

Be on the lookout for your registration invite that will be sent, via email, on Tuesday, July 30. We hope to see you there!

League Members Engage with Local GPF Clerk

A special thanks to the following volunteers who assisted Grosse Pointe Farms Clerk Derrick Kozicki by stuffing absentee voter ballot envelopes; it is always a pleasure engaging with our local clerks on the election process. Kathleen Cernok, Karen Feldman, Judy Florian, Judy Masserang, Laura McCourt, Ann Nicholson, Julianne Phillips, Marcia Powell and Kathy Rogers.

13th District, U.S. Congress Candidate Forum Completed

A virtual candidate forum, conducted on July 9 via Zoom, included 3 of the 4 candidates for the position of U. S. Congress, 13th District. We were pleased to partner with the Detroit LWV for this forum.

The following 3 candidates participated:

- Republican Martel D. Bivings
- Democrat Shakira Lynn Hawkins
- Democrat Shri Thanedar

Mary Waters, Democrat, was unable to participate.

A special thanks to

- Lauri Read, Forum Producer,
- Rhonda Craig, Moderator (Detroit League)
- Sue Acton, Technician/Question Sorter,
- Julianne Phillips, Timekeeper/Question Sorter
- Jaime Rae Turnbull, Question Sorter

The recording of the forum is currently available on our YouTube channel at this [link](#).

LWVGP Annual Meeting Elects Board, Honors Lifetime Member

Many of our members convened at the Grosse Pointe Memorial Church for our 74th annual meeting. The following officers were elected to the Board of Directors:

- President-Elect: Dawn Drozd (*see below*)*
- 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 At Large: Gerianne LaPratt (*term to expire June 30, 2026*)
- Nominating Committee Chair: Vicki Granger (*term to expire June 30, 2025*)
- Nominating Committee Member: Anastasia Koutsopoulos

*In the case of President Elect, Dawn has agreed to continue as Vice President of Programs and President-Elect concurrently, with the understanding that she and Lynne Pierce will be co-presidents the following year. Lynne has agreed to continue as President for another term.

We encourage all members to review the annual report. Due to the size of the document, it is only available online. This report summarizes the many activities accomplished by League members this past year! You can access the report [here](#).

At its July meeting, the LWVGP Board appointed Patricia Cardoze to be Assistant Treasurer and Judy Masserang to join the Nominating Committee as the Board representative.

Welcome to all of our new board members! Pictured below are Lynne Pierce, Sue Acton, Catherine Dumke, Dawn Drozd, Gerianne LaPratt, Carol Lufburrow, and Vicki Granger. Not pictured: Anastasia Koutsopoulos.

A highlight of the LWVGP Annual meeting was the presentation of the LWVUS Lifetime membership Certificate of Recognition to Suzanne Suski from Grosse Pointe Park. She has maintained continuous membership since January 1974.

Suzanne remembers being active with a LWVGP study group on government issues and receiving calls from LWVMI for needed member actions. She 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 WSU, 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. It was a pleasure seeing Suzanne, accompanied by her husband, and recognizing her lifetime membership!

In the above photo: Suzanne (seated) is with Ann Nicholson, standing at left, and Lynne Pierce, standing at right.

Members To Vote on Senior Services Advocacy Position

The meeting to vote on the Senior Services position is scheduled for September 10 at 7 pm via Zoom. A link to the meeting will be sent to all members in early September. This meeting will have two agenda items:

1. Discussion from members about this position
2. A vote on whether to adopt it as an official LWVGP Advocacy Position

The LWVGP Bylaws require that our members vote on a position before it can be adopted. Members must receive the complete position statement within 60 days before a vote is called. This statement, along with the position paper, was sent to all members, via email, on July 5th.

In May, our Board of Directors approved the following study, *Proposed Advocacy Position: Senior Services*. Lauri Kingsbury, Advocacy Committee Chair, briefly reviewed the following position statement at the June 18 Annual Meeting.

The significant increase in the count of seniors projected over the next fifteen years in the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods communities requires community-wide financial support from local governments and nonprofit organizations to ensure seniors have access to necessary resources and support. Essential services in public health, specifically senior services, should be integral components of each community's infrastructure to promote and protect the health and well-being of its older population.

Please read the full study at this [link](#). It examines the different aspects of this proposed position, as well as the pros and cons of adopting it.

Questions regarding this position and/or the meeting can be directed to Lauri Kingsbury, Advocacy Chair at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com.

Early Voting Now Available!

With the passage of Proposal 2 of 2022, Michiganders now have the opportunity to vote early before Election Day.

Early voting is not the same as absentee voting. Early voting is the opportunity to cast a ballot in person before Election Day. For voters, the early voting experience will be similar to the experience of voting at a polling place on Election Day and will include the act of putting your completed ballot into a tabulator. The voter can also bring his/her absentee ballot to an early voting site and insert it into the tabulator.

Early voting will take place at early voting sites. An early voting site will operate similarly to an Election Day polling place. Communities are required to offer early voting in each statewide and federal election for at least 9 consecutive days, beginning on the second Saturday before the election and ending on the Sunday before the election, for at least 8 hours each day. For the August 6 Primary, the schedule for our local communities is as follows:

- **Grosse Pointe Park:** Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4, 8:30 am-4:30 pm—City Hall, 15115 E. Jefferson Avenue
- **Grosse Pointe City:** Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4, 8:30 am - 4:30-City Council Chambers, 17145 Maumee Avenue
- **Grosse Pointe Farms:** Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4, 8:30 am-4:30 pm—Council Chambers at City Hall, 90 Kerby Road
- **Grosse Pointe Woods:** Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4, 8:30 am-4:30 pm—Community Center, 20025 Mack Plaza

- **Grosse Pointe Shores:** Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4, 8:00 am-4:00 p.m.–795 Lake Shore Road
- **Harper Woods:** Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4, 8:30 am-4:30 pm–19617 Harper Avenue.

We encourage you to participate in the early voting process!

We Need Postcard Writers!

LWVGP will again participate in the LWVMI Get Out The Vote (GOTV) Postcard Campaign.

The Engage Democracy Committee will mail postcards to 1,600 voters in two groups: Registered voters who didn't vote in 2022 in Grosse Pointe and Harper Woods, and Harper Woods addresses with no registered voter record.

Each postcard will be hand addressed and include a brief note to the voter, so we'll need lots of volunteers to help us out.

Packs of 25 postcards, along with instructions and a list of addresses will be available for pickup in all 5 cities beginning August 15. You'll have 2-3 weeks to write and return the postcards.

If you want to be part of our movement to encourage voter registration and engagement, we hope you'll join us.

A Signup Genius will be developed for those who want to volunteer. Thanks in advance for your involvement! Questions? Contact Dawn Drozd at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com.

LWVGP Attends Annual GPC PRIDE Event

An annual tradition is for our League to have a table at the annual PRIDE event in the City of Grosse Pointe. Handling these duties this year were Judy Florian, Marge Freundl, Lauri Kingsbury and Jan Ryndress. A variety of handouts were provided, including information on early voting for the August and November elections.

Photo: LWVGP Members Jan Ryndress, Marge Freundl and Judy Florian

New Member Orientation Sessions

The Membership Committee will conduct new member orientation sessions, via Zoom, on the following dates:

- July 29, 7pm meeting link [here](#)
- July 30, 2pm meeting link [here](#)
- August 26, 7pm meeting link [here](#)
- August 28, 2pm meeting link [here](#)

These orientations are not just for new members. This is a great opportunity for current members to get a refresher on the League and to meet new members. If you have questions, please contact Jaime Rae Turnbull at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com.

Please RSVP at the same email address so the Membership Committee knows who will be attending.

Volunteers Needed for Upcoming Events

We need volunteers to assist at our League table for the following events:

- After 6 on Kercheval: August 24, 6-10 pm, Location: West Park (between Nottingham and Maryland), Grosse Pointe Park

- Racing for Kids on the Hill: August 30, 11 am-3:30 pm; The Hill-Grosse Pointe Farms

Sign up is available at this [link](#).

Questions? Contact Jaime Rae Turnbull at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com.

Free Vote411 Lawn Signs Available

We have a supply of Vote411 Lawn Signs available. Help us promote this important online voter guide! If you want a sign, contact Lynne Pierce at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com. She will be happy to deliver to you.

Contact LWVGP! To reach anyone on the board, with a question or a suggestion, or to volunteer, use the lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com email address - your email will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

Board through June 30, 2025

Executive Board (Elected)

- President: Lynne Pierce
- President Elect: Dawn Drozd
- Vice President Programs: Dawn Drozd
- Vice President Voter Services: Sue Acton
- 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 (At Large): Gerianne LaPratt

On-Board Positions (Appointed by the President)

- Advocacy Director: Lauri Kingsbury
- Assistant Treasurer: Patti Cardoze
- Communications Director and Parliamentarian: Judy Florian

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director: Cathy McAdam
- Environmental Network Chair: Melissa Levasseur
- Observer Corps Director: Liz Martin

Off-Board Positions (Appointed by the President)

- Finance Review Coordinator: Connie Frey
- Historian: Annie Spence
- Vote411 Coordinator: Sarah Coats
- Webmaster: Sue Acton

Newsletter Co-editors: Judy Florian and Vicki Granger

Nominating Committee: Vicki Granger (chair), Anastasia Koutsopoulos and Judy Masserang

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/>

LWVGP on YouTube - no subscription necessary
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIoWa1Hw9PPhDvUY_2SB30w

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