



The Voter Newsletter
May 2025

*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 1: Voter Registration Drive-Grosse Pointe North High School, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
May 12: Virtual Program: *Constitutional Meaning in the Shadow of the Articles of Confederation*
May 13: *We the People: Civics in Action*, GP Woods Library, 6:45 p.m.
May 16-18: LWVMI Convention, Sheraton Airport, Grand Rapids
May 20: LWVGP Board Meeting, 7 p.m., GP Memorial Church
June 2: New Member Orientation, 7 p.m., Virtual
June 4: New Member Orientation, 2 p.m. Virtual
June 10: Annual Meeting, 7 p.m. GP Memorial Church

SAVE THE DATE: October 5
LWVGP 75th Anniversary Celebration at the Country Club of Detroit

President's Message

Greetings, Folks!

I have talked to several League members recently who have shared their feelings with me about the state of our democracy (and our world). We (I included!) have been oscillating between a low-level depression and suppressed rage, which are two sides of the same coin.

Simultaneously, I happened to read some thoughts from Aeschylus (525 BC – 456 BC), known as the father of the Greek tragedy. Two struck me as particularly pertinent to today's world.



The first is “In war, truth is the first casualty.” Wow! What a powerful statement! It seems we are faced every day with distortions of the truth. With the internet, it is all encompassing. Part of what we do as the League is to fight against misinformation and disinformation. I know it seems burdensome sometimes but keep speaking the truth. It’s important!

The second quote from Aeschylus is “Happiness is a choice that requires effort at times.” It is so easy to fall into the quagmire of sadness at times like this. On top of what is happening in our country, we have our personal tragedies to deal with.

So today, I want to talk about some of the things that I am grateful for (in addition to my family and my health).

- First and foremost, I am grateful for the wonderful, dedicated individuals of our League. I am so proud to be part of this group. Your friendships are truly a treasure. Your intellect is inspiring. Your hard work does not go unnoticed. The depth and breadth of your volunteerism is awesome. Hard times bring out the best and the worst in people and all of you have truly shown your greatness.
- I am ever so grateful that I live in the United States. Despite our infighting, we have not experienced war on our front during our lifetime. I am grateful I don’t live in the Ukraine, or any number of other hotspots in the world. And I am grateful we have a democracy that allows us to speak our opinion, even if others don’t agree.
- I am thankful for the beautiful world we live in. The flowers of spring are starting to come out around us. As many of you know, my husband and I love to visit National Parks. They are incredibly beautiful, each with their own unique character. We have such a beautiful country!

Happiness is a choice that I make, in spite of all that goes on around us. And I pledge to keep working at it every day. Peace!

Lynne Pierce, President

Hands Off! Rally

On April 5th, the League of Women Voters joined hundreds of thousands of people nationwide to say "Hands Off! We cannot let them continue to strip away our rights, gut our federal resources, and threaten our livelihoods."

Celina Stewart, LWVUS President, stated “The State of Democracy



depends on our collective power and we must fight against the forces that undermine the principles of our Democracy.” She encouraged League members and all citizens to speak out, educate and vote.

Demonstrations voicing opposition to the administration’s policies occurred in over 1,400 locations across all 50 U. S. states. LWVGP members gathered at the Detroit Institute of Arts and marched over three miles in protest.

PHOTOS: Top left - Dawn Drozd and Judy Florian



Above: Liz Martin

At right: Julianne Phillips

Below: Marge Freundl (left) with
friends





LWVGP Sponsors Civics in Action Program

Mark your calendars for *We the People: Civics in Action* Program on Tuesday, May 13, 6:45 – 8:00 p.m. at the Grosse Pointe Library-Woods Branch. This program will focus on the civics you may have forgotten, specifically as it relates to 'checks and balances'.

After reviewing basic principles of the relationship among our three branches of government, the speaker will look at some recent headlines to determine if the process is working and provide tips on how to fully understand the news.

Register at this [link](#). The registration deadline is May 11.

If you require accommodations, please notify the League at lwwgrossepointe@gmail.com.

NOTE: If you missed the *The Attack on DEI* Program on April 17, check this [blog post](#) for a summary and a link to the recording.

LWVGP April 2025 Board Meeting Highlights

The LWVGP Board met on April 15 at the GP Memorial Church. Here are some reports from that meeting.

- **Current membership is 142.** Welcome to new members Susan Budrys (Grosse Pointe) and Ann Walton (Grosse Pointe).
- **The Board approved the draft 2025-26 budget**, which is sent to the membership for review prior to the June 10 Annual Meeting when members

vote on the budget. Review the budget at this link.

- **Having received no comments from the membership**, the Board unanimously approved the revised Bylaws dated March 2025. View the [new bylaws](#) on our website at lwvgrossepointe.org under About Us.
- **The Advocacy Committee** has completed our response to the Federal Judiciary Study and submitted it to LWVUS. A special thanks to the following committee members: Lauri Kingsbury (Chair), Nicole Castka, Marge Freundl, Vicki Granger, Ruth Hoover, and Joanne Swanson. The League's principles in developing a position statement are on the website under Advocacy>Positions at this link.
- **Voter Services** is gearing up for our annual voter registration activities. Many members have signed up to assist with registering 17.5 year olds, along with preregistering those age 16. We will be at all of our local high schools. Julianne Phillips and Sue Acton are spearheading these events. They may also plan candidate forums, depending on how many contested local races we have.
- **75th Anniversary Committee:** Judy Masserang is leading a committee to plan our 75th Anniversary celebration. The event will be held on Sunday, October 5, from 4-6 p.m. Barbara McQuade will be our guest speaker. McQuade served as the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan from 2010-2017. Stay tuned for further details.

Membership Directory

LWVGP is planning to release our membership directory to current members.

- Our intent is to provide a full directory of members via email in a PDF document. Members can then print their own copy. **This directory is to be used solely for the purpose of communicating with members of the League of Women Voters of Grosse Pointe for matters pertaining to the League. Members and others may not use this directory for any other purpose.**
- Please complete the release form online [at this link](#) by May 5.
- You have only three options: 1) Publish all of your membership information; 2) Publish your name only or 3) Do not publish any information. No other options will be available.

Member Spotlight–Julianne Phillips

Julianne is a native Detroit and has earned three degrees from Wayne State University: her bachelor's degree in Psychology, a master's in Guidance and Counseling, and in 2000, her doctorate in Instructional Technology through the WSU College of Education.

She was inspired to go for a doctorate after attending a lecture on the impact of smoking. “When the speaker shared she had received her doctorate at the age of 27, I was hooked! I wanted to challenge myself to obtain a doctorate as well. Walking across the stage in 2000 was one of my proudest moments.”

In 1980, Julianne started her career at Michigan Consolidated Gas Company as a customer service representative, and 37 years later, retired as a Training Manager from DTE Energy.

“Having never lost my love for developing people and teaching, I established the JHP Consulting Group, LLC. I love giving workshops on vision boards. At the moment, I am providing leadership coaching to a young executive in the Detroit area.”

Julianne joined the League because “I wanted to do something besides write a check.”

She added, “I remember my first contact with LWVGP was with Marge Freundl. She walked me through the website, conducted a brief orientation, and viewed many areas I could become involved in.”

Julianne has been extensively involved with LWVGP, and is a member of the Observer Corps, the DEI Committee, and has served as the Voter Services Director the last two years. In that role, she has set up the High School Voter Registration activities, achieving the highest number of registrations in our League’s history. She also updated the Your Government Officials (YGO) brochure. But you will see Julianne at nearly every LWVGP event.

“I always enjoy lending a helping hand,” she says.

For fun, Julianne enjoys reading mysteries, shopping at Kroger’s (“my happy place”), cooking new dishes for her husband, and visiting her daughter in New York City.

Julianne also loves to decorate for Christmas and has several trees in her house.

“There is an angel tree in my dining room, a Detroit Tigers tree in the basement, and a BIG tree in our living room with 351 ornaments. These are from my mother, mother-in-law, and from “places we have traveled.”



Many League members know Julianne has a great sense of humor and exudes high energy.

She recently spent her birthday in New York City to see “MJ - The Musical.”

“What a show! I begged my husband to buy me the glove. The rest is history.”

Julianne is looking forward to the 50th anniversary celebration of her high school graduation from Immaculata High School in Detroit.

If you have a member that you think should be featured in Member Spotlight, please send the information to the Voter Newsletter Co-Editors, Judy Florian and Vicki Granger at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com.

New Member Orientations

The Membership Committee is planning two virtual new member orientations as follows:

Monday, June 2, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 4, 2 p.m.

Please RSVP to Marge Freundl by June 1 if you plan to participate. You can contact Marge at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com.

Brennan Center Program

The Brennan Center will conduct a virtual program titled *Constitutional Meaning in the Shadow of the Articles of Confederation* on Monday, May 12, 11 a.m.- 4 p.m. Scholars will discuss the ongoing relevance of the Articles in today’s constitutional debates. You can register at this [link](#).

14th Annual Community Luncheon

Marge Freundl represented LWVGP at the 14th Annual Community Luncheon, on April 2 at Maire School, sponsored by the Grosse Pointe Public Schools, Wayne County Community College District (WCCCD) and Grosse Pointe Magazine.

Representatives from local governments, organizations and our legislators heard from WCCCD Provost Denis Karic about partnership



activities with the Grosse Pointe Public Schools.

They also received updates from State Senator Kevin Hertel on the impact of the federal reductions to our Michigan budget. In addition to a delicious lunch, attendees were treated to a program by Maire's kindergarten students and choir as well as desserts from the WCCCD *The Art of Desserts* class.

PHOTO: Marge Freundl and Harper Woods Mayor Val Kindle, also an LWVGP member!

Nominees for LWVGP Board 2025-2027

The 2024-2025 Nominating Committee has proposed the following slate of members for LWVGP positions. The LWVGP Membership present at the Annual Meeting on June 10 will vote on these nominees.

Note that the VP for Programs position has not been filled. The Program Committee has a robust group of committee members, and many of the programs are already in place, such as the Kick-Off Picnic, the Holiday Gathering, Program Planning, and the Annual Meeting. Presenting informational programs to the public is a vital service of the League. Contact Nominating Committee Chair Vicki Granger to discuss how YOU might fill this vital role. Email lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com and put Nominating in the subject line.

Two-year positions

- President: Lynne Pierce
- Vice President of Program: TBD
- Director of Voter Services: Holly Cory
- Secretary: Ruth Hoover
- Membership Director: Judy Masserang

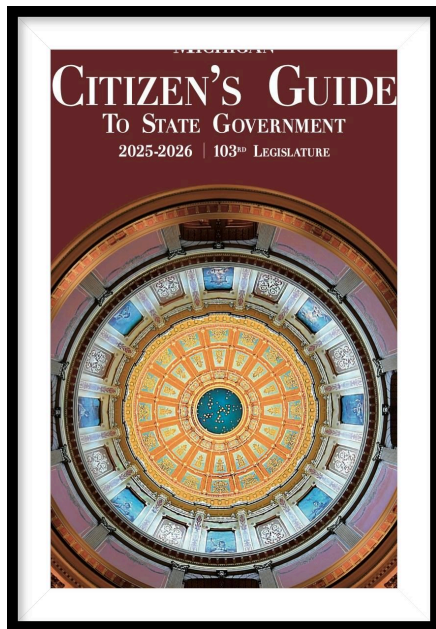
One-year positions

- Nominating Committee Chair: Diana Domin
- Nominating Committee Member: Kathy Cernok

Read about our [nominees in this blog post](#) on our website.

Advocacy

The *Michigan Citizen's Guide to State Government, 2025-2026*, is now available as a downloadable PDF. Find your copy [here](#).



It's "one-stop shopping" for:

- Contact information for our state legislators and committees: how they work and who serves on them,
- A handy chart for the three branches of state government and the various departments under each branch, and
- The step-by-step process on how a bill becomes a law.

Anatomy of a Lame Duck

Sue Acton attended the April 9, 2025 presentation, *Anatomy of a Lame Duck*, sponsored by LWV Detroit and the Detroit Public Library. Erika Rosebrook, from the MSU Extension Center for Local Government Finance and Policy, defined what a Lame Duck session is: the period from Election Day through the end of the legislative session. She offered a brief history of significant legislation that had passed in previous Michigan Lame Duck sessions, including Right to Work, Personal Property Tax Exemptions, and Minimum Wage Reform.

The 2024 Michigan Lame Duck session was not as productive, though there had been high hopes for major changes in the last year of the Democratic trifecta. The House descended into chaos when all the Republicans walked out over the issue of sick leave and tipped wages. A Democrat from Detroit boycotted the session, and there was no quorum for two days. A Call of the House was issued, but with no consequences enforced, this was ineffective. The House adjourned early.

The Senate was somewhat more productive. Three examples were noted.

1. The first prohibited housing discrimination by source of income.
2. The second expanded hate crime laws to include sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and age.
3. The third ended the ability of counties to opt out of public transit costs.

The drama continues because there were nine bills, passed by the Senate and the House, that should have been sent to the governor for her signature in January. The current House leadership has refused to do so, despite a court order. So far, no consequences have followed the court order, so the stalemate continues. Republicans are considering an appeal. The nine bills fall into four categories: museums' ability to propose millages, corrections officer retirement

changes, debt collection prohibitions for those on public assistance, and health care limits for retirees.

The presenter recommended the following website for a wealth of information on good government and training opportunities-you can access at this [link](#).

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.

LWVGP Board through June 30, 2025

Executive Board (Elected)

- President: Lynne Pierce
- 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): Marge Freundl
- 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: Vicki Granger

Voter Newsletter Co-editors: Judy Florian and Vicki Granger

Nominating Committee: Vicki Granger (chair), Anastasia Koutsopoulos, Diana Domin 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: lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com

Website: lwvgrossepointe.org

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

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

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