

*The Voter Newsletter*  
**December 2025**

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

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**Calendar**

**December 3:** Deadline for *Suffs* Interest Form

**December 5:** Last day to RSVP for Dec. 9 Holiday Party

**December 9:** Holiday Party, Melissa Levasseur host, 7 p.m.

**January 19:** Day of Hope and Advocacy, GP Congregational Church, 12-5 p.m.

**January 20:** LWVGP Board Meeting, GP Memorial Church, 7 p.m.

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**President's Message**

Greetings, Folks!

The elections are over and the results are in. At the local level, we have several newly elected officials. As usual, our Voter Services Team did a great job, with our VP of Voter Services, Sue Acton, leading the group. We provided candidate forums for all the local elections, except one, and conducted an informational forum on the GP Public Schools bond proposal.

We were unable to do a candidate forum for the Grosse Pointe Farms mayoral race because one of the candidates refused to participate in the forum. Under League rules, we do not hold an “empty chair” forum. Therefore, the other candidate was unable to express his views, and the citizens of Grosse Pointe Farms were left without an opportunity to hear from the candidates.

When challenged by a reporter on why he didn't participate, he blamed the League as being “biased” toward particular candidates. THIS IS BLATANTLY UNTRUE! Our League is a trusted source for providing open, unbiased forums for voters to hear from their candidates. We have been providing this service to the community for decades and many people rely on our forums to inform them of candidates' positions.

Critics of the League expressed their concern that we take positions on certain issues. They used this to support their claim that we aren't really nonpartisan. They confuse nonpartisanship with “neutral.” We are always nonpartisan: we



never support a candidate or a political party. We are not neutral on issues for which we have an advocacy position. Whether on the national, state, or local level, we publish our positions for all to read. Many of our positions have been there for decades. As a local League, we are free to publicly support any national or state position, or we can remain silent if we don't agree.

Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season. I hope to see you at our holiday event!

Lynne

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### **Last chance to sign up for our Annual Holiday Party!**

Don't forget! Come celebrate the season with us at our annual holiday gathering — a warm and festive evening for all members!



#### **WHEN and WHERE**

- Tuesday, December 9, 7-9 pm
- Home of Melissa Levasseur, 802 Pemberton, Grosse Pointe Park
- Drinks will be provided

#### **WHAT to BRING**

- **Yourself!** - not optional!
- **Optional** - bring a savory appetizer or dessert (8 servings)
- **Optional** - cookie exchange - bring one, get one!
- **Optional** - a holiday craft raffle (value up to \$15) of a homemade item for a silent auction - proceeds to a local food bank

Please complete the reservation form at this [link](#) no later than **December 5th**.

We look forward to celebrating the season together!

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### **Voter Services Update**

Our League has a long tradition of supporting democracy in many ways, both pre and post election. Thanks to the following members who served in these roles.

#### **Election Day**

At least nine of our members worked on or before Election Day as Election Inspectors and on Absentee Voter Ballot Counting boards.

These included Sue Acton, Kathy Cernok, Diana Domin, Judy Florian, Lauri Kingsbury, Loren Mannino, Liz Martin, Deb Sloss, Steve Trowbridge, and Mary Zahler.

If you worked on Election Day, please complete the LWVMI Election Worker Survey at this [link](#).

## Canvassing

The Wayne County Board of Canvassers meets for about two weeks following the election to review the poll books and vote counts. We have trained observers who work shifts of two hours to give early notice to LWVMI and their partners about anything out of the ordinary.

Many thanks to the following members of our League who joined this effort: Sue Acton, Holly Cory, Diana Domin, Dawn Drozd, Judy Florian, Judy Masserang, and Kathy Rogers.

We believe this role will be even more important for the 2026 midterm elections and strongly encourage our members to plan to participate next year.

### **Congratulations to our LWVGP Members who were re-elected in their respective communities:**

- Valerie Kindle - Mayor - Harper Woods
- Michele Hodges - Mayor - Grosse Pointe Park
- Sheila Tomkowiak - Mayor - Grosse Pointe
- Maureen Juip - Council Member -Grosse Pointe
- Vicki Granger - Council Member - Grosse Pointe Woods

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### **Member Spotlight: Liz Martin**



Liz Martin is a lifelong Eastsider who now resides in Grosse Pointe Farms with her husband—and fellow LWVGP member—Loren Mannino, and their dog Chi Chi, a rescue from GPAAS. She also has two adult stepchildren.

Her interest in history, government, women’s rights, and politics took root early. Liz’s father was a WWII veteran, and both of her parents were career civil servants—an example she believes helped shape her own passions. Encouraged by her mother to be a “joiner,” Liz became active in Girl Scouts, student council, and school newspapers, and attended public

schools for most of her education.

Liz earned a B.A. in History from the University of Michigan and a J.D. from Detroit College of Law. Her legal career began at UAW Legal Services, where she was hired by current LWVGP President Lynne Pierce—and where she also met her husband. Years later, Lynne officiated their wedding. After eight years with the UAW, Liz spent 14 years in private practice before concluding her career with a decade in government service, writing decisions for Administrative Law Judges at the Social Security

Administration's Detroit hearing office.

Liz joined the League following a convergence of factors: her retirement, the events of January 6, 2021, and Lynne Pierce's first term as LWVGP President. In addition to her leadership in the Observer Corps, she has helped develop questions for candidate forums, recruit new members, and has served as an election inspector in Grosse Pointe Farms.

Liz sees the League's history—and its mission of Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy—as a natural match for her lifelong interests and professional background.

Asked what first drew her to direct the League's Observer Corps, Liz offered a smile and said,

"I had no idea what the OC was, but Lynne and Sue Acton decreed that I was the new co-chair, and the rest is history!"

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### **Suffs at the Fisher Theater April 14-26, 2026**

Suffs is a Tony Award-winning musical by Shaina Taub about the American women who fought for the right to vote, focusing on the leaders and activists of the suffrage movement. The show explores the internal conflicts within the movement, such as the tension between different leaders like **Alice Paul** and **Carrie Chapman Catt**, and the crucial, often excluded, struggle to include Black suffragists like **Ida B. Wells**. The musical is described as bold, entertaining, inspiring, and a relevant exploration of the challenges, triumphs, and moral complexities of fighting for equality and social change.



We'd like to reserve a block of tickets for a group of League members to attend. We can get a discount if we have at least 10 people. If you're interested, please complete the form at this [link](#) no later than **December 3rd**.

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### **Advocacy**

The Michigan Library Association named State Representatives Carol Glanville, 84th district, and Veronica Paiz, 10th District, "Legislators of the Year" for "their leadership in introducing and championing Michigan's Freedom to Read Act." See related article at this [link](#).

**Federal Court Permanently Blocks Show-Your-Papers Requirement**, a provision of an Executive Order earlier this year. See the LWVUS press release, October 31, 2025 at this [link](#).

## Participation in LWVMI Election Law Study Group

The third meeting of the LWVMI study group was held on November 17 to examine existing advocacy position, Election Law. Discussion centered around preliminary studies of the various primary election methods throughout the country. Lauri Kingsbury, Carol Lufburrow, and Joanne Swanson represent LWVGP.

L. Kingsbury made public comments on LWVMI's support of the Freedom to Read bill at the Harper Woods Public Library Trustees meeting on November 20, 2025.

## Digital Compliance

**ADA digital compliance** ensures that digital content, such as websites and applications, is accessible to people with disabilities: those with vision, hearing, motor, and/or cognitive impairments.

### Key Elements of ADA Digital Compliance

**Perceivable:** Content must be accessible to the senses; this includes adding alt text for images for visually impaired users.

**Operable:** Interfaces should be navigable using a keyboard, not just a mouse, to assist users with motor impairments. **Understandable:** Information should be readable and predictable, using simple language and consistent navigation.

**Robust:** Digital content must be compatible with various assistive technologies, especially screen readers. Read more on our [website blog](#).

## MLK Day Event

The Grosse Pointe Congregational Church will hold a community event, *The Day of Hope and Advocacy*, to honor the life and legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

- Monday, January 19, 2026, 12-5 p.m.
- Grosse Pointe Congregational Church, 240 Chalfonte, Grosse Pointe
- Farms

This event will bring together neighbors of all ages to celebrate the spirit of Dr. King through art, music, open mic sessions, yoga, and a community chili potluck.

LWVGP will have a table with League information. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage in open conversations with local political candidates to discuss equality, justice, and community growth.

We encourage members to attend. Questions about the event can be sent to Lauri Kingsbury, Advocacy Director at [lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com](mailto:lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com).

**Latest Advocacy Positions - [Check the blog post!](#)**

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**LWVGP Observer Corps Mentors Macomb County League**



On November 13, Liz Martin and Lauri Kingsbury drove to the Clinton-Macomb Public Library's South Branch in Clinton Township. Six Macomb members attended, arriving 30 minutes early for the seminar! Participants are pictured above (left to right: Nanette Noorbakhsh, Kathy Poore, Shelly Lotocki, Debbie Griffith, Liz Martin, Lauri Kingsbury, Connie Wolf Hornok).

- Lauri outlined parliamentary procedure, the Open Meetings Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act with emphasis on polling places, and a "bare bones" synopsis of League advocacy.
- Liz reviewed Observer Corps procedures, including an example of a "gold standard" report from one of our own - names and identifying information redacted of course.

Great questions and lively discussion went on for more than two hours. We were the last group to leave after the library had closed at 9 p.m.

The Macomb County League will assign trained Observers in Chesterfield Township and Sterling Heights - a great start for a local League that serves the entire county. Congratulations, Macomb County LWV!

As a side note, the Macomb League grew out of the Grosse Pointe League in 2015, with a small group meeting twice a month at the Mt. Clemens library. LWV Grosse Pointe mentored them from the start. Macomb continued to participate in LWVGP's candidate forums, implemented VOTE411 and conducted outreach efforts at high schools. With LWVGP's guidance, the Macomb League grew steadily and earned Member At-Large status in 2017. The mentorship continued with this Observer Corps training!

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### **Thanking Barbara McQuade for Celebrating With Us**

The League of Women Voters of Grosse Pointe extended our sincere appreciation to Barbara McQuade for joining us at our 75th Anniversary celebration.

In recognition of her presentation and support, a group of League members traveled to Ann Arbor to present Ms. McQuade with a special gift: a handmade quilt created by member and talented quilter Melissa Levasseur. The quilt contained the following label:

*Thank you, Barbara McQuade, for celebrating the League of Women Voters, Grosse Pointe's 75th Anniversary! October 5, 2025. Sewn by Melissa Levasseur.*

Ms. McQuade was genuinely appreciative of the gesture, and we are grateful for the time she shared with us—both at the celebration and in welcoming our members to Ann Arbor.

A very special thanks to Melissa Levasseur for donating her lovely quilt!



Barbara McQuade reads the quilt label.



League members, left to right: Melissa Levasseur, Lynne Pierce, Marge Freundl and Judy Florian present the quilt to Barbara McQuade who is second from left.

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### **Unite and Rise 8.5 - Part Three: Building Power Through Partnerships**

Unite and Rise, a campaign by LWV nationally, has moved into its third phase: Building Partnerships.

What this means for us in LWVGP is simply to partner with other community organizations when we have a common interest. These partnerships may be as simple as presenting a shared program or sharing a table at a community event.

We have partnered in the past with the AAUW Grosse Pointe Chapter, Soroptomists of Grosse Pointe, the Grosse Pointe Public Library, the Grosse Pointe Rotary, and with other local Leagues for candidate forums and programs.

We would like to expand our outreach efforts as we head toward the 2026 elections and look to engage an additional 8.5 million voters.

If you are a member of a local organization that could be a potential partner for programs, shared tables at local events, and coalition activities, please let us know NOW! We are nonpartisan so not every organization is a potential partner. For example, a partisan political club may host us for a program, but we wouldn't

consider that group a partner.

I am really excited about this phase of Unite and Rise. For the first two efforts, we were already the "varsity on the field" and had accomplished almost everything national called for: increased membership, voter registration and outreach, programs. We are one of the largest leagues in the state, with the largest Observer Corps, and have MORE THAN HALF of our members engaged in Voter Service activities. We have so very much to be proud of!

And we want to build sustainable lasting partnerships to deepen our impact.

Contact me through [lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com](mailto:lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com) with the subject line Community Partner, and help build our list.

Vicki Granger  
LWVGP Unite and Rise 8.5 Chair

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## Membership News

We currently have 172 members and are very pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Lynne Aldrich, Grosse Pointe Woods
- Kathleen Britton, Grosse Pointe Farms
- Clara Dixon, Grosse Pointe
- Christina Pitts, Grosse Pointe Woods
- Carla Teagan, Grosse Pointe Park
- Michelle Thomas, Grosse Pointe Park

We believe that this is our highest number of members in the last 40 years!

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## LWVGP Board through June 30, 2026

### Executive Board (Elected)

- President: Lynne Pierce
- Vice President Programs: Vacant
- Vice President Voter Services: Sue Acton
- Secretary: Ruth Hoover
- Treasurer: Carol Lufburrow

### On-Board Directors (Elected)

- Acting Director (Programs): Kathy Rogers
- Director (Voter Services): Holly Cory
- Director (Membership): Catherine Dumke
- Director (Membership): Judy Masserang
- 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: Martha Hutting
- 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: Raymond Andary
- Webmaster: Vicki Granger
- Voter Newsletter Co-editors: Judy Florian and Vicki Granger

**Nominating Committee:** Diana Domin (Chair), Kathy Cernok and Gerianne LaPratt (Members)

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

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

**LWVGP on YouTube - no subscription necessary**  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCloWa1Hw9PPhDvUY\\_2SB30w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCloWa1Hw9PPhDvUY_2SB30w)

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