

The Voter Newsletter February 2026

75 Years of Serving the communities of
Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park,
Grosse Pointe Shores, Grosse Pointe Woods, and Harper Woods

Calendar

February 5: Observer Corps 2nd Quarterly Meeting, GP Central Library, 7 p.m.

February 5: Disinformation Program: Macomb County LWV, 7 p.m. Speaker: Barbara McQuade. Register [here](#).

February 11: Program Planning Meeting, GP Woods Comm. Center, 6-8 p.m. (see article below). February LWVGP Board meeting at 5 p.m.

March 4: Voter Registration at University Liggett High School, 9:45 am -1:30 p.m.

March 17: LWVGP Board Meeting, 5 p.m., GP Woods Comm. Center

March 23: Program: *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Women's Suffrage, and the Legacy of the 19th Amendment*, 1 p.m. (see article below)

April 6: New Member Orientation, Home of Judy Masserang, 7 p.m.

May 1: Voter Registration at Grosse Pointe North High School, 7:45 a.m-12:45 p.m.

May 30: Annual meeting, *details to follow*

President's Message

Happy New Year Folks!

I hope you all had a good holiday break! Now it's time to get back to work! Our democracy continues to face daily challenges, and many Americans have lost faith in the election process. The current administration continues to use deflection, distraction, and misinformation to attack our treasured democratic systems. This makes our work more important than ever!

Unfortunately, it isn't just the current administrative policies that are the problem. There is an overwhelming concern by our citizens that they can no longer trust the government. This problem is not going to disappear after the next election cycle. We need to work toward restoring our faith in elections and our government. This is not a partisan issue! There is distrust and fear on both sides. We must find common ground to fix this!



LWVUS has made coalition-building a priority. Since its founding, the League has supported the United Nations and maintains Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Status, allowing participation in UN meetings and initiatives. Nationally, we also partner with organizations such as the Girl Scouts of the USA, the Interfaith Alliance, the American Library Association, and Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), among many others.

Here in Michigan, LWVMI works in partnership with a broad range of organizations, including American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Healing Our Waters–Great Lakes Coalition, Detroit Disability Power, End Gun Violence Michigan, Michigan Climate Action Network, Michigan Voices, National Popular Vote, Promote the Vote Michigan, Voting Access for All, and many more dedicated to protecting our environment, health, and democratic processes.

What can we do locally, beyond the strong work we already do? This year, our focus will be on building coalitions with other nonpartisan groups so we can use our resources more effectively. There truly is power in numbers, and by working together, we can address the bigger picture—not just our own corner of it.

To that end, we will hold our annual **Program Planning Meeting on Wednesday, February 11, at the Grosse Pointe Woods Community Center**. This will be a working meeting focused on outreach and collaboration. We will also review the proposed LWVUS 2026–28 campaign, *Women Defend Democracy: Democracy Under Siege*, which centers on six key areas: Voting Rights, Election Protection, Redistricting, Individual Liberties, Immigration, and the Presidency. Our goal is to decide if we support this campaign and if we have other issues we want to recommend.

I hope you will join us for this important meeting. Your ideas, energy, and involvement are essential as we plan for the year ahead! I look forward to seeing you soon.

Lynne Pierce, President

Program Planning Meeting on February 11

Our Annual Program Planning Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 11 at the Grosse Pointe Woods Community Center, 20025 Mack Avenue, GPW.

This year's meeting will begin at 6 pm. with a bring-your-own dinner and social hour—coffee, tea, water and dessert will be provided.

The planning meeting will begin promptly at 7 pm.

So—grab a carryout from one of our many local favorites—or bring your own—and join us for good company and a great opportunity to help shape this year's League activities.

There is no charge to attend. Please complete the RSVP form at this [link](#) so we have a headcount of attendees.

Questions? Contact Kathy Rogers at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com. Put Program Planning in the subject line.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Voter Services Update

After Wayne County certified the November election results, a recount was requested in the Hamtramck mayoral race, where the leading candidate was ahead by 6 votes. The Wayne County Board of Canvassers conducted the recount on December 2. In the end, the challenge was unsuccessful, and the final results showed an 11-vote margin. Thanks to LWVGP members, Sue Acton, Dawn Drozd and Judy Florian for observing the recount.

Special thanks to Holly Cory, Director of Voter Services, for her great work in updating our Your Government Officials (YGO) brochure. A total of 6,000 copies are on order. Voter Services will host a bundling party on Friday, February 6, 9:30 am, at Sue Acton's house. To participate, sign up at this [link](#).

Voter Registration dates have been scheduled at University Liggett (March 4, 9:45-1:30 pm.) and Grosse Pointe North (May 1, 7:45-12:45 p.m.). We will need volunteers. A link to sign up will be available at a later date.

Holiday Party A Great Success!

Over 40 people attended our holiday party on December 9. A very special thanks to Melissa Levasseur for hosting this event and to Kathy Rogers, Program Director and committee members Carol Bendure, Diana Domin, Catherine Dumke, Wilhelmina Giblin, Mary Jo Johnson, Geri LaPratt, Erin O'Meara, Deb Sloss, Joanne Swanson, Deb Voorhees, and Mary Zahler for their hard work to make it a success!

Here's [a link to our blog](#) with pictures of the festive event!

Member Spotlight: Mary Jo Johnson



A graduate of the University of Michigan with a degree in social science, Mary Jo grew up in Dearborn, where her family's roots run deep—her great-great-grandfather was among the city's founders. Some of her fondest memories are of time spent on her grandparents' farm, an experience that shaped her lifelong interest in community and civic life.

After beginning her career in education, Mary Jo taught at Grosse Pointe Academy and, following her retirement, continued teaching geography at Baker College. Her professional life also included teaching civics, American history, and social

studies, subjects that reflected her enduring interest in politics and public affairs.

Marriage eventually brought Mary Jo to Grosse Pointe Farms. She has two sons and three grandchildren.

Mary Jo loves traveling with family and friends, on her own, and abroad. Ireland and Spain have been particular favorites, along with a meaningful experience in Kenya, where she joined three friends to support teacher professional development at St. Clare Girls School in Meru.

Mary Jo joined the League of Women Voters in 2013—drawn by a lifelong interest in politics and a love of reading about public affairs—inherited from both sides of her Irish family. While teaching, she was unaware of the League and doubts she would have had time to participate back then. Joining later in life, however, felt like a natural next step.

“It felt like I had found my people,” she said. At the encouragement of Tom Wells, she became secretary and attended the 2016 League convention in Washington, D.C., where she participated in lobbying efforts. She describes being inspired by the League’s mission and energized by the presence of so many knowledgeable, engaged women working together on political activism.

Over the years, Mary Jo has served on the Nominating Committee and the Diversity Committee alongside Wilhelmina Giblin, experiences she recalls fondly. She also participated in the Program Committee and is currently active on the Membership Committee. She has worked on petition efforts for the Michiganders for Money Out of Politics with Laura Larson and recently joined the Youth Outreach Committee, where she is eager to contribute new ideas.

What Mary Jo values most about League work is the interaction with other members and the intellectual stimulation it provides. “I’m constantly exposed to women doing incredible things,” she said. She especially enjoys the educational aspect of candidate forums and sees League involvement as a natural continuation of her work as an educator. After stepping away from classroom teaching, she found that the League offered “the next step”—a meaningful way to stay engaged, informed, and active in civic life.

January 2026 Board Meeting Highlights

The Board of Directors met on January 21, with the following highlights to report.

The 57th Biennial LWVUS National Convention will be held June 25-28 at the Hilton Columbus in Ohio. The theme is: *Women Unite and Rise*. LWVGP can send up to four delegates. If you are interested in attending, contact Lynne Pierce at lwvgrossepointe@gmail.com (put National Convention in the subject line).

Observer Corps:

- **Grosse Pointe Public Library Trustees Meeting:** A new audio system, which LWVGP OC member Marge Freundl was invited to test prior to the

Library's purchase, works well. The new system includes assistive listening devices (headsets)

- **Harper Woods Public Library Trustees Meeting:** Laura McCourt. LWVGP OC member noted, "It has been a pleasure to observe this group during 2025 and see so many positive changes."
- **Special thanks to Andy Dervan,** LWVGP OC member at the Harper Woods School Board, for providing assistance to a board member on how to access the GPPSS meetings. Andy has also seen a great improvement on how their meetings are conducted.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Available funds: \$7,326.11. Retained Earnings: \$25,975.89.

The following motions were approved.

- To pay expenditures as detailed in the Treasurer's Report
- To pay all off-line expenses as detailed in the Treasurer's Report
- To send \$50 to LWVMI as a memorial donation in remembrance of Lifetime member Suzanne Suski, who passed away in August 2025.
- To donate \$525 (raised during the silent auction at the Holiday Party) to Forgotten Harvest with the designation that the funds go to the Harper Woods location, formerly known as Queen of Peace.
- That LWVGP begin the planning process to implement 501(c)(4) status

LWVGP Committee Meetings

Meetings of our committees are open to all members, so we hope you will consider joining one of these groups. Here is a schedule of two future meetings.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee

Monday, February 9, 7 pm, at the home of Marge Freundl. Contact Marge at this [link](#) for address.

Membership Committee

Tuesday, February 10, 2 p.m, at the home of Catherine Dumke. Contact Catherine at this [link](#) for address.

Know What You Sign Presentation on YouTube

There are many petitions being circulated in Michigan. To understand what these petitions mean, we encourage you to view the presentation on our YouTube channel. Here is the [link](#).

Know What You Sign!

When Signing a Ballot Proposal Petition



What is said in **PETITIONS** and about them, can be misleading and confusing. Be certain you know exactly what the ballot proposal will do and how it will affect you.

Use the QR code for information about the 2026 Ballot Proposals.



Call for Nominations!

The Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for the positions listed below. The terms of office are as follows: one-year term from 2026-27; two-year terms from 2026-28.

President-Elect (one-year term)
Vice President for Voter Services (two-year term)
Treasurer (two-year term)
Director of Membership (two-year term)
Nominating Committee Chair (one year term)
Nominating Committee Member (one-year term)

We are also still in need of a Vice President for Programs (one-year term). Please contact Diana Domin or Lynne Pierce if you are interested.

We would love to see some nominations of members who have not previously served on the board. These are all very important positions and the opportunity to serve on the board really deepens a member's experience with the League. Full job descriptions will be provided upon request. Members accepting a nomination must agree to serve for the designated term(s) and abide by the League's bylaws and policies.

If you are interested in serving or want to nominate a member, please contact any of the Nominating Committee Members at the emails below:

Chair: Diana Domin [email](#).



Know What's Happening With Your Michigan Legislature

Full details on viewing legislative sessions and more at this [link on our blog](#).

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Women's Suffrage, and the Legacy of the 19th Amendment *Virtual Program*

In celebration of Women's History Month, constitutional scholar Reva Siegel joins award-winning historian Ellen DuBois, author of *Elizabeth Cady Stanton: A Revolutionary Life*, to discuss the life, ideas, and legacy of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the decades-long struggle for women's suffrage. Thomas Donnelly, chief scholar of the National Constitution Center, moderates.

Monday, March 23, at 1 p.m.

Registration is free at this [link](#).



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

A lot is happening across the country as LWV local Leagues are establishing relationships with other groups in their communities. Hear more about the current efforts at our Program

Planning Meeting on February 11.

As President Lynne Pierce noted in her President's Message above: "What can we do locally, beyond the strong work we already do? This year, our focus will be on building coalitions with other nonpartisan groups so we can use our resources more effectively. There truly is power in numbers, and by working together, we can address the bigger picture—not just our own corner of it."

Vicki Granger
LWVGP Unite and Rise 8.5 Chair

Membership News

Membership currently stands at 175. We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Kathlyn Elsila, Grosse Pointe Park
- Angela Jones, Grosse Pointe Park

- Gail Mixa, Grosse Pointe Woods
- Molly McGrane-Cleary, Grosse Pointe Farms
- John Minnis, Burtchville Twp.

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)

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/UCloWa1Hw9PPhDvUY_2SB30w

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

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