

**EMPOWERING VOTERS
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY**



**THE
CAPITOL
VOTER**

**SEPTEMBER
2024**

IN THE SEPTEMBER CAPITOL VOTER

- President: Help Spread the Word on Early Voting
- Time to Renew Your League Membership
- Upcoming Program on Community Solar
- Vote For the Environment
- One Thing

LWVLA CALENDAR

Friday, October 21— LWVMI Environmental Network will host a presentation on “Community Solar in Michigan: Why We Need It and How We Can Get It.” 7 pm via Zoom.

See articles below for more information.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Kathy Ruby Petroni

Tuesday, September 17, was National Voter Registration Day, but to the Lansing League September is voter registration month! September is filled with voter registration events either

organized by us or where we played a role. Our most notable events included drives at Lansing Community College, East Lansing and Haslett High Schools, the Wilson Talent Center in Mason and the Grand Ledge Public Library. Thank you to all the members who have helped with our registration efforts; there are too many of you to list.



Our Lansing Area Voter Guide was completed and sent to the printer on September 20, all under the capable direction of Joanne Winkelman, our Voter Services Director. The work done by member Anna Scott was critical in collecting the content from the various candidates. Members Beth Moore and Kathy Lovell provided critical proofing. The Guide is posted to our website as a pdf and distributed as an insert to the City Pulse. Combined with the LWV of Michigan Voter Guide, it will be shared with over 50 different establishments across the tri-county area. Our League member volunteers are critical in this distribution. The information in the Guide is also available at VOTE411.org. Sadly, Clinton County races are scarcely covered in the guide because Clinton County no longer provides contact information for its candidates. We are hoping a solution can be found for future elections.

There is a proposed amendment to the City of East Lansing Charter that impacts local housing and rental regulations. Many East Lansing residents are seeking a better understanding of the proposed amendment. As a result, the Lansing League, in partnership with East Lansing Info (Eli), is hosting a program on the proposed amendment. The program will include a speaker in favor of the amendment and a speaker against the amendment, explaining their stances and answering questions. The program will be recorded on October 4 without a live audience and the recording will be widely shared with the East Lansing community. League member, Jacqueline Stewart, will be the moderator while past-president, Donna Mullins, will record the program.

As the election draws near, please consider spreading the word on early voting. Many in the community are hesitant to embrace this option. For example, my husband, a League member, likes to vote on Election Day and is reluctant to vote early. To him, Election Day is a tradition. But I hope we can learn to rethink the notion of an election **day** as an “election period.” We should feel just as great putting our ballot into a tabulator during an election period as we do when we do it on a given Election Day. Voting prior to the final day protects us from unknowns that may prevent us from getting to the polls on Election Day. So, please, have this conversation with family and friends and let’s see if we can get more people to take advantage of the extended election period. Details on locations, dates, and hours can be found at <https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/Voter/Index#early-voting-search-section>.

To help spread the word about early voting, the Lansing League is going to be participating in a text banking program supported by the Michigan League in mid-October. Please look out for a message from us on Constant Contact with details for volunteering. The texts are not sent via a cell phone but rather via the internet.

Let’s get out the vote as the countdown to the election begins,
Kathy

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Camilla Davis, Membership Chair

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Katherine Crips, Lansing
Diane Holley, Lansing
Mary Lee Kimball, St. Johns
Thomas Petroni, Haslett
Meenakshi Simmons, Lansing
Tina Stojakovich, Okemos
Maria Wawro, Holt

IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

If you joined the League of Women Voters **before February 1, 2024**, it's time to renew your membership.

There are two ways to pay your dues.

#1 Join Online by using the link below and your credit card or PayPal account:

1. Scroll down to "How Do I Join?"
2. Choose the type of membership from the drop-down menu. Provide a second name if you choose household.
3. Indicate it is a renewal.
4. Click the "Pay Now" button below.
5. There are fees we must pay when online payment is used. Please consider leaving a "tip."

[Use this link for paying your dues](#)

#2 Download this [form](#), fill it out, and send a check for the correct amount to:

League of Women Voters of the Lansing Area
P.O. Box 971
East Lansing, MI 48826

If you have any questions, including asking about your join date, please email [Camilla](#). (Members who joined after February 1, 2024 will not receive renewal information.)



UPCOMING PROGRAM ON COMMUNITY SOLAR



On Oct. 21, the LWVMI Environmental Network will host a presentation on "Community Solar in Michigan: Why We Need It and How We Can Get It." Community Solar programs allow everyone to participate in the benefits of renewable energy, even renters and people who can't afford to install solar panels. They'll also examine other ways of taking advantage of renewable energy to save money and fight climate change.

The program will take place via Zoom at 7 p.m. [Register here](#) for the link. You can also contact [Sandy Sorini Elser](#) for further information.

VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
Ellen Link, EAG Co-chair

Very soon we will all, presumably, be voting in perhaps the most important election of our time. As you have probably been admonished or done so to others, you should “make a plan,” i.e., do whatever research required to ensure you end up voting only for those candidates who align with your values and/or philosophy.

The issues that will affect your choices are many: gun control, women’s rights over their own bodies, climate action, equal rights under the law, health care—the list could be endless. Your choices, then, will rest on your priorities. The LWVLA’s Environmental Advocacy Group hopes you will put protection of the environment—which is addressed in positions and actions taken by local, [state](#) and the [national](#) Leagues—at the top of your list by choosing those candidates who make the environment *their* priority. Why?

Without a sustainable environment, nothing else will matter. Those species (mostly human) and populations that have access to clean/ drinkable water and breathable air may survive—but only until they, too, lose access. To protect the environment and all that resides within it is to acknowledge the needs and rights of all who inhabit the planet, from mosses and trees to bees and butterflies to humans. Even if you think you can live on this planet without those other species (I can’t think of anything sadder), you can’t: without the myriad interactions between animals and plants, our environment and the planet which has always sustained us will crumble. And technology is not a silver bullet for this dilemma.

Climate change is real and is not going away. This past summer was the hottest ever on earth, surpassing last year’s record. Erratic and powerful storms will continue and ramp up, millions more species will go extinct, heat waves will intensify, and so on. What are we waiting for? Now is not the time to give up or walk away and hope that someone else will tackle it. Yet it does seem that people become inured to repeated tragedies, be they school shootings or catastrophic weather events. When little if anything happens to address these threats, especially by our elected leaders, it’s easy to feel powerless and defeated.

That’s why we need to elect individuals with vision and, when possible, proven records of working to confront the climate crisis. (Online searches for environmental records and endorsements will help.) The kinds of people who would pass a bottle bill, reform solid waste laws, or create legislation to regulate contaminants in water like PFAS. People who want to ensure that our children and grandchildren inherit a livable planet.

Efforts on behalf of the environment have been taking place every day, by individuals, governments, even businesses, slowly and often with difficulty but incrementally, and they’re having an effect. We need to support this in any and every way we can. You can join others in the cause. The League of Women Voters U.S., having declared climate change a key priority at the 2020 Annual Convention, initiated a [Climate Interest Group](#) open to all League members interested in working on climate action. Do what you can. Do it with your votes.

Find out when your state Representative and/or Senator is holding a coffee and attend, and ask if he/she believes in climate change and how they plan to address the consequences.

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK

All committees would welcome new members. Contact the chairs for more information.

VOTER SERVICE: Contact [Joanne Winkelman](#)

K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Contact [Bettie Landauer-Menchik](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE: Contact [Linda Melaragni](#)

ENVIRONMENT ADVOCACY GROUP: Contact [Ellen Link](#) or [Elaine Dierwa Fischhoff](#)

League of Women Voters Lansing Area | PO Box 971 | East Lansing, MI 48826 US

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