



The Voter

A publication of the League of Women Voters
of Dearborn – Dearborn Heights

120 N. Military, Dearborn, MI 48124 313-278-6476

www.lwvddh.org

January 2016



Money in Politics: Consensus Meeting

Saturday, January 23, 10 am- 12 noon

1st Floor Parlor, Christ Episcopal Church, 120 N. Military, Dearborn 48124

Questions were included in the December Voter and are repeated at the end of this Voter. They are also available on the League of Women Voters - United States website www.lwv.org

Come early for refreshments!

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We maintain an office at Christ Episcopal Church, 120 N. Military, Dearborn 48124.

The League of Women Voters is a national, nonpartisan political organization which encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership is open to men and women citizens of voting age. For information go to www.lwvddh.org or call 313-278-6476.



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President's Message - Betsy Cushman

2016 will be one of the most important years in our American history, and the League of Women Voters is needed as perhaps never before.

National political messages will continue to bombard the corporate media with accusations and counter accusations, sensationalizing policy issues as well as tragic events rooted in poverty and racism. Quietly the traditional markers of democracy are being challenged by secret money, voter suppression in a variety of forms, and gerrymandering. Our public education, the foundation of a democratic society, the schools and teachers, are being painfully challenged in new ways. International issues, infrastructure on roads and bridges, power grids, municipal and county needs will get little attention unless there is a catastrophe or a scandal.

A few days after I write this, I expect Michigan's enactment of undemocratic legislation which would silence the government for 60 days prior to an election, ensuring that wealthy voices with a special interest will control the messaging. The People of Michigan have twice voted to keep the option of voting a Straight-Party Ballot while other states have eliminated this option. Yet the Michigan Legislature voted to eliminate this possibility; making it a decree by attaching a large dollar appropriation so that it cannot be challenged by a vote of the People. Without a major expenditure to educate the public, provide more voting booths and more workers, the possibility of long lines and long waits in a Presidential Election year is almost guaranteed.

How will the People respond to these challenges? ***The League of Women Voters is a national non-partisan political organization which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose political parties or candidates.***

I don't know any better group than the League of Women Voters for studying up on the issues (currently Money in Politics) and educating the people about their elected officials (Who's Who), about the issues and candidates on the ballot (VOTE411.org) (Candidate & Issue Forums). We are one of the best groups for registering high school students to vote (Youth Voter Registration Project).

You are needed; your time, your skill, your voice of reason as well as your passion. Please look for the opportunities in this Voter and come to the meeting, or email if you can't come but want to help. Or leave a message on the League phone 313-278-6476. We need to respond to these challenges!

Thank you to all have responded to our request for donations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Monday, January 11, 7 pm:** Betsy's house. Organizational meeting for the 2016 Who's Who List of Elected Officials. Word document. Checking every fact and update; gathering information. Email or call betsy.cushman@gmail.com or 313-565-5972. Must be completed by February 1. If you don't do Word documents, can you help with distribution in February?
- **Saturday, January 23, 10 am- 12 noon:** 1st Floor Parlor at Christ Episcopal Church, 120 N. Military, Dearborn: National Consensus on *Money in Politics*. See the questions in this Voter. This meeting is to discuss and reach consensus, if possible, on our Local League's answers to specific questions. Resource materials have been provided on the www.lwv.org website. Every member is welcome.
- **Monday, February 15, 6:30 – 8:30 pm:** (location to be determined) Celebrate 96 Years of the League of Women Voters! A gathering open to all members and prospective members will be held to discuss Local and National Program Planning. What will we study and which issues will we act on locally? This is discussion with a purpose: to recommend to the full membership what local issue we should adopt at the Annual Meeting; and what national issue the League should adopt at the National Convention in June in Washington DC. What is the unique role that our League can perform in 2016 and who can help?

We are very pleased that we have hired an independent contractor, a new student at Henry Ford College named Fatima Nkata, to assist with special projects. She is helping with donor Thank You notes at the moment, but will be available to help with other needs as well.

**Thank you to Mona and Abed Hammoud, and to Chris Sullivan-Rathwell for a great 2015 December Pot Luck, and to all who brought food and attended.
What a fun afternoon!**

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