



# The Voter Newsletter

November 2011

published by LWV Dearborn-Dearborn Hts

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

[www.lwvddh.org](http://www.lwvddh.org)

After the right to vote was established for American women, in 1920, the League of Women Voters worked to inform the influx of new voters. LWV has since become a resource for ALL voters. Men and women with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints rely on our non-partisan candidate guides and forums as well as our well-studied positions on local, state and national issues.



## Privatization Study

**Roundtable**  
**with the League**

**Thursday**  
**Nov 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**@ 7pm**



Consider the potential benefits and problems in the trend towards privatizing government services and help develop our 'consensus'. Consensus is a grassroots method in which Leagues across the country direct LWV US on a nationwide position.

Positions authorize local and state leagues to advocate on issues as a league. Find links to LWV Positions and other 'Resources' at [lwvddh.blogspot.com](http://lwvddh.blogspot.com).

According to Answers.com<sup>1</sup>, privatization is a process in which 'responsibility for a service is transferred from the public sector to the private sector', although this can be a shared responsibility.

Privatization may promise lower costs, but what is cut and what should be protected? What pitfalls should be considered and how can they be avoided? Are some things better off left in public hands, while others are ideal for privatizing? We'll talk about it on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>!

1 <http://www.answers.com/topic/privatization>

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## Protecting the Health of Our Families through Clean Air Policies

Tuesday, November 15

4:00 to 5:30 pm

at the

University of Michigan-Dearborn,

Environmental Interpretive Center.

### Elisabeth MacNamara

President, League of Women Voters of the US

### Sue Smith

President, League of Women Voters of Michigan

### Pam Ortner

Michigan Nurse Advocate, Health Care Without Harm

Clean air policies are some of the most successful governmental initiatives in our history. They provide strong public health protections that have saved hundreds of thousands of American lives and prevented countless asthma attacks, heart attacks, premature deaths and other pollution-related illnesses. Our air is safer now but not safe enough for the most vulnerable in our communities. **In Michigan, nearly 1,000,000 people suffer from asthma, including more than 225,000 children.**

National League President Elisabeth MacNamara will speak about the promise of the Clean Air Act and attempts to roll back its public health protections, joined by speakers Sue Smith, LWVMI President, and Pam Ortner, Michigan Nurse Advocate with Health Care Without Harm.

While in Michigan, MacNamara will also meet with members of the State's congressional delegation as well as talk to the media, League members and concerned citizens about protecting the Clean Air Act and public health.

**This event is open to the public and a reception will be held following the program.**

**MEMBERSHIP**

Open to any U.S. citizen.  
Dues are \$60 per year payable  
July 1st to LWVDDH.

Print and mail membership  
form as well as online payment  
is available on our website,  
[www.lwvddh.org](http://www.lwvddh.org)

**MEETINGS**

Many of our meetings are held  
at Christ Episcopal Church,  
host to the local league office:  
120 N. Military at Cherry  
Hill, Dearborn, MI.

**Handicap Accessible.**

Check our online calendar to  
confirm location and details  
for upcoming events,  
or contact our office  
by phone/email.

**LWVDDH OFFICE**

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

The LWV, a non-partisan  
political organization,  
encourages the informed and  
active participation of  
people in government, works  
to increase understanding of  
major public policy issues,  
and influences public policy  
through education and  
advocacy.

“The Voter Newsletter” is included  
in membership. Others can  
subscribe for \$10 per year. We are  
also transitioning to an email alert  
for those who opt out of the printed  
newsletter. Contact us at 313-278-  
6476 or [lwvddh@mailcity.com](mailto:lwvddh@mailcity.com).

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Mary Bugeia**

Well, November is here and activities for elections are winding down, but there is no end to involvement in other projects. Thanks again to everyone who helped with the Forums and publishing the Voter Guides. The Guides were in demand and we had to print more. Many calls came into our League office asking questions about a "Headlee Amendment - over-ride" in Dearborn Heights, and how is the increase in millage calculated for homeowners in Dearborn and in Dearborn Heights.

Because I am also President of the LWV Detroit Metro Area, I received a request from citizens in Warren, Mi., to moderate a candidate forum on November 1st. It was a new experience to handle a forum for an unfamiliar area. Kathy Gapa was the time-keeper and Barbara Adams collected audience questions. Members from LWV Oakland Area helped make it happen- Judy Bateman shared moderating duties with me, and Karen DeGrendle greeted and instructed candidates. Others helped with screening questions. The people were appreciative, making it worthwhile.

November 9th the City of Dearborn is hosting a Senior Expo from 9 am to 12 noon. Our league will have a table to distribute "Who's Who of Elected Officials" and put a friendly face for LWV.

Friday, November 11th., Betsy Cushman, Judy Carty, Chris Sullivan, and I, will participate in the 8th annual Michigan Student Political Issues Convention hosted by Henry Ford Community College. Tony Perry PhD. Political Science, also a League member, does a wonderful job organizing this event. Elected officials will be attending to hear the students concerns.

Congratulations to our league. LWV-US is awarding us one of the \$1,000 grants for the "Youth Registration Project". Joe Borrajo and Betsy Cushman will be co-coordinators. Barbara Adams wrote the application and will be on the committee. Registration events will be conducted early next year.

On another exciting note, the LWV-US President Elizabeth MacNamara is coming to Michigan to promote the "Clean Air Promise". **Our league has been asked to help plan an event to host her visit in Dearborn on Tuesday, November 15th.** Tentative plans are for her to visit the Environmental Interpretive Center on the University of Michigan campus at 4:00 pm to 5:30pm. We will advise you by email with definite plans, so please make an effort to be included.

Our next study is of the "Privatization of Government Services" which will be presented on Thursday, November 17th. At first, it may not sound like a very interesting subject, however, committee members Jenni Dunn and Carolyn Buell are finding out that it may affect many of the services that we take for granted. Will those services always be available? Can a private company conduct tasks more efficiently? In some counties the library system has been delegated to a private agency. Help us decide which kinds of services should be maintained by government and which ones can be delegated to outside sources.

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*We look forward to seeing you at our events this month:  
November 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.*

## Voter Service Report

by Betsy Cushman, Committee Chair

Voters in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights appreciate the League of Women Voters in their towns, as demonstrated by the speed with which they picked up copies of the Voter Guides, and by the support shown by their respective city halls for taping and airing the League's candidate forums. Voters reading our ballot and candidate guides and watching the forums received non-partisan information, in the candidate's own words.



In all, there were 6 forums with frequent airings on the cable governmental access stations, as well as 4,000 voter guides printed. There were many references in the local newspapers and blogs to the League of Women Voters.

The 6 forums were: 4 on Sept. 28 at Dearborn Heights, the ballot issue, city clerk, city council and District 7 school board races. 2 on Oct. 4 at Dearborn, the school board race and the 3 ballot issues.

Many thanks go to all who helped make the voter guides and candidate forums possible, most especially Dennis Kirchoff, Judy Patrick, Jenni Dunn, Chris Sullivan, Judy Carty, Mary Bugeia, Carolyn Buell, Joe Borrajo, Susan Bennett, Pam Adams, Barb Adams and Kathy Gapa.



Talk about the election and other topics on our blog or facebook page:

LWVDDH Blog:

<http://lwvddh.blogspot.com/>

LWVDDH.org Facebook Page:

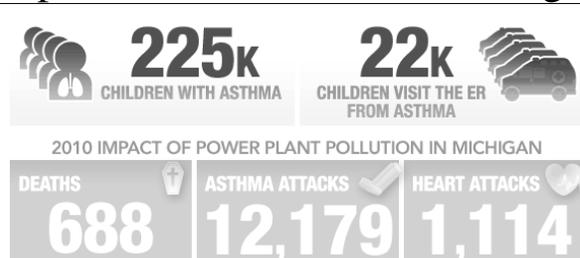
<http://www.facebook.com/lwvddh.org>

## Get the Facts

“For over 40 years, laws requiring power plants, factories, oil refineries, and other sources to reduce their air pollution have prevented countless asthma attacks, heart attacks, and early deaths. Updating these protections based on new scientific and public health information will save countless more. Some of these updates have been delayed by industry lobbying for more than 20 years. Unless we stand up and demand it, special interests and allied elected officials will make sure it never happens.”

<http://cleanairpromise.org/get-the-facts>

### Impact of Air Pollution in Michigan



<http://cleanairpromise.org/states/michigan>

### Air Pollutants in the Food Chain

Ozone and particulates irritate the respiratory tract and are most noted for triggering asthma attacks.

Mercury pollution on the other hand, accumulates through the food chain and causes neurological disorders and developmental problems.

Symptoms of mercury poisoning include lack of coordination, cognitive difficulties, muscle weakness, slurred speech etc.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/201111/mercury.aspx>



## Make the Clean Air Promise

***I Promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution.***

**Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths, *I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality.***

go to <http://cleanairpromise.org/>

### **Taking Action for Convenient Voting**

Betsy Cushman, Kathleen Gapa and Barbara Adams attended the subject workshop. It was held on October 12<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lansing Michigan. The workshop included a Welcome from Sue Smith, LWVMI President, opinion of convenient voting by Representative Jeff Irwin of the 53th District MI House of Representatives, issue background by Pat Donath,

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk gave a policy brief and provided background on elections and electorate registration. He is a vice president of the Michigan Municipal Clerks Assoc. They provide new city clerk training, consistency of city clerk practices and determine which voting legislation changes to support. He had a wealth of knowledge on this subject.

The next part of the workshop was Advocacy Training & Practice given by Jean Doss, of J. Doss Consulting, LLC. She was excellent. Jean taught us how to talk to our legislator on issues based on 5 of the 10 Commandments of Effective Advocacy. They are:

1. Education, do your homework. Come prepared.
2. Power is in the number of people. Be focused and united in goals
3. Be positive and polite.
4. Treat staff of legislators well or better than the legislator. They can get you a lot. They may know more about the subject.
5. Concise, be brief. Talk 20% and listen 80%. Ask questions.

We practiced these commandments by role-playing both participant and our legislator. This included introductions with a good firm handshake followed by prepared questions.

After a box lunch at the church, we walked across the street to the Capital. The LWVDDH members had it easier than the other league members because each legislator we met with sponsored a Convenient Voting bill. We met with Morris Hood who sponsored SB 49. He was very gracious. We asked how we could help. Since Senator Robertson controls the Senate bill hearings, he suggested contacting league members in Senator Robertson's district to ask them to help support the bill by contacting him since they are his constituents. He suggested we email/write to him also.

After this meeting, Senator Hood walked with us to the Capital where the League was introduced from the second floor gallery to the floor of the House of Representative. This was a high moment of our day!

Since we had an hour before our meeting with Representatives George Darany and Bob Constan, we walked around the State Capital building. The architecture is beautiful. The Governors portraits are on display. It was fascinating and beautifully restored. If you have not visited the Capital since it was restored, it is worth a trip. Tours are available.

At 2:30 we met with Rep. Darany and Constan. They co-sponsored bills HB 4520 and 4698. Once again these bills need hearings, which is controlled by Rep Lund. Again, we were asked to contact Rep. Lund and the League members in his district to ask for a hearing.

Our day was complete by 3:30pm and we drove home. Since this is an annual event, I encourage everyone to take the opportunity to participate in next year's workshop. It was well worth it!

## **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

### **Welcome new members!**

Nuzmeya Elder & Redwan Bahaa  
Donald L. Mack

Did you know that we are now accepting online payments for membership dues and donations? Going through PayPal makes it convenient to use a credit card. Go to [www.lwvddh.org](http://www.lwvddh.org).

For those who prefer mailing a check, printable donation and membership forms are also available. Go to <http://www.lwvddh.org/joinform.pdf>

### **Forms of Government:**

To understand the dysfunctional government that prevails in Washington today one must revisit a few definitions from old political science classes-

- Democracy-** A government by people: rule of the majority: government in which supreme power is vested in people.
- Republic-** A government having a chief of state who is not a monarch and who in modern times is usually a president
- Oligarchy-** A government in which a small group exercises control, especially for corrupt and selfish purposes.
- Plutocracy-** Government of wealthy: controlling class of rich men. (gender bias duly noted)

Definitions drawn from Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1990

**submitted by Joe Borrajo**



### **Recommended Reading:**

If you haven't had a school lunch lately, maybe you can just read about a teacher's experience eating lunch with her students for a year. She blogged about it anonymously as Mrs. Q before publishing her book, Fed up with Lunch.



Find out more at

<http://fedupwithlunch.com/>

Read about a study of school lunch and 6<sup>th</sup> graders in SE Michigan:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/08/health/research/08childhood.html>

## **TRANSPORTATION NEWS**

submitted by Carolyn Buell

I attended one of three public hearings on SMART last Thursday. There were at least 50 persons there, some with obvious disabilities. Several spoke about their dependence on bus lines that SMART is proposing to eliminate. I spoke on behalf of the LWVDMA with a message to maintain current level of service. I also questioned the reliability of DDOT since SMART passengers would have to switch to DDOT busses at certain times. SMART will review comments and implement the plan by December 15.

### **REGIONAL RAIL PROJECT**

SEMCOG, Southeastern Council of Governments has a transit plan that includes new stations, with shuttle service to Metro Airport. Commuters will



read, check the internet and relax instead of fighting traffic.

Traveling to Ann Arbor, Dearborn and Detroit for entertainment and business will be a breeze.

Nine passenger cars have been refurbished and all have new seats.

MDOT has an agreement with Norfolk Southern with plans for 3 roundtrips per day. Read more about it, with an interesting video and powerpoint here:

<http://www.semcog.org/AADD.aspx>. The Director of Transportation Programs at SEMCOG, Carmine Palombo, posts interesting news and updates at <http://www.semcog.org/TransportationBlog.aspx>.

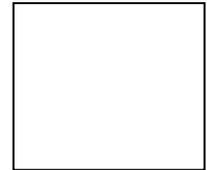
### **ROUGE RIVER - IMPROVEMENTS AHEAD?**

The Army Corp of Engineers has done an extensive study with emphasis on the environment regarding the removal of the concrete channel from Michigan Ave. to Rotunda. LWVDMA



sent a letter of support with a request to inform us when public hearings will be held. The plan includes removal of the concrete bank (not the submerged "V" channel) and expanding the banks to include wetlands. Stay tuned for further updates!

League of Women Voters  
Dearborn & Dearborn Heights  
120 N. Military  
Dearborn, MI 48124



### **Calendar of Events**

November 9: City Senior Expo  
November 9: Inter Service Club - luncheon  
November 11: HFCC Student Civic Conference  
**November 15: 4pm Clean Air Campaign**  
**November 17: 7pm Study Up! Privatization**  
November 19: Tapping the Power Workshop  
December 1: LWVDDH Board Mtg  
**December 11: Holiday Luncheon**

See inside this newsletter or  
check out our online calendar  
at [www.lwvddh.org](http://www.lwvddh.org) for more details

## **Politic Issues Convention at HFCC**

*Public Welcome*

Friday, Nov 11<sup>th</sup> 9:30am - 1pm

LWVDDH and Henry Ford Community College will be hosting the **8<sup>th</sup> annual Student Political Issues Convention** on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> from 9:30am to 1pm. This popular event is part of National Student Political Issues Week. The purpose is to help the students engage in the political process, presenting and discussing issues. Students will conduct workshops and reach consensus positions. They will present their positions to their local and state political officers. Bart Stupak will open the morning session, and Congressman Dingell will open the afternoon session. Other invitees are Mayor O'Reilly, Mayor Paletko, State Representatives George Darany, Bob Constan, State Senators and County Commissioners. **The public is welcome to attend.** The workshops and general sessions will be in the Mazzara Admin Bldg on the south side of HFCC campus. For more information go to <http://www.hfcc.edu/news/items/620>.  
submitted by Chris Sullivan