



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

November 2013

How Safe is our Food Supply?

A PUBLIC FORUM

Thursday, November 14, 2013, 7:00 p.m.

Fellowship Hall (basement) of Christ Episcopal Church
120 N. Military, Dearborn 48124 (convenient parking)

Come learn from a panel of experts about organics, GMOs, herbicides, pesticides, antibiotics, and food labeling. Make your personal food choices based upon information.



Jim Zook Executive Director, Michigan Corn Growers Association

Jim was born and raised on his family's farm in central Illinois. After earning a BS from Illinois State University, he worked in the farm supply business in Wisconsin before moving to Michigan in 1999 to accept a position as the Crops Agent for Michigan State University Extension. He helped facilitate discussions for Michigan Corn Processors that eventually led to the state's first ethanol facility in Caro, Michigan and then helped co-found and manage the ethanol facility in Woodbury. Jim and his wife Carol currently live in Mason.

Bridget Patrick Risk Communications Specialist, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Bridget Patrick has worked for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) since 2007. She was the State Bovine TB Eradication Coordinator at the Michigan Department of Community Health from 2002 to 2007. She has a sheep farm in Mason, and mentors young farmers with market gardening so they may sell at the farmer's market.

Mary Ann Baier Organic Community Gardening Specialist

“Why go green? Going green is a process. I started with recycling, then I started thinking about how everything adds up with everybody. I try to look at my actions and purchases with one more aspect: How does this affect the earth? If I buy a packaged item, the package should be recyclable/biodegradable, otherwise I won't buy it. The reason to go green is to use our resources wisely and treat our environment with respect. Going green is using our resources efficiently and may even save money in our budgets.”

President's Message - Betsy Cushman



November 5 Election

Although we never support or oppose political candidates, we can congratulate the winners, and appreciate all those who ran for political office. The countless hours and dedication required must be enormous.

We printed and distributed thousands of Voter Guides in both Dearborn and Dearborn Heights, as well the VOTE411 Voter Guide online and the Voter Guide on our website. We had lots of feedback from appreciative voters who tell how much they appreciate this guide. And I want to thank the members who distributed the Voter Guides to the public libraries, city halls, and other locations throughout our communities.

Programs

October

Thank you to Chris Sullivan-Rathwell for arranging for the excellent program on Campaign Finance Reform and "Dark Money" in Michigan Politics last month. Learning that Michigan has the most "Dark Money" of all 50 states was unpleasant but important to know. Go to the Michigan Campaign Finance Network website for more information, if you missed that great meeting and refreshments.



The **November 14** meeting on food issues – GMOs, antibiotics in meat & poultry, herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution - should be interesting and informative. Mary Bugeia, Elayne Boismier and Kathy Gapa have planned a program to prepare us for the upcoming National LWV consensus due April 1 on Agricultural issues, primarily the food industry.



Committees The Membership Committee has planned for a new member gathering beginning at **6 pm on November 14**, just before the 7 p.m. program. They will learn more about the League and be given a new member packet of information. Judy Carty and Chris Sullivan-Rathwell are holding it on the first floor parlor, so all can simply walk downstairs for the general meeting. It should be fun!



The Education Study Committee is busy planning an exciting meeting for **Saturday, January 18 at 10 a.m.** It will be devoted to Students-at-Risk and Schools-at-Risk especially in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights. We hope to have a top office from the State Department of Education as well as 3 or 4 local school superintendents, so we can learn the facts about the definitions and factors that label student and schools in these kind of categories, and how the local districts are addressing the issues. **SAVE THE DATE.**

Voter Service Committee The new project will begin the week of January 6, 2014. The night has not been selected, but we will send out a notice to ask for volunteers to update the list of elected public officials "Who's Who", now that the elections are over. This is a fun project and our most popular publication. What's involved, you ask? Each page is assigned to a different person who researches the elected officials on that page for updated or new information. Much can be found on the internet first, but then you have to contact the appropriate office to double-check. Once we went to press when a Congressman's offices were moving that day, and we didn't know a plan was underway. We had the wrong information all year.

This is an excellent project for a new member to learn about their elected officials, and help is needed. Please contact me at the League phone 313-278-6476 and leave a message or email me at betsy.cushman@gmail.com if you'd like to learn more.

Upcoming Fun Meetings On **December 14** at 11 a.m., our members Mona and Abed Hammoud have invited us to a potluck brunch in their home, and Abed, assistant U.S. Prosecutor, will again update us on what is happening in the Detroit area. He has done this for years and it is always the highlight of my League year. I hope it is or will be yours, too. To sign up to attend and learn what you might bring, please contact Chris Sullivan-Rathwell at 313-563-4586 or csullivan@comcast.net.



On **Saturday, January 25 at 10 a.m.** we will have a meeting to discuss the needs of Dearborn and Dearborn Heights and if the LWV-DDH wants to undertake a new study to address the needs with an aim to coming to consensus, taking positions, and advocating on behalf of our findings. This is called Local Program Planning. We have not done this in many years, but many of our members feel that we should consider at least discussing our communities' needs. And it's some of our members idea of fun. It's certainly important! We will have refreshments to lure you to attend. Look for more information in the upcoming communications.

State of the League As you can see – and look ahead at the list of upcoming activities - we have a lot of exciting activities going on. Our communities appreciate our involvement. In addition we have two new members this past month, Anne Gautreau and Linda Rex, and that makes 11 new members since June. This is very exciting. I have been asked to talk about the League's Voter Service activities on KiwaniTalk cable program, and again next March to distribute the new Who's Who and discuss all the League's activities with this excellent Kiwanis Club of Dearborn. We hope more organizations will ask us to speak!

These are all positives. The challenge is to engage our members in activities which help the league to grow and to prosper. We have many needs because we want to do many things. Our board recently accepted with regret Patti Mack's resignation. She did heroic work as our smiling Voter Editor and PR Director. We have new openings for these positions and others. If you are interested in helping, if you believe in the League and enjoy computers, please contact me.



We are recognizing one of our own at the ISCC Lunch on November 13 – Barb Adams. Please read her nomination on the next page.

And to all of you hardworking and dedicated volunteers who do keep working for us, day in and day out, our unsung heroes, THANK YOU!

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, 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 lwvddh.org or call 313-278-6476. **Established in 1920** after winning the right to vote for women, the League is one of the nation's most respected community-based organizations. **We never support or oppose a political candidate or party.** We want everyone to vote so that our elected leaders represent our entire community. We provide and work from facts. We educate. We advocate for change.



Our Nomination for “Volunteer of Year” of ISCC

Barb Adams joined the League of Women Voters in 2009 and was recruited almost immediately as **the Treasurer**. She has served quietly and conscientiously, keeping expert track of our expenses and income. Treasurers tend to be every organization’s unsung heroes, and we want to recognize Barb for the excellence and diligence of her work.

But that’s not all Barb has done for the League. In 2011, Barb led the League’s effort to successfully apply for a grant for the “Youth Voter Registration Project” to register eligible students in high schools and community colleges, especially in underserved populations. She has served as an outstanding project coordinator for the last two years.

“The Youth Voter Registration Project” requires adherence to very specific guidelines. These include meeting with the City Clerks, recruiting and training volunteers, meeting with school superintendents and high school principals. Then follows the many hours spent in the high schools, educating and registering students to vote. The students are very responsive and interested, and their enthusiasm was picked up by our League members.

Under Barb’s leadership, the League of Women Voters of Dearborn – Dearborn Heights registered 878 students in 9 high schools and one community college in the two years, all with the help of 10 League members and student helpers .

The success caught the attention of our state league, and in May of 2013, the State League of Women Voters presented Barb Adams with the Bell Ringer Award for her work in the Youth Voter Registration Project. We believe she has demonstrated outstanding organizational and leadership qualities and we are very appreciative of her membership and involvement in our League.

Save these dates and please come!

November 14, 6 p.m. New members

7 p.m. Members and the public *"How Safe is our Food?"*

December 14, 11 a.m. *Holiday Potluck*

Sign up with Chris Sullivan-Rathwell (see President's message)

January 18, 10 a.m. Education General Meeting

"Students and Schools at Risk"

January 25, 10 a.m. New Local Program Planning

"What do our communities need?"

February 1 Detroit Metropolitan Area (DMA) Meeting

Regional Transportation Update in Birmingham

February 15 ? Possible Regional Conversation on State Needs *Center*

for Michigan program for all citizens in our area

March 20, 7 p.m. Consensus on *Agriculture Update*

Using programs & written materials to reach consensus

April 17, 7 p.m. *State Education* Consensus

Using programs & materials to reach consensus

May 15, 7 pm Focus on *women in local politics*: How to encourage, what are the obstacles. Hear from women who won and who didn't.

June 19? Possible *Annual Meeting* Hear about the LWV US Bi-annual Convention?



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

MEETINGS

Held at Christ Episcopal Church
120 N. Military at Cherry Hill
Dearborn. Handicap accessible
with elevator and an outdoor ramp.
(unless otherwise noted)

President: Betsy Cushman
Vice President: Joseph Borrajo
Secretary: Mary Jo Durivage
Treasurer: Barb Adams
Directors: Carolyn Buell
Mary Bugeia
Judy Carty
Kathy Gapa
Don Mack
Chris Sullivan-Rathwell

The Voter is included in membership.
Others can subscribe for \$10 annually.