



The Voter

A publication of
Dearborn and Dearborn Heights
League of Women Voters

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



OCTOBER 2013

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.



“Dark Money” & Our Democracy

What You Don't Know CAN Hurt You

ALL LWV – DDH MEMBERS & Public:
YOU'RE INVITED

... to an evening to learn the facts about Michigan's political campaign financing. Learn how to do your own research. This is nonpartisan. We are interested in promoting democracy and participation in government by all, not simply those with the special interests and the extraordinary financial means to sway outcomes.

This is a crucial key to understanding what is happening in government. Rich Robinson, Executive Director of the Michigan Campaign Finance Network is a good speaker and an interesting speaker. He is dedicated to the subject. Please spread the word. Come yourself and bring your friends!

Thursday, October 24, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Parlor / Lounge, 1st floor,
Christ Episcopal Church
120 N. Military, Dearborn, 48124

Rich Robinson
Executive Director
Michigan Campaign Finance Network



MEMBERSHIP

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

MEETINGS

The League Office and most local meetings are held at Christ Episcopal Church
120 N. Military at Cherry Hill,
Dearborn, MI.
The church is handicap accessible with elevator and an outdoor ramp.

LEAGUE OFFICE

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MISSION STATEMENT

The LWV, a non-partisan political organization, 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 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 info@lwvddh.org to request an email or printed subscription

President's Message – Betsy Cushman



The League did a GREAT job of working to benefit our communities in September!

- **VOTE411** in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights “went live” with our online Voter Guide
- **Voter Guides** for Dearborn (3,500 copies) and Dearborn Heights (1,500) were printed and are being distributed
- **Dearborn City Council Candidate Forum & Dearborn Schools’ 3 ballot proposals Forums** were conducted and are airing.
- **‘Meet the Candidates’ Event** conducted at Henry Ford Village
- **Public Forum on State Financing of Public Schools** conducted and is airing

Thank you to all those who helped with these activities. For Voters Service, thanks to Michelle Audia, Sue Bennett, Joseph Borrajo, Carolyn Buell, Mary Bugeia, Judy Carty, Agnes Dobronski, Kathy Gapa, Sue Hachem, Don & Patti Mack, Tony Perry, Chris Sullivan-Rathwell, and Don Rathwell. For Education Committee, thanks to Pam Adams, Michelle Audia, Joseph Borrajo, Mary Bugeia, Kathy Gapa, Zaineb Hussein, Tony Perry, and Chris Sullivan-Rathwell. And if I left off your name, I apologize.

Coming October 24, 7 p.m.: “Dark Money & Our Democracy” or maybe **“The Best That Money Can Buy: Michigan Campaign Financing”**. Take your pick of title, but come to this informative and important meeting. To inform ourselves and our community about the influences of unlimited campaign donations and the need for transparency, come to the meeting and spread the word.

We are especially fortunate this busy month to have Don Mack keeping our website up-to-date and user-friendly and Patti Mack creating a beautiful newsletter and sending out press release after press release. Unsung heroes Barb Adams, treasurer, and Mary Jo Durivage, secretary and online member communicator, continue to make their jobs look effortless. The other board members and committee members help as they can, mostly without any recognition at all. Please know your work is noticed and needed. I don’t know how to thank you.

Betsy Cushman



About the Michigan Campaign Finance Network

The Michigan Campaign Finance Network is a nonpartisan, nonprofit coalition of organizations and individuals concerned about the influence of money in politics and the need for campaign finance reform in Michigan. MCFN conducts research on campaign contributions and their relationship to election outcomes and issues of public policy, supports access to campaign finance information and develops educational initiatives for the public on the subject of campaign finance reform.

Rich Robinson has worked for the public purpose throughout his career. Beginning as a Peace Corps volunteer more than 30 years ago, he has worked in local, state and federal government, and more than 18 years in the nonprofit sector. Since 2001 he has been executive director of the nonpartisan Michigan Campaign Finance Network, where he is the principal investigator of the biannual *Citizen's Guide to Michigan Campaign Finance* and periodic reports on money in Michigan politics. His commentaries on democracy and money in politics have appeared in numerous state publications, including the *Detroit Free Press*, *The Detroit News*, the *Lansing State Journal* and *Dome Magazine*. He has been a frequent guest lecturer at the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Central Michigan University, Oakland University and Grand Valley State University. Rich Robinson has a BS, MA and Master of Public Policy from the University of Michigan. He is a native of Sault Ste. Marie.

Board of Directors

- John Chamberlin - Professor of public policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan
- Jan Dolan - Former Michigan state representative
- Patricia Donath - Past President, League of Women Voters of Michigan
- Eva Garza Dewaelsche - President, Metro SER
- Lynn Jondahl - Former Michigan state representative
- John M. Koval - Retired state economist; senior activist
- John Mayer - Former state and federal court administrator
- Alma Wheeler Smith - Former Michigan state senator and state representative

Supporting Organizations

The work of the Michigan Campaign Finance Network is supported by:

- Hundreds of Michigan citizens who care deeply about the health of our democracy.
- The Joyce Foundation

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION

Make check payable to:

LWVDDH Education Fund

120 N. Military
Dearborn, MI 48124



** **Tax-deductible donations** are designated for educational publications and programs such as non-partisan voter guides, candidate forums and the annual publication of local, state and national elected officials (Who's Who). These non-partisan resources are essential to our community and appreciated by our voting population. These contributions are managed by the LWVDDH Education Fund, a 501(c)(3) organization.

Rooted in the movement that secured women the right to vote, the League of Women Voters has always been committed to registering, educating and turning out voters – and we're not stopping now. To help us continue this vital work, ***please make a donation today***. Your support helps the League continue to fight every day for free, fair and accessible democracy that works for all of its citizens – not special interests.



Why ‘dark money’ matters when you stand before a Michigan judge

The State Bar of Michigan this month urged Secretary of State Ruth Johnson to require everyone who contributes money to Michigan judicial campaigns to be publicly identified. It said a 2004 decision by then-Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land allowing those who bankroll so-called judicial “issue ads” to remain anonymous undermines the integrity of the judicial system and conflicts with more recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions requiring such donors to be identified.

Issue ads typically attack a candidate without endorsing an opponent.

The State Bar, which represents 43,600 Michigan lawyers and judges, said secret contributions — dark money — prevent judges, litigants and the public from knowing when a judge is being asked to rule on an issue involving a major donor. State Bar President Bruce Courtade said its request for a ruling from Johnson about such ads is designed to add transparency and promote public confidence in the impartiality of Michigan’s judges.

Dark money increasingly is playing a role in Michigan judicial campaigns. Last fall, someone, possibly a disgruntled litigant, secretly spent \$2 million on misleading attack ads in an unsuccessful effort to defeat an incumbent Oakland County Circuit Court judge. Dark money also played a role in last fall’s Michigan Supreme Court race.

Johnson’s staff said the State Bar’s proposal would be posted on the department’s website within 48 hours and that the public would be given 10 days to comment. It said the department would issue a proposed response within 45 days and a final response within 60-90 days. For additional information and answers to questions go to: <http://bridgemi.com/2013/09/bridge-q-a-why-dark-money-matters-when-you-stand-before-a-michigan-judge/>

by [David Ashenfelter](#)
Bridge Magazine contributor
16 September 2013

SAVE
THE
DATE!

**Save the Date
November 14**

**7 p.m. Christ Episcopal Church
Public Forum**

“What’s on Your Plate:
Organics, GMOs, Herbicides,
Pesticides, Antibiotics and Food Labeling”

Welcome New Members

Jill Brandana



Help
Wanted

Upcoming Meetings – *Can you help?*

- **October 15**, 7 p.m., League office: Come to the Education Committee to help plan a follow-up to our successful September 26 Education Forum.
- **October 21**, 7 p.m., League office: Agriculture Committee - Come to a meeting to finalize plans for November 14 Public Meeting, “What’s on Your Plate: Organics, GMOs, Herbicides, Pesticides, Antibiotics and Food Labeling.”



VOTER SERVICE



Our over-worked and underpaid President, Betsy Cushman has been doing double duty as she has the responsibility as President of seeing that our League runs smoothly, but she also has been handling Voter Service tasks. If any of our members (**YES ... I'M TALKING TO YOU**) thinks that this would be something they would find interesting, please let Betsy know. She will not leave you alone with it but will mentor and gently guide you through this exciting area of the League's responsibilities.

- VOTE411 Voter Guide went “live” on September 20. This tool is so easy to use and provides more information than in printed voter guides. www.vote411.org
- A partial order of Printed Voter Guides was picked up on September 26 and brought to the Education Forum. School Superintendent Dr. Whiston was provided 300 copies for his use.
- September 30, 3,500 Dearborn Voter Guides and 1,500 Dearborn Heights Voter Guides were picked up and delivered to sites around the city by many League members assisting. Additionally, there are links on our website, www.lwvddh.org to the on-line Voter Guide.
- Linda DePoorter from Oakland Area moderated the Ballot Proposal Forum and City Council Candidate Forum on September 23.
 - Three ballot proposals were discussed with HFCC President Stan Jensen and David Mustonen, Communications Coordinator for the Dearborn Public Schools. The forum was taped by CDTV and is currently airing or available from the City's website. Visit our league website for the link.
 - The City Council Candidate Forum was well attended with 13 of the 14 candidates participating.
- The HFCC Student Political Convention scheduled for November 15 is well into planning meetings for this annual event. More information to come.

FELONS RUNNING FOR OFFICE

Our League was asked a question regarding a felon running for office. “Can someone be on the ballot if they have a record?”



Per Eva Packard, here is the response:

In general, the answer is Yes – with one exception. Michigan voters approved a constitutional amendment in 2010 that bans anyone convicted of a felony in the last 20 years from running for office – but the caveat is the conviction has to be “related to the person's official capacity while holding any elective office.” For example, if a person has not held office, a prior felony would not prevent him / her from running. However, if the person committed a felony while in office and it was related to their elected position, they could not run. (Has anyone ever heard the name Kwame Kilpatrick?)

Additionally, while someone in prison cannot vote while in prison or jail, once they are released, they can vote. That is not true in various other states.



There's Something Fishy About My Tomato!

You say "toMAto";
I say "toMAHto";
Monsato says "fish"

The following excerpt is from The Detroit News/Free Press Sunday, August 25, 2013 edition from an interview by Danielle Braff of the Chicago Tribune of Jayson and Mira Calton who co-authored the book "Rich Food Poor Food: The Ultimate Grocery Purchasing System (GPS).

QUESTION: What's so bad about genetically modified organisms?

JAYSON CALTON: They are taking a tomato and taking the DNA of a fish and sticking it into the tomato to make it grow better. They're turning on and off genes in a food. There have been no long-term studies, but there have been short-term studies, and they're bad across the board."

Keep informed and add to the discussion.

**WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE
PUBLIC MEETING**

Thursday, November 14 – 7pm

Submitted by Member Elayne Boismier



Transit Oriented Development

Published on 06 September 2013

A final presentation on the conceptual Transit Oriented Development (TOD) plans for Dearborn is available for the public to view online.

<http://www.cityofdearborn.org/news-and-events/press-releases/1043-transit-oriented-development-final-report-online>

- The TOD initiative seeks to capitalize on the new Dearborn Intermodal Passenger Rail Station's ability to draw more visitors, businesses and residents to Dearborn's west downtown.
- The train station is scheduled to open in by mid-2014.
- Through a grant awarded the city from MIPlace Partnership, planners from Michigan State University and experts from the Michigan Municipal League and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority are assisting city staff and stakeholders with creating a vision for the neighborhoods, parkland and business area near the train station.
- Public sessions were held in 2012 and 2013 and allowed residents and other stakeholders to generate ideas about how they would like the area to be developed. Suggestions focused on creating green space, fostering community involvement and honoring Dearborn's rich heritage.
- Although the conceptual designs are not binding, the exercise will help to focus the City's efforts when considering future development.



Kay & Betsy Cushman

Dearborn Resident to be Inducted into Michigan Women's Hall of Fame



Kay Cushman

Our very own Betsy Cushman's mother will be honored on October 17. Following is an article that was highlighted within the Dearborn Community. The first Dearborn woman is about to be inducted into the Michigan Woman's Hall of Fame! The late Katherine Moore Cushman will be honored at the 30th Annual Awards Dinner and Induction Ceremony on October 17 in Lansing.

Kay Cushman was one of the "Con-Con Eleven," having been elected to represent the City of Dearborn. Of the 144 delegates at the 1962-1962 Michigan Constitutional Convention, only eleven were women! At the first constitutional convention in 53 years, women participated for the first time in the writing of Michigan's constitution! Subsequently, the document was approved by the voters and was effectuated in 1963.

Michigan's Constitution had been amended 70 times and no longer supported the nature of the state as it had evolved into an industrial leader. "For eight months, the delegates listened, proposed, debated, and compromised. The document they produced greatly changed the workings of Michigan's executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Significant revisions were also made in the powers granted to local government, the administration of public education, and the terms of office for elected officials. The new Constitution revitalized the guarantee of civil rights to every Michigan citizen and established a civil rights commission to safeguard those rights."

Kay Cushman, a lifelong resident of Dearborn, graduated as valedictorian of the class of 1933 at Dearborn High School, the same year AAUW-Dearborn was founded.

In addition to serving as a Con-Con delegate, Cushman was elected to the 1977 Dearborn Charter Commission as top vote-getter and served two terms on the Dearborn Planning Commission in the 1980s.

Having served as president of the League of Women Voters of Michigan, the Detroit Metropolitan Area LWV, the Detroit LWV, and the Dearborn LWV, Kay Cushman naturally attributed her interest and knowledge in constitutional government to the League of Women Voters. A delightful bit of synchronicity is that her daughter, Betsy Cushman, currently serves as president of the Dearborn / Dearborn Heights League of Women Voters.

The final two decades of Katherine Cushman's life were largely devoted to environmental education and conservation. She served on the Governor's Study Commission on the Conservation Commission, among other activities. At the time of her death in 1991, she was working diligently to save Rouge Woods, a natural area in the Lower Rouge Valley.



Posted by Daniel Lai, Editor, Patch, September 8, 2013



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

Calendar of Events

Thursday, October 24 – 10 am

Senior Expo – Dearborn Performing
Arts Center

Thursday, October 24 – 6:30 pm

Dark Money & Our Democracy

Tuesday, November 5, 7 am – 8 pm

General Election – VOTE!

Thursday, November 7 – 7 pm

Board Meeting

Thursday, November 14 – 7 pm

Agriculture in America Public Meeting

Friday, November 15

HFCC Student Political Convention



