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

**The Voter** *newsletter for members and friends of the League of Women Voters of Dearborn – Dearborn Heights*

**October 2015**

**League of Women Voters Dearborn – Dearborn Heights**

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# Redistricting in Michigan:
## Should Politicians Choose Their Voters?

The LWV-Michigan & the LWV-DDH will present an educational Town Hall in Dearborn this month in partnership with ACCESS and the Dearborn Public Library. Our Guest Speaker is Sue Smith, Vice President of the State League.

### Wednesday, October 21, 7 pm
**Henry Ford Centennial Library**
**16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn**

The presentation will explore how legislative lines are drawn in Michigan, who draws them and why it is a critically important question for those concerned about fair representation.

In Michigan, the district lines are drawn by elected officials in the legislature, effectively allowing politicians to choose their voters and giving the political party in power at the time a tremendous advantage. What are the ramifications of partisan drawn districts that favor one party over another? Is there a better and fairer way to do this? What are the alternatives?

The U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision on Arizona's Independent Redistricting Commission said there is an alternative and that citizens, not just politicians, have the right to decide how congressional district lines are drawn. The Decision has grabbed the public's attention. Some have asked if Michigan, like Arizona, should use an independent commission to draw the lines, not only for the Congressional Districts, but for the State House and Senate as well. This alternative and others will be presented at the Town Hall.

This fall the League of Women Voters of Michigan is hosting 30 community based, redistricting education programs across the State. All Town Halls are open to the public. Everyone is invited and welcome.

## President's Message

**Thank you to all who helped at the Dearborn Heights Candidate Forum** on September 21. It was the best turnout in years! Special thanks go to Tony Perry and Zaineb Hussein for helping and promoting, as well as to Paula Bowman from LWV-Michigan, for moderating. It was taped and is on YouTube and on the City's cable television. The candidates have all participated in our online Voter Guide at www.VOTE411.org. The Election is Tuesday, November 3.

**Redistricting in Michigan** This issue is very important for the health of our democracy. The State League is leading an educational project with 30 Town Halls scheduled this fall around the State. I will be one of the trained speakers, and am scheduled to go to Macomb County twice, as well as to speak to a local Rotary Club. Sue Smith will present in Dearborn on **October 21** – see the article about it.

**Consensus on U.S. Constitutional Amendment Process** The National League consensus deadline of December 1 is rapidly approaching, and I hope you will look at the background information for this important topic (see other article) and come to the Consensus Meeting on Monday, November 9 at 6:30 pm at my house.

**Membership** Welcome to the 24 new members since February 1, 2015! Please come to a new member gathering at my house on Monday, October 26, at 6 pm. Look to the article on membership to learn more.

**Fundraising** Our $60 dues results in support for our wonderful State and National Leagues with about $5 remaining with the Local League. This means we need to raise money for our work locally by fundraising from our community and our members. A fundraising letter will go out in November, a year after we last held a letter fundraising drive. Another Dinner? In February last year, we raised $8,000 (or so) from the big 95th LWV Birthday Celebration with Debbie Dingell as speaker. The committee met and has some great ideas for a new dinner for the coming Big Election Year – but we don't have the members to help. Watch this space for the next development.

Betsy Cushman, President

## Constitutional Amendment Consensus Meeting November 9

Our National League has set December 1, 2015 as the deadline for Local Leagues to return their consensus forms. At our August Board Meeting, the LWV-DDH decided to send out information to our members ahead of our Consensus Meeting, which will be held in conversation-style at the home of Betsy Cushman on **Monday, November 9 at 7 pm.** Zaineb Hussein volunteered to bring refreshments.

Here is the link to the materials from LWV-US. Vera McAnulty, one of our new members, will be sending out some clarifying information (the questions alone are very difficult). Link to Constitutional Amendment materials
http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/constitutional-amendment-study-guide

This study is in three parts:

- Part I asks about guidelines for evaluating constitutional amendment proposals
- Part II asks about aspects of an Article V Constitutional Convention that may be important in conducting such a convention
- Part III asks two overall balancing questions between process and positions

VOTE411.ORG
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

## Dearborn Heights Election

for City Council Candidates
(vote for up to 3)
and Ballot Proposal(s)

**VOTE on Election Day**
**Tuesday, November 3, 2015**
**7 am – 8 pm**

- LWV-DDH Voter Guide online at VOTE411.org
- LWV-DDH Candidate Forum YouTube
  https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCRdsv07DxBTF5ZWgiqXPcKw

  & Channel 12 Comcast, Channel 10 WOW, Channel 99 ATT at 12, 3, 6, 9 (am & pm)

# Welcome – Welcome – Welcome!

The League of Women Voters of Dearborn was founded in 1951, an outgrowth of the Detroit League of Women Voters which was founded the same year as our National League, 1920. The Dearborn Heights League was founded in the 60's and the 2 leagues merged in the 70's.

We are proud of our League's past, and excited about our League's future. New members bring diverse ideas, priorities, views to traditional League activities, yet the mission of the League does not change – to encourage informed and active participation in government.

With the involvement of new members, board members, long-time members, and everyone in between, we can make a difference!

Please come to a **New Member Gathering** for fun and information about the League on ***Monday, October 26, at 6 pm*** at Betsy Cushman's house, 21945 Wildwood St., Dearborn. We want to know more about you and for you to know more about us. Everyone is welcome.

**Who Are Our Members?**

Total Membership now stands at 70 people. 77% are women, 23% men. 70% live in Dearborn, 19% in Dearborn Heights. 10% live in nearby cities. 16% live in **Henry Ford Village**. The members at HF Village are meeting to decide what League activities they would like to be involved in. One member, Mary Stuckey, has already volunteered to make reminder phone calls. One or more of their members will attend Board Meetings to keep the lines of communication open. All League members will be invited to all planned activities. This strengthens the League and it strengthens our communities.

New members since Feb. 1, as of Oct. 1, 2015:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Dave Wassim Abdallah** | **Ali Baleed Almaklani** | **Mariam Bazzi** |
| **Mary Castonguay** | **Anne Cramton** | **Layla Elabed** |
| **Rachid Elabed** | **Janine Janosky** | **Jay Korinek** |
| **Tash Linder-Haynes** | **Vera McAnulty** | **Norma McDaniel** |
| **Connie Mitchell** | **Jackie Pitts** | **Julie Plawecki** |
| **Eric Rader** | **Eva Redwine** | **Mary Ross** |
| **Mary Stuckey** | **Jackie Washington** | **Sandra Watley** |
| **Gary Woronchak** | **Vivian Woronchak** | **Robert Yahrmatter** |

About 1/3 of our membership is new! What an opportunity!

- Are you an experienced Leaguer? Come help us engage the new members in a League activity.
- Are you new to the League? Come learn more on what the League does or should do to educate and engage our communities to work for good government.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2015, 6 PM**

**FROM THE LWV-US :**

## Constitutional Amendment Study Summary of Articles Dealing with Article V Constitutional Conventions

Authors hold strong, but very opposite views regarding how an Article V Constitutional Convention would actually be conducted, and what limits, if any, there would be on its ability to offer amendments to the constitution.

In a **University of Florida law review article (pp.618-621 and pp. 680-690)**, **Robert G. Natelson**, an attorney affiliated with ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) believes there is no uncertainty about the rules and procedures governing such a convention. He relies on historical precedent from the years preceding the 1787 convention related to the Articles of Confederation to support his conclusion that the states are in charge of the process from beginning to end. He is joined in the view that there is no uncertainty about the operations of a Convention by **Milton Eisenhower**, who was writing in support of a balanced budget amendment in 1985. He calls fears of a "runaway" convention "extreme nonsense," based on the contention that Congress can regulate the process.

On the other hand, **The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities** produced a position paper on Article V Constitutional Conventions in 2014. Their conclusion is that since the convention would write its own rules and set its own agenda, no other body including Congress or the courts would have authority over it. **Larry Greenlee**, writing for the John Birch Society in 2013 agrees that there would be no way to control a constitutional convention. He is critical of the Natelson position because it is based on customs and procedures of 200 years ago, and he believes the Declaration of Independence would further support the position that the convention could take whatever steps it wished.

**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. We never support or oppose a political candidate or party.

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

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

### LWV Calendar

**Wednesday**
**October 21, 7 pm**
**Redistricting Town Hall**

**Monday**
**October 26, 6 pm**
**New Member Gathering**

**Thursday**
**November 5, 6:30 pm**
**Board Meeting**

**Monday**
**November 9, 7 pm**
**Constitution Consensus**

**Sunday**
**December 6, 12 noon**
**LWVDDH Holiday Brunch**