



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



SEPTEMBER 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.



## What's on the Nov. 5 Ballot?

### A Public Forum

**Monday, September 23**

**Dearborn City Council Chambers  
13615 Michigan Ave., Dearborn 48126**

- **6:15 Dearborn's Ballot Proposals**

There are 3 ballot proposals in Dearborn. Come learn what they are!

- **7:00 Dearborn's City Council Candidates**

There are 14 candidates running for 7 city council seats. All have been invited. Many, if not all, will attend. This is a great opportunity to see who they are and hear their answers to questions.

*The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League never supports or opposes political candidates or political parties.*

## MEMBERSHIP

Open to any U.S. citizen.  
Dues are \$60 per year payable  
July 1<sup>st</sup> 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

120 N. Military  
Dearborn, MI 48124  
313.278.6476

Email: [info@lwvddh.org](mailto:info@lwvddh.org)  
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1.202.429.1965  
[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

## 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](mailto:info@lwvddh.org) to request an email or printed subscription

## President's Message – Betsy Cushman



## President's thoughts

### Here's what I'm learning as President:

- New members bring new energy to us “old” members. A very warm WELCOME to those who have joined us since June: Elayne Boismier, Marion Bloye, Sue Hachem, Zaineb Hussein, Leona Nowakowski, Carla O'Neill, Don Rathwell and Helena Thornton. Of these 8 new members, 5 live in Dearborn Heights.
- New study committees are fun and I wish I had time to devote myself purely to the studies. **The Education Committee** is teaching me all kinds of things I didn't know about the schools, and their ideas for community programs are terrific! In **the Agriculture Committee** I'm learning about organic foods, GMO's (genetically modified crops), food labeling, and the foods we eat. We will look into consolidation of food industries and the regulatory system. All very interesting.
- This is a good time to become active in the League of Women Voters! There are new study committees to join and the need for the League's nonpartisan approach to Voter Education has never been greater. New members only pay \$30 the first year. **GET INVOLVED!** You *can* make a difference!
- Writing a monthly message for the Voter is hard.

### Here's what I already knew as Voters Service Director:

- VOTE411.org administration is fun for the right person. I have backup support from Don Mack and new help for Dearborn Heights from Sue Hachem. I would like one more person who loves to play on the computer and appreciates the value of VOTE411.org to help with the Dearborn election information. If you know someone, or you **ARE** someone, let me know! [Betsy.cushman@gmail.com](mailto:Betsy.cushman@gmail.com)
- Candidate Forums are important. The City of Dearborn is again welcoming us and taping a public forum on September 23. Please come and tell your friends, family and neighbors! See the front page for more information.
- Printed Voter Guides are much prized by the voters, especially if you don't have access to computers.

*Betsy Cushman*

**Mark your calendars!**



## WHAT'S CHANGED IN SCHOOL FUNDING?

### A Public Forum

**Thursday, September 26, 7:00 p.m.**

**Dearborn Public Schools  
Administrative Service Center Board Room  
18700 Audette, Dearborn 48124  
(convenient parking)**

- **The Structure of School Funding in Michigan & How It Has Changed**

7:00 p.m. Panel      **Kathleen N. Straus**, Elected Member, State Board of Education  
                                  **Brian J. Whiston**, Superintendent Dearborn Public Schools  
                                  **Craig Thiel**, Citizens Research Council

- **What is the State Legislature Doing to Address School Funding?**

7:45 p.m. Panel      **Sen. Morris W. Hood III**, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
                                  **Rep. George T. Darany**, 15<sup>th</sup> District  
                                  **Rep. David Knezek**, 11<sup>th</sup> District

### 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.



# TAKE ACTION

Ninety-three years ago today, following over seven decades of tireless advocacy, the 19th amendment became law and women gained the right to vote. Later this week another important anniversary occurs – the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, which later helped spark Congressional action on the Voting Rights Act (VRA).

**As we celebrate our nation’s progress toward equality, voting rights remain under attack across the country.** Help the League of Women Voters mark these important anniversaries and continue the fight for voting rights for all citizens!

Earlier this summer the U.S. Supreme Court erased fundamental protections in the VRA against racial discrimination in voting that have been critical to protecting our democracy. **The damage to the VRA can and must be fixed** – Congress has the power to act swiftly to restore the effectiveness of the Voting Rights Act. Tell your members of Congress to work quickly to repair and restore the VRA to ensure our elections are free, fair and accessible to all citizens.

Upon passage of the 19th amendment, Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of the League of Women Voters, proclaimed **“Progress is calling to you to make no pause. Act!”** These words continue to ring true as we remain committed to fighting back against the attacks on voting rights.

The League is continuing to pursue all avenues to fight for voters’ rights following the Supreme Court’s decision. On August 28<sup>th</sup> members of the League and thousands of other activists met at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC to mark the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington. Speakers at the rally renewed the call to protect our voting rights and called on Congress to restore the VRA. **Add your voices to those who rallied in Washington and tell Congress to work quickly to fix the Voting Rights Act.**

(excerpts from communication from Elisabeth MacNamara, President League of Women Voters)



Perhaps you know of someone who would be interested in the League of Women Voters but just may not wish to make the commitment to join. Maybe a friend or family member is interested in the work that the League does and would like to help support our cause. If so, would you please provide that person’s name and address to Patti Mack, 3501 Monroe, Dearborn, MI 48124 or email [pmack@mack4.com](mailto:pmack@mack4.com) Contact will be made to your “lead” and **YOU** will receive a complimentary “gift” in the mail.

## Welcome New Members



*Sue Hachem  
Zaineh Hussein  
Leona Nowakowski  
Don Rathwell*



By Gary Varvel - September 06, 2013



OVERCOMING VIOLENCE TOGETHER  
24-HOUR HELP LINE:  
(734) 722-6800 • (888) 453-5900



FIRST STEP: WESTERN AND DOWNRIVER WAYNE COUNTY PROJECT ON DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The League is many things to many people. With roots firmly imbedded in the suffrage movement, the League offered representation for women and women's issues. Today's League still retains the image of an organization that serves the need of others in many different ways. Recently the League received a phone call from a woman in need of help with domestic violence. We referred her to the U.S. Domestic Violence hotline.

The Mission Statement and Core Values of the League is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide. As a non-partisan organization the League builds citizen participation in the democratic process. Our organization is focused in these areas. On the issues of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment, the League can only serve to provide direction in matters of Domestic abuse/violence and Sexual Harassment.

The following are some suggestions on actions to take when faced with the problem:

*First Step envisions a community where respect, fair treatment, comprehensive support, and social justice are available to all survivors of domestic and sexual assault and their families.*

- Police - dial 911
- First Step 24-Hour Help Line - 734-722-6800
- Toll Free Help Line - 1-888-453-5900 -- [www.firststep-mi.org](http://www.firststep-mi.org)

Additional Information for Domestic Abuse:

- National Hotline – 1-800-799-7233 or TTY 1-800-787-3224

Sexual Harassment:

- The National Association of working women- 1-800-522-0925, 9 to 5 pm
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission- 1-800-669-4000
- Equal Rights Advocates- 1-415-621-0672, 1-800-839-4372, 24 hour line, 1-415-621-0505
- National Women's Law Center- 1-202-588-5180

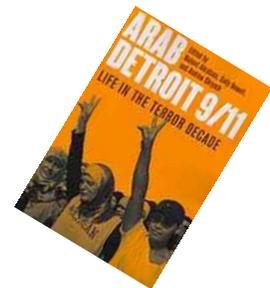
**Uphold your social, political and economic RIGHTS!**

*Content provided by Joe Borrajo*

On a recent edition of *Through the Arsenal Gates* Glenn O'Kray interviews Dr. Nabell Abraham. He discusses his career as the Director of Anthropology and the Honors Program at HFCC and his two books; *Arab Detroit 911* and *Arab Detroit From Margin To Mainstream*.

<http://cdtv.pegcentral.com/player.php?video=bccb4875d59955743f5df4f4e0a90263>

Dr. Abraham was our speaker at the June 8, 2013 annual meeting and provided a most interesting and informative talk.





### **ANN ARBOR TO DETROIT REGIONAL RAIL PROJECT:**

The Dearborn multi modal station is now under construction...the building is beginning to take shape and the parking lots are on the verge of completion. A picture is posted at the site and the structure is linked to Greenfield Village so that passengers can enter the Village from the train station.

According to the web site, all 9 cab cars have been refurbished and have cleared initial testing. Plans are to have static displays of completed cars at venues such as the Henry Ford where visitors will be able to view and board the train cars first-hand. The project team is working on providing service to special events along the corridor in 2013.

### **REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

After 30 years of attempts to pass legislation for an RTA, it was recently established for Southeast Michigan. The RTA is composed of the counties of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Washtenaw. It will be governed by a 10-member board with 2 representatives from each county, one representative from the City of Detroit, and one non-voting member appointed by the governor who acts as the chair. This would be Paul Hillegonds. The full board can be viewed on the web site...semcog.org/RTA.aspx

As of May 15, 2013, bylaws have been established. Monthly meetings are scheduled in various venues. Info on web site.

### **MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed it into law. This law authorizes and funds the federal surface transportation policy and programs for 2 years. This law is 600 pages! In an 8 page SEMCOG summary, Public Transit indicates there will be a new pilot program of \$10 million per year to state or local government for transit oriented development. Further noted is that for bus and bus facilities, funding has been cut by more than half.

### **2040 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN**

At the May 15, 2013 TAC meeting, this plan was approved so that it would be put before the SEMCOG General Assembly June 20 for final approval. However, there is some controversy regarding the I-94 widening from I-96 to Conner. Despite a strong plea to eliminate this project, it was voted to continue to be in the long range plan. However, when the 2014-2017 TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) was presented, MDOT reported that the I-94 project was moved to 2018! TRU, being a strong opponent of this project reported that there would be 6.5 miles of widening at a cost of \$2.7 billion over the next 15 years. The project does not help local people...just moves trucks faster.

### **TRANSPORTATION RIDERS UNITED...TRU**

**www.DetroitTransit.org**

TRU celebrated 13 years at their May annual dinner for Regional Transit Awards at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial. I did not attend, but the winners of the various awards are on their website. TRU has regular e-mail newsletter. Annual dues for individuals are only \$20.

**M-1 RAIL** The Woodward Avenue Corridor runs between the Fisher building and Congress, just past Campus Martius Park. A brochure highlighting the project overview, indicates that the construction phase is to begin late this summer through Fall of 2015, with plans to begin service in late 2015. "M-1 RAIL's work has become an unprecedented model of public-private will and cooperation. Together with community partners, M-1 RAIL is developing a streetcar line many believe someday will become the center-piece for a seamless transit system that connects Detroiters and people throughout the region to jobs and prosperity, thriving businesses and retail, sporting and cultural activities; but perhaps most importantly, each other."

### **METRO DETROIT TRANSIT WORKSHOP**

On May 17, I attended this workshop held at University of Detroit Mercy. The purpose of this workshop was;

- to understand the components of a good transit system and how it affects everyone;
- to begin to build a strong and diverse coalition of support for its development;
- to build a campaign for a ballot initiative, referendum or other funding source to pay for it.

There were about 100 participants from a variety of groups etc. TRU was one of the sponsoring organizations. We heard speakers from Atlanta GA, Washington DC, Los Angeles, CA and St. Louis MO. All spoke of their campaigns that were successful, and some areas that were not.

Strategies were discussed and since I didn't complete the workshop on the next day, I'm not sure what the outcome was! I will have to research this!

"U of D Mercy Transportation center is a coalition of faculty and staff members from across the university dedicated to improving Southeastern Michigan through purposeful action focused on the critical issues of transportation systems, organizations, policies and public support."

During July, the University sponsors 2, one week Transit programs, "Smart Moves Summer Program" for 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grades.

Carolyn Buell

### What is GI?

As we gathered together at the University of Michigan-Dearborn FCNB on Tuesday, August 6th, we were greeted by members of the Wayne County Department of Public Services – Environmental Services Group to participate in an interactive visioning session to promote the importance of increasing “Green Infrastructure” within all regions of Southeast Michigan.

Basically, each group was assigned to a different regional map, and participated in an interactive discussion in regards to identifying which important natural areas, such as roadways, trails, open space (fields), bare ground (parking lots), tree canopy, parks and wetlands, need an increase of green infrastructure. We discussed the following questions:

- 1) Which areas within each city need an increase of green infrastructure?
- 2) What kind of green infrastructure do we suggest?
- 3) How can we create a connection between natural areas?

Then, each group stated their results from the interactive discussion. Finally, we answered some questions with respect to certain policies in regards to increasing green infrastructure within Southeast Michigan by using a power point presentation and keypads to record our answers in the form of a bar graph.

Indeed, the data from this interactive visioning session will be used to help educate and inform the people of Southeast Michigan by developing future vision sessions as well as create public announcements or advertisements about the importance of increasing “GI” within all regions of Southeast Michigan (Kucel & Mangus, 2013) from (SEMCOG, 2013).

Submitted by  
Michelle Audia, LWVDDH



### Agriculture in America: The Fate of the Orange



We all love oranges and that All-American drink orange juice. But what if the orange were to disappear? How would American consumers feel about that and what would they be willing to accept to save the orange?

These are not hypothetical questions. The orange tree is in danger **all over the world** from an infection called citrus greening. They have tried cutting down infected trees and heavily spraying the healthy trees with pesticides against the insect that carries the bacterium, but it is not working. Orange groves around the world are being infected, cut down and abandoned.

A New York Times article tells the story of the battle to save the orange, led by Southern Gardens Citrus and its president Ricke Kress. Southern Gardens had two and a half million orange trees. They tried first to find a naturally immune tree but discovered there aren't any. The only solution seems to be a genetically modified tree and a promising tree is being grown that contains a spinach gene. But will the public accept GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) orange juice? The first juice from these new trees won't be available for at least 5 years and many millions of dollars will be invested before then.

There are strong feelings about GMOs and many have already taken a position on GMOs. Is the resistance well founded? Do we know? How much worse is an orange with a spinach gene than a nectarine, a cross between a peach and a plum? Nature has been engineering plants for all times. GMOs are one of the agriculture technologies that we will be exploring in the upcoming LWVUS agriculture study.

#### JOIN OUR STUDY COMMITTEE - SEPTEMBER 30<sup>th</sup>

1:00 pm - League of Women Voters Office  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Christ Episcopal Church, 120 N. Military

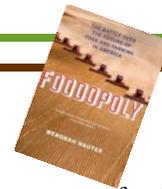
... let your **VOICE** be heard on this relevant topic of today

Full NY Time Article available at  
[www.nytimes.com/2013/07/28/science](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/28/science) "A Race to Save the Orange by Altering Its DNA"

### *The topic is Agriculture --getting ready for the agriculture consensus!*

With the upcoming LWVUS Agriculture study in mind, here are three books to help you prepare for the study. The three books are:

- "The World According to Monsanto: Pollution, Corruption, and the Control of the World's Food Supply" by Marie-Monique Robin 2012
- "Foodopoly: the Battle Over the Future of Food and Farming in America" by Wenonah Hauter 2012
- "Food, Inc.: A Participant Guide: How Industrial Food Is Making Us Sicker, Fatter, and Poorer--and What We Can Do about It" by Karl Weber 2009





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

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, September 11

Patriot Day

Tuesday, September 17

Constitution Day / Citizenship Day

Monday, September 23 – 6:15 pm

Candidate & Issues Forum

Dearborn Council Chambers

Tuesday, September 24

National Voter Registration Day

Thursday, September 26 - 7 pm

State Funding of Education Forum

Dearborn Public Schools ASC

Thursday, October 3 – 7 pm

Board Meeting

Thursday, October 24 – 7 pm

Campaign Finance Reform Public Meeting

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

