



# Midland Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE MIDLAND AREA

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## CALENDAR 2009

- October 6**      **“Hot Topic” Meeting:** follow up discussion of the September tour of the new Midland County Jail. Donna DeVinney’s home, 4954 Grandview Circle, 1:00 pm
- October 7**      Board Meeting in Conference Room B, Grace A. Dow Library, 1:00 pm
- October 28**     **General Meeting:** Midland County Housing, panel discussion, Little Theatre, First United Methodist Church, 7pm
- November 3**    **ELECTION DAY:** Contested race in Ward One for Midland City Council
- November 4**    Board Meeting in Conference Room B, Grace A. Dow Library, 1:00 pm
- November 18**   **General Meeting:** Nuclear Disarmament, Whitman Room, Doan Historical Center, cosponsored by the League and the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice. Film followed by discussion with Jim Head, expert in the field of nuclear disarmament

**Remember LWV meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!**

### OCTOBER MEETING TO FEATURE HOUSING PANEL DISCUSSION

Housing in Midland County will be the focus of a panel discussion at the October 28 general meeting. Panel participants will be: Cheryl Standfest King, Planning Administrative Assistant for the City of Midland; Kevin Beeson, Director of the Housing Commission of Midland County; and Sharon Mortensen, Shelterhouse. The discussion starts at 7 pm in the Little Theater at First United Methodist Church. The meeting is open to the public. Please use any of the doors on Larkin Street. An elevator is available to get to the Little Theater level.

### *Background:*

A recent report of the Fair Housing Center of Eastern Michigan to the Midland Housing Commission showed some type of discriminatory action on the basis of race, national origin or disability status occurred in 53 per cent of test cases in Midland - higher than the national average.



The League has a position addressing fair, affordable fair housing. See: [http://www.lwv-midland.org/position Midland County Housing.html](http://www.lwv-midland.org/position%20Midland%20County%20Housing.html)

## GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

The national health care “debate” has been worse than a “disappointment” for me. It seems to have turned into a “half-truth free for all.” I’ve heard that 70 per cent of Americans want health care reform in America, yet neither house of Congress can come up with a bill for a vote on either the floor of the House or the Senate – and that’s with a majority of Democrats in both!

Citizens show up at town hall meetings, tea parties, and rallies bearing signs declaring we’re headed toward communism, socialism, Nazism, you name it! They depict the President of the United States as a witch doctor and as Hitler himself! Representative Wilson even felt compelled to yell, “You lie!” at the President as he was addressing a combined session of Congress.

So, what should we do about it? Should we withdraw from the debate and keep our mouths shut to lessen the din? I think not! I believe we must become knowledgeable about the issue and join the discussions that surround us. The TV news seems content, for the most part, to simply “stir the pot” and publicize the sensational, so we will have to dig deeper for information. I read a fascinating article called “The Assault on Truth,” in the AARP BULLETIN for September. It gave a very clear definition of “socialized medicine” that I would like to pass along:

*...the government not only runs health care but also owns hospitals and pays doctors’ salaries. Great Britain has this kind of setup, as do the Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense health programs in the United States.*

Clearly, the US already has some socialized medicine, but it is definitely not what is proposed for our entire nation’s health care reform – not in any of the bills that have currently made their way out of committees.

I’m urging you to search out factual information and be ready for the next discussion you fall into. Our national website, [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), is a good source, as is the “Myths” information on [www.healthactionnow.org](http://www.healthactionnow.org). You don’t have to scream or carry a crazy sign. Just be intelligent and ready. Also, if you haven’t done it yet, send Representative Dave Camp, Senator Debbie Stabenow and Senator Carl Levin letters urging each of them to support health care reform that covers all Americans, provides for cost containment, and doesn’t have death panels to kill grandma!

*Karen Sherwood, President*

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## WHAT YOU CAN DO IN OCTOBER TO HELP OUR LOCAL LEAGUE

- ✓ Send your membership renewal in now!
- ✓ Consider a sustaining gift or tax exempt gift to the Education Fund.
- ✓ Invite a non-member friend or family member to the Housing Discussion on October 28.
- ✓ Go paperless and request an e-subscription to The Voter. (J.kusch@charter.net)

## SEPTEMBER TOUR OF NEW JAIL *DID YOU MISS IT?*

Last month Sheriff Jerry Nielsen conducted us on a tour of the new Midland County Jail. Twenty years after the need for a new jail was first discussed, this state of the art facility will open later this year.

Sheriff Nielsen explained the new “behavior driven” philosophy of corrections then showed us the pod facility design that supports this approach. We also viewed the intake center, medical clinic, visitor accommodation, classroom space and high tech monitoring capabilities. With 103,000 square feet (plus room to expand) and 250 beds, the Sheriff’s Department expects to meet the needs of Midland County as well as contracting services to the U.S. Marshalls.



Karen Sherwood, Sheriff Nielsen, Sharron Such

### **JAIL TOUR FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION**

Donna DeVinney will host a follow up to the September jail tour at her home 4954 Grandview Circle on October 6 at 1 pm. This is an opportunity to discuss and relate what we saw at the new facility in the context of our League position on Adult Corrections. See: [http://www.lwv-midland.org/position\\_local\\_adult\\_corrections.html](http://www.lwv-midland.org/position_local_adult_corrections.html). Any advocacy opportunities will be explored. Adult Corrections is the focus of the local League program for 2009-10, and prisons will be the topic of a LWVMI consensus process next spring. Please join us even if you did not tour the jail!



### **GREAT DECISIONS 2010**

Great Decisions will again offer a wide range of timely and relevant foreign policy topics in 2010. Great Decisions, a program of the Foreign Policy Association, is the longest running national civic education program devoted to U.S. foreign policy and global affairs. Our Midland League has sponsored local discussion groups for over 30 years. The eight topics for this year are:

***Special envoys*** -- Will the Obama administration's reliance on special envoys increase the ability of the U.S. to deal with major international issues or complicate our diplomatic options?

***Preventing genocide*** -- What lessons can be learned from the intervention in Kenya

***Global crime*** – Crime is becoming increasingly organized and globalized. How can countries better protect citizens from being exploited?

***U.S.–China security relations*** -- Will China's expanding military and economic power affect traditional U.S. roles and U.S. alliances in East Asia?

***Global financial crisis*** --How will governments and the world community respond to this challenge?

***Russia and its neighbors*** -- Will Russia regain its traditional leadership role in the region?

***The Persian Gulf*** – Now more than ever, the Persian Gulf region offers many difficult challenges to U.S. policymakers.

***Peacebuilding and conflict resolution*** -- How can the U.S. successfully integrate the tools of peace building into its statecraft?

### **CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS**

The Midland Area LWV and MCTV hope to produce taped interviews of the two 1st Ward candidates for Midland City Council, Tom Adams and Mike Westendorf. As we go to press, participation of both candidates has not been secured. Please look for a notice in the MDN listings for MCTV programming in the last two weeks of October. Election Day is November 3.

*Published By*  
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**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**Enclosed is my check (made payable to LWV of the Midland Area) for:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual Membership (\$55)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Household Membership (\$75)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student Membership (\$30)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining Membership (\_\_\_\$100\_\_\_\$150\_\_\_\$200\_\_\_other-specify amount \$\_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ **CHECK TOTAL**

(Membership contributions are not tax deductible)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Separate check made payable to LWVUS Education Fund**

(This contribution is tax-deductible)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail check(s) with this form to LWV of the Midland Area, Box 1203, Midland MI 48641-1203**  
**Please use separate sheet to note special interests, skills, suggestions for LWV meetings.**

