



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

Midland Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE MIDLAND AREA

Volume 42, Number 5

January 2010

Karen Sherwood 989-832-3533
President

Judith McDowell 989-839-6926
Membership

Jenifer Kusch 989-837-0307
Newsletter

CALENDAR 2010

- January 6** **Board Meeting** Conference Room B, Grace A Dow Library, 1pm
- January 6** **First of 2010! Info and Issues Meeting:** Regional Poverty. Jill Sutton, Executive Director of Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency, Youth Center First United Methodist Church, 315 W. Larkin Street, 7pm
- February 14** **90th Birthday of LWV founded February 14, 1920**
- March 2** **90th Birthday Celebration:** Michigan Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth Weaver, keynote speaker, Holiday Inn, 7pm
- March 24** **Info and Issues Meeting:** School Financing. Superintendent Clark Volz, MCESA Building, 3917 Jefferson, 7 pm

REMEMBER LEAGUE MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. BRING A FRIEND!

GREETINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR FROM YOUR 2009-2010 BOARD!

League offers many opportunities to learn and serve our community. The Board hopes that in this season of resolutions you resolve to take full advantage of your membership in 2010. We will start the new year with a **program on regional poverty with Jill Sutton.** (See Calendar above).

New members add vibrancy to any group, so consider inviting friends to join us this spring. We will celebrate the anniversary of suffrage, learn more about school financing, and conduct a consensus study of the prison system.



GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

2010! It's a new year. It's a new decade.

In February, the national League of Women Voters will be 90 years old. August will be the 90th anniversary of women's right to vote. For me, the first reference of 90 years seems like a long time. Our organization has existed for nearly a century! The second 90-year reference, however, strikes me as being a surprisingly short period of time. Our nation is nearly 239 years old, but women have been able to vote just under 90 years!

The League was born when leaders of the suffrage movement met to discuss what they would do now that they had accomplished the task of getting the 19th Amendment ratified. They had succeeded in the battle for the right to vote, but would the women of the nation be ready to vote wisely for the candidates and on the issues at the ballot box? They decided that with this influx of new voters, there would be a real need for information and education. Their solution was to form a league made up of groups of women who would not support a party or a candidate, but would gather and publicize information about each candidate so that voters could cast an educated vote - a League of Women Voters! Over time the League has championed voter education on candidates and issues for both male and female voters.

Today we carry on that legacy in a culture where non-partisan, fact-based information is a desperately needed commodity. Our voters are bombarded with paid political ads that include facts along with "pants on fire" lies. Words like "liberal," "conservative," "progressive," "Republican," and "Democrat" are thrown around as if they described "good" and "bad", rather than "differing" views. Ads are paid for by committees with names that hide the identity of the advertisers. In fact, even the committee name is normally hidden in print too small to read that is flashed across the screen too fast to be read.

In this new decade the challenge to the League of Women Voters at all levels – national, state, and local – remains. We must continue to be political, but not partisan. We must do our best to find out and publicize what each candidate stands for so each citizen can vote for the candidate who will best represent him/her. We must study issues so that we can support positions that will truly benefit our communities. We must not abandon our commitment. League members and other citizens in our community deserve to be informed on issues and knowledgeable about candidates. We want them to be prepared to form opinions based on facts.

A new year, a new decade, still work to be done!

Karen Sherwood, President

GREAT DECISIONS 2010 BRIEFING BOOKS AVAILABLE NOW

Great Decisions discussion groups will begin meeting in late January. Briefing books can be picked up at the Grace A. Dow Library starting January 5. The cost is \$18, payable at first meeting. Schedules for the four discussion groups are as follows:

Tuesday afternoons

Deb Ballard, Facilitator 832-2873

Wednesday mornings

Ghislaine Maurissen, Facilitator 636-7145

Thursday Mornings

Tina Laughner, Facilitator 633-3790

Thursday evenings

Margo Haynes, Facilitator 835-9204

LEAGUE PRESIDENT COMMENDS SENATE'S PASSAGE OF HEALTH CARE

(from LWV.org) League of Women Voters National President Mary G. Wilson acknowledged the Senate's passage of health care reform legislation before the Christmas holidays as a step forward in the struggle to extend health care coverage to all Americans.

"The League is encouraged to see the Senate take action that moves health care reform closer to final passage," said Mary G. Wilson, national president of the League of Women Voters. "However, we are extremely disappointed that this deal came at the expense of a public insurance option, an element the League believes is crucial to protecting consumer choice and controlling health care costs in the long-run."

"The harsh reality is that we can no longer afford to do nothing, and key provisions of this bill are a step in the right direction," Wilson continued. "The Senate bill extends coverage to tens of millions of uninsured Americans, expands Medicaid coverage for the poor, subsidizes some of the costs of care for individuals, and prevents insurance companies from denying insurance to those with pre-existing conditions or dropping coverage due to an illness."



LOCAL CELEBRATION OF LWV 90th BIRTHDAY PLANNED

The Midland League has adopted the theme of *Making Democracy Work- Future of Hope* for celebration of the LWV's 90th birthday and the 90th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. A reception for League members and guests will be held on Tuesday, March 2, at the Holiday Inn, starting at 7:00 p.m. Women who have served as elected officials in Midland County will be honored. Michigan Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth Weaver is scheduled to be the keynote speaker.

Thank you to Sue McCollister, Judy McDowell, Karen Sherwood, Sharron Such and Carole Swinehart who are planning this event. This Committee is also considering other events to celebrate these historic milestones. Please contact them with suggestions or if you would like to participate in the planning.

90 Years in Photos



At League Booth at Dakota State Fair (approx. 1924)

1920's

President Maud Wood Park called the first League program adopted in 1920 a kettle of eels. It contained some 69 items grouped in broad subject areas: child welfare, education, the home and high prices, women in gainful occupations, public health and morals, and independent citizenship for married women! The League's first major national legislative success was the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act providing federal aid for maternal and child care programs.

Published By:
**League of Women Voters
Midland Area
P.O. Box 1203
Midland MI 48641-1203**

Address Block

**WHAT YOU CAN DO IN JANUARY TO HELP
OUR LOCAL LEAGUE**

- ✓ Mark your calendar now for the March 2 LWV
90th Birthday Celebration
- ✓ Save paper and postage by requesting an e-
subscription to *Midland Voter*.
j.kusch@charter.net



