



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

# Midland Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE MIDLAND AREA

Volume 42, Number 8

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Newsletter

## CALENDAR 2010

- April 7**            **Board Meeting**, Conference Room B, Grace A. Dow Library, 1 pm
- April 13 and 20**    **Consensus Study Days:** Study and Discussion of the League of Women Voters  
Michigan Restudy of Prisons, Midland County Jail, 101 Fast Ice Drive, 7 pm
- April 28**            **School Board Candidate Forum**, Board Room, MPS Administration Building, 7:00 pm
- May 4**                **School Board Election**
- May 5**                **Board Meeting**, Conference Room C, Grace A. Dow Library, 1 pm
- May 26**              **Annual Meeting**, Tuscany Hall, D'Allessandro Villa, 801 Wackerly, 6:00 pm social,  
6:30 pm dinner

## STATE PRISON RESTUDY AND CONSENSUS MEETINGS

Our League will join other Leagues across the state for a Prison/Jail Restudy and Consensus. Local meetings are scheduled for April 13 and April 20 at 7 pm at the Midland County Jail at 101 Fast Ice Drive.

The scope of the restudy includes:

- How and why persons are sent to prison or jail
- How individuals are treated while in prison or jail
- How, when, and why individuals are released from prison or jail to the community



There are seven consensus questions. Please study the background information prior to the meetings:

<http://www.lwvmi.org/documents/PrisonQstnswBckgrnd.pdf>

## GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

We've had a really busy few months lately! Now the time is coming to wrap up the 2009-10 year and make some decisions about the upcoming 2010-11 year. Yes, I'm talking about the Annual Meeting.

Sometime during the week of April 19, the official mailing called for in our Bylaws will go out to all members. This important piece of information will include the budget proposed by the Budget Committee, slate of nominations from the Nominating Committee and a local program proposed by the Board of Directors. This year there will also be a proposed change to the Bylaws. Of course, there will be a dinner reservation form with some yummy choices!

The meeting will be May 26 at D'Alessandro's Tuscan Hall on Wackerly. Doors will open at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30. A cash bar for wine will be available. We'll have our customary used book sale (\$1.00 for paperbacks, \$2.00 for hardcover books). Joyce Scott has agreed to be in charge of decorations; Sandy Burmester will be taking reservations and making sure we get the specific dinners we ordered.

Gary Skory of the Midland County Historical Museum will be our special speaker for the evening. We're expecting him to talk about his project with Delta and to bring information to us about notable women in Midland County.

During our business meeting, the Bylaws call for the membership to:

- a) *Adopt a local program for the ensuing year;*
- b) *Elect Officers, Directors and members of the Nominating Committee*
- c) *Adopt a budget, including specific dues amounts; and*
- d) *Transact such other business as may properly come before it.*

It is vital that we have a quorum present for these important actions. When your packet comes, please read it, make your meal selection and reservation, then spend some time during the following month considering the proposals of the Board of Directors, the Budget Committee and the Nominating Committee. Think about what the amendment to the Bylaws might mean. Be ready to approve or thoughtfully discuss the items of business. The agenda is limited, but the items under consideration determine the directions we will take in the year to come.

The League offers a variety of activities and levels of member involvement. The Annual Meeting is extremely important to the health and vitality of our organization. Please come, enjoy a great meal, hear an interesting speaker, AND cast your vote on the underlying structure of our Midland League – office holders, budget, and program! **Do your part to ensure that we meet and exceed our quorum requirements!**

*Karen Sherwood, President*

## ***DID YOU KNOW?***

The U.S. Justice Department in 2009 reported that a record 7 million people -- one in every 32 American adults -- were behind bars, on probation or on parole. The United States has the world's highest incarceration rate, and a disproportionate number of those in prison are African-American and poor.

## **SCHOOL CANDIDATE FORUM SET FOR APRIL 28**

The local League and the Midland Chapter of AAUW will cosponsor a school board candidate forum on April 28 at 7 pm in the Board Room of the Midland Public Schools Administrative Building, 600 East Carpenter. The forum will be broadcast by MCTV. Three candidates, Lynn M. Baker, John E. Kaminski and Joseph A. Trombka II, are competing for two places on the Midland Board of Education. School board elections are also taking place in Bullock Creek, Meridian, and Coleman. For additional information click: [http://www.lwv-midland.org/files/school\\_board\\_candidates\\_2010.pdf](http://www.lwv-midland.org/files/school_board_candidates_2010.pdf)



*What is the future of our public schools?*

## **MARCH EDUCATIONAL FORUM WITH COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS**

The Educational forum on March 24 was an excellent opportunity to learn about the current state of the schools from the superintendents of Midland County. Fortunately Rep. Jim Stamas was able to leave Lansing and participate. We appreciate the work they do and the presentation they gave to us. Superintendents John Hill, of Bullock Creek Schools, Doug Fillmore of Meridian Public Schools, Carl Ellinger of Midland Public Schools, and Clark Volz of the Midland County ESA provided information about the many cuts and adjustments that have been made. More are predicted as per pupil spending decreases the foundation grant from the State of Michigan. Rep. Jim Stamas explained that the current Michigan budget is for \$44 billion, with a \$1.7 billion deficit. As education is a top priority, a top investment of \$13 billion is being planned for education. Michigan is going from a 10 million to an 8 1/2 million population. The audience submitted a variety of written questions. The audience was primarily grandparent age. We need to evaluate why more parents were not present. In the question and answer session, a question was raised about consolidation. Studies have shown that there is no real dollar savings in consolidation of the school districts. The districts are working in a collaborative manner.

When questioned about changing the tax structure, Carl Ellinger indicated that political will has to be generated locally. We were left with the question: What is ahead for the public schools with Reform, Reductions, and Revenue? –*Terry Townley*

## **LOCAL PROGRAM PROPOSAL 2010-2011**

Members will vote on proposed local programming at the May 26 Annual Meeting. There are four components. The first concerns school financing:

*Investigate the funding of 5 local public school districts (Bullock Creek, Coleman, MCESA, Meridian, and Midland) and explore the effects of decreases on the education offered to Midland County.*

Additionally, it is proposed that the League pursue normal election year activities, continue to promote Great Decisions and maintain current positions as posted on the web site: [http://www.lwv-midland.org/position\\_statement.html](http://www.lwv-midland.org/position_statement.html)

## 90 YEARS IN PHOTOS: THE 1950'S

The witch hunt period of the early fifties inspired the League to undertake a two-year community education program focusing on the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. Next came an evaluation of the federal loyalty/security programs and ultimately a League position that strongly emphasized the protection of individual rights. In 1955 League President Percy Maxim Lee testified before Congress against Senator Joseph McCarthy's abuse of congressional investigative powers. *"I believe tolerance and respect for the opinions of others is being jeopardized by men and women whose instincts are worthily patriotic, but whose minds are apparently unwilling to accept the necessity for dissent within a democracy."* -www.LWV.org



Voters Roundup Edinburg, Texas

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**Save the Date!**  
**Annual Meeting May 26**

**Address Block**

