



# Midland Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE MIDLAND AREA

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Newsletter

## CALENDAR 2006

Oct 3 Board Meeting at Donna DeVinney's home: 14 Dartmoor Place, 1:00 p.m.

**Oct 16 General Meeting: "Affirmative Action: Why Do We Need To Preserve It?"**

**Anita Bowden, speaker: Grace A. Dow Library Lounge, 7:00 p.m.**

**Oct 26 General Election Candidate Forum: City Council Chambers, MCTV live,  
7:00 p.m.**

**Nov 7 ELECTION DAY: Vote and Watch Election Returns Coverage, Live, MCTV**

**Nov 8 "Morning after Election" Breakfast: Shirlene's Restaurant, 9:00 a.m.**

Nov 8 Board Meeting at Donna DeVinney's home: 14 Dartmoor Place, 1:00 p.m.  
(Note Date Change)

**Nov 30 General Meeting: Update on City, County Housing Status, Room 110, United Way  
Strosacker Center, 220 W. Main Street, 7:00 p.m.**

**Dec. Board Meeting and Annual Holiday Party at Carole Swinehart's home: 5313  
Sunset, Board Meeting, 4:00 p.m.; Dinner, 6:00 p.m. All members welcome!**  
Remember LWV meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend.

### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: WHY DO WE NEED TO PRESERVE IT?**

Anita Bowden, Executive Director of the Bay City YWCA and Co-Chair of the Bay County Affirmative Action Task Force, will speak on October 16, at the Grace A. Dow library lounge at 7:00 p.m. Bowden has actively participated in several forums and gatherings during the past year. She will discuss the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) and review the negative impact it would have on women and minorities including pay equity, lending programs and education opportunities.

### **Other programs in the area:**

October 5: Delta College Lecture Theater, 10:00 a.m., "Is it Civil? Is it Right? Is it for Michigan?" a debate with panelists representing both sides.

October 24: Saginaw Valley State University.- 7:00 pm. Michele Allen and others, "MCRI"

### **HOUSING POSITION UPDATE SUBJECT OF NOVEMBER MEETING**

A review of the current status of housing in Midland City and County as part of the update to our League's positions on Midland County Housing Needs and Low Income Housing will be presented Thursday, November 30 at the United Way

Strosacker Center, Room 110 at 220 W. Main Street at 7:00 p.m. Our local League members agreed to this review at our annual meeting. The speakers will be: Cheri Standfest of Midland City Planning Department, Roger Mikusek of Affordable Housing Alliance and Kevin Varner, County Low Income Housing. Besides the status update, they will also

review the League's current housing positions; suggest what may be outdated or still necessary aspects of the position; and give input on potential action. Questions and discussion will follow.

### ***GREETINGS FROM THE THIRD LEG OF THE TRIANGLE,***

Welcome to the Spotlight! As members of this politically savvy organization, any of you may be asked for election information - whether it is 'How do I know if I am registered to vote?' or 'Where is my precinct?' or 'Who is running for 4<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals?' and 'What does the League think about Proposal X?' Here are a few possible responses to help you maintain that authoritative reputation.

Information on registration and where to vote may be obtained from your city or township clerk. You may also check your registration through the Secretary of State's website: <http://www.michigan.gov/sos>

Information on who is on the ballot, as well as the state and local ballot proposals, is available now at the Midland County Clerk's office. The LWV Voter Guides, both state and local, will be out in mid-October in print and on our websites. These will have candidates' answers to our questions together with pros and cons on the ballot questions. Impartial analyses of the ballot proposals by the Citizens' Research Council of Michigan are available now at: <http://www.crcmich.org/election/index.html#04>

Remember that the League does not support or oppose candidates. If asked for your opinion, be sure to emphasize that it is YOUR opinion. The proposals are a little different. Although the information in the Voter Guides is even handed, the LWVMI opposes Proposals 2 and 5. Our position on No. 2, the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, has been discussed in previous Voters. An explanation of the decision to oppose No.5, the K-16 proposal, is on page three of this Voter. If you disagree with either of these positions or wish to take a stance on one of the other proposals, please make clear that these are your personal opinions, not the League's.

Go forth, educate the public and encourage them to VOTE.

**Fran Hamburg**, the third leg of the triangle



### **TWO LEAGUE ELECTION PROGRAMS TO BE FEATURED ON MCTV**

Midland Community Access Television will broadcast live the League's Candidate Forum on October 26 at 7:00 p.m. from the City Council Chambers and Election Night Coverage on November 7 starting at 9:00 p.m. at the County building on MCTV Channel 3. A schedule for repeat broadcasts will be printed in the Midland Daily News. The following candidates have been invited to the forum: County Commissioners in District 1 (the only contested Commissioner race), 36<sup>th</sup> District State Senator, 98<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> District

State Representatives, 42<sup>nd</sup> Circuit Court Judges, and 75<sup>th</sup> District Court Judges. The ballot proposals will also be presented.

The Election Night broadcast will present election returns as they come in from around the state and local precincts and are being counted and posted. League members will conduct interviews on camera with various candidates and other city or county political figures. Everyone is welcome to come to the County Building to join in the excitement or

join us by tuning in to Cable channel 3 any time between 9:00 p.m. and approximately 11:00 p.m. for news on the local results as they come in.

## **DUES PAYING TIME**

So far over one-fourth of our League members have sent in their dues for the 2006-07 year. This promptness is appreciated. Hopefully it will be a reminder to others to use the form on the back of this newsletter and send in your yearly dues as soon as possible. The Finance Committee appreciates the extra contributions that have been made so far for Voter Guides and other election year expenses.

## **LWVMI OPPOSES NOVEMBER BALLOT PROPOSAL NO.5**

Ballot Proposal No. 5 is a legislative initiative to establish mandatory school funding levels. If passed it would increase current funding and provide an annual increase equal to the rate of inflation for all public schools, kindergarten through higher education. It would require the state to fund any deficiencies from the General Fund and cap retirement fund contributions paid by all school districts, shifting the remaining portion to the state.

The League of Women Voters of Michigan has traditionally supported adequate funding for education and recognizes the serious financial problems faced by our public education system. However, LWVMI believes that Proposal No.5 is not the correct answer. In the first place, the League's position on Taxation and Budgeting states, 'The Legislature should have broad and fundamental taxing powers, free of constitutional restrictions except for constitutional provisions requiring a balanced budget and property tax millage limits.' Based on similar reasoning, LWVMI opposes earmarking funds for specific expenditures. If legislators are unresponsive to public needs, the remedy is to change the legislators and give their successors the flexibility necessary to deal with unforeseen circumstances. Once passed, overturning or modifying this law would require a three-fourths majority in the legislature, a near impossibility or another vote of the people.

The League is also concerned about the effect this proposal will have on funding for other government programs we support such as social services, public

safety, and natural resources. The cost to the FY07 budget is estimated at \$565 million to \$707 million and the ability to absorb future required increases will depend on the state's ability to generate increased revenue regardless of economic conditions in Michigan. Last but not least, the provision which transfers responsibility for retirement benefits to the state will result in increased costs to the general fund well beyond the rate of inflation. This information is derived from an analysis by the Citizens' Research Council of Michigan

<http://www.cremich.org/election/index.html#04>

## **CAROLE HEAD – IN MEMORIAM**

The Midland LWV recently lost a valued member with the death of Carole Head. Carole served on our board and was active in a variety of efforts over many years. In the past she was a member of a committee that received a \$1000 grant to promote understanding of economic policy, specifically the federal deficit and national debt. The committee sponsored many talks locally and participated in a forum held in Lansing. Carole's husband Jim was also a member of the League for a time and both he and Carole were instrumental in organizing and completing the LWVMI Charter School study a few years ago. Throughout her time as a member of the Midland League, we were grateful for Carole's ability to obtain significant contributions to our finance drives.

Carole was an enthusiastic traveler and for a time she and Jim owned and operated Lee Travel. After she retired, Carole gave much time to the League, Planned Parenthood and was a founder of Midland's Coalition for Choice. She will be greatly missed for her contributions to the community and to our League and as a dear friend.

## **LWVUS ACTION ALERTS**

See [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) for more information and to take action:

### **DC Voting Rights Bill**

Significant new legislation to provide voting rights in the House of Representatives for citizens of the District of Columbia is making its way through Congress. Urge your representative to support the D.C. VRA.

**League urges Congress to Vote against National Security Surveillance Act of 2006**

League believes this program would “rubber-stamp” the NSA’s warrantless wiretapping program and weaken our system of checks and balances.

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