



Oakland Voter

The League of Women Voters Oakland Area
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President: Eva Packard e-mail: Pres@lwvoa.org

2007-2008 Issue 4

January 2008

A January Triple Header

Brunch and National Program Planning

Saturday, January 12, 9:30 am

Home of Vicki Lange

(Details on page 7)



LWVOA Student PSA Contest Award Banquet

Thursday, January 17, 6 pm

Rock Financial Showplace, 46100 Grand River Ave., Novi, MI 48374

in the Sapphire/Ruby Ballroom of the Diamond Center

Adults \$25/ Students \$20 before 1/07/08; Adults \$35/\$Students \$30 after 1/07/08

Winning Public Service Announcements on voting/LWV will be announced and shown.

Support the League and the students who participated.

(See details on page 5, Registration Form and Map on page 7)

A Town Hall Meeting with Senator Majority Leader Mike Bishop and House Speaker Andy Dillon

**Monday, January 28
7 pm**

**Oakland Community College - Orchard Ridge Campus
in Smith Theatre**

27055 Orchard Lake Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48334

**Co-sponsored with LWV NorthWest Wayne and
Oakland Community College**

(see pages 3 and 4)

Invite your family, friends, colleagues and neighbors.

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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THE OAKLAND VOTER is the official publication of the League of Women Voters. It is published eight times a year by the LWVOA. Articles and Letters to the Editor, with writer's name, address and phone number may be sent to the LWVOA office.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Eva Packard

In June, the LWVOA Board set goals in the areas of Voter Service, Program Studies, Advocacy, Membership, Visibility, and Fundraising. Activity has occurred or is in process in each area.

Previous VOTERs talked about our significant **Voter Service** activity to provide Voter Guides and Candidate Forums for the elections this past Fall for villages, cities, and school districts. We are beginning to plan for 2008.

For **Program**, we held several meetings and took Consensus on the national Immigration Study and will be submitting our input to LWVUS. We held a background meeting on the state study on Local Government and will be taking Consensus in February. (The next VOTER will contain a report on the 11/15 meeting and the Consensus questions.) We will do National Program Planning over brunch on **January 12th**. See Page 7.

Members have written **Advocacy** letters on topics such as the state fiscal crisis, children's health care and other state and national topics. LWVOA sent letters of support to the papers for the Novi Library Bond Proposal.

We are beginning to implement the **Membership** Recruitment Initiative and working on a full calendar of events that will draw potential members with an interest in areas of League involvement such as issues, government, and voting.

Encourage those you know to attend our **January 28th Town Hall** with the leaders of both houses of the Michigan Legislature. See Pages 3 and 4. Let us know if you would like an invitation with information about it sent to an organization.

League has **Visibility** in the community for our voter service activities. Events such as our Public Service Announcement Contest for high school students have increased our visibility in the community and with the media. See Page 5 on the **January 17th PSA Award Banquet**.

Fundraising to-date has included the Dream Cruise, the September luncheon, and managing an election at the Italian-American Club which together have brought us about \$2100 or essentially what we budgeted to receive from projects.

It is contributions, however, which provide the bulk of funds for our activities so it is now time to turn our attention to our **Finance Drive** as well as efforts to get corporate sponsors for voter service activities such as our eight *They Represent You* brochures and our 2008 biennial Voter Guides.

Soon you will be receiving a letter asking for a financial contribution to LWVOA. As our dues mostly go to cover our per-member-payments to the national, state, and area Leagues, we need your help for all our other expenses. Our finance drive is vital to having sufficient funds to carry out our activities – both for voter service (checks mailed to LWVOA but payable to LWV Education Fund) and for advocacy and operational expenses (checks payable to LWV Oakland Area). **We would appreciate your support.** Also, if you have any suggestions for businesses to approach, let me know.

 pres@lwvoa.org

“As an LWV member, you are a part of an organization where citizens like you are actively engaged in effecting change on the local, state and national level.”

Town Hall Meeting with Legislative Leaders

We are fortunate to have in Southeast Michigan the leaders of each house of the Michigan Legislature. Both **Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop** of Rochester and **House Speaker Andy Dillon** of Redford Twp. have agreed to speak and answer questions about legislative issues on **Monday, January 28 at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills**. Co-sponsors of this Town Hall are OCC and the Leagues of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne County and Oakland Area.

The Moderator for the forum will be LWV of Michigan Past-President Connie Ferguson of Kalamazoo. Questions will come from a panel and from the audience, and both men will speak to each question. The panel will consist of OCC Political Science Professor Gerald Faye, a League leader, and a member of the media. Questions will alternate between a panel member and the audience. Audience questions will be submitted in writing and asked by the Moderator.

The State budget, taxes and state spending have been major news items in 2007 and our two speakers have played a leading role in the decisions made. This is your chance to ask them about those issues and more. The meeting is for the general public. The Smith Theatre holds more than 400 people. Please **tell your friends, relatives, colleagues and neighbors and invite them to attend**. We plan to fill the auditorium.

Go to www.oaklandcc.edu/Maps/ORcampus to see and print a map of the OCC-OR campus. It is just south of I696 at the Orchard Lake Rd. exit. There is a small lot for disabled parking adjacent to Lot 2. Closest main lot for the Smith Theatre is Parking Lot 1C.

See Page 4 for a biography of each Legislative Leader.

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VULNERABLE FOR A RECALL BY DOING THEIR JOB?

LWVMI state president **Jessica Reiser** issued the following statement to the press:

"The League of Women Voters believes in representative government, with legislators not elected to vote the will of a particular constituency, but to consider options and make the best decisions for their constituents and for the state. We believe that legislators should be accountable to the voters for their decisions at the ballot box on a regular basis.

The League also believes that there is a role for recall elections, which can be used to oust a legislator in the case of malfeasance or gross incompetence – in other words, for wrong-doing., Recalls or threats of recall for retaliation for a particular vote, however unpopular, undermine this representative government, are expensive to administer and don't produce "better" results.

Voters can hold their representatives accountable at the next regularly scheduled election on November 4, 2008. In the meantime, the society that we call Michigan can continue to operate, and people can get on with their lives."

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Me? Run for Office???

LWVOA will again partner with the Women Officials' Network (WON) plus AAUW to produce two programs encouraging citizens to run for office. The First United Methodist Church in Birmingham will co-sponsor and be the site of the first program, **"Me? Run for Office???, taking the first step to local government leadership"** on Saturday morning, February 9, 2008. Keynote Speaker will be State Senator Gilda Jacobs. Panelists will be Marcia Gershenson (Oakland County Commission), JoAnne McShane (Farmington Council), Debbie Macon (West Bloomfield Board of Trustees) and Geri Rinschler (Birmingham School Board).

The second program titled **"The Nuts & Bolts of Running for Public Office"** will be held Saturday, March 8, 2008, and will include lunch and speakers on organizing a campaign, raising and reporting money, and the media. A fee will be charged for this program.



Senate Majority Leader Michael Bishop

Michael Bishop is in his final term as State Senator representing the 12th District – eight cities and five townships in northeast Oakland County. Following the 2006 election, he was chosen to be the leader of the Senate. Before being elected to the State Senate, he served two terms in the Michigan House of Representatives.

Senator Bishop's top priorities are first, resolving the budget crisis; then lowering the cost of health care for Michigan families; consolidating and restructuring state government to find savings; and, finally, protecting our natural resources from pollution and out-of-state trash.

This is Bishop's second four-year term in the Senate. In the 93rd Legislature, he was assistant majority leader and chaired the Banking and Financial Institutions Committee and was vice chair of the Gaming & Casino Oversight and Judiciary committees. As majority leader he chairs the Government Operations Committee.

During his four-year tenure (1999-2003) in the House, Bishop served as vice chairman of the Commerce Committee and as a member of the committees on Energy & Technology, Criminal Justice and Redistricting & Elections. He was also appointed to chair the Commerce Subcommittee on Banking & Finance, the Congressional Redistricting Subcommittee and the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules.

Bishop is a licensed attorney and realtor and served as president of his own realty firm.



House Speaker Andy Dillon

Andy Dillon was elected to his first term in the Michigan House in 2004 in a special election for the 17th District to fill a vacancy, and retained his seat for Redford Twp. and parts of two northern Wayne County cities in the general election.

His focus in the House:

- Dillon authored a plan that anchored an economic stimulus package to raise and set aside money – without new debt – to create and retain good-paying jobs of the 21st Century and diversify Michigan's economy.
- Consumer protection.
- Making health-care more affordable
- Engineered an agreement between Detroit Diesel and state and local governments to expand, create hundreds of new jobs and improve major roads in Redford.

Before the House:

- President of DSC Ltd. (formerly McLouth Steel). A business executive since 1995 with a reputation as a savior of struggling companies. Testified before the federal government on protecting manufacturing jobs. Worked with state and local governments to improve the quality of life in Redford, preserve jobs and bring business to Michigan.
- Aide to Democratic U.S. Sen. Bill Bradley of New Jersey.
- Redford Planning Commission member
- Magistrate, 17th District Court
- Ran a local law practice for seven years.

Dillon has degrees in accounting and law.



The Award Banquet!

Let's Support our Young People, help the League and have Fun!

Plans for LWVOA's PSA (public service announcement) award banquet are forging ahead. The PSA Award Banquet will be held at the wonderful Rock Financial Showplace in Novi in the beautiful Diamond Center on Thursday, January 17, 2008, at 6:00 pm. Catering will be provided by the famous "Epoch Events Catering".

PSA Award Banquet Menu

Artisan Bread & Whipped Butter
 Salad of Mixed Greens, Grape Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Carrots & Radishes
 Choice of Ranch and Italian Dressing

Chicken Marsala Sautéed Breast of Chicken with wild Mushroom Marsala Sauce
 Accompanied by Roasted Red Skin Potatoes and Garlic Green Beans

Vegetarian Selection
 Portabella Mushroom Raviolis with Roasted Garlic Cream Sauce
 Accompanied by Garlic Green Beans

Chocolate Cake with Fresh Berries
 Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee & Tea Service

The LWVOA Youth PSA Contest was created by P.J. Royale, in what we plan to be an annual event. The contest ran from October 1 to November 2, 2007. Although the number of contestants was smaller than hoped for, the quality of the entries was high; and the contest has provided a good foundation on which we can build next year.

The winners will be announced at the banquet where the PSA's will be shown. High school students from Berkley, Bloomfield Hills Andover, Novi and Walled Lake Western prepared nine entries. Prizes are \$500 for 1st place, an iPod for 2nd place and bowling tickets for Lucky Strike Entertainment in Novi for 3rd place.

Judging occurred at the Lucky Strike Entertainment facility (one of the sponsors of the contest) at the Fountain Walk in Novi on November 28, with Deb Horner computing the judges' ballots. **A blue-ribbon panel of judges consisted of:**

Dan Alpert, PBS COO/GM	Roger Avie, Vi-Spec Video Production President
Steve Wasserman, WDIV-Ch 4 Vice President/GM	Raymond Malover, Vi-Spec Video Production
Rich Homberg, WWJ 950 Vice President/GM	Eva Packard, LWVOA President
Jayne Bower, WWJ 950 News Anchor	Randa Keener, LWVOA Board
Sam Sclafani, Comcast,	Deb Horner, LWVOA Board
Margaret Hall, Southfield School Board Trustee	Erica Folks, youth new voter Leah Folks, 15 yr. old youth judge

Don't miss this event. The registration form is on page 7, so send in your reservation now! The cost increases after January 7. For your convenience, the LWVOA website, www.lwvoa.org, has a feature where you can purchase your tickets for the banquet by credit card. For questions, call the LWVOA office at 248/548-1097. Everyone is welcome. There will be door prizes.

Presidential Candidate Voter Guide

LWVUS, with the help of the Maryland, Virginia, and National Capitol Area Leagues, is producing a Voter Guide for the 2008 Presidential candidates. Only candidates that meet the LWVUS criteria were invited to provide answers to the LWVUS questionnaire.

The criteria for inclusion required that (1) a candidate must have made a public announcement of intention to run for his/her party's nomination for President and (2) that the candidate met the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act's minimum contribution threshold requirements for qualifying for matching funds, based on most recent data publicly available on the FEC website as of October 5, 2007.

Candidates were advised that the material will appear in print and on VOTE411.org and state/local League Web sites that choose to incorporate it. LWVOA will link to the LWVUS Voter Guide which is expected to be available by January 2008 for the Presidential Primary season.

Questions Asked of the Qualifying Candidates:

- Question 1: What should be done, if anything, at the federal level to reduce our use of and dependence on fossil fuels?
- Question 2: What should be our short-term and long-term goals in Iraq and the Middle East?
- Question 3: What should the federal government do, if anything, to ensure that every American has health coverage?
- Question 4: Please explain why you do or do not support setting spending limits for political campaigns and providing a set amount of public funding for all candidates who agree to take no private contributions.
- Question 5: What should the federal government do about immigration?

MICHIGAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

On **Tuesday, January 15, 2008**, Michigan voters will have to specify whether they want a Democratic or Republican ballot for the Presidential Primary. Each political party will receive a list of the voters that asked for their ballot. No permanent record will be kept by the government of your choice and it will, therefore, not restrict your party option for future primaries.

There are 4 Democrats on the ballot: Hillary Clinton, Chris Dodd, Mike Gravel, Dennis Kucinich. The other 4 candidates asked that their names be removed from the ballot. The national Democratic Party had said that Michigan's convention delegates will not be seated because the Primary was moved into January.

There are 8 Republicans on the ballot: Rudy Giuliani, Mike Huckabee, Duncan Hunter, John McCain, Ron Paul, Mitt Romney, Tom Tancredo, Fred Thompson. The national Republican Party has said that only half of Michigan's convention delegates will be seated because the Primary was moved into January.

If you vote by Absentee Ballot, you will have to choose the party ballot that you want sent to you. You may also be asked whether you want to continue to normally receive Absentee Voter (AV) application request forms. A court ruling which precluded the city of Detroit from mailing AV applications automatically has put in question the practice of clerks sending AV applications automatically to voters 60 and over without authorization from them.

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Continued from page 1 - National Program Planning

Brunch and National Program Planning

Saturday, January 12, 9:30 am

Home of Vicki Lange

See membership directory or call the office for directions.

Program planning is your opportunity to suggest topics for study and to comment on existing positions. See www.lwv.org and click on **Issues** to learn about the many positions that the League has in the areas of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy.

If you can bring a dish for the potluck brunch, contact Bernadette Najor at bnajor1@yahoo.com.

Combining League business with a pleasant social event makes this a perfect time to invite a friend!

Map to Rock Financial Showplace in Novi

REGISTRATION FORM

LWVOA Student PSA Contest Award Banquet

Thursday, January 17, 6 pm

Rock Financial Showplace, 46100 Grand River Ave., Novi, MI 48374

Name(s) _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip code _____

Cost before 1/07/08: Adults \$25 / Students \$20

Number of Adults attending @\$25: _____ Sub-totals _____

Number of Students attending: @\$20: _____

Cost after 1/07/08: Adults \$35/ Students \$30

Number of Adults attending @\$35: _____

Number of Students attending @\$30: _____

Number of Vegetarian Dinners _____ Total Amount Enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to LWVOA and mail to:

200 S. Washington Ave., Suite 4, Royal Oak, MI 48067

For information call: 248/548-1097



The League of Women Voters Oakland Area
 200 S. Washington Ave., Suite 4
 Royal Oak, MI 48067

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Time Dated Material Enclosed

Calendar of Events

- Sat. Jan. 12 9:30 am Brunch and National Program Planning General Meeting**
Home of Vicki Lange

- Tue. Jan. 15 7 am-8pm Michigan Presidential Primary (See Page 6.)

- Thurs. Jan. 17 6 pm LWVOA Student PSA Contest Award Banquet**, Rock Financial Showplace,
Diamond Center, 46100 Grand River Ave., Novi, MI 48374
Adults \$25 / Students \$20 before 1/07/08; \$35/\$30 after 1/07/08.
Registration Form on Page 7.

- Mon. Jan. 28 7 pm Town Hall with Senator Majority Leader Mike Bishop
and House Speaker Andy Dillon**
Oakland Community College – Orchard Ridge campus in Smith Theatre
27055 Orchard Lake Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48334
Co-sponsors: LWV Northwest Wayne County, OCC

- Sat. Feb. 9 9 am **Me? Run for Public Office???** with Panel of local elected women officials.
First United Methodist Church, 1589 W. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009
Co-sponsors: Women Officials’ Network (WON), AAUW, FUMC

- Mon. Feb. 11 7 pm **State Local Government Consensus + LWV League Birthday Party**
- Mon. Feb. 25 7 pm LWVOA Board Meeting
- Sat. Mar. 8 9 am **The Nuts and Bolts of Running for Public Office** with WON, AAUW
- Sat. Apr. 12 10 am Michigan State Budget Analysis and Look to the Future
By LWV Detroit Metropolitan Area at Southfield Public Library
- Sat. May 31 9:30 am **LWVOA Annual Meeting** at Shenandoah Country Club, West Bloomfield

"LWV: Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement."