

**League of Women Voters-GTA
Annual Board of Directors Retreat
June 25, 2016**

Present: J. Warren, B. Newson, M. Beeker, I. Kurt, D. Hornberger, L. Messing, L. Crandall, P. Laarman, M. Grover, B. Berry, I. Brophy, A. Geht, P. Townsend, A. Montgomery

Welcome offered by Jan. She reminded the Board that June 25 marks the day in 2013 that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on the Shelby County vs. Holder decision that invalidated Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, which required that states get federal approval before changing their voting rules, a decision that has proved to be a serious setback to voting rights. She also shared information and hand-outs from the LWVUS national convention. She reported that two positions were adopted at the convention:

- 1. Support redistricting processes and enforceable standards that promote fair and effective representation at all levels of government with maximum opportunity for public participation.***
- 2. Every U.S. resident should have access to affordable, quality in- and out- patient behavioral health care, including needed medications and supportive services that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care.***

No new programs were adopted by LWVUS. Focus will continue to be on the 2014-16 theme of Making Democracy Work for All: Voter protection and mobilization; Election reform; Money in politics, Amending the Constitution and Redistricting.

Minutes: The April 11 minutes were approved with no corrections.

Treasurer's Report: Liz reported that \$13,281.30 is in the LWVGTA bank account. The Education Fund balance is \$6319.41. The Parsons Law Firm paid for the printing of "They Represent You" - Grand Traverse Area booklets. The business from Kalkaska Co. hasn't paid their share yet for the pamphlets covering that county. Liz contacted them, but has had no response.

PayPal Report: Mary B. explained that \$2.04 would be charged for the dues payment through PayPal, which would reduce the \$5.00 the League makes on the dues payments once the state and LWVUS Per Member Payments are deducted. Jan's research on the topic showed that some local Leagues charge more to pay through PayPal. Mary G. moved and Donna seconded that PayPal be offered as an option to pay League dues. Discussion highlighted that younger people would probably prefer using PayPal. It was also brought up that Christmas wreaths might be paid for through PayPal. However, Liz explained how difficult it is to do paperwork for the Ed. Fund so using PayPal for that purpose might add to the difficulty. Donna moved and Linda seconded to charge \$3.00 to use PayPal. Discussion continued as to whether we should charge a percentage for PayPal instead, if the dues amount increased. The idea to raise the fee amount was suggested. Liz and Mary B. will do research and report back to the Board. Motion carried.

Annual Meeting Debriefing: The change to a brunch seemed to be well received. Many thanks to Bev for how successful the annual meeting was. Many thanks also to Ingrid for finding an excellent and informative speaker for our program. Ann G. will put a survey about preferences for next year's annual meeting in "The Voter" to see what option the membership likes best.

Library Committee: Based on the Library Committee's research, Donna moved and Mary G. seconded to have a Letter to the Editor from the LWV-GTA supporting the library millage to be voted on Aug. 2, 2016. Motion carried.

Membership Update: Donna reported two new family memberships. One member has chosen not to renew. 50 members have paid their 2016-17 dues thus far. Donna will send out reminders to those who haven't renewed their membership.

Programs: A suggestion was made to have a Campaign Finance topic review.

Vina Mikesel contacted Jan about a program on plastics in Lake Michigan. She is a delegate to the League of Women Voters of Lake Michigan and plans to contact a person who can speak on the topic. Jan will talk to Vina to find out more details about the program and possible presenters.

Discussion took place about a possible mid-Sept. program. Ingrid will check on dates. Anne M. mentioned a possible tour of the American Waste Recycling Plant.

Another suggestion was a program on the various positions taken concerning TBAISD funding. Previous discussions have suggested a program on opiate addiction.

Voter Services: A voter registration drive was held at TADL on June 22 from 10 - 5P.M. and on June 23 from 4 - 8P.M. Seven voters registered. Most were new, young voters. Several people stopped to check if they were registered or to ask questions about the primary election and absentee ballots. Bonnie Scheele helped for a few hours as well as sending a deputy clerk each day to help register voters and to answer questions. During the drive, we learned from the clerks that many citizens have difficulties when voting, especially senior citizens. They told us how important it is to get information out to them as to the help that can be legally provided to seniors or disabled voters. Bonnie's and her deputies' help and information sharing was greatly appreciated as were the League members who volunteered each day. The consensus of those who participated was that future TADL voter registration drives would be a good idea even if they only resulted in providing information to voters.

A suggestion was made to check with Friday Night Live (DDA) about having a voter registration booth set up by League. Another suggestion concerned possibly providing voter information to area senior residence communities or senior citizen groups.

A 104th Michigan House District Candidate Forum is planned for July 14 at Garfield Twp. Hall. A forum sponsored by the Veterans Coalition took place on June 24. UpNorthTV has it available on their station.

A 104th House District General Election Forum is planned along with a 1st Congressional District General Election Forum. The 1st Congressional forum may be co-sponsored with the Leelanau League and the International Affairs Forum. TCAPS school board candidate interviews and NMC Board of Trustees candidate interviews or a forum are being considered.

Peg had new LWVGTA signs made by The Copy Shop. Two signify voter registration drives by LWVGTA and 4 identify LWVGTA and can be placed outside of program venues or forum venues.

Mary B. gave a report on creating the local Vote411 website. Inputting and contacting candidates who hadn't responded or had trouble using it took many hours. LWVMI takes care of state level candidates. Anne M. created a spreadsheet of the candidates' information to help Mary with her work. We greatly appreciate the time and effort put forth by Mary and Anne.

Benzie Unit: The Center for Michigan's Community Conversation will be sponsored by the Benzie Unit at the Frankfort City Hall from 6:30-8P.M. on Sept. 14. The Center is putting these forums on around the state to collect

citizen input regarding issues facing the state of Michigan as well as possible solutions to them. Jan suggested carpooling to the event which will happen after the Sept. 14 Board of Directors meeting. An online guide to the forum is on The Center's website. Thanks to the Benzie Unit for hosting this important event.

Nominating Committee: Donna nominated and Mary G. seconded Linda Crandall as the Board representative on the 2017 nominating committee which includes Nancy Crandall, and Jane Watts. Motion carried.

Community Requests: North Country Community Mental Health Services asked for an LWVGTA speaker to present information on voting at their August conference for their clients. Jan volunteered to speak and to answer questions. Donna and Anne M. volunteered to participate with Jan. They will take along voter registration application forms.

Fundraisers/Events: Hosting a Parade of Homes house went well. Board members who volunteered really enjoyed their experience. The builder of the home, Brian Terhune, had asked for LWVGTA to be the host. We received \$600 from the Builders Association for hosting. The Board wishes to continue hosting so we will apply again for next year. Bev and Ingrid deserve many thanks for organizing this event and for making it a success. Thank you also to the members who filled the hosting spots at our assigned home.

Ingrid and Anne M. volunteered to head the 2016 wreath sale. Orders will need to be in by Nov. 11. Wreaths will be delivered on Nov. 18 and must be picked up on Nov. 19. Notice of the wreath sale will be in the Sept. issue of "The Voter". Ingrid praised the people who create the wreaths. We will use them again this year.

Marilyn Jaquish has volunteered to host the Holiday Open House again. Thank you, Marilyn! Dec. 4 is the selected date, and we will ask Marilyn the time she prefers. Linda will head the refreshments/decorating committee with help from Ingrid and Donna. Peg and Ann G. will help with clean up.

Report on the LWVUS Convention: 478 delegates from 48 states along with Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgins attended. At the convention, the delegates were reminded that LWV is the last living legacy of the struggle for women's voting rights.

Donna went to a session about a model for becoming a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. It would eliminate dividing the League and the Ed. fund which has a 503(c) 4 identity. LWVMI plans to research the idea. Jan went to a session offering a parliamentary procedure update.

Changes to League by-laws were hotly contested. The new by-law wording states that "any person 16 or over who pays dues may vote as part of the LWV. LWVGTA by-laws don't reflect that wording. We can change the wording in our by-laws without a membership vote.

New Business: Ann G. asked if LWVGTA could establish a scholarship for those who can't afford dues. She thought it might draw more young people.

Board meetings will be scheduled for the second Wed. of the month from 12 - 2P.M. Location needs to be determined. Anne M. will check on Grace Episcopal Church. The first Board meeting will be on Sept. 14 from 12 - 2P.M.

A very grateful thank you to Anne M. for hosting our annual retreat.

Respectfully submitted by, Peg Townsend