



League of Women Voters of the Lansing Area Jackson Unit

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvotersjacksonmi

APRIL 2017 NEWSLETTER

EMAIL US AT: LeagueWVJackson@gmail.com

Calendar

May



Throughout May

Issue Groups continue work

2 Election Day

Vote

8 Lansing Speaker Series

Path to Public Service: the Advocacy

Perspective – Pat Sorenson

11:30–1:00pm

Hall of Fame Café Lansing

17 League May Luncheon

Issue Groups Report.

1:00-2:30pm

Hard Knock Grill, Order off menu

Ann Arbor Rd. Jackson

18 JXN Community Forum

Downtown Development Report Card,

Patrick Burch, Jackson City Manager

6:30 - 8:30pm

Carnegie Library Auditorium

19-21 LWV State Convention

MSU Campus, East Lansing

24 Discussion Group

Voter Registration Modernization

2:00 – 3:00pm

Bigby Coffee East Side Conference Room

Now Through 27 Prison Art

University of Michigan's Prison Creative

Arts Project and SONS: Seeing the

Modern African American Male

Ella Sharp Museum

June

14 Jackson League Annual Meeting

Topic: Becoming an Independent League

2:00 – 4:00pm

Meijer Library East Side, Community Rm

21 Discussion Group

Voting Equipment

2:00 – 3:00pm

Clark Lake Beach & Boat Club

Throughout June

Issue Groups continue to work and

implement Action Plans

May 2 Elections

In 63 counties. Jackson County elections:

City of Jackson

Blackman Township

Grass Lake Charter Township

Hanover-Horton School District

Jackson ISD

Jonesville Community Schools

Spring Arbor Township

Go to your clerk's website to see your ballot.

Wednesday May 17 League Luncheon
1:00pm – 2:30pm Hard Knock Grill
Order from menu Individual checks
Interim Reports from Issue Groups
Each table focuses discussion on one of the Issues

Join your fellow members for an educational lunch on a number of important issues that the Jackson Unit is pursuing. Issue Groups will present brief reports to the entire group on their work and findings. If you have particular interest in one of the topics, be sure to sit at that "Topic Table" where Issue Group Members will guide discussion and answer questions.

- **VOTER RIGHTS AND PROTECTION:** Redistricting
- **CRIMINAL JUSTICES REFORM:** Challenges for Parolees
- **ENVIRONMENT PRESERVATION:** Class A Biosolids
- **PUBLIC EDUCATION:** Civic education in grade/ high schools
- **LOCAL GOVERNMENT:** County Government Structures; how to contact your elected officials

If we are to make a difference we need to be informed. Come. Learn. You will be proud of the work of your fellow League members. And you may find the future plans of a group offer an activity in which you choose to participate.

Important Millage Votes May 2:

Lifeways - first millage to cover unprecedented reduction in funding. Read about it <https://hsca45.wildapricot.org/resources/Pictures/LIFEWAYS%20Jackson%20County%20Commission%20Presentation-1.pdf> See proposal on page 2 below - The area highlighted in yellow is required on city ballots and is not specific to this issue. Also on the ballot - ISD replacement millage for special education services.

Book Club Morphs Into Discussion Group

May 24
Bigby Coffee East Side
Crrn Michigan & Dettman

First Topic: Voting Rights & Elections

The Book Club decided to focus on contemporary topics offering recent research and reports to read, review and discuss. We will read recent articles and papers on a given topic affecting our current lives. A list of suggested articles will be provided but members are welcome to find additional materials to read and suggest them to members to add to a well-rounded review and discussion of a topic. Go to the links provided and you will find a plethora of information. Read what you are comfortable with & come join the discussion.

Focus: Voter Registration Modernization (VRM)



Information at **The Brennan Center for Justice:**

VRM link: <http://www.brennancenter.org/voter-registration-modernization>

Voter Registration for the 21st Century: <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/fact-sheet-voter-registration-21st-century>

Additional Info links: <https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/voting-rights-elections>

Automatic Voter Registration: <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/automatic-voter-registration>

The Heritage Center: Voting Online is Not in the Foreseeable Future:

<http://origin.heritage.org/research/commentary/2014/5/voting-online-is-not-in-the-foreseeable-future?ac=1>

PEW Center on the States: Voter Registration Modernization

<http://www.ncsl.org/documents/legismgt/becker.pdf>

Welcome 2017 New Members

Bobbie Bryant

Remember— Even if you don't have time for active participation, your membership and donations strengthen our ability to serve our community!

THIS IS DEMOCRACY



Frances Perkins
Wilson was an American sociologist and workers-rights advocate. She served as the U.S. Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945. She was the first woman appointed to the U.S. Cabinet by a United States President.

June Meeting First Annual League Meeting.

The Independent League Committee will review steps for Jackson to become an independent league, seek your input on elements of the process and membership will vote on some facets. This is your chance to help shape our local league. Don't miss it. Library Ease Side Meijer Branch

LWV Michigan State Convention May 19 – 21 Lansing, MI

All members are welcome. You may choose to attend the entire convention or only a specific workshop on Friday or Saturday. Topics include: Voter Registration, Natural Resources Update, Moderator Training, From Program to Advocacy, League fundraising, Engaging our Membership. For more details go to the State website – lwvmi.org or contact Mary Lee or see March Newsletter



League Mission: The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan 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.

Questions: Email Mary Lee at LeaguwvJackson@gmail.com or Call 517-782-0964

New Voting Machines Coming

From Secretary of State of Michigan

The State of Michigan has approved purchase and replacement of a new voting system statewide. Local clerks will be purchasing voting equipment from approved voting system sources. Our current voting machines are 10 years and older.

New contracts for equipment and servicing will be for a 10 year term. The initial purchase includes 5 years of service and maintenance. Currently available Federal/State funding of \$40 million should cover the majority of the expected cost of the initial 5 year period statewide.

Equipment to be purchased includes:

- Tabulators – one per precinct
- Accessible voting devices for use by voters with disabilities – one per polling place
- Election Management System (EMS) software

Each local clerk, in consultation with the state, will choose the system that best fits with their requirements. **The new machines will have a staggered roll-out.** Precincts that have an August election will get the new equipment for August. The rest of the precincts will debut in 2018.

Fulfilling Our Mission to be Informed and Active Citizens

With so much recent controversy over our election process, equipment and veracity, League members have a great opportunity to fulfill our mission by learning all we can about Michigan's voting system.

The City Clerk's office has offered to give League Members a demonstration of the new equipment. I hope everyone will participate in this civic event once it is set up. Stay tuned.

Prior to the demonstration we are educating ourselves on this topic via our Discussion Group. See details above and below.

COUNTY PROPOSALS on May Ballot City of Jackson

JACKSON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES MILLAGE PROPOSAL

For the purpose of providing mental health services for Jackson County residents, shall the Constitutional limitation upon the total amount of taxes which shall be assessed in one (1) year upon all property within the County of Jackson, Michigan, be increased, and shall the County be authorized to levy, up to 0.50 mill (\$0.50 per \$1,000 of Taxable Value) for a period of ten (10) years, 2018 through 2027, inclusive.

If approved and levied in full, this millage will raise an estimated \$2,000,158 for providing funds for mental health services in the first calendar year of the levy based on taxable value. If approved and levied, in accordance with State law a portion of the millage may be distributed to the Downtown Development Authorities of the City of Jackson, the Villages of Grass Lake and Springport, and the Townships of Blackman and Leoni; the Local Development Finance Authorities of the Village of Parma and the Township of Blackman; and the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority of the City of Jackson.

View both City of Jackson ballots at: <https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/MVIC/PublicBallot.aspx>

June 21 Clark Lake Beach & Boat Club Summer Discussion Group - Topic #2: Voter Registration Modernization

Focus: **Voter Registration Modernization (VRM) - emphasis on Voting Equipment**

The Brennan Center for Justice:

1. <https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/voting-rights-elections>
2. **Voting Machines and Ballot Design:**
<https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/ballot-design-machines>
3. <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/voting-problems-present-2016-further-study-needed-determine-impact>
4. **Electronic Poll Books** <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/vrm-states-electronic-poll-books>
5. **Status in Michigan** <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/vrm-states-michigan>

The Center for Public Integrity:

6. Democracy Inaction: Old Equipment & Partisan Battles Threaten Voting Integrity
<https://www.publicintegrity.org/2015/08/27/17899/democracy-inaction-old-equipment-and-partisan-battles-threaten-election-integrity>