



Summer 2025

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"The Times They Are A-Changin'" rings as loud today, as it did when first released in 1964. I find it interesting as it was based on Irish and Scottish ballads. Two groups who knew a thing about oppression and civil unrest. It seems that daily there is a new "enemy" targeted. So, What Can I Do? We can keep informed of what is truth and what is conspiracy. We can contact our legislators, local, state, and federal, reminding them to do their duty and honor the Constitution. Remember that this is YOUR League. If you hear of a group/church/neighborhood organization interested in learning who/what/when/where to find the truth, let us know. Read the missives from not only the LWVMI and LWVUS, but our own emails of What Can I Do?

Remember the date, August 18th. It was on this date in 1920, when Tennessee, yes a southern state, voted and ratified the 19th Amendment. They did it by a single vote! Honor that day by wearing your LWVJA name tag. Wear it to the grocery store. Wear it to physical therapy. Wear it to start a conversation with others about our organization, how long we have stood, and what we continue to stand for. Wear it proudly for the thousands of unnamed women who stepped out of their comfort zone to fight for what they were denied.

Please check out our "wanted" list. We have a committee for everyone.

Linda Furgason
Deborah Nagy
Co-Presidents
League of Women Voters Jackson Area

2025 Calendar July

28th Monday Book Club 5-6:30 p.m. Carnegie Library
Auditorium, Book: While Justice Sleeps by Stacey
Abrams

August

5th Tuesday, Primary Elections Jackson 3rd Ward City Council
6th Anniversary of Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibits racial
discrimination in voting

14th Thursday 5:00pm-7:00pm New Member Meet and Greet,
New Members please **RSVP** to thulinru@gmail.com

14th Thursday 7:00pm Zoom LWVMI President's Meeting

16th Saturday 2:00-6:00pm Jackson Pride Fest, LWVJA Table,
Downtown Jackson

18th Monday 105th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment
Ratification by TN by a single vote!

21st Thursday 10:00am – 11:30am LWVJA Board Meeting,
Ella Sharp Museum

September

1st Monday **Labor Day**

18th Thursday 10:00am-11:30am LWVJA Board Meeting, Ella
Sharp Museum

18th Thursday 7:00pm - Zoom LWVMI President's Meeting

22nd Monday LWVJA Book Club 5:00pm-6:30 pm Carnegie
Library Auditorium, Book: All the Light We Cannot
See by Anthony Doerr



September can't

3rd week LWVJA General Meeting

October

6th Monday 10th Anniversary Member Retreat 10a.m.-
2p.m. Meijer Branch Library see page 3

13th Monday Columbus Day

16th Thursday 10:00am-11:30am LWVJA Board Meeting,
Ella Sharp Museum

16th Thursday 7:00pm Zoom LWVMI President's Meeting

24th Noon-1:00pm- ZOOM MLD LWVJA Board Meeting

31st Friday, **Halloween**

Upcoming Events:

TBD Movie for Grownups, Michigan Theatre
Flatiron Block Party

Nov 8th Saturday, Friendship Tea, 120N Jackson St

Dec 4th Thursday, Holiday Party, TBD

May 2026 Symposium Fraud in the Era of
Artificial Intelligence

The Aug 9th Block Party has been changed to
October—stay tuned for the specific times & date

Spotlight on Lola Dodge: A Legacy of Civic Engagement and Mentorship

By Sheryl Rose & Marge Duane

In this League of Women Voters Jackson Area newsletter, we shine a light on Lola Dodge a League Life Member and a dedicated member whose journey with the League has spanned several decades. Lola's story is one of unwavering commitment to civic engagement, mentorship, and community involvement.

Lola Dodge joined the League of Women Voters in the late 1950s, and her involvement has been nothing short of remarkable. She has held various leadership roles, including local Board secretary, treasurer, and director. Lola told her colleagues that she would do any job except president, and she did do most LWV jobs. Finally, she agreed to be a co-president and later president for a brief time. She served on the LWVMI board, co-chairing committees on energy and health care. In the early 70's, during the energy crisis, the state and national LWV were very active in educating and advocating about energy, and Lola became quite an expert. Her dedication to these issues highlights her passion for addressing critical issues that impact our community.

Lola's League involvement has taken her to state and national conventions where she represented our local League and contributed to important discussions. Her enthusiasm for meeting and conventions is evident; she often attended these as a proxy for the president, ensuring that the League's voice was heard. She went to Russia in the late 80's, along with LWVJA members Fran Parker a Life Member, then LWVMI president, and Peg Eaton who is also a Life Member on a LWVMI sponsored trip.

Born and raised in Jackson County, Lola's roots run deep. Despite spending time overseas due to her husband's work, she always returned to Jackson, where she continued her work with the League. She stayed informed and engaged even while abroad, speaking to her dedication to the LWV mission.

Mentorship has played a significant role in Lola's life. She credits many "nice ladies" who helped her throughout her career, particularly in her work as a librarian. She learned on the job. She worked as a branch librarian for the Jackson District Library, and served on the JDL board. For many years, she was in charge of the JDL Used Bookstore in the basement of the library annex next to the Carnegie Branch. If you had League business with her, you could usually find her there. Lola's experience underscores the importance the mentorship within the League, where members support and guide each other.

One of Lola's most passionate causes is voter turnout. She believes in the power of voting and has always encouraged others to exercise their right to vote. She was active in the many tasks of LWV Voter Service over the years. Her family's tradition of voting, with her mother being a Republican and her father a Democrat, instilled in her the importance of civic participation. Lola's advice to young people interested in activism is simple: find where you can work on something that matters to you. The League of Women Voters has partnered with the Girl Scouts of America, fostering mentorship and civic engagement among younger generations. At our most recent tea event, Girl Scouts served sandwiches and tea and engaged with League members to discuss and learn. This partnership is an example of the League's commitment to nurturing future leaders. Lola's story serves as an inspiration to all member of the League of Women Voters Jackson Area. We are grateful for Lola's contributions and the lasting impact she has had on our community.



Lola Dodge awarded her Life Membership the Annual Meeting in May 2023



MEMBER RETREAT - OCTOBER 6

Meijer Branch Library

10:00am – 2:00pm

Celebrate Reflect Learn Reset
Plan our Future

So much has changed since LWVJA was formed into our present iteration in February 2015. We have faced many challenges and made our presence known in the community. Almost 8 years ago when we reached official League status, we held a member retreat and reviewed where we were, what we were doing, where we wanted to go and our planning turned into actions. The first retreat was an inspiring time for our membership and so important because our volunteers are our lifeblood.

Now, it's time for a reset - your input and involvement are crucial. We are having a

10th Anniversary Retreat

in October and hope every member comes to participate.

At our fall retreat we will reflect on how far we have come, where we are and where we want to go. Our lives - American life - has changed greatly over the past 10 years. We will look at what is important to us, look at our resources, set priorities and move forward. What a time for member engagement, to have your voice heard, to be part of setting our direction!

Please make plans to come to our Fall Retreat. Lunch will be provided. See you there.

Would you like a contact email here or for an RSVP

Together We can Help to Make Democracy Work

Help Wanted – LWVJA Volunteers

Have a bit of spare time? Want to help out on a project either with others or at home when it is convenient for you? Check out some of the help we need. If interested or want to know more, just contact us at:

info@lwwjackson.org

Voter Services

looking for:
Members to work one or more 2-hour shifts after August and November Elections. Guidance provided. With this work you bear witness to the security and honesty of our elections.

Newsletter

looking for:
Help with scheduling, tracking and/or writing and suggesting content. Editing written copy also needed. Help laying out pages. Working with graphics.

Member Services

Looking for creative person to help decorate our award-winning Christmas tree at Michigan Theater. Just need a couple hours around end of November

Youth Outreach is expanding

Now presenting program to middle school students for 3rd year on **My Democracy/My Vote**. Need assistants to hand out items and help as needed. Or be trained to present. We can only expand with new volunteers. Can sign up for a day, a 6 session program at one school or other options.

Communications needs

Photos of our events. Snap photo on your phone and send to us

Co-Presidents NEED HELP!!!

Zoom – scheduling meetings
Website – management
Facebook – support and know-how
Instagram – ditto
Threads – ditto – so ditto
Bluesky – extra ditto
Twitter/X – beyond us and looking for help in getting started

Co-Presidents & Member Services

Seek help in planning and handling social activities like our Christmas Party, special meetings and events. Deciding room set up including décor from tabletop to centerpieces, handle sign-in sheets and greet guests. If you have a forte in any or all of these activities, we would love whatever help and time you can offer.

We have something for everyone!

You can work alone or with a group.

One off or join a committee.
Ongoing or one-off.

Save the Date

Seventh Annual Friendship Tea

An energy packed event of enjoyment

Saturday, Nov 8, 2025 10:30 a.m. til 1:00 p.m.

First Congregational Church 120 N Jackson

Silent Auction

10:30 a.m. til 12:30 p.m.

Estate Jewelry

10:30 a.m. til 1:15 p.m.

Friendship Tea

11:00 a.m. til 1:00 p.m.

Hostess Opportunities Available

Contact Deborah Nagy danangy@gmail.com

LWVJA Annual Friendship Tea

Saturday, November 8, 2025

What a perfect time to purge your jewelry box and home for silent auction items as well as jewelry! New or nearly new condition please

Scarves, fancy handkerchiefs and all kinds of jewelry are welcomed.

Items such as art, statuary, paintings, quilts, gift certificates & services would be wonderful for the Silent Auction.

Ask your friends, relatives and neighbors to donate. Everything has new life so this is a truly "green" event.

Please bring your jewelry or other donated items to any meeting of the LWVJA.

Or contact Linda Furgason : lindafurgason@gmail.com or 517-812-7965 for drop off or pick up. Silent Auction items to Shirley Zeller: seztowne@gmail.com Call 517-812-7965 to arrange drop off or pick up. Donations accepted until Nov. 1st, 2025.



LWVJA Annual Meeting: Renell Weathers gave us so much food for thought during her "Don't Take the Bait" speech many even took notes



Speaker Renell Weathers



The League of Women Voters Jackson Area held the Annual Meeting, June 12th, at the Carnegie District Library.

The guest speaker was Renell Weathers, Advocacy and Public Policy Consultant. Renell is also a member of the LWVJA. Her presentation, "Don't Take The Bait", was inspiring and informational. The members were enthralled by her words as shown by their intense expressions.

At this Annual Membership Meeting the following Board members were elected:

Roberta Sexton - Vice President; Nan Whitmore - Secretary

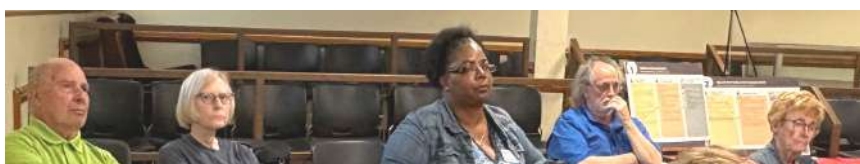
Pam Schultz - Treasurer (filling unexpired term through 2026)

Louvenia Shack Seals - Elected Director and Isabel Nazar - Elected Director

We are excited to welcome our new Board and look forward to the coming year.

We also, thanked the following members who have served the LWVJA, and whose terms ended. Their commitment and professionalism has helped to elevate our League in the community.

Ann Green - Vice President, Laurie Campbell - Secretary , Susan Murphy - Treasurer, Abigail Frew—Elected Director



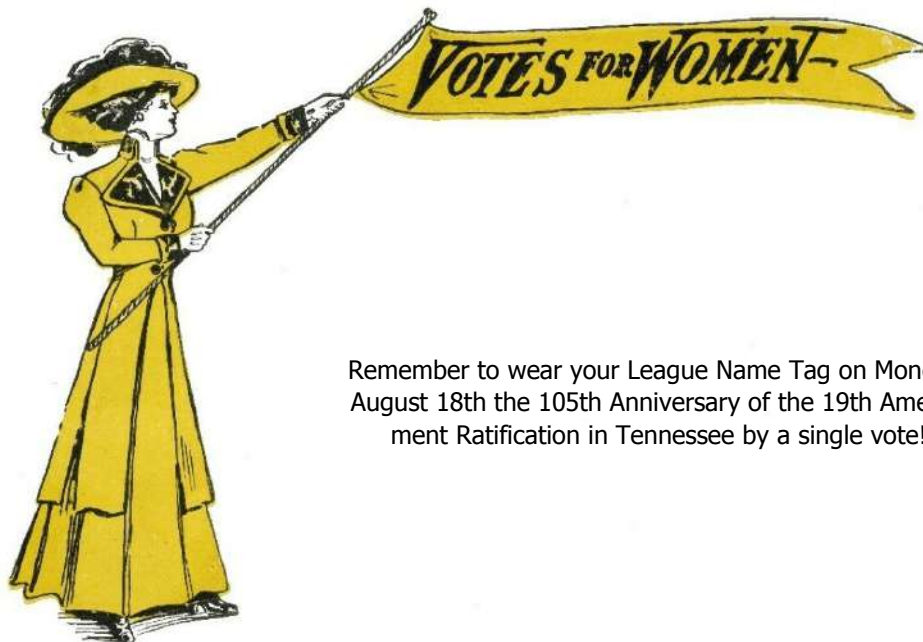


Your LWVJA Board is hosting a Meet and Greet Party for the 14 new members we have welcomed over the past year. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Board to get to know new members while introducing them to what we do, how and why.

The party will start with a mix and mingle while everyone dips into the light fare before our Co-Presidents Deborah and Linda welcome everyone.

In a relaxed atmosphere, new members will learn about current activities and future plans. They will be introduced to our Voter Services work, Observer Corps, Youth Outreach, our seventh Annual Friendship Tea and more. There will be lots of time to ask questions.

We hope all new members can attend on August 14th at 5:00pm. If you have a question or have not yet responded, please RSVP to Ruthann by August 11th at thulinru@gmail.com.



Remember to wear your League Name Tag on Monday, August 18th the 105th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment Ratification in Tennessee by a single vote!



2026 Symposium: *Fraud - in Era of AI*

April 2026

11 a.m. - noon Registration & Visit Resource Tables

Noon - Lunch

1 p.m. - Program

Further Information to follow as to specifics and avenue for reservations

The League of Women Voters Jackson Area and AARP Michigan

Look for the invitation in the Spring

2026 Symposium - Fraud in the Era of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Brenda Price, AARP Associate State Director, with over 25 years experience serving Detroit and other Michigan communities, will be presenting on the different types of scams that seniors should avoid. This interactive presentation will touch on Artificial Intelligence and potential scams related to AI.

Experts in banking, financial investments and law enforcement will also speak and a panel of experts will answer audience questions

ARM YOURSELF by learning from these experts!

LWVJA & AARP offers this symposium to empower members of the Jackson community with credible, accurate information on Scamming and Hacking to use in their personal and professional lives and to be better, more participative community citizens.



The LWVJA Book Club is now in lift-off mode, with our first meeting and book discussion happening on Monday, July 28th in the auditorium of the Carnegie Branch of the Jackson District Library at 5 p.m. We will be talking about "While Justice Sleeps," by Stacey Abrams. Martha Petry is slated to lead the discussion and will be giving those of us who are new to a book club a lesson in how this is done.

The members of the LWVJA are known for their intelligence, critical thinking and curiosity, all of which lead most of us to a natural love of reading. It is hoped that this book club will further this love of reading, as well as foster LWVJA members' interaction and socialization with each other, their engagement with the league, and an increased understanding of the world.

We plan to choose books that uplift and provide clarity, rather than titles that are overtly political. The book selection for September 22nd is "All the Light We Cannot See," by Anthony Doerr, and for November 24th our choice is a fictional book set in Michigan, "The Women of Copper Country" by Mary Doria Russell.

We will continue to meet on the fourth Monday of every other month, in odd months, in the auditorium of the Carnegie Branch, at 5 p.m. There are always open chairs in the library, and we encourage all who are interested to drop by and join us. You can also contact Ruthann Thulin at thulinru@gmail.com with questions, or to express your interest in joining.

Primary Election Tuesday, August 5 Jackson City Council, Ward 3

A primary election for the Jackson City Council, Ward 3, is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, August 5.

The candidates who will be on the ballot are (in alphabetical order):

Jeromy Alexander

Caleb Blondke

Angelita V. Gunn

Information about the candidates

for the Jackson City Council Ward 3 position is available on [VOTE411.org](https://vote411.org).

The candidates have all provided responses to questions related to issues of interest to residents. Their responses will help you learn more about each candidate and make an informed decision.



VOTE411 - Your Source for Election Information



VOTE411, provided by the League of Women Voters Education Fund, is a “one-stop” resource where you can find the personalized information you need to cast your ballot.

It’s virtual, nonpartisan, and available in both English and Spanish.

By visiting the website (www.vote411.org), you can:

- ♦ Check your voter registration status,
 - ♦ See what’s on your ballot,
- ♦ Learn more about the candidates running for the positions to be elected,
 - ♦ Find your polling place,
 - ♦ And more!

FAQ

What is the League’s Observer Corps?

The Observer Corps (OC) is a structured way for a local League to observe various governmental agencies to determine if they are being conducted to be a valuable service to the community. OC puts an agency on notice that the community is interested in their actions, has a general understanding of what those agencies provide, and may respond to their actions. Through this process our goal is to encourage better, more transparent government.



An important guide for the Observer Corps is the “Open Meetings Act.” By law, all meetings of government entities must be open to the public. OC activities can ensure that the issues facing the community are being handled in the open. Through our presence, local elected and appointed officials are put on notice that the public cares and is watching what decisions are made and how they are being made.

Maybe stick this quote in here somewhere – I do like boxes or highlighting:

“The liberties of a people never were, nor ever will be, secure, when the transactions of their rulers may be concealed from them.” Patrick Henry (1736-1799)

MORE ABOUT LWVJA OBSERVER CORPS



What does a League Observer actually do?

Members choose what entity to observe on a regular basis with the explicit purpose of seeing how that public body conducts its business, makes decisions, and responds to public input. LWVJA President sends official notice to the head of that entity to alert them to our group and who will be Observing. Members wear an official name tag and special OC button to meetings. Observers take notes, complete a simple form, do not offer any comments and alert the league of any possible advocacy issue.

With the demise of much local media our Observer Corps can also serve to inform the public as well as our own members of what is going on in the Jackson area. Local OC's tailor activities to what their members choose. A local league may have structured regular means to share what they learn with members during the year. Other local OC Committees meet regularly and discuss/plan a project that can benefit from OC Information

Benefits of an Observer Corps

- | | |
|--|--|
| Knowledge of local government | Develop relationships with elected officials |
| Better Candidate Questions | Better questions for Vote411 |
| League stays in tune with local hot topics | Members increase their expertise in local government |
| Increased visibility of LWVJA | Identify local issues for potential Advocacy |

LWVJA members observe or have observed (I know there are more but ?)

Jackson County Board of Commissioners
 County Department on Aging Advisory Council
 Jackson District Library Board
 Jackson County ISD Board of Education
 Jackson Public School Board
 Affordable Housing Commission
 Blackman Township

ACTION AROUND THE STATE

Observer Corps Special post-election Projects

Board of Canvassers: At election time throughout Michigan, local leagues have become active observing many local Boards of Canvassers. LWVJA members have become very active and faithful participants in this critical step in our election process. It is a terrific way to give testament to the integrity of our local elections. Members can volunteer to monitor for a few hours or whatever fits their schedule. Guidance is provided.

Michigan Independent Redistricting Commission (MIRC): The state league recruited 100 volunteers to observe every meeting of the new Michigan Independent Redistricting Commission beginning in 2021. Our Observers were active participants in identifying Communities of Interest, and testifying at public hearings. The new voting districts were in place for the 2024 election

Every 10 years after the census is completed, new political lines are drawn for federal, state, county and some local districts. To learn more about the MIRC, go to www.lwvmi.org

"Transparency in government, no less than transparency in choosing government, remains a vital national interest in a democracy" Merrick Garland (1952 -) Former U.S. Attorney

By-Laws is not generally a topic of hot conversation. But think about this. The League of Women Voters is 105 years old. LWVJA is into our 11th year and our presence in Jackson goes back to 1920. Organizations last this long because they have a Mission people care about and rules and regulations to ensure focus on the Mission and principles.

Reviewing by-laws is not for everyone. This year, we have five members who took this role very seriously, volunteering their services to complete this task.

We were fortunate this cycle to have a by-laws Committee which included:

- A Life Time Member (at least 50 consecutive years of membership) to give us a true north perspective
- Two members who served as President and Treasurer in 2018, helped create the 2018 by-laws, and have been League members for over 10 years.
- Two members who "love" by-laws and have been active participants on by-laws Committees with other organizations, bringing a world of experience and a serious attitude into their work during this year's review.

These five worked diligently this winter and spring through many hours and meetings to update the by-laws and improve them to keep us working effectively, efficiently and in sync with changes in LWV national by-laws. LWVJA Board reviewed their suggested changes. Members at our annual meeting approved them. This process is followed every two years.

If you are one of those who seldom gives by-laws a thought or may even get cross-eyed at the thought of by-laws, you may want to thank those Committee Members who did their due diligence to keep our league running smoothly.

By-Laws Committee Members for 2025:

Mary Lee Clark
Marge Duane
Linda Furgason
Molly Kaser
Jodi Snyder



Another example of ways our members can volunteer.
By-laws Perspective:
LWVJA League History

A group of LWVJA members originally created by-laws which were approved by the Michigan League when our application for League Status was approved in 2018. Original by-laws were patterned after the Lansing Area's by-laws and in compliance with National by-laws. Since then, we have grown, changed and adapted during a chaotic time.

In 10 years we have grown from 10 members to 60, developed programs to fit our local interests, always remaining committed to empowering voters and defending democracy. The Pandemic did not stop us but did require some emergency and lessons-learned by-laws updating. We worked during and through the Pandemic when no in-person events were allowed. And we ALWAYS remain committed to the League's 105 years of Nonpartisan Policy.

New LWVJA Members in the 2nd quarter of 2025

Welcome to: Melissa Brice



Board of Directors

Co-Presidents



Deborah Nagy



Linda Furgason



Bert Sexton
Vice President



Nan Whitmore
Secretary



Pam Schultz
Treasurer
Chapterspot



Ken Hollingshead
Tech Support



Mary Lee Clark
Member Services



Rosemary Edgar



Isabell Nazar

Martha Petry



Louvenia Shack Seals



LWVJA Contacts

Mailing address: LWVJA P O Box 1886
Jackson, MI 49204

website address: LWVJackson.org

Facebook address: League of Women Voters Jackson Area

Scan this QR code
Which takes you
directly to the
LWVJA website

VOTER /Newsletter staff

Email the newsletter committee at: leaguewvjackson@gmail.com



Mary Lee Clark



Marge Duane



Linda Furgason



Nancy Connell



Martha Petry Contributor



Sheryl Rose Contributor