



PERSPECTIVE

VOLUME XVII

ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2010

GENERAL MEETING

MARCH 22, 2010

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

**LUIGI’S RESTAURANT
2132 DAVISON ROAD**

“MARCH INTO THE LEAGUE”

Join us on March 22nd and help us celebrate. We’re 90 years old!

The cost is only \$10.00

We’ll enjoy salad, pizza, cake and soft drinks

And spend time with our friends, present and future

Call me for reservations or details / Andrea 238-8680

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!Please bring a guest with you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

In 1920, after a 72 year struggle, when passage of the 19th amendment became imminent, members of the National American Woman Suffrage Association met to form the League of Women Voters, the organization they began to educate the newly franchised women to effectively use the vote. It should be emphasized that both groups included many men in their membership. Men continued to be supportive of the League over the years and their numbers continue to increase. We’ve had and continue to have men members serve on our Board of Directors.

Our local League was also formed in 1920 so we are also 90 years old!

Today we continue our mission of educating voters on the important issues we all face: health care, climate change, election and campaign finance reforms, land use and education.

We are asking you to write a sentence on why you joined the League and send it me – Andrea – so we can have them on posters on the 22nd. Write: P.O. Box 230, Flint, MI 48501 or to our website at www.flintarealeague.org

2010 CENSUS

We can't over emphasize how important it is for every person in our county to be counted!

We're talking a \$1000.00 per person.

The form is only 10 questions long and your answers are completely confidential. The Census Bureau cannot share your answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities. The penalties are a \$25,000.00 fine and up to 5 years in prison or both.

The form will be mailed to households in early March. By late April there will be a follow up. The third step is to count people in shelters or places where individuals receive food such as local churches or soup kitchens.

An undercount here is going to cost us millions of dollars in federal & state funding. We will lose funding for police & fire protection, for health care, infrastructure, spending for education. Census data determines things such as services for the elderly and where to locate job training centers.

Equally important – the count determines our presence in Lansing and Washington. Michigan is in danger of losing a representative in the U.S. House of Representatives.

If you have access to organizations that serve those who are homeless or live in shelters please give this information and point out the importance of taking part and how the services they depend on will be affected by any undercount.

U.S. SUPREME COURT DECISION ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE

In a 5 to 4 vote, the U.S. Supreme Court upset decades of campaign finance laws.

In *Citizens United vs. FEC*, it created a new constitutional right for corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts of money to influence elections. This decision is constitutionally irresponsible and means that tremendous sums of money from special interest groups cannot possibly be matched by ordinary citizens. The only possible outcome of this is that big money and special interests will have an even tighter grip on our democracy. The U.S. League has filed an amicus brief in this case.

As stated by U.S. President Mary Wilson:

“Congress and the President enacted campaign finance laws over a series of decades for a reason – to protect our democracy from the perverse influence of big money in our elections. In making this decision the Court has ignored the best interests of the American public and our representative form of government.”

It is vitally important that Congress update campaign finance laws, especially enhanced disclosure laws governing corporate and union spending, more complete disclaimers, barring election spending by foreign corporations, barring election ads by government contractors, ensuring candidates can afford to respond to heavy corporate or union spending.

PROGRAM PLANNING

February is the time of year when our National League asks local leagues for their input on our national positions. The positions in their entirety can be found online on the U.S. website: www.lwvus.com. There are four main categories:

- Representative Government
- International Relations
- Natural Resources
- Social Policy

On the website, go to Positions; then issues. On the screen you will see these four headings. The individual positions are spelled out under each heading. We would like you to look over the positions and respond to us with any comments you may have.

You may recommend a review of an existing position. If there are sufficient League members who want to see this position opened for review, we will submit that request to the U.S. League. If that position is chosen, a review committee will be appointed to examine the position and, if appropriate, suggest changes and updating. You may choose only one. You would need to be specific as to why you want this position changed. A second choice would be that you have looked over the positions and have no recommendations for changing any at this time and that you consider the positions OK as they are.

We are a grassroots organization so we welcome your input. You can give us your choice by writing to us: LWV Flint Area, PO Box 230, Flint, MI 48501 or respond via our website: lwvflintarea.org.

FLINT CITY CHARTER

The Flint Area League has been concerned with issues dealing with the Flint Charter. The Charter committee has worked for over a year reviewing our position on the Charter. They have interviewed individuals ranging from those involved in writing the Charter up to elected officials who deal with the Charter as it now stands. The committee presented its review at a public League meeting and at a Flint City Council Meeting on February 22nd. We are gratified at the interest shown in this review as well as being invited to speak at a City Council Meeting on February 22nd. Chair Edith Prunty Spencer is very knowledgeable on the issues involved and you can reach her by phone 239-8604 if you have questions.

FLINT CITY CHARTER

Support of Charter with the following standards:

- A. Support a strong mayor elected on a non-partisan basis
- B. Support non-partisan election of council persons
- C. Support a direct line of responsibility and accountability to be clearly established for all departments, agencies, boards, and commissions for the function of city government.
- D. Support a responsible and accountable financial structure under the jurisdiction of the executive.
- E. Support City Council power to override a mayoral veto by 2/3 vote.
- F. Support a personnel system under the jurisdiction and responsible to the executive with policies consistent with sound personnel procedures, which allows for a grievance commission responsible for employee appeals and accountable to City Council.



**League of Women Voters
Flint Area
P.O. Box 230
Flint, Michigan 48501-0230**

**EDUCATING AND
ADVOCATING FOR
RESPONSIBLE
GOVERNMENT**

LWV-FLINT AREA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Mail To: LWV-FA P.O. Box 230 Flint, MI 48501-0230

Dues are \$55.00 per member, \$80.00 for two in one household, \$30.00 for students. Scholarships are available. Contact Helen Hoyt for more information at (810) 233-6659.

LWV-FA President: Jeanette Hall (810) 659-9683

Board Members: Rhina Griffel, Larry MacDonald, RoseAnn MacDonald, Andrea Ananich, Ann Kraft, Marion Wright, Jan Nieuwenhuis, Edith Prunty-Spencer, Helen Hoyt, Ruth Brown, David Caswell, Toni Promenchenkel

www.lwvflintarea.org

MISSION STATEMENT

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