

THE VOTER

Fall 2026 Newsletter ~ Volume 7 Issue 2

LWV OF MARQUETTE COUNTY

SEP 2



LWVMC's Summer Election Work

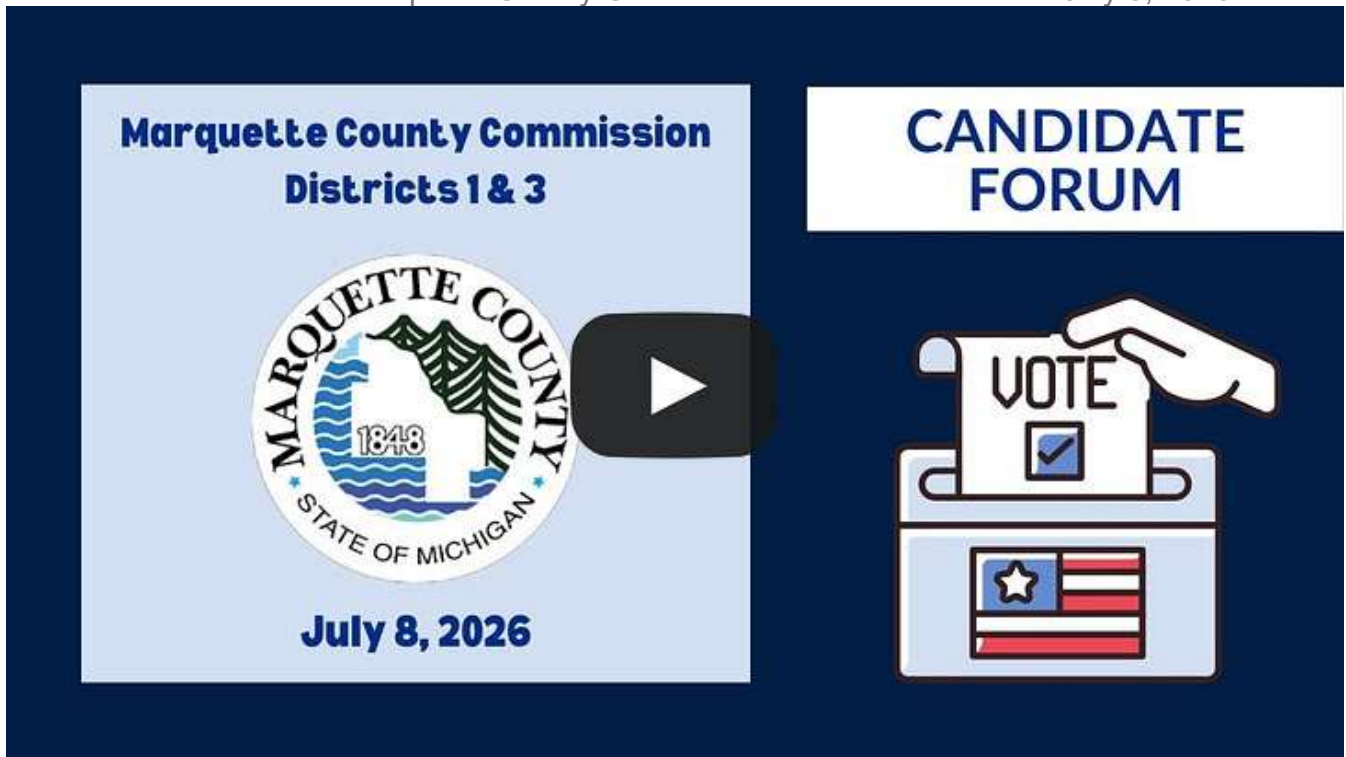


LWVMC Question Screeners at the Marquette County Commission candidate forum on July 8, 2026.

Over 90 citizens filled Marquette Township Hall on July 8 to hear County Commission candidates for District 1 and District 3 answer questions on Marquette County issues. More than 20 LWVMC member volunteers made the event possible. As of the Primary Election date of August 4, the forum had over 200 views on the LWVMC YouTube channel.



Photos from the Marquette County Commission candidate forum on July 8, 2026.



The following day, the smaller Marquette City Commission Chamber was packed with more than 60 attendees as the three candidates for the 96th District Court Judge discussed the Court's operations and their approach to issues raised by their constituents. By Election Day, the forum had more than 450 views on YouTube. The 20-plus LWVMC volunteers are now gearing up for General Election Forums!



Audience members listen as candidates for the 96th District Court Judge position answer questions at the July 9, 2026, forum.



Photos from the 96th District Court Judge forum on July 9, 2026.



The League's summer election work extended beyond hosting candidate forums. Nine volunteers monitored five county boards of canvassers in the days immediately following the August election, as part of the statewide program of LWVMI. This program is an early warning system that alerts election attorneys if any county board runs afoul of state election law, as Oakland County and the Michigan Board of Canvassers nearly did in 2020. Thankfully, the

LWVMI program was already in place by then, which helped prevent an election disaster. The program continues to this day, and the August election was a trial run for the critical election coming up in November. Luckily, the five counties we monitored in August were efficient and professional, as usual!

In addition to our public candidate forums and board of canvassers monitoring efforts, we printed and distributed 400 Primary Election Voter Guides throughout Marquette County. Vote411 will continue to be a valuable resource for the community as they prepare to vote in the November 3, 2026, General Election. You can check out your voting information on the [Vote411 website](#).

Major funding for The Voter Guide was provided by John Scram in memory of his wife, Theresa Scram.

NMU Fall Fest

The LWVMC had a blast at NMU's Fall Fest on Monday, August 24, chatting with students about Vote411 and encouraging them to request absentee ballots as soon as they can.



League member chatting with NMU students at Fall Fest.

We also conducted an election to determine the students' favorite NMU sports program as part of our table programming. The ballot included four candidates: Women's Volleyball, Men's

Soccer, Women's Basketball, and Men's Football. We also included a line for write-in candidates. In total, 149 votes were cast. The results are:

Women's Volleyball – 45 votes

Men's & Women's Hockey – 29 votes

Women's Basketball – 20 votes

Write-in candidates who earned one or more votes: Rugby, Swim & Dive, Cheerleading, Tennis, Wrestling, Baseball, Color Guard, and the Math Team.

A Brief Note on Election Security

The League of Women Voters of Marquette County (LWVMC) joins the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) in reaffirming a simple truth: confidence in our democracy depends on accurate information about our elections.

The League of Women Voters of the United States has strongly denounced false claims about our election system and continues to advocate for free, fair, and accessible elections for everyone.

Michigan's county, city, and township clerks have conducted mandatory public pre-election tests of their machines to ensure they are working properly. The logic and accuracy tests confirm that the voting equipment is in working order. Clerks run a set of test ballots through the machine to verify that it's programmed correctly and operating as expected. After the test, the test materials are securely stored and kept separate from early voting and Election Day materials.

As your local League, we encourage Marquette County residents to rely on trusted, nonpartisan sources for election information. Whether you're looking to register to vote, verify your voter registration, learn about upcoming elections and local candidates on your ballot, or access voter education resources, we're here to help.

We recently hosted Mark Brewer, a long-time election consultant and lawyer, to discuss the challenges in Michigan elections for 2026. Brewer has served as the League of Women Voters

of Michigan's litigator in the past and continues as a vigilant observer and commentator on the state of election law and security in Michigan. You can watch his presentation here:



Visit the League of Women Voters of Marquette County [website](#) for reliable local election resources and information. Together, we can strengthen our democracy by staying informed and participating in every election.



Unite & Rise 8.5, the League's initiative to defend democracy, is moving into the last phase building towards the midterms, and will emphasize Civic Holidays and Voter Services.

Civic Holidays are nonpartisan days of action that strengthen and celebrate our country's democracy. They bring together a wide range of organizations and communities in pursuit of an America where everyone participates and votes. Each holiday accounts for a different phase of democratic participation: registering to vote, making a plan, casting a ballot, and thanking the community members who make elections possible. Together, the Civic Holidays celebrate the entire voting experience. Learn more about civic holidays [here](#).

The 2026 Civic Holidays are:

- National Poll Worker Recruitment Day – August 11
 - National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) – September 15
 - National Voter Education Week (NVEW) – October 5-9
 - Election Hero Day – October 20
 - Vote Early Day – October 24
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4TH OF JULY PARADE



MARQUETTE, MI

League of Women Voters National Convention 2026

By Tina Korotko, LWVMC Member

The convention was a fantastic opportunity to learn about the League's impact and the work that still needs to be done at the local, state, and national levels. In the last biennium, the League has seen an increase in voter engagement, a net increase in membership, and more improvements made possible by local volunteers. But, as always, there is more work to be done!



Our work at the local level is especially important today, as LWVUS has officially declared our country a “democracy under siege.” The updates on our democracy’s current situation and the respective recommendations provided by LWVUS left me with a few key takeaways for Marquette County.

We must:

1. **Rely on our partnerships with other local nonpartisan organizations**
2. **Adopt practices that are more inclusive of individuals from all different walks of life**
3. **Continue holding the government accountable**
4. **Keep pushing against mis- and disinformation**



Photo (from left to right): David Allen, Tina Korotko, Iris Bailey, and Darlene Allen

As a whole, the convention solidified a very important message in my mind: The League has been crucial to the fortification of our democracy over the past century, and our work as an organization continues to be critical in order to achieve “liberty and justice for all” in our country.

SUMMER EVENTS



PRIDE FEST



BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL



**MQT COUNTY COMMUNITY
RESOURCE FAIR**



SKANDIA DAYS



LAKE SUPERIOR DAY



**MQT TOWNSHIP
COMMUNITY DAYS**

Three Marches, Two Sisters, and One Bridge Documentary

On August 8th, the League and our partners hosted a nationwide day of civic action in honor of the anniversary of the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*. The League of Women Voters of Michigan hosted a livestream 30-minute documentary, *Three Marches, Two Sisters, One Bridge*. The event was followed by a panel discussion featuring the two sisters who marched across Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge in 1965. The documentary tells the untold story of two 1965 Selma foot soldiers, still fighting for Voting Rights.



Welcome, New Members!

Judith Ashby

Dan Barrington

Esther Barrington

Diane Bomer

Fran Darling

Lily Dixon

Carmen Greenwood

Karla Paterson

Taylor Spade

Pamela Spady

Committee Updates

Environmental Committee

In August, our Environmental Committee reviewed our progress with our Strategic Planning goals. We have accomplished our first goal and are now focusing on our second goal: "Increased community engagement."



Participants in the Environmental Committee's DNR Fish Hatchery tour.

We toured the DNR Fish Hatchery in Harvey and will be touring the Marquette Food Co-op in September. We are hoping to continue our growth and momentum with a focus on tours and speakers that appeal to all Marquette County residents. Future possibilities include the MSU Extension office, the Gwinn Department of Natural Resources Office of Forestry Management, and a look at how hunting contributes to the sustainability of the U.P.

We are also hoping to add an element of community service with multiple opportunities to serve and beautify our County.

(New!) Fund Development Committee

A strong Fund Development Committee doesn't just have fundraisers and ask for money — it builds the infrastructure to support the organization's broader strategic plan. During our Strategic Planning last year, it became very apparent that the fundraising department could not sort out its mission and goals without a committee. So, one goal was set forth: to create a Fund Development Committee. The goal was met!

The committee chair will be Leslie Warren with prospective members Lynnette Ewbank, Iris Bailey, Laura Petrie, and Suzanne Dees. We will meet in October to catch up with the other committees to define our mission, goals, and budget for 2027. We look forward to hearing members' ideas and interest in starting to raise funds for the 2028 Election Year.

Voter Services Committee

LWVMC members collaborated with nonpartisan community groups at two community parades, featuring a decorated truck, handouts, candy, and pinwheels. We hosted tables at Pride Fest, Lake Superior Day at the Maritime Museum, Blueberry Fest, and Marquette Township Community Day, engaging hundreds of children with the "Hooked on Voting" activity. Our educational outreach then brought voting information to students and others at NMU Fall Fest, where 149 students voted for their favorite sports teams to have fun while practicing voting. At these events, we handed out nearly 1,000 LWV bookmarks to individuals, along with "make a plan to vote" and other informative handouts. We explained Vote 411 to hundreds of people.

Voter Services hosted an excellent educational event led by Attorney Mark Brewer on the complex and immediately relevant "Challenges to Michigan Elections." Members also arranged two educational events focused on the Supreme Court, part of the federal court Civic Outreach program.

We participated in text banking, an outreach program designed to encourage voters who missed the previous election. Eight of our members served as election workers. And to prepare voters for the August 5 primary election, Voter Services also distributed 400 printed voter guides to county locations.

Membership Committee

What a party! The Membership Committee, along with the LWVMC Board and lots of volunteers, helped make this year's annual meeting in June a celebration of all that is good in our league.



With 59 league members and 37 guests, we showcased our wide variety of activities and educational opportunities, and highlighted those who have gone above and beyond to further the league's mission and democracy in our community. We enjoyed pizza and were entertained by the Marquette County String Orchestra Society. Many thanks to all who attended and supported this event!

The annual meeting, the candidate forums, and the participation in the July parades spurred a surge in new members. We look forward to meeting you all at the next event!

Thank You, Donors!

Our League is rich in support from our members and the community. This is good because we are very busy planning more candidate forums for this upcoming elections!

Donations: April-August 2026

- Darlene Allen
- Judith Ashby
- Diane Bomer
- Mary Lou Bloomquist
- Dana Bovbjerg
- Priscilla Burnham
- Carol Cappuccio
- Bruce Closser
- Toni Eppensteiner
- Jo Foley
- Carmen Greenwood
- Megan Hull
- Lisa Jahnke
- Margaret Jajich
- Jane and Richard Jamsen
- Madalyn Koval
- Nancy Kreft
- Meredith and Robert Kulisheck
- Margi Licht Mallo and John Mallo
- Sandy Meyskens
- Carrie Moon-Dupree
- Barbara Owdziej
- Wally Pearson
- Kerrie Lee Pierson
- Laura Sabo
- John Scram
- Christie Wagner
- Leslie Warren
- Suzanne Williams
- Sue Wilson
- Johanna Worley

Gifts and Grants from Businesses and Organizations

- Community Foundation of Marquette County
- League of Women Voters of Michigan
- Marquette Regional History Center
- The Mining Journal
- Ore Dock Brewing Company
- Tadych Marketplace Foods 1% Program
- Zonta Club of Marquette Area
- A cookie-sized donation jar filled with cash from the many Voter Service Education Programs.

Please use the on-line donate button below or mail your donation to: League of Women Voters of Marquette County, P.O. Box 585, Marquette, MI 49855.

If you are 70½ or older, you can make a tax-wise gift directly from your IRA to LWVMC using a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). A QCD lets your transfer up to \$100,000 per

year tax-free to a qualified charity and can satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution. Contact your IRA custodian and consult your tax advisor for details.

Members are encouraged to save Tadych's Marketplace receipts for LWVMC. We participate in the store's "We Share" program and can receive 1% of the total of receipts we turn in. Please circle the before-tax subtotal minus any amount for alcohol or tobacco. Receipts may be turned in at meetings or contact Mary Burtch.

Calendar

September

Sept. 2: General Membership Meeting, 6:45-8:15 p.m. (Social 6:30 p.m.), Marquette Charter Township Community Center, featuring an "Election Security in Marquette County" presentation by Linda Talsma, Marquette County Clerk, and Kyle Whitney, Marquette City Clerk

Sept. 3: Environmental Committee Meeting, 5-6 p.m., Lions Room, PWPL

Sept. 8: Voter Services Meeting, 10-11:30 a.m., Lions Room, PWPL

Sept. 19: Adopt-A-Highway Fall Clean-Up, 9:30 a.m./Done by 12 p.m., Meet at LoFaro's Market (101 Carmen Dr, Harvey), [Sign-Up Here!](#) (Rain Day: Sept. 26)

*Sept. 23: Marquette City Commission Candidate Forum, Lakeview Arena (Citizen's Forum Room). Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Forum starts at 6 p.m.

Sept. 28: Combined Education/DEIA Committee Meeting, 10-11:30 a.m., Lions Room, PWPL

Sept. 29: LWVMC Board Meeting, 6-8 p.m., Messiah Lutheran Church, Room 202

****Waiting confirmation. An additional email will be sent to membership once the date, time, and location are set.***

October

Oct. 1: Environmental Committee Meeting, 5-6 p.m., Dandelion Room, PWPL

Oct. 7: General Membership Meeting, 6:45-8:15 p.m. (Social 6:30 p.m.), Studio One, Lower Level, PWPL

Oct. 13: Voter Services Meeting, 10-11:30 a.m., Lions Room, PWPL

Oct. 19: Combined Education/DEIA Committee Meeting, 10-11:30 a.m., Lions Room, PWPL

Oct. 27: LWVMC Board Meeting, 6-8 p.m., Messiah Lutheran Church, Room 202

November

Nov. 10: Voter Services Meeting, 10-11:30 a.m., Lions Room, PWPL

Nov. 18: LWVMC Program Planning, 5–7 p.m., Heritage Room, PWPL

December

Dec. 2: General Membership Meeting, 6:45-8:15 p.m. (Social 6:30 p.m.), Studio One, Lower Level, PWPL

Dec. 8: Voter Services Meeting, 10-11:30 a.m., Lions Room, PWPL

Dec. 15: LWVMC Board Meeting, 6-8 p.m., George Shiras III Room, PWPL

Board of Directors: 2026-2027

Convenor: Jo Foley

Voter Services Coordinator: Mary Pelton-Cooper

Treasurer: Laura Petrie

Secretary: Jeanne Sekely

Communication Coordinator & Spokesperson: Andie Balenger

League Liaison to LWVMI & LWVUS: Michelle Storms-VanHowe

Board Administrator: Laura Sabo

Director: Sandy Meyskens

Director: Lynnette Ewbank

Director: Barb Owdziej

Director: Johanna Worley

Director: Joan Park

Director: Tina Korotko

Director: Iris Bailey

To contact any board member or committee chair, please use our [Contact Form](#) or email us at lwvmqtco@gmail.com.

About Us

League of Women Voters of Marquette County

The League of Women Voters (LWV) is a non-partisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and is one of the most respected and effective grassroots organizations in the world.

On September 19, 1968, the first meeting of the Marquette County LWV was held. With over 100 members at the height of its 38-year existence, eventually membership declined and the Marquette County LWV disbanded in 2006.

In 2017, a small group ignited the revival of a Marquette County chapter. Today the LWV of Marquette County (LWVMC) continues the essential work of providing voters with nonpartisan information about candidates, elections and the mechanics of voting; conducting voter registration drives to encourage the public, especially young people, to become active voters; holding town halls around the county to educate about ballot issues and changes to our laws; observing local boards and governmental entities, including the Board of Canvassers.

Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policies of the League of Women Voters is eligible for membership. Voting members are at least 16 years of age.

Follow Us on Social Media

[LWVMC Website](#) [LWVMC Facebook](#) [LWVMC Instagram](#) [LWVMC YouTube](#)

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.
Imagining a Democracy where every person has
the *desire*,
the *right*,
the *knowledge*,
and the *confidence*
to participate.

The League of Women Voters of Marquette County is a non-partisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

