

**Subject:** News from League of Women Voters of Berrien and Cass Counties Michigan

**Date:** Sunday, June 1, 2014 4:04:41 PM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** LWV of Berrien and Cass Counties Michigan (sent by LWV of Berrien and Cass Counties Michigan <susan@lwbcc.ccsend.com>)

**To:** susangilbert@csinet.net



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**LWVBCC: Contact Us**

[lwbcc.org](http://lwbcc.org)

P.O. Box 161  
Three Oaks MI 49128

**LWVBCC Calendar**

June 17 (Tuesday) 6:00 pm  
LWVBCC Annual Meeting &  
Dinner at Orchard Hills Country  
Club.

July 15 (Tuesday) 5:00 pm  
LWVBCC Board Meeting at the  
Bridgman Library

July 16 (Wednesday) 7:00 pm  
Campaign Finance meeting at the  
Vickers Theatre in Three Oaks

July 21 (Monday) 10:00 am Book  
Group meeting in Harbert.

**LWVBCC  
Board of Directors**

Chris Zilke President  
Bonnie Pollack Treasurer  
Pat Lauth Secretary  
Donna Dutton Membership  
John Ripley Voter Service  
Susan Gilbert Commun.  
Ginny Washburn Finance  
Jean Sharp Environment  
Monica Eberhardt Environ.  
Judy Scully Health & SS

**June 2014**

League of Women Voters  
of Berrien & Cass Counties

**ANNUAL  
MEETING &  
DINNER**

**GUESTS:**

LARRY WEBER Chief  
Nuclear Officer, Cook  
Nuclear Plant, speaking on  
Fukushima Daiichi plant  
in Japan.

JOE NAINES

**Cost \$26/  
person**

**6:00 PM Tuesday June 17th, 2014**

Location: Orchard Hills Country Club,  
2841 Niles Buchanan Rd., Buchanan MI

Liz Ennis Education  
Joe Naines Adult Ed  
Sandy Click At Large  
Melissa Clapper At Large  
Mary Gignac At Large  
Earl Bickett Spec. Projects

### Board Meetings/Minutes

Board meetings are held on alternate months at the Three Oaks Village Hall or the Bridgman Public Library. Members are encouraged to attend.

The next meeting is on Tuesday, July 15 at the Bridgman Public Library.

Minutes are posted after they are approved by the Board.

[April 15, 2014](#)  
[March 18, 2014](#)  
[January 14, 2014](#)



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To make a reservation and pay go to  
[lwvbcc.org](http://lwvbcc.org) Calendar Page,

## Annual Meeting & Dinner Tuesday, June 17

### Make Your Reservation Now! Here's How

All readers of this newsletter are invited to attend the League's Annual Meeting & Dinner. Our guest speaker, Larry Weber, is going to speak to us about the conditions at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant in Japan. Larry has been to Fukushima twice since the disaster and he is Senior Vice-President and Chief Nuclear officer of the Cook Nuclear Plant, so he knows his subject. He is also a really good speaker. Just think--what starts there eventually comes here, in the air or in the water. Wouldn't you like a better idea of what is happening *there*?

We will also honor long-time member and former president Joe Naines, who is retiring from the Board.

Reservations can be made through [PayPal](#) or by sending a check for the appropriate number of dinners to LWVBCC, P.O. Box 161, Three Oaks, MI 49128. The deadline is the close of business on Wednesday, June 11. Payments are not refundable, as we pay for the number of dinners we order. The dinner will be a buffet with a variety of choices prepared by Chef Tim Carrigan, also of Fernwood. The all-inclusive price is \$26 (alcoholic beverages excepted--but available).

The business part of the meeting will be very brief: members will adopt the budget shown in the left sidebar and elect serving Board members Donna Dutton, Susan Gilbert, Judy Scully and Jean Sharp to a new two-year term.

Questions? Contact President [Chris Zilke](#).

### From the President



If you haven't already, please earmark Tuesday, **JUNE 17** on your calendar ... the date for our Annual Meeting to be held at Orchard Hills Country Club in Buchanan. Attending provides a wonderful opportunity to meet new and "old" friends, have a lovely meal and gain insights and updates on the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant disaster in Japan from our featured speaker, Larry Weber. The situation there is far from resolved, and the news continues to be unsettling.

League US Convention is in Dallas this year from June 6 to 10. This

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### The League's Online Voter Guide



Going live the end of June for the August Primary

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### Proposed Budget 2014-2015

#### EXPENDITURES

##### Operating Costs

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Newsletter      | 175 |
| Insurance       | 122 |
| Office Supplies | 33  |
|                 | 330 |

##### Board & Administrative

|           |    |
|-----------|----|
| President | 30 |
|-----------|----|

will be my first national convention; and from all the e-mails I've been receiving from local leagues throughout the U.S., plus what I've learned from delegates who have attended before, this is shaping up to be quite an exciting and educational experience. I'll do a brief review at our Annual Meeting.

'Til then,  
Chris

### Campaign Finance the Topic for July 16 Meeting

#### July 16 at 7:00 at the Vickers Theatre in Three Oaks

Rich Robinson, Executive Director of the Michigan Campaign Finance Network, will speak to us on "Dark Money and the Future of Politics." A [Mother Jones Magazine article](#) about Rich and the 2010 campaign described Rich as Michigan's "leading campaign finance reform advocate". Rich certainly knows his subject and is an excellent speaker. This will be a public meeting open to all and at no charge.



### July Book Group Selection

#### Next Meeting Monday, July 21 in Harbert

The group's next book selection is a new book by retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens *Six Amendments: How and Why We Should Change the Constitution*. The book should be widely available.

You may not all know that Justice Stevens spent many summers in Lakeside, from boyhood until recent years. And a special tidbit, he taught our former president Betty Oostenbrug how to play tennis! Always nice to have a local connection with an author.



### Youth Voter Registration Project Completed

#### Congratulations to John Ripley & Earl Bickett

John (pictured at right) and Earl did a great job organizing this project to register young voters.

Teams of LWVBCC volunteers accompanied John or Earl to 8 high schools and 2



|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| Secretary          | 30         |
| Treasurer          | 30         |
| Board Expenses     | 30         |
| Finance Committee  | 150        |
| Membership         | 250        |
| Mtngs/Arrangements | 1500       |
| Programs           | <u>100</u> |
|                    | 2120       |

### Delegates

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| State Convention    | 1000       |
| National Convention | 0          |
| Workshops           | 200        |
| Lake MI LWV         | <u>200</u> |
|                     | 1400       |

### Financial Support

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| State PMP          |           |
| Individuals        | 1150      |
| State PMP          | 1012      |
| State PMP          | 1550      |
| Household          | 1364      |
|                    | <u>25</u> |
| US PMP Individuals | 5101      |
| US PMP Households  |           |
| Lake MI LWV        |           |

### Educational Activities

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| Equipment     |            |
| Publications  | 0          |
| Voter Service | 30         |
| Donations     | 400        |
|               | <u>100</u> |
|               | 530        |

### Position Support/ Action

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| National             | 25         |
| State                | 25         |
| Local (inc. website) | <u>230</u> |
|                      | 280        |

### TOTAL EXPENDITURES

**\$9761**

### INCOME

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Dues Individuals      | 3120     |
| Dues Households       | 2410     |
| Drawn from Ed Fund    | 600      |
| Contributions         |          |
| Members               | 900      |
| Non-members           | 550      |
| Publications/Projects | 50       |
| Other Income          |          |
| Newsletter ads        | 625      |
| Meetings/Misc         | 1506     |
| Grants                | <u>0</u> |

**TOTAL INCOME \$9761**

**We Have an Updated  
Agriculture Position!**

community colleges and ended up registering 279 students.

This effort was funded by a \$1,000 grant from the LWVUS Education Fund.

Many thanks to all the voter service volunteers. Think about volunteering at the next opportunity. We have candidate forums coming up this summer and in the fall.



## Report on GRID Meeting

### The Nightmare Comes True in South Bend

Shown at right is American Electric Power's Director of Transmission Archie Pugh. Archie was a surprise speaker at the meeting on THE GRID. What Archie did not know that Tuesday night was that on Thursday night there would be a fire in an underground vault in downtown South Bend that would shut off the power to the entire downtown grid on one of the busiest weekends of the year--the Notre Dame and St. Mary's graduation.



Archie and Marc Lewis told us many interesting things about the grid that night, such as that parts of the electricity transmission system are 50-100 years old. The layout of grids supplying many areas follows plans developed generations ago that no longer accommodate modern transmission needs or realities. For many years there was no incentive to modernize the system, but that has changed. Finally, they talked about security--how do you secure such a far flung and decentralized system?

In South Bend I&M had actually done a lot of modernizing of the downtown grid, spending \$18 million in 2002 (after a series of fires and explosions), including new equipment, ductwork and wiring. So the cause of the vault fire is a mystery that Archie and his team will be working to figure out.

We are sorry that more people did not attend this meeting, as it was informative and lively with two excellent speakers. Thank you to Monica Eberhardt for making it all possible.

## What's Going in the Michigan Legislature? ?

### Keeping an Eye on Lansing

The legislature has an ambitious agenda before they adjourn for the summer break the end of June. Among the items on the list are road and bridge financing, school funding and testing, the minimum wage, the Detroit rescue plan and finalizing the governor's 2014-15 state budget. There could be some wheeling and dealing going on, where, say, the minimum wage is linked to road and bridge financing. All in all, it's good for citizens to pay attention to what is happening in Lansing.

The Legislature has been trying to figure out what to do to finance roads and bridges since at least 2008. There are several options, of

The LWVUS has announced that we successfully reached a consensus as a result of our recent restudy of the agriculture position. LWVBCC was one of 243 Leagues that participated in this complex study.

Read the [LWVUS statement on the new position](#).

### Recommended Reading The State of the Mental Health System

USA Today has published an excellent series called [The Cost of Not Caring: Nowhere to Go](#), on the financial and human toll for neglecting the mentally ill. Our various governments have been cutting spending on mental health for decades to the point there are now few resources and even fewer hospital beds for the seriously mental ill.

### Quick Links

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course, with the boldest calling for doubling the gasoline and diesel taxes. They need to pick one and get on with fixing and improving the roads.

Every year the legislators toss around how much the minimum per pupil grant should be. The governor is proposing a \$111 increase to \$7,187, still less than it was several years ago and inadequate given this is all the operating revenue most districts receive. (Some districts get a little more; a long story.) The dispute over testing is linked to the Common Core Standards, a relatively new political issue. Originally proposed by governors and state education leaders and approved by 45 states, some of those states are now waffling or reneging. While the Michigan State Board of Education supports using the new Smarter Balanced tests that coordinate with the Standards and say it is too late to change course, some legislators want to whip up a new MEAP test to use for a couple of years instead.

The plan to bring Detroit out of bankruptcy, an inspiring group effort by private foundations, unions, the Detroit Institute of Arts and the state, looks like it will go ahead. The state is being asked to contribute \$194.8 million to help save Detroit retiree pensions and the Art Institute collection. The Koch brothers are trying to derail the state effort, but the House passed 10 of the 11 bills in the plan easily.

Associated Press writer David Eggert's beat is Lansing and he is a good source of information. [Read a recent story](#).

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