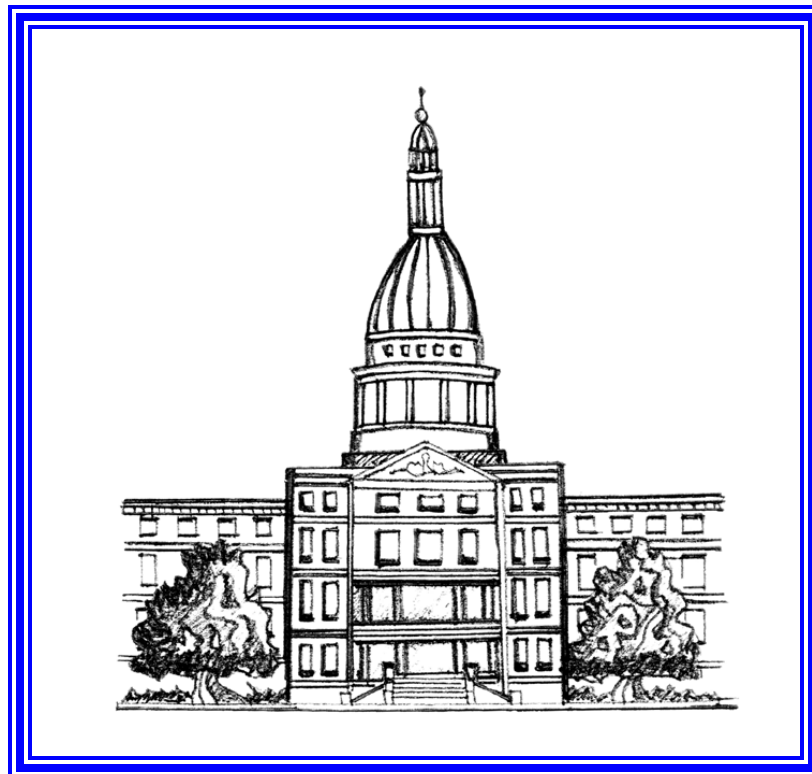




League of Women Voters of the Lansing Area Voter Guide



EATON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ELECTION November 4, 2008

Under a Michigan law upheld in July 2007 by the Michigan Supreme Court, ALL voters are required to show photo identification to vote at the polls. If you have no photo identification or don't have one with you, you must fill out and sign an affidavit in order to receive a ballot. The ID requirement does not apply to persons voting by absentee ballot.

Publication sponsored in part by:

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE LANSING AREA VOTER GUIDE

CANDIDATES FOR THE EATON COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION

The League of Women Voters is a national nonpartisan organization established to encourage citizen participation in government. It never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. The League of Women Voters does support or oppose governmental action on issues after careful study, without regard to the stand of any political party. This Voter Guide is also available at: <http://lansing.mi.lwvnet.org>.

This guide was prepared with the help of League members, students and members of the community interested in the issues. The personal statement is limited to forty-five (45) words or fewer. The response to each question is limited to thirty-five (35) words. The answers are printed as submitted and have not been edited, except for necessary cutting when replies exceed the stated word limitations. If the candidate does not reply by the required date for publication, the words "Did not reply in time for publication" appear by the candidate's name. When a candidate exceeds the word limit the answer ends with an ellipse (...). They respond in alphabetical order by Party. The Michigan Secretary of State's Party will always appear first on the ballot. **All candidate responses are in bold.**

Publication of these statements and opinions of the candidates is solely in the interest of public service and in no way is to be construed as an endorsement thereof by the League of Women Voters. The League of Women Voters takes no responsibility for any of the views or facts as stated by the candidates.

Eaton County is holding a General Election on November 4, 2008. Candidates have been gracious enough to draft responses for this Voter's Guide. **All candidate responses are in bold.** The following races are covered in this Voter Guide.

Eaton County Commissioners - 2 year term - Vote for 1 candidate

There are 15 Districts represented on the Eaton County Commission.

Editors
Deanna Hanieski
John Hanieski

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President
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Eaton County Commissioner

Election assigned to this office: General Election 11/ 04 /2008

Office Description: County commissioners are members of the legislative body of the county. Members attend public meetings at which they may approve purchase or lease property, determines county building sites, sell county property, borrow or raise tax money for approved purposes, determine salary and compensation of county employees, pass ordinances, oversee the financial health of the county and other duties as prescribed by law. They also participate on standing committees as determined by the board.

Salary: Chairperson, \$8978, Vice-Chairperson, \$8123, Chair of Finance Committee, \$8123, All other Commissioners \$7743

Term of office: 2 years

Partisan Election

Vote for ONE (1) candidate

District 01

Tom Raymond Republican (R)

- Did not reply in time for publication.

Michael Hosey Democrat (D) (Incumbent)

- Did not reply in time for publication.

District 02

Blake Mulder (R)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

My commitment to local people, local values and years of local involvement prepared me to represent you. We deserve a hard-working, high energy commissioner, someone who will dedicate himself to supporting your families in trying times, while holding the line on taxes.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

I will strive to attract business and jobs to the county while preserving our rural atmosphere, all under the fiscal attitude of "spend only what we can afford".

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

I have been actively involved in our community for twenty years. I am co-owner of a successful local business, I work with real estate and am on the board of a community bank.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

Our regions current economic malaise will impact our tax revenue, we will have to operate very efficiently to maintain our current high level of service. Teamwork and elimination of waste will be essential.

Harry J. Moore (D)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I object to our Federal and State dysfunctional fiscal policy of spending while cutting taxes, shifting funding and cutting public services. This has resulted in the elimination of revenue sharing and places a larger burden on fiscal responsibility for county services.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

We must have financial policies that provide for competitive bids, joint purchasing and the sharing of resources that are cost effective. We must promote cooperative relationships for better financial leverage and for quality services/resources.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

I have pro-active planning experience and a strong background in public financing. I can build consensus in a partisan environment. I am a problem-solver with common sense and the ability to be objective.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

We need to promote fiscal responsibility and intra-governmental and inter-governmental cooperation to provide for more services/resources. I support development/growth by fitting rural residential and commercial growth with our towns and farms in Eaton County.

District 03

Susan Hoffman (R)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I believe in the value and importance of public service. Involvement provides knowledge and a greater understanding of the needs of your community. Elective office is a privilege and a responsibility I will not treat lightly.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

Representing the interests of the district is a primary responsibility. Developing more open lines of communication with city officials, businesses and community leaders is essential. I will be a presence in the community.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

I have demonstrated leadership skills through service on city, county and state boards, have actively been involved in the legislative process, testifying on human service budget issues. I understand how government works.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

Balancing the budget without compromising public safety is the number one priority. We are experiencing an economic downturn - shrinking funds and increased needs. No easy answers but a problem that must be addressed.

Theresa Abed (D) (Incumbent)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

As a County Commissioner, I have kept my promises to enhance accessibility and accountability by spearheading the creation of a Communications Committee. I have experience, proven leadership and have a track record of finding innovative solutions to problems facing our community.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

- 1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?**
I plan to continue the positive direction Eaton County has taken in the last two years in the areas of communication, providing needed services, and maintaining a balanced budget.
- 2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?**
I have had thirty years of extensive experience as a community leader. As a County Commissioner I have sat on the Equalization, Personnel, Health and Human Services, and Information and Technology Committees.
- 3. What are the most important issues this office should address?**
We must meet the needs of our residents while maintaining a balanced budget. We need to continue to examine what those needs are, collaborate with other communities, and work together in a bipartisan manner.

District 04

Fritz Kellermann (R)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

The first priority of the County is PUBLIC SAFETY (sheriff's dept). I would see that this county functions adequately funded. Further, I would see that Eaton County is operated efficiently so tax dollars aren't wasted. I would not vote for any additional property taxes.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

- 1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?**
I would like to see an operations review performed to see if any efficiencies can be implemented. It is possible some regionalization (counties combining together) of services may reduce costs.
- 2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?**
The county budget is a significant problem. I have a strong financial background (CPA and operated a business) which would help me address the budget issue. I have lived in Eaton County for 36 yrs.
- 3. What are the most important issues this office should address?**
The budget/finances is the most important issue facing Eaton County.

Carol Strachan (D) (Incumbent)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

It has been an honor to serve the people of Eaton County as a commissioner. We have taken some important steps since Democrats won the majority in 2006 and we have plans to bring new services to the county, especially for those in greatest need.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

I will utilize my experience balancing large budgets to assist Eaton County in meeting future financial challenges. Further, I will continue to pursue policies that make the county a family-friendly place to live and work.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

My extensive executive experience in state government is an important asset I brought to my position as commissioner. I've managed budgets the size of the county's and have experience making reductions in expenses when necessary.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

With revenue stagnant and costs going up, the next few years will be critical. Counties will have to prioritize funding for mandated services and may have to abandon programs that are not required by law.

District 05

Jim Osieczonek (R)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

Government policy and key decisions are usually made with little citizen input. Our public administrators need to be more proactive in keeping citizens informed of the issues and encouraging citizen participation. My focus is on citizen involvement and common sense government.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

I expect to gain the respect and trust of my constituents by meeting with them regular, mailing regular newsletters, making them part of the decision process, and assisting them with concern.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

Vast board experience, small business owner, and a graduate degree in Public Administration. I completed advance coursework in Policy, Budgeting, and Financial Management. My advance computer skills will aid me in communication and process improvement.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

The economy – Many people have taken pay cuts and are losing homes. Government must be small and fiscally responsible. I will work with agencies requesting millages to become self-sufficient instead of relying on tax dollars.

Jeanne Pearl-Wright (D) (Incumbent)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I believe a good leader has the ability to listen to others and make the best effort possible to meet others needs. Sometimes people just need a hand up in trying circumstances. My focus has been in meeting the needs of those young to elderly.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

- 1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?**
I will work to enhance job opportunities, bring more options for affordable dental care, expand primary health care to uninsured, and continue to support policy/programs that provides a quality of life for all.
- 2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?**
I have had the honor to serve the people four years as commissioner and I have been a school teacher in Eaton County since 1996 seeing the needs of children and families up close.
- 3. What are the most important issues this office should address?**
I believe the improtant issues are a balanced budget, keeping the public safe, job creation, public health and having Eaton County a place where people want to live, work and raise a family.

District 06

Leo A. Farhat Jr. (R) (Incumbent)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I have been a longtime Lansing resident and have resided in Delta Township for the past fourteen years. I graduated from Lansing Catholic (Class of 1971) and Alma College (Class of 1976). I am currently employed by The Farhat Group Inc. as a governmental consultant (...).

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

- 1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?**
I would like to implement a Dental Clinic in Eaton County that would serve the low income, uninsured, and Medicaid population of the county. This is not a free clinic; there is a fifty dollar (...).
- 2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?**
I have served the residents of Eaton County as a Commissioner for the past six years. I have served on the Equalization and Personnel Committees and the Capital Area Community Service Agency. I am also (...).
- 3. What are the most important issues this office should address?**
Eaton County Commissioners have the responsibility to submit a balanced budget. This year the county had a \$1.6 million shortfall and had to cut twenty positions. We must find ways to increase revenues and not (...).

Denise Sloan (D)

- Did not reply in time for publication.

District 07

Bill Coan (R)

- Did not reply in time for publication.

Glenn H. Freeman III (D) (Incumbent)

- Did not reply in time for publication.

District 08

Joseph C. Brehler (D) (Incumbent)

- Did not reply in time for publication.

District 09

John B. Forell (R) (Incumbent)

- Did not reply in time for publication.

District 10

Bob Blackburn (R)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I'm proud to be the second of four generations of my family who currently live in Windsor Township. Grade school, high school, my first kiss, first job and many of life's other firsts, for me, all happened right here in Eaton County.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

I promise to work hard, listen to your concerns and be a good steward of your money. Everyday I'll use intelligence and common sense. Count on me to be a strong voice for you.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

Over 28 years of management experience. Experienced with multi-million dollar budgets. Former U.S. Chamber of Commerce Membership Director, Michigan Region. Former Development Director, Michigan Health Fund. Real Estate Broker since 1996.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

Job growth, business and agri-business development, along with funding of county services without raising taxes are key to the future well being of our county.

Linda Keefe (D) (Incumbent)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I advocate for policies that take into account the economy, environment, and interests of Eaton county residents. Having produced two statewide Voter Guides while employed at the LWVMI, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the questionnaire and respect the efforts of LWV members.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

Provide low cost dental clinic for uninsured; use Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards for new county buildings; implement animal control task force recommendations; keep Village and Township informed about county issues impacting them.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

Third term county commissioner. Chair Ways and Means, which deliberates and sets the county budget. Advocate on human services, mental health, environmental, economic development, and family sustainability issues. Coordinator- helping families to build financial assets.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

Providing excellent county services; ensuring access to health and dental care; maintaining public safety while expanding prevention programs to help at risk kids become competitive adults in the world marketplace and to avoid incarceration.

District 11

Heather Spielmaker (R)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I will be a voice among elected officials that advocates for responsible spending and reporting. While having a unique appreciation for the challenges facing single parents and those wanting to preserve the quality of life in smaller communities, I will strive to represent all constituents.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

I hope to lead the Board of Commissioners in balancing the county budget, in funding programs that benefit the most residents, and in providing opportunities for our own residents and business people.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

I have been a Charlotte City Councilwoman for 1.5 years, have attended various Michigan Municipal League seminars and trainings, and am a Masters of Public Administration student at WMU, concentrating on local government.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

The Board of Commissioners should spend tax dollars responsibly and provide those services most needed by residents. Commissioners also should be a voice for constituents with higher levels of government.

Art Luna (D) (incumbent)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

As your County Commissioner we have made vast improvements to make the County Government more efficient and effective in providing quality services to Eaton County. We are meeting today's challenges with tomorrow's ideas to improve safety and services and doing it under a balanced budget.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

I will continue to find ways to improve services for Eaton County as well as manageable growth in housing, business and energy ideas for job growth without interfering with our rich agriculture base.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

I have two years of experience as your County Commissioner. I chair the Public Works and Planning Committee, sit on the Public Safety and Ways and Means and servicing my 12th year on the Charlotte (...).

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

Eaton County will continue to face budget issues with revenues dwindling. We must look at creating more revenue without losing services or raising taxes. Transit system issues of providing services. Keep looking for opportunities.

District 12

L. Daryl Baker (R) (incumbent)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I have served nearly 16 years as 12th District Eaton County Board of Commissioner. Committees I have served the following committees: public works, personnel, finance, information & technology systems. Prior to this I served with the City of Charlotte on the council for 26 years (...).

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?

I wish to see that our Eaton County residents are served adequately and efficiently within the constraints of a balanced, safe, sound and secure budget. After all, we serve you first.

2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?

I have served nearly 42 years in Municipal Government. I served 26 with the city of Charlotte and 16 years as a county commissioner.

3. What are the most important issues this office should address?

I believe with the continuing decline in revenues and the need for fiscal restraint, we must, through computer technology, work more diligently with our various county departments in order to effectively serve our residents.

No democratic candidate running.

District 13

Dale Barr (R) (incumbent)

- Did not reply in time for publication

Thomas F. Andreas (D)

- Did not reply in time for publication

District 14

Denise Clarke (R) (incumbent)

- Did not reply in time for publication

No democratic candidate running.

District 15

Michael DeGrow (R)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

I have lived in Eaton Rapids 32 years; married to Katherine; 3 grown children and 3 grandchildren. Owner and president of DeGrow & Associates, Inc., an

association/governmental consulting business.

Serve on the local hospital board, area BSA board, and many other local volunteer positions.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

- 1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?**
I will provide continuous communication and coordination of efforts between the county and the Eaton Rapids area. I will promote efficiencies in county government, set budget priorities and ensure a balanced budget.
- 2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?**
I have a unique combination of experience: small business ownership, executive director of a statewide association, 35 years professional employment within/around the State Legislature, served on many local boards, and significant community volunteer involvement.
- 3. What are the most important issues this office should address?**
Economic stabilization and fiscal accountability are critical for Eaton County government to create a viable environment for job growth, economic development and vital services. I believe that public safety and emergency readiness are top priorities.

Roger Harris (D)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: (45 WORDS)

With a Centennial farm in Eaton County that will be passed on to my daughters and their daughters, I have deep roots and new sprouts here; this is why I want to keep Eaton County a great place to live, work and raise a family.

QUESTIONS:(35 WORDS)

- 1. What do you expect to accomplish in the office for which you are a candidate?**
As Commissioner, I plan to aggressively pursue job opportunities for the area, increase awareness of County health programs and to improve communication between the state, county and local communities.
- 2. What are your technical qualifications or experience for this office?**
My experience on the GCIW Negotiating Committee, Eaton Rapids DDA, US Navy, and in various leadership roles in community activities have provided me with invaluable experiences to make me a better Commissioner.
- 3. What are the most important issues this office should address?**
A commissioner should address the ongoing budget problems such as rising costs in day to day operations. A commissioner should work with other organizations to revitalize the area as far as employment and growth.

State Proposals

Proposal 08-1

A LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE TO PERMIT THE USE AND CULTIVATION OF MARIJUANA FOR SPECIFIED MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The proposed law would:

- **Permit physician approved use of marijuana by registered patients with debilitating medical conditions including cancer, glaucoma, HIV, AIDS, hepatitis C, MS and other conditions as may be approved by the Department of Community Health.**
- **Permit registered individuals to grow limited amounts of marijuana for qualifying patients in an enclosed, locked facility.**
- **Require Department of Community Health to establish an identification card system for patients qualified to use marijuana and individuals qualified to grow marijuana.**
- **Permit registered and unregistered patients and primary caregivers to assert medical reasons for using marijuana as a defense to any prosecution involving marijuana.**

Should this proposal be adopted?

Yes

No

Proposal 08-2

A PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO ADDRESS HUMAN EMBRYO AND HUMAN EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH IN MICHIGAN

This proposed constitutional amendment would:

- **Expand the use of human embryos for any research permitted under federal law subject to the following limits: the embryos--**

--are created for fertility purposes:

--are not suitable for implantation or are in excess of clinical needs;

--would be discarded unless used for research;

--were donated by the person seeking fertility treatment.

- **Provide that stem cells cannot be taken from human embryos more than 14 days after cell division begins.**
- **Prohibit any person from selling or purchasing human embryos for stem cell research.**
- **Prohibit state and local laws that prevent, restrict or discourage stem cell research, future therapies and cures.**

Should this proposal be adopted?

Yes

No



Please join us and make a difference!

The total annual dues for 2008-2009 are \$59.00. This includes \$28.00 for LWV-US, \$21.00 for LWV-MI, and \$10.00 for LWV-LA. If another member resides in the same household, the dues for the second member are \$29.50. National and state dues are assessed to our local league based on the national membership list as of January 31, 2009.

If you wish to join or renew your membership, please complete this form and mail in the enclosed envelope to:

LWV-LA
P.O. Box 971
E. Lansing, MI 48826

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Please note that we will keep your information confidential.

Amount enclosed:

\$ _____ \$59.00 for one member

\$ _____ \$88.50 for two members in the same household

Additional donations:

\$ _____ for LWV-LA

\$ _____ for League of Women Voters Education Fund (Please use separate check)



League of Women Voters of the Lansing Area
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