



League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

March 2013

www.lwvka.org

Co-Presidents: Paula Manley and Michele McGowen

Vol. 58 No. 6

League Phone: 269-544-0303

Kalamazoo Environmental Council Legislative Breakfast

Please join us as we talk with our Lansing and Washington lawmakers about protecting and managing Michigan's natural resources for future generations in the face of global climate change and increasing pressure to maximize short-term economic gains.

We have invited State Senator **Tonya Schuitmaker**, State Representatives **Jase Bolger**, **Sean McCann**, **Aric Nesbitt**, and **Margaret O'Brien** and legislative staff for U.S. Representative **Fred Upton**, and U.S. Senators **Carl Levin** and **Debbie Stabenow**. Visit www.kalamazooenvironmentalcouncil.org for latest updates.

WHEN: March 11, Breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Discussion 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Kalamazoo Nature Center, 7000 N. Westnedge Ave., Kalamazoo, Michigan

COST: \$8 for hot breakfast

RSVP: [Register online](#) by Wednesday, March 6, 2013

Your financial support is appreciated. No refunds are available. Program is free.

If you have questions or do not have internet access, please call 375-0954 and leave your name and phone number.

KEC member organizations: Asylum Lake Preservation Association, Audubon Society of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Nature Center, Kalamazoo River Protection Association, Kalamazoo River Watershed Council, League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area, Sierra Club—Southwest Michigan Group, Students for a Sustainable Earth, Wild Ones Natural Landscapers-Kalamazoo Area

Calendar

Mar. 11 Kalamazoo Environmental Council Legislative Breakfast

Mon. Kalamazoo Nature Center
7:30 am See adjacent article. Registration required.

Mar. 19 LWVKA Board Meeting

Tues. The Park Club
5:30 pm 219 W. South St, Kalamazoo
Food available for purchase
6 pm Meeting
Questions? Call 269-544-0303 or email president@lwvka.org

Mar. 25 Human Trafficking Program

Mon. Kalamazoo Public Library
6pm 315 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo
See article inside.

Apr. 29 LWVKA Annual Meeting

Mon. Fetzner Center, WMU
5:30pm Save the date.

May 9 YWCA Women of Achievement Dinner

Thurs. Watch for your invitation

May 17-19 State Convention in Lansing

Fri.-Sun. Radisson Hotel, Lansing

Note: Board meets on 3rd Tuesdays. Members are welcome to attend all Board Meetings.

**Roses are red.
Violets are blue.
We value government,
And trust you do too!**

Founder's Day Brunch

We hope to see you at next year's Founder's Day Brunch.

By Frances Eckenrode

The 2013 Founder's Day Brunch was held on February 9 at the Park Club in downtown Kalamazoo. A bright winter day set the tone for an enjoyable get-together for 55 attendees, including 14 guests.

The program began with introductions of guests and new members. Co-presidents

Paula Manley and Michele McGowan then gave a brief history of the League, reviewed League activities during 2012, and provided an update on ongoing and planned activities for 2013.

The Brunch concluded with door prizes and networking with old and new friends. A big "Thank You" to everyone who attended and made this event a success.



LWVMI President Visits Kalamazoo

By **Connie Ferguson**

When we learned that LWVMI President **Sue Smith** would be in Kalamazoo on February 8, we invited her to an informal coffee discussion with a small group of LWVKA members. **Mary Brown, Fran Eckenrode, Connie Ferguson, Georgiann McWilliams, and Kay Perry** talked with Sue about League advocacy, including the frustrations of the lame duck session where several bills op-

posed by LWVMI were adopted. See a [report on LWVMI advocacy](#) during the 2011-12 legislative session.

We also looked forward to possibilities for the current session, particularly in the area of education. Sue was interested to hear about our priorities and projects, as well. Thank you, Sue, for spending some time with us. We appreciated this opportunity for an inside look at League action in Lansing.

Program Planning Report

By **Amy Sue Manley**

Eleven League members attended the program planning meeting on Saturday, January 26, 2013, and two members submitted their comments via email. We reviewed state and local positions, and participants suggested a few updates on wording for several state positions.

LWVMI State Board will review all local League recommendations, and then delegates to the State Convention in May will vote on the 2013-15 program. There were no suggested changes on local positions. We will wait for the upcoming LWVMI update on education to address our local education position.

Human Trafficking Program

By **Amy Sue Manley**

On Monday, March 25, 2013 the Kalamazoo League of Women Voters and the Kalamazoo Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition are co-hosting a program on Human Trafficking. The

speaker will be **Carmen Kucinich**, Victim Specialist for the FBI. Please join us at 6:00 p.m. at the Kalamazoo Public Library to learn more about the issue of Human Trafficking in Southwest Michigan.

Annual Meeting

Save the date! The LWVKA Annual Meeting will be held on Monday evening, April 29, 2013 at the Fetzer Center on the WMU campus. The featured speaker, **Lori Mercedes** of the Hispanic-American Council, will discuss immigration. More details to follow.

News From National and State

LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2013

The LWVUS Board established the following as Legislative Priorities for 2013:

Money in Politics and the many facets of Election Reform.

In addition, the following were included as a second tier of focus for 2013:

Climate Change, Gun Safety and Immigration.

Other issues, such as Health Care Defense and Budget/Taxes may be acted on as opportunities arise for League action, if they do not interfere with action on an LWVUS priority, and it appears the LWVUS can make an impact.

The Board considered many issues and the responses from League members suggesting Legislative Priorities. The decisions were based on what issues are likely to come before the 113th Congress, the opportunities to make an impact, program decisions made by members at the last Convention, member interest, and resources available to manage these priorities effectively. The Board reviews these priorities throughout the year, making changes if necessary.

LWVUS and LWVFL File Amicus Brief in Florida Purge Case

LWVUS and LWVFL filed an amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals arguing that a last-minute purge of suspected non-citizens by the state of Florida is barred by the National Voter Registration Act, which says that no

systematic purges are allowed within 90 days of an election. The League was joined by the Brennan Center for Justice in the brief to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

League Sends Letter to U.S. Senate on Gun Safety Issues

The League sent [a letter to the U.S. Senate](#) in favor of common sense solutions to the gun violence plaguing our nation.

The Agriculture Update is Up and Running!

The names of committee members, scope and timeline for the [LWVUS Agriculture Update](#) are now available. Local and state Leagues will want to check out the timeline to see when to schedule your local update meetings. Be sure to subscribe to the Agriculture Update group in the member forums to discuss the update with other League members.

Power the Vote 2012: How a New Initiative Launched Results for Millions of Voters

LWVEF is pleased to release [Power the Vote 2012: How a New Initiative Launched Results for Millions of Voters](#). This comprehensive report showcases the best accomplishments League volunteers and activists achieved through unified and focused efforts during the 2012 election cycle. It also lays out a plan to continue to advocate for voters as well as strengthen and expand our electorate

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News National continued

in 2013 and beyond. Thank you for your incredible work to engage and empower voters!

LWVMI 2013 Convention

The LWVMI Convention will be held May 17-19, 2013, at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Lansing, two blocks from the Capitol. The theme is "Advocacy: Powering Our Voices." Delegates will: adopt the 2013-15 state program; approve LWVMI budgets for the next two years; elect LWVMI officers and directors; and consider proposed amendments to the bylaws. Special events and activities will include the following.

- New this year are two **Pre-Convention Events**. "Taking Action in the League: Issues Briefing at the Capitol" and "Taking Action in the League: Membership and Leadership Development." Both will be held on Friday, May 17 from 9:00 to 3:30.
- LWV of the Lansing Area and the Michigan Women's Historical Center

and Hall of Fame will co-sponsor a **Welcome Reception** at the Center on Friday from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

- **Dine Around in Lansing** - Friday evening dinner options will be arranged at local restaurants and hosted by local League members at participants' own expense. This will precede the opening session of the Convention which will be scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. at the Radisson.
- **Convention Banquet** Saturday evening will be preceded by a reception featuring a cash bar.
- **Wares Market/Silent Auction**- Proceeds from this popular event will help fund the convention.

Welcome New Members

Lynne Cowart

308 Monroe St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49006
269-344-0489
Lfcowart45@gmail.com

"Topsy" Rachael Schlegel

8362 Warbler Dr.
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
cell: 734-478-1616
home: 269-375-2170

Kristine Pioch

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Kalamazoo, MI 49009
269-372-2927
kpioch@sbcglobal.net

Mary Baggerman

1338 Pinehurst Blvd.
Kalamazoo, MI 49006
home:269-873-4319
work: 269-344-0202
mjbaggerman@hotmail.com

Mollie Clements

2229 La Cross St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49006
269-226-0910
revmollie@aol.com

Volunteer Photographer(s) Needed

The League is in need of someone to take pictures at various League events and functions throughout the year. The photos may be used in future League *Bulletins*, displays, or on our website or Facebook page. No professional photography experience is necessary. Contact **Michele McGowan** at (269) 553-9699 or mcgowenm@dnswm.org if you are interested in helping.

2013 Nominating Committee Slate

Please consider serving on the LWVKA Board.

The following members have accepted nominations for LWVKA Officers, Directors, and Nominating Committee. Members will vote on the slate at the 2013 Annual Meeting. The slate includes:

Co-Presidents (1 year)	Paula Manley & Michele McGowen
Vice President for Organization (2 year)	Sabrina Pritchett-Evans
Secretary (2 year)	Denise Hartsough
Treasurer (1 year, due to vacancy)	Dawn Haley
Board Members (1 year, due to reassignments)	KC Miller
	Janet Jones
Board Members (2 year)	Ruth Caputo
	Terry Hluchyj
	(open)
Nominating Committee (1year)	Kay Anderson, Chair
	Yolanda Mitts
	(open)

The current Nominating Committee consists of **Yolanda Mitts**, chair, off-board members **Kay Anderson** and **Diane Worden** and board members **Amy Sue Manley** and **Sabrina Pritchett-Evans**. If you are interested in serving on the LWVKA Board, contact **Yolanda Mitts** at ymitts@yahoo.com.

Call to LWVMI State Convention

This is a great opportunity to network and learn.

By Paula Manley

This year's LWVMI State Convention "Advocacy: Powering Our Voices" will be Friday, May 17 through Sunday, May 19, 2013 at the Radisson Hotel in Lansing. There will be a pre-convention event on Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This event includes two training sessions: "Taking Action in the League: Issues Briefing at the Capitol" and "Taking Action in the League: Membership and Leadership Development." A welcome reception will take place Friday from 4:30-6:00 p.m. at the Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame. Lansing League members will guide attendees to a "dine around" on Friday night.

Business will be conducted in three plenary sessions on Friday evening, Saturday morning, and Sunday morning. Workshops will be presented on Saturday afternoon, and the convention banquet is scheduled for Saturday evening.

According to the LWVKA membership count, we are allowed 8 delegates. This is a great opportunity to network with other Leagues and learn more about the State League. Our local League will pay for registration fees. Each delegate is responsible for transportation and hotel expenses. If you are interested in representing the LWVKA, please contact **Paula Manley** or **Michele McGowan** at 544-0303 or president@lwvka.org.

Members Needed for Legislative Interviews

Interviews are a great way to learn about State issues.

By Michele McGowan

LWVKA members are needed to interview our State Representatives and Senator in partnership with the State League.

Developing a relationship with our legislators, even if that person doesn't always agree with the League's position, is very helpful when you contact him or her to discuss the League's position on an issue or to issue an invitation to a candidate forum. Gathering information on our legislator's opinions concerning issues of interest to the League and then sharing that with the State League is very helpful to LWVMI's Advocacy Committee. Knowing whom we might contact to get some help with a particular issue is also of great value.

What: Team of 2-3 League members will meet with a State Representative or Senator and ask their opinion on questions developed by the State League. New League

members or members who have not conducted legislative interviews will be paired with more experienced members.

When: During March 2013, date and time to be determined by teams and Legislators' schedules

Duties: Reading background material and interview questions provided by the League, participating in interview, recording legislator responses to questions, submitting information gathered by due date of April 1, 2013.

Contact: Michele McGowan via [email](#) or (269) 553-9699 evenings/weekends or (296) 345-1516 x116 weekdays for more information or to be member of an interview team.

These interviews are a great way to meet other League members, learn more about the issues the State League is following this year, and build a relationship with an elected official.

Sunshine Week is March 10-16, 2013 Open Government is Good Government

Attend a public meeting in March.

By Michele McGowan

A national initiative since 2005, Sunshine Week focuses on citizen access to government and information.

[Sunshine Week](#) seeks to enlighten and empower people to play an active role in their government at all levels, and to give them access to information that makes their lives better and their communities stronger.

The League has long known the importance of citizens having access to public meetings and information, and over the



years LWVKA and Leagues across the country have had active Observer Corps.

Local Kalamazoo-area government meetings are taped and shown on Public Media Network (TV) and can also be [viewed from your computer](#). When was the last time you observed your local city or township board meeting? What about a board or committee meeting that makes decisions on topics that interest you, like transit or zoning? Consider being an interested member



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of the Kalamazoo Area
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Meet Two New Members

New members bring a wealth of experience to the League.

By Frances Eckenrode

Lynne Cowart recently joined the League. She was born and raised in Cleveland and educated in Washington, DC. She worked in Parchment schools for 29 years, finishing there as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instructions. She then worked at Kalamazoo RESA for nine years. Although retired, Lynne is still involved in education, and volunteers in the Ready Fours program for young children and in the Education Reconnection program for older students who did not graduate. She is an avid reader, and also enjoys going “up north” for fun and relaxation. Lynne is interested in the effective and efficient running of government. Now that she is retired and has more time to devote to her interests, she joined the League to see where she can contribute.

Mollie Clements is a new member of LWVKA. She may easily be described as a global citizen. She was born in Galveston and educated at the University of Texas, where she met her husband. They were married in Stockholm, and honeymooned in Mindanao, Philippines. Mollie and her husband were missionaries in Bombay and Hong Kong. She was affiliated with Charity Hospital in New Orleans for a time and then completed her education to become a pastor in the United Methodist Church. She served as a pastor in Indianapolis for 12 years. Retirement brought Mollie and her husband to Kalamazoo to be closer to children and grandchildren. Mollie was an active LWV member in Dallas and was prompted to join LWVKA when the League took a stand on immigration.