

THE BULLETIN

League of Women Voters Kalamazoo Area

June 2018 • Vol. 64 No 9

President's Column

By MerriKay Oleen-Burkey and Chris Kuthe

Membership Survey

Thank You to all who participated in our recent membership survey! We heard from more than 60% (111) of our members. A quarter of the respondents have been members of the LWVKA for more than 21 years, a quarter have been members for six to twenty years, and half of the respondents have been members for less than five years.

Thank You to all who volunteered skills you would be willing to share, areas of our strategic plan where you are willing to assist, and /or your willingness to serve on the LWVKA board. You will hear from one of us individually as we match interests with needs. For example, those who offered a clerical skill have been asked to assist the Fundraising (Friendraising) Committee with a mailing this month. Those of you with skills in Community Outreach will be contacted about assisting with our "Get Out The Vote" initiatives. Those with marketing skills will be asked to help with promoting Vote411.org, candidate forums and ballot issue updates. If event planning is a skill you will share we will contact you for help with forums and membership meetings in coming months. If you expressed interest in serving on the LWVKA board, your names will be shared with the nominating committee that will begin to contact members about leadership positions for the new year about four months before the next annual meeting.

Thank You to those who listed businesses or organizations whose members would be interested in hearing about the LWVKA. What an impressive list! To reach all of these groups we need to revitalize our speakers' bureau. We have LWVKA members who would be willing to train speakers to talk about the League with these organizations. If you would like to be part of our Speaker's Bureau, let me know at moburkey30@gmail.com or by phone (269-270-3302).

June Board Meeting

We invite our outgoing, incoming and continuing LWVKA board members, the Nominating Committee, and the LWVKAEF board members to join us for a potluck dinner at the Walden Woods Clubhouse on **June 11 at 5:30 pm**. Please bring a dish to pass and a beverage of choice. Water and place settings will be provided. Our LWVKA board meeting will begin about 6:15PM. As always, all LWVKA members are welcome to come.



Calendar

JUNE 2018

- 1 Voter Registration**
Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
United Methodist Church
- 4 Grand Rapids Unit Social**
Fountain Street Church — 7pm
- 9 Pride Voter Registration**
at Arcadia Park
- 11 LWVKA Board Meeting**
Old & new members and board appointments
Walden Woods Condominium Clubhouse
5:30 pm Dine – 6:00 pm Meeting
- 27 Water Focus Day**
LWV Lake Michigan Region — Chicago, IL
- 28-1 LWVUS Convention (Chicago, IL)**

AUGUST 2018

- 1 LWVKA Educational Presentation**
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Summer Event
- 4 Mothers of Hope Voter Registration**
LaCrone Park
- 7 LWVKA Educational presentation**
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Summer Event
- 13 LWVKA Board Meeting**
Walden Woods Condominium Clubhouse
5:30 pm Dine – 6:00 pm Meeting
- 24 YWCA Women's Equality Day**
Fetzer Center

Note: Board meets on 2nd Monday. Members are welcome to attend all Board Meetings. Contact (269) 270-3302 and moburkey30@gmail.com

Save the Date!

Friday, August 24, 11:30am-1:30pm for the Women's Equality Day celebration at the WMU Fetzer Center. LWVKA and the YWCA are excited to announce as keynote speaker Kalilah Spencer, attorney and civil rights activist. Watch for your invitation in July!

LWVMI Updates

by Denise Hartsough

Promote the Vote

Signatures still needed! Signature gathering to protect and enhance voting rights in Michigan is going well as of May. June marks the final push of this collective effort of the League of Women Voters, ACLU and NAACP. Please step up, if you can, to collect a few signatures. Ask your family and friends—every single signature helps!

An EPIC-MRA poll from May shows that of Michigan voters likely to vote in November, 77% would vote for Promote the Vote—if it were on the ballot! LWVKA's 30 volunteers have gathered 1,200 signatures since February. Reinforcements would be welcome!

Stop by **This is a Bookstore** (Bookbug) in the Oakwood Plaza on Wednesday, **June 13** from 4:00-5:30pm and/or Tuesday, **June 26** from 4:30-6:00pm. You can turn in petitions with any number of signatures, pick up blank petitions to circulate, or just sign the petition yourself. If that time does not work for you, please contact **Denise** at 269-599-1801 or denise.hartsough@gmail.com.

For details about the proposed voting rights amendment to the Michigan Constitution, please see www.lwvmi.org and www.promotethevotemi.com. You can also donate to support the cause at www.promotethevotemi.com.

Redistricting Ballot Proposal

The **Voters Not Politicians** redistricting ballot proposal may make it on to the November ballot! LWVMI has endorsed this proposal and urges League members to support the measure in any way they can.

Gerrymandering Lawsuit

LWVMI is lead plaintiff in a federal lawsuit challenging Michigan's Congressional and State Legislative districts as unconstitutional partisan gerrymanders. The defendant, Michigan Secretary of State **Ruth Johnson**, asked the court to dismiss the lawsuit, claiming the League and other plaintiffs lack standing to sue.

On **May 16** the court granted the Secretary of State's motion to dismiss for lack of standing in part and denied it in part, dismissing the plaintiffs' statewide claims but holding that the plaintiffs have standing to bring district-specific claims. The trial is set to begin on February 5, 2019.

Watch for updates at <https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/state-redistricting-litigation> and www.lwvmi.org!

If you can make a tax-deductible contribution, please do! Make checks out to LWVMI Education Fund and

write "Gerrymandering Lawsuit" in the memo line. Send checks to LWVMI Education Fund, 600 W. Saint Joseph Street, Suite 3G, Lansing, MI 48933-2288.

LWVMI Action Alerts

When you receive an emailed Action Alert from LWVMI, please take action! The automated system takes only seconds to use, and you can personalize the message to your elected officials in Lansing. LWVMI sends alerts about legislation on which the State League has decided to take action, based on the LWVMI's set of positions on key issues.

LWVUS Update

By Paula Manley

Join the live stream *Conversation on Redistricting* with **Nick Stephanopoulos** and **Ruth Greenwood** Thursday evening **June 28** at **7pm** (CST) from the LWVUS National Convention in Chicago. LWVUS suggests members who cannot attend the Convention host parties in their local communities. For more information on planning and hosting your party, complete the survey at: <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4361038/A-Conversation-on-Redistricting-with-Nick-Stephanopoulos-and-Ruth-Greenwood-Viewing-Party-Sign-Up>

- ❖ Ohio voters approved a ballot issue in their May primary to create new rules for drawing congressional lines. On May 23rd the LWV of Ohio joined in a lawsuit challenging the state's U. S. congressional districts as unconstitutional. While the passage of the ballot issue will create fair maps beginning in 2021, this lawsuit addresses creating fair maps for the 2020 elections.
- ❖ The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee held hearings on the proposed inclusion of the citizenships question on the 2020 Census. This question has not been on a census form since 1950.
- ❖ The LWV of Missouri and A. Phillip Randolph Institute recently filed a lawsuit against the state of Missouri for violation of the National Voter Registration Act. The suit alleges the state does not offer all residents the option to register at state motor vehicle agencies or to have their voter registration information automatically updated when residents notify the state they have moved.
- ❖ LWVUS recently held a webinar on the Dangers of a Constitutional Convention. The recording is available at: <http://salsa.wiredforchange.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=xJnFPxBLPRUFPE%2FQOYia67fLQtbNAZHZ> and PowerPoint presentation is available at: <http://salsa.wiredforchange.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=HF2Oanv8LoQ9l%2Fu7b1SGhrfLQtbNAZHZ>.

PROMOTE
the **VOTE**

Let's have a
voting system
that works for
all Americans

www.promotethevotemi.com

“On May 16 the court granted the Secretary of State's motion to dismiss for lack of standing in part and denied it in part...”



Image credit: Vince_Lamb/CC

Member Updates

By Chris Kuthe

Please welcome new members to the LWVKA. These members have joined in the last month and are anxious to be involved. If you have a project that you need help with, call or email to invite them.

Maggie Bresz
1310 Reycraft Dr
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
maggiemay0068@charter.net
269-383-2356

Julia and John Mathieson
1926 Luralwood Ave
Portage, MI 49002
mathiesonjl@gmail.com
H: 269-329-0692
C: 269-779-9556

Directory Updates

By Chris Kuthe

Please make the following additions/edits to your LWVKA member directory. If you have a change in home address, phone or email, please contact me at ckuthe57@yahoo.com or call 269-501-3305.

Ann LaForge has a new email address: annlaforge@gmail.com
Tanya Potter's correct phone number is: 269-330-1584

Fundraising Update

By Ken Manley

We are now finishing up our three year fundraising campaign. If you have a pledge to complete, please consider that now. If you have not made a pledge, we welcome your participation now. Our campaign will end June 30, 2018. Donations can be made on the LWVKA web site, or sent to League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area, P.O. Box 2106, Kalamazoo, MI 49003

Thank you for all you are doing for our League!

Please also consider supporting the LWVMI fundraiser. Letters were recently mailed and should arrive shortly. Donations can also be made at the LWVMI web site. Options for contributions include the Ed Fund (tax deductible) or the operating budget (not tax deductible). The state office supports many things, such as Vote411.org, that could not be funded without donations.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthy cause!

Candidate Forum

By KC Miller

The League is partnering with Kalamazoo County Advocates for Senior Issues (KCASI), Douglas Community Association, El Concilio/Hispanic American Council, Edison Neighborhood Association, and potentially ISSAC, Outfront Kalamazoo, and Public Media Network to sponsor a Candidate Forum of US Congress District 6 for the primary. It will be held on **June 14, 2018**, 6-8 pm at El Concilio/Hispanic American Council, 930 Lake Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49001.

If you are interested in being a greeter, moderator, timer, or have any questions, contact KC Miller at 269-385-1385 or aakcmiller@yahoo.com.

Annual Meeting Highlights

MerriKay Oleen-Burkey and Aedin Clements



Our LWVKA Annual Meeting on April 30th opened with a tribute to long-time member **Ann Perry**. Michigan State Representative Jon Hoadley presented a commemorative plaque to Ann's sisters, **Kay Perry** and **Sue Nelmes**, which had been signed by all of her state elected officials. It acknowledged Ann's lifetime of community service to the citizens of Kalamazoo.

The keynote speaker for the evening was **Judy Karandjeff**, President of LWVMI, who discussed the three forms of advocacy being used by the state League: 1) Action Alerts—They request that individual League members around the state contact their members of the state legislature when proposed bills deal with topics on which the League has positions; 2) Lawsuits such as the current federal lawsuit LWVMI vs. Johnson in which the LWVMI is lead plaintiff in the redistricting case; and 3) Ballot petitions like the Promote the Vote ballot initiative to amend the Michigan Constitution to make voting more accessible and convenient.



During the business meeting the 2018-2019 General Fund Budget was approved, proposed by-laws changes were adopted, and nominees for the LWVKA board were elected. The meeting closed with an informative presentation by Janet Jones on the County ID program that was being launched at the County Building on May 3rd. Diane Worden won the raffle for Ann Perry's suffragette doll. Proceeds from the raffle were donated to the LWVKA in Ann's memory.

GR Unit Updates

By Elianna Bootzin

Members and volunteers Elianna Bootzin, Linda Davis and Jeanne "Sam" Helmrick began data entry for Vote411 on Friday May 25th. Members are encouraged to help West Michigan Pro-mote the Vote with gathering petition signatures at upcoming local events; sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b4caaaa29a1fa7-promote>. We will also be registering voters after the Social Justice Choir Pride Celebration Concert scheduled for 4 pm on Sunday June 10 at Trinity United Methodist Church (1100 Lake Dr SE).

Monthly Grand Rapids social evenings continue Monday June 11 at Fountain Street Church (24 Fountain St NE). Learn about the League and opportunities to get involved, and just have a good time with other engaged citizens! We will gather again on Sunday June 24 at 1 pm at Caitlin Boon's home for our quarterly book club. You will be sent the address when you RSVP to her at ryancait@gmail.com. We will be discussing 'A City Within a City', a case study of the civil rights era as it happened in smaller cities, focusing specifically on the struggles involving school integration and bureaucratic reforms in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

Kalamazoo Area

P.O. Box 2106
Kalamazoo, MI 49003-2106

LWVKA Education Fund Board of Directors

Jessica Reiser, Chairperson
jcreiser@comcast.net

Yolanda Mitts, Vice Chair
ygmitts@gmail.com

Paula Aldridge, Treasurer
paula.mae.aldridge@gmail.com

Rebekah Fennell, Secretary
rsfennell@sbcglobal.net

Susan Atkinson, Director
sls.atkinson@gmail.com

Dennis Elmer, Director
dgelmer@comcast.net

Eileen Schoenfeld, Director
Benziedoc1@gmail.com

Memorials

In Memory of **Ann Perry**

Rosa Tinetti	Connie Ferguson
Monica Evans	Ginny Frey
Sue Nelmes	

LWVKA Board for 2017-2018

Officers:

MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
President
moburkey30@gmail.com

Fran Eckenrode
VP Programming
feckenr@gmail.com

Paula Aldridge
Treasurer
paula.mae.aldridge@gmail.com

Aedin Clements
Secretary
aedinclements@gmail.com

Denise Hartsough
Past President
denise.hartsough@gmail.com

Board Members:

Jennifer Hill
jahill231@yahoo.com

Chris Kuthe
ckuthe57@yahoo.com

Millie Lambert
millielambert3922@gmail.com

Georgiann McWilliams
georgiann@charter.net

KC Miller
aakcmiller@yahoo.com

Alison Parsons
alisonparsonsmi@gmail.com

Sabrina Pritchett-Evans
sabrina.pritchett-Evans.ghik@statefarm.com

Karen Thomas
karen.thomas@wmich.edu

Professional Painting Services

BATES ENTERPRISE, INC.

RESIDENTIAL - COMMERCIAL

Locally-Owned
Experienced
Reputable
Exterior/Interior



Power Washing
Low Odor Interiors (269) 553-6387

ProfessionalPainting-Michigan.com

THIRSTYCAT FOUNTAINS

Handmade - Unique
Cat Water Fountains
Decorative Fountains



Food Safe - Ceramic
Easy to Clean

www.thirstycatfountains.com