



## Calendar

### October 2019

- 1 Voter Registration: Grand Rapids**  
*Cherry Health Westside 9am-12 pm*
- 2 Kalamazoo City Commission and Mayoral Candidates Forum**  
*First Congregational Church  
345 W. Michigan Ave., 6:30-8:30pm*
- 3 Voter Registration: Grand Rapids**  
*Cherry Health Westside 3-5pm*
- 4 Voter Registration: East Kentwood**  
*Homecoming Game & Community Festival 4-8pm*  
**Voter Registration: Grand Rapids**  
*First Friday at Linc Up 6pm*
- 6 Strategic Planning Meeting**  
*Walden Woods Condominium Clubhouse  
Noon-6pm*
- 7 Grand Rapids Unit Monthly Meeting**  
*St. Andrews Episcopal Church (NEW!)  
1025 3 Mile Rd., Grand Rapids*
- 9 Development/Fundraising Committee Meeting 10am (location TBD)**
- 14 LWVKA Board Meeting**  
*Walden Woods Clubhouse, 6pm*
- 20 Voter Registration & Education: Global Climate Strike**  
*Kalamazoo Arcadia Festival Site, 2-6pm*
- 21 LWVKA DEI Committee Meeting**  
*6:30-8:30pm, St. Martin's Church, Nichols Rd.*
- 24 Voting Presentation**  
*East Kentwood High School*
- 25 History of Voting Presentation**  
*East Kentwood High School, Grand Rapids*
- 25 Lake Michigan Region Annual Meeting**
- 26 Lakeside Inn, Harbor Country, Lakeside Michigan**

### November 2019

- 4 Grand Rapids Unit Monthly Meeting**  
*St. Andrews Episcopal Church 1025 3 Mile Rd*
- 5 General Election**
- 11 LWVKA Board Meeting**  
*Walden Woods Clubhouse, 6pm*

## President's Column

By MerriKay Oleen-Burkey

### October is Voter Education Month

Our League of Women Voters mission is Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy.

There are several important ways that all of us can educate voters this month by sharing information about new voting rights, redistricting and the 2020 census.

**Voting Rights** — As of September 10th, an unregistered citizen who will be 18 years old by election day and who visits a Secretary of State's branch office will be automatically registered to vote unless the citizen declines.

Any citizen who will be 18 years old by election day can register to vote any-time including on election day at a city or township clerk's office with proof of residency (driver's license, state ID, utility bill, etc.).


Any registered voter can request an Absent Voter Ballot Application from a city or township clerk in order to receive an absentee ballot for any reason. Absent Voter Ballot Applications can also be printed from the Michigan.gov/ vote website. Absentee ballots are available 45 days before an election.

*Encourage everyone to exercise their right to vote on November 5th.*

**Redistricting** — The Secretary of State has announced that the application period for the first Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission will open in late 2019.

**2020 Census** — The U.S. Census Bureau is responsible for conducting a nationwide census every ten years, the next being in 2020. The goal of every census is an accurate count. The results of the census have real-world impacts from determining the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives to planning for roads, schools, and hospitals. If you visit the LWVUS website ([www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)) you can sign the pledge #CountMeIn to be counted and to educate your community about the importance of the 2020 census.

Another way you can help is to recruit Census Taker applicants from our community. Although the next census will be taken in 2020 the Census Bureau is already recruiting to fill positions. They will recruit and employ thousands of Americans as Census Takers throughout the country. You can help our community by getting the word out about 2020 Census jobs. Census Takers receive paid training, are paid weekly and have flexible work hours. Applicants are encouraged to apply online at [2020census.gov/jobs](http://2020census.gov/jobs) or to call the toll-free number at 1-855-JOB-2020 with questions or to obtain more information.

A Making Democracy Work Town Hall sponsored by the LWVKA will take an in-depth look at voting rights, redistricting and the census later this fall. Watch for the Save-the-Date coming soon. 



## LWVUS Update

By Paula Manley

### Recently LWVUS:

- Posted Election Security Talking Points on the League Management Site so that Leagues may speak with one voice about Election Security concerns prior to the 2020 elections.
- Joined other organizations in a letter to the U.S. Senate asking for an increase in funding of the Environmental Protection Agency's Nonpoint Source Management Program under the Clean Water Act.
- The requested funding levels were approved by the U.S. House and are outlined in the Senate version of the legislation.
- Issued Save the Date for the 2020 National Convention to be held in Washington D.C. June 25-28, 2020.
- Suggested local league members plan get together to view the DEI webinars held the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00pm.

## Your State League— Fun Facts!

By Denise Hartsough

- The League of Women Voters of Michigan (LWVMI) is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2019!
- 23 local Leagues make up LWVMI.
- LWVMI has 3 Member-at-Large (MAL) Units. MAL Units grow into local Leagues.
- LWVMI membership has increased by 79% in the past 4 years!
- Three LWVKA members serve on the LWVMI Board: **Paula Manley, Ken Manley and Denise Hartsough.**

## Candidate Forum

By KC Miller

There will be a Candidate Forum for the Kalamazoo City Commission and Mayor Wednesday, October 2, 2019 from 6:30-8:30 pm at the First Congregational Church, 345 W. Michigan Ave.

It is being sponsored by the *Edison Neighborhood Association, El Concilio, First Congressional Church, ISAAC, Kalamazoo County Advocates for Senior Issues (KCASI), League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area (LWVKA), Loaves and Fishes, National Association of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), Public Media Network, Tendaji, OutFront Kalamazoo, We Vote and Transformations.* We expect a good turn out. Come down, meet the Candidates, and submit questions.

All four Mayoral Candidates have agreed to attend: **David Anderson, David Benac, Esteven Juarez, and Corey Smith.**

All eight Commission Candidates have agreed to attend: **Jacob Andrews, Andrew Argo, Emily Demorest, Patrese Griffin, Jeanne Hess, Pete Kushner, Chris Praedel, and Benjamin Stanley.** 



## Global Climate Strike 2019

By Debbie Phillips

LWVKA participated in the 2019 Global Climate Strike, held at Arcadia Creek Festival Place. Participants rallied at WMU and marched to the festival site, where they enjoyed a variety of speakers, presentation tables and musical entertainment. The LWVKA table was busy! We offered information about our upcoming events, membership opportunities and Prop 3 election law changes, and enjoyed a high level of engagement by our guests. Our new table kit makes it easy to answer voter questions and develop relationships. Volunteer to help with a table event soon and check it out for yourself! 



Fran Eckenrode, Barb Dircks, Lee Fevig, and Susan Kiser greet guests with answers to questions and an invitation to join the League.

Thank You to the volunteers who registered voters on National Voter Registration Day at Ministry with Community:

Martha Cohen  
Barb Dircks  
Moir Macleod  
Melanie Manis  
MerriKay Oleen-Burkey

thank  
You 

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee

## September Highlights



The Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee invites LWVKA members to explore resources from the LWVUS website:

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/leadership-development/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-continued-learning>

Committee members are beginning to review and discuss these articles, books, audio and as well as other resources at their monthly meetings. This month we reviewed possible self assessment and action plan tools from the National League. The next meeting of the DEI Committee will be held at 6:30pm on Monday, **October 21, 2019**, at St. Martin of Tours Church on Nichols Road, Kalamazoo. Anyone who is interested is welcome to join us.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee compiles this list of community events that may be of interest to the LWVKA membership. If you learn of an event that should be included here, send the information to Millie Lambert at [millielambert3922@gmail.com](mailto:millielambert3922@gmail.com).

“Committee members are beginning to review and discuss these articles, books, audio and other resources. . .”

## DEI Community Events to Consider:

### Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

Exhibits in ceramics, sculpture, painting, photography and printmaking from Black Artists. These exhibits continue until December 8, 2019 at KIA, 435 W. South St.

#### Exhibits include:

- Where We Stand: Black Artists in Southwest Michigan (Meet the Artists)
- Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem; and Resilience: African American Artists as Agents of Change.

### A Lecture-Recital Advocating for the Recognition and Inclusion of Black-American Sacred Music

Featuring guest soloists and a guest choir Saturday, October 26, 2-4pm with reception to follow at Portage United Church of Christ 2731 W. Milham Ave.

### Society for History and Racial Equity (S.H.A.R.E.)

S.H.A.R.E. is sponsoring the 2019 Summit on Racism on November 15 9am- 4pm at Ascension Borgess Hospital, Lawrence Education Center, 1521 Gull Rd.

The goal of the Summit on Racism is to examine how we as a community can take steps to join the resistance against hate and intolerance. The networking luncheon and break-out sessions will offer opportunities to share ideas for collaboration and develop specific action steps. \$40 standard registration opens Oct. 1; \$25 student registration can be purchased at [sharekazoo.org](http://sharekazoo.org) (click on the donation link at the bottom of the page).

### Dr. Ibram Kendi “How To Be An Antiracist”

Nov. 15 at 4pm 2000 Schneider Hall, WMU. Find event and ticket information at Eventbrite – Bookbug. This program is presented in conjunction with WMU Theatre’s production of August Wilson’s *Gem of the Ocean* playing at WMU Nov. 15-24.

### White Fragility: Why it’s so hard for white people to talk about racism

Society for History and Racial Equity (S.H.A.R.E) in collaboration with the Kalamazoo Public Library will discuss the book, *White Fragility: Why it’s so hard for white people to talk about racism*, by Robin DiAngelo facilitated by Gail Griffin. Thursday, November 21, 6:30-7:30pm at the Kalamazoo Public Library Central Location, 315 S. Rose Street, Kalamazoo. (Note Date Change.)

## LWVKA Book Discussion Group

By Aedín Clements

Mary Robinson’s book, *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future*, will be discussed in our next meeting. We will meet on Tuesday, November 26 at 7 p.m. at Kazoo Books on Parkview. For more information or to join the email list, contact Aedín Clements, [aedinclements@gmail.com](mailto:aedinclements@gmail.com).



# Kalamazoo County Clerk Speaks at LWVKA Event

By Paula Manley

All LWVKA members were invited to the Donor Appreciation event on September 12th at the Park Club.

The 30 members in attendance were thanked for giving their time and money to support the League and its work.

Guest speaker Kalamazoo County Clerk **Tim Snow** gave an update on the new election laws with the passage of Prop 3 and how these changes impact the work he and his staff are doing. We learned that once one election cycle has ended, the work begins on the next upcoming election so there is never a “down time”. He explained the measures to ensure that the election system is secure. The goal is always to ensure that all votes count. 🗳️



Kalamazoo County Clerk  
Tim Snow

# Grand Rapids Unit

By Courtney Winell

The Grand Rapids Unit participated in National Voter Registration Day on September 24 by hosting seven voter registration events throughout the Greater Grand Rapids Area. Volunteers spent time registering voters and providing educational materials to those that were already registered. Thank you to KDL and Cherry Health for their continued partnership and hosting our volunteers on this important day.

Voter registration efforts will also continue throughout the month of October with several events already scheduled. If you are interested in assisting with upcoming voter registration events, please email Courtney Winell at winell22@hotmail.com to obtain a list of events and volunteer sign up information. 🗳️



# Member Updates

By Kym Mulhern, Membership Chair

The following members have recently joined. Please welcome them to the LWVKA!

- Leah Bectel (GR Unit)
- Ferdousi Begum (GR Unit)
- Phyllis Chenery
- Karen Gustafson
- Carolyn Heineman
- Shibly Hossain (GR Unit)
- Elsa Hossain (GR Unit)
- Amara Hossain (GR Unit)
- Betty Kronemeyer
- Rob Lyerla
- Kathryn McFarlen
- Claire Ott
- Kayli Rife
- Anne Schweitzer (GR Unit)
- Claire Schweitzer (GR Unit)

**WELCOME**  
*New Members!*



# CANDIDATE FORUM



## KALAMAZOO MAYORAL OFFICE & CITY COMMISSION CANDIDATE FORUM

**Wednesday, October 2, 2019**  
**6:30pm - 8:30pm**

**First Congregational Church**  
**345 West Michigan Avenue**  
**Kalamazoo, MI 49007**



Spanish interpretation will be available.



**Sponsored by League of Women Voters of Kalamazoo Area**



Co-Sponsors: Edison Neighborhood Association, El Concilio, First Congregational Church, ISAAC, KCASI, Loaves & Fishes, NOBLE, OutFront Kalamazoo, Public Media Network, Tendaji, Transformations Spirituality Center





## LWVKA Education Fund Board of Directors

**Jessica Reiser**, *Chairperson*  
jcreiser@comcast.net

**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



Join us monthly for  
informative programs  
and legislative  
updates on issues  
facing older adults in  
our community.

Visit our website or Facebook page for  
meeting details and membership information:  
[www.kcasi.net](http://www.kcasi.net)

 [facebook.com/KalamazooCountyAdvocatesForSeniorIssues](https://facebook.com/KalamazooCountyAdvocatesForSeniorIssues)

### Officers:

**Fran Eckenrode**  
*Co-President*  
feckenr@gmail.com

**MerriKay Oleen-Burkey**  
*Co-President*  
moburkey30@gmail.com

**Chris Kuthe**  
*VP Organization*  
ckuthe57@yahoo.com

**Denise Hartsough**  
*VP Program*  
denise.hartsough@gmail.com

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

**Aedin Clements**  
*Secretary*  
aedinclements@gmail.com

**Kym Mulhern**  
*Membership Chair*  
kym.mulhern@gmail.com

### Board Members:

**Courtney Winell**  
winell22@hotmail.com

**Sabrina Pritchett-Evans**  
sabrina.pritchett-evans.gh1k@statefarm.com

**Debbie Phillips**  
dphillips@siriusco.com

**Millie Lambert**  
millielambert3922@gmail.com

**Alison Parsons**  
alisonparsonsmi@gmail.com

**Jules Isenberg-Wedel**  
julesisenbergwedel@gmail.com

**KC Miller**  
aakcmiller@yahoo.com

**Paula Manley**  
pjmanley@hotmail.com

**Terry Hluchyj**  
hluchyberg@aol.com