



Calendar

June 2020

- 1 Grand Rapids Unit Monthly Meeting**
7pm via Zoom, contact Courtney Winell @ winell22@hotmail.com
- 8 LWVKA Board Meeting**
6pm via Zoom, contact MerriKay Oleen-Burkey @ moburkey30@gmail.com
- 10 LWVKA Development Committee**
10am via Zoom, contact Ken Manley @ kenmanley@hotmail.com
- 15 LWVKA DEI Committee Meeting**
6:30pm via Zoom, contact Millie Lambert @ millielambert3922@gmail.com
- 25 National LWV Convention**
- 28** Now a virtual convention due to Covid-19
- 30 LWVKA Book Discussion Group**
"America's First Daughter" by Stephanie Dray,
7pm via Zoom, contact Aedin Clements @ aedinclements@gmail.com

July 2020

- 6 Grand Rapids Unit Monthly Meeting**
7pm via Zoom, contact Courtney Winell @ winell22@hotmail.com
- 8 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting**
Gull Rd. Starbucks, 10am
- 9 Black Arts Festival**
- 14** Various locations throughout Kalamazoo
- 13 LWVKA Board Meeting**
Walden Woods Condominium Clubhouse, 6pm
- 28 LWVKA Book Discussion Group**
Kazoo Books, Parkview Ave, 7pm

August 2020

- 4 State Primary Election**
- 12 LWVKA Development Committee**
10am, Gull Road Starbucks
- 15 Do Dah Parade**
March with Ladies Library Association to celebrate 19th amendment
- 21 Women's Equality Day Luncheon**
Delta Conference Center
2747 S 11th St., Kalamazoo
- 26 Women's Equality Day**

President's Column

Fran Eckenrode

Annual Meeting Business by Email & Ground Mail

2020 LWVKA Annual Meeting Business was conducted by mail and email to comply with COVID-19 stay-at-home orders. THANK YOU to all members who participated in this unprecedented voting process. All proposals were adopted including Budget, Program, and Slate of Officers. The following 2020-2021 LWVKA Board nominations were approved:

Co-Presidents (1-year term)

Fran Eckenrode
MerriKay Oleen-Burkey

VP of Program (2-year term)

Denise Hartsough

Treasurer (2-year term)

Paula Aldridge

Board Members (2-year term)

Millie Lambert
Jules Isenberg-Wedel
Jennifer Snyder
Lisa Fuller

Board Members (1-year term)

Barbara Dircks
Marti Fritz

Nominating Committee (1-year term)

Kay Anderson
KC Miller
Regena Nelson

2020-2021 Returning Board Members:

Chris Kuthe (VP for Organization); Aedin Clements (Secretary);
Sabrina Pritchett-Evans (Board Member)

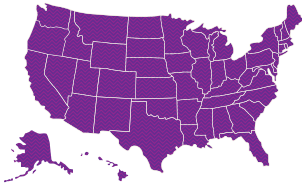
All Michiganders can vote safely in upcoming elections.

Michigan Secretary of State **Jocelyn Benson** announced that every registered voter in Michigan will receive an application to vote by mail in the August and November elections. Many of you are already on the permanent absent voter list and receive this application ahead of every election. The Michigan Department of State's Bureau of Elections is ensuring that all registered voters will receive an application for the August and November elections. Be on the lookout for your application and return it to receive an absent voter ballot.

Stay safe, vote by mail! 

LWVUS Update

By Paula Manley



VOTE411.org received the 24th Annual People's Voice Webby Award for the Best Government and Civil Innovation Website on May 19th. The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences which gives these awards is the leading international award organization honoring excellence on the Internet.

LWVUS has endorsed a new project — RepresentUs — which creates a space for nonpartisan organizations and a cross section of election officials to promote reforms in states to make voting safe. They have created the website: votesafe.us — a bipartisan platform giving a state by state breakdown of what states need to do, allowing the public to see where and what is being done, and providing resources and advocacy.

Recently LWVUS joined other organizations in a letter to Congress requesting \$40,000,000 for one-time competitive grants to nonpartisan, non-profit civic education programs that have a record of successfully providing effective civic education programs. The goal is to meet the remote teaching needs of K-12 schools and teachers, the home-schooling needs of parents and students and for meaningful student-centered civic learning.

For information on upcoming webinars and resources, go to lwv.org and access League Management.

LWVMI Updates

Denise Hartsough, VP Program

LWVMI Makes Democracy Work!

Leagues around the state reached people 17,447 times in 2019-20 with important information about the 2020 Census, Michigan's new Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, and our state's enhanced voting rights, including no-excuse absentee voting.

Online retrieval of information nearly matched attendance at in-person events, with nearly 9000 of each. Note that the pandemic forced cancellation of some events in 2020.

A pass-through grant from the LWVUS Education Fund supported this outreach.

Lame Duck Sessions

Local Leagues will help create a State League position on lame duck sessions in the Michigan legislature. Lame duck is the period between the

November election and the end of legislators' terms on December 31st.

During lame duck the outgoing legislature can enact bills speedily without having to answer to voters. Lame duck bills in 2018 included efforts to undermine all the newly passed ballot proposals, and creation of a "straits corridor authority" to oversee Endbridge's proposed tunnel under the Straits of Mackinac for Line 5.

LWVKA members will discuss the LWVMI lame duck study consensus questions early in 2021.

New Members

By Kym Mulhern

Please welcome the following new members to the League of Women Voters Kalamazoo Area:

Susan Brundage

Linda Lesniak

Marcia DeVos (GR unit)

Corinn Rutkoski

Laura Latiolais

Book Discussion Group

By Aedin Clements

The next meeting will be held online on Tuesday, June 30 at 7 p.m. The discussion will be on *America's First Daughter* by Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie. A link will be sent to all those on the Book Club email list. If you wish to be added to this list, please contact Aedin Clements, aedinclements@gmail.com

Honor 100 Years

By Paula Manley

Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment and the 100th Anniversary (July 20, 1920) of the LWVKA by honoring an important woman in your life! Give a gift to LWVKA and help sustain our efforts to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy as we go forward in the next 100 years. It is as easy as going to lwvka.org and donating online or sending a check to P.O. Box 2106 Kalamazoo MI 49003.



Welcome
NEW
MEMBERS!



Environment Beat

by Denise Keele

LWWUS takes the position that “as citizens of the world we must protect our planet from the physical, economic and public health effects of climate change while also providing pathways to economic prosperity.” LWWKA has taken that national position seriously through the work of its Natural Resource Committee and as an affiliate member of the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition (KCCC). The KCCC unites organizations and individuals to promote awareness and engagement to achieve immediate and drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and a rapid and just transition to 100% renewable energy in the greater Kalamazoo area.

The KCCC, in partnership with the Kalamazoo Earth Day Festival Committee, Kalamazoo Nature Center, Hope for Creation and several other local organizations and individuals hosted over thirty digital events as part of Virtual Kalamazoo Earth Week 2020 (April 18-25).

The digital pivot was remarkably successful, drawing thousands of visitors to the websites and social media platforms of the major partner organizations. Virtual events provided educational opportunities, art and photography exhibits, messages on how to get engaged in effective collective action,

connected people to nature through sharing signs of spring, and highlighted the impact of individual choices in diet, native plantings and transitioning a home to net-zero.

Elected officials participated and supported events in a variety of ways. Kalamazoo Township, City and County all passed proclamations expressing support for honoring Earth Week 2020; encouraging all citizens to participate and recognizing the interconnectedness of all living things on which we depend for our survival. Kalamazoo area officials participated in a climate crisis town hall and discussed climate emergency declarations, climate change impacts and responses. Michigan state and federal officials, including Senators Stabenow and Peters, State Senator McCann and State Representative Hoadley, sent personalized video reflections on Earth Day and the Climate Crisis.

Most events were recorded and remain available for all to discover and enjoy at Kalamazoo Earth Day Virtual Events.

A key take away message from Earth Week was recognition of the robust community of highly committed activists in the Kalamazoo area and that “we are all in this together.” The KCCC is thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with affiliates like LWWKA and look forward to continuing to work together to address our ecological and climate crises. 

“
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like LWWKA .
”



Remembering Carol Urban

By Janet Jones



Getting up to mischief with Carol was interesting — sometimes funny, sometimes physically challenging, and always an adventure.


I met Carol through the Community Access Center (now Public Media Network) when I took classes in video production in the 1990s. From Carol I learned a lot about how to frame a story, communicate clearly, and engage the audience.

Carol had a wide range of interests; the arts — she served on the Board of Wellspring, the environment (especially the lakeshore), public affairs, and many others. This led to many experiences for me. We video tapped *Bach Around the Block* and developed a series on *Ethics in Public Life*, and began taping (not digital in those days) of the *LWVKA Candidate Forums*. Carol served on the League of Women Voters Board and produced a video to celebrate the LWVKA's 90th anniversary.

Carol and I have sons the same age who became friends in high school. That of course led to other exploits related to education and the challenges of rearing teenagers.

Some of my fondest memories were hearing about all her travels. She read extensively before traveling and her curiosity led to great stories and unusual souvenirs from far-flung places all over the U.S. and the world.

Carol's generosity ranged from the particular to community-wide. Many organizations and individuals benefited from her fund-raising.

Like all friends everywhere, I wish we could have had more time together and will miss her very much. 

YOUR TEXT HERE
SAMPLE
TEXT

Special Tributes

In Memory of Jean Jones

Terry Hluchyj
David Lin & Anita Vasavada

In Memory of Carol Urban

Paula Aldridge
Jeanne Hess
Terry Hluchyj
Barbara Hivira
Peter Kobrak
Ken & Paula Manley
Tanya Potter
Diane Worden

In Honor of Violet Aldrich & Dorothy Huitt

Ken & Paula Manley

In Honor of Helen Lyon

Cheryl Lyon-Jenness

In Honor of Debra Lagasse & Pat Olson

Millie Olson

In Honor of Caroline Ham & Betty Lee Ongley

Mary & Don Brown



DEI Meetings & Events:

By Millie Lambert

The DEI Committee invites members to explore resources from the LWWUS: www.lww.org/league-management/leadership-development/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-continued-learning

Meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice. The next meeting May 27, 6:30pm. The June meeting is scheduled for June 15, 6:30pm.

DEI June Events to Consider:

Have an event or resource that should be included? Send it to millielambert3922@gmail.com.

Due to current restrictions regarding gatherings, many events have been cancelled or postponed.

Tips for on line Meetings for People with Disabilities – June 1, 9-10am, Disability Network: 269-345-1516

Ableism 101 – Kalamazoo: June 3, 9-11:30am, and June 9, 1-4pm Disability Network, 517 E. Crosstown Parkway. *Everything you know about Disability is (probably) wrong!* This workshop introduces the basic concepts of ableism and explores how the language we use can support equality, or perpetuate stigma. To pre-register contact Miranda 269-345-1516 x 120.

Web Movie, Intelligent Lives – June 11, 2-4pm, Disability Network. From award-winning film maker **Dan Habib** comes the film *Intelligent Lives*, a catalyst to transform the label “intellectual disability” from a life sentence of isolation to a life of possibility for the most systemically segregated people in America. Pre-register 269-345-1516.

Know your Rights – Webinar, Overview of laws protecting people with disabilities. Live webinar discussing the laws that protect people with disabilities in the areas of employment, housing, public places/ access, voting, transportation, and education. June 17, 2- 4pm, and June 23, 9– 11am. Disability Network. Pre-register 269-345-1516.

Juneteenth Celebration – June 19. This years celebration will bring the community together for a virtual experience. Visit the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and Soul Artistry LLC Facebook pages from 1-5pm to commemorate the history of Juneteenth. Featuring live music, poetry, dance, visual art and history from some of Kalamazoo’s most prominent creatives. Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the U.S.


Resources/Books/Videos etc.

Racial Equity Tools www.racialequitytools.org
COVID-19 – Racial Equity & Social Justice Resources. This list includes information that will help communities and activists as they work to understand and respond to the moment and for the long haul. Resources

are arranged in categories: Analysis, Resources and Tools, Healing and Community Care, Organizing and Solidarity, Resource Building & Rapid Response, Virtual Work and Online Engagement, and List of Lists.

Lovehasnolabels.com – This site has an abundance of materials covering DEI in depth. It provides information, activities to address DEI issues, and illustrates what media campaigns and other efforts are underway.

YWCA Advocacy – check out standagainstracism.org for their social-media tool kit, calls-to-action, and to listen to their podcast miniseries.

Society for History, and Racial Equity – SHARE: You are encouraged to explore the many resources available on this site: sharekazoo.org 

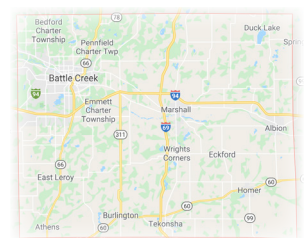


Calhoun County Unit Updates

By Sue Rosko

It has been an interesting time with our unit beginning in the grips of the Covid Pandemic. Since becoming a unit we have not been able to hold an in-person meeting, gathering or project...but that hasn't stopped us. We are passionate about the work that needs to be done with the upcoming important elections, the Census, and all of the issues that seem to target safe and free elections. So we are not letting social distancing totally interfere with our connections with the people in Calhoun County.

Beginning to reach out to the public, we have shared articles introducing our unit with the county newspapers that are distributed to all residents, built our Facebook page, shared on social media, held Zoom meetings and are reaching out to others to share our mission. We've also been reading, watching webinars and exploring all of the excellent resources that the League of Women Voters provides. **Lori Kline-Closson**, voter registration chair, borrowed from sister leagues to share with all Calhoun County schools the distance learning program that encourages high school seniors to register to vote. We plan to continue to follow up on this program in the summer and fall. Chairs **Darlene Neidlinger** and **Mary Jo Byrne** are busy learning the ropes of the 411 guide. Unit members are continuing to brainstorm to develop programs and ways to reach county residents through distance learning/social media, print, and physically when Covid allows. There is definitely a desire to meet in person once it is safe! In the meantime we remain very committed to doing all we can to support the League's mission—“Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy”. We've appreciated the support of the Kalamazoo League and beyond. Thank you for the help in getting us started and mentoring us as we proceed. 



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updates on issues
facing older adults in
our community.

Visit our website or Facebook page for
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