



Calendar

June 2021

- 8 Calhoun County LWV Unit Meeting**
7:pm via Zoom, contact Sue Rosko
lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com
- 9 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting**
10am via Zoom, contact Ken Manley,
kenmanley@hotmail.com
- 10 LWVKA DEI Committee:**
"Housing Issues in the Kalamazoo Area"
7pm, pre-registration required, contact Millie Lambert,
millielambert3922@gmail.com for link
- 17 LWVMI Workshop: Sorting Out Sex & Gender**
7:00 to 8:30 via Zoom
- 23 DEI Committee Meeting**
6:30pm via Zoom, contact Millie Lambert
millielambert3922@gmail.com
- 28 LWVKA Board Meeting**
6pm via Zoom, contact MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
moberkey30@gmail.com

July 2021

- 1 MICRC Redistricting Public Hearing**
6pm, Grand Rapids, DeVos Center and via Zoom.
Go to lwvmi.org for link. Brittni Kellom of Detroit
(Democrat) will chair hearing
- 13 Calhoun County LWV Unit Meeting**
7pm via Zoom, contact Sue Rosko,
lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com
- 14 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting**
10am via Zoom, contact Ken Manley @
kenmanley@hotmail.com
- 16 Kalamazoo Growlers "A League of Their Own"**
6:35, Homer Stryker Field. Honoring the 1950s
Kalamazoo Lassies. Evening dedicated to women's
empowerment, LWVKA will have a table for voter
registration and education
- 26 LWVKA Board Meeting**
6pm via Zoom, contact MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
moberkey30@gmail.com
- 27 LWVKA Book Group**
7pm via Zoom. Book by John Meacham, "The Soul
of America: The Battle for our Better Angels".
Contact Aedin Clements, aedinclements@gmail.com
- 28 DEI Committee Meeting**
6:30pm via Zoom, contact Millie Lambert
millielambert3922@gmail.com

President's Column

Submitted by Fran Eckenrode

Highlights of the 2021 LWVMI Convention

This month, the President's Column offers highlights of the 2021 LWVMI Convention which was held virtually on May 21 and 22. The convention included keynote speaker Michigan Lieutenant Governor Garland Gilchrist, a panel discussion with Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson and Livonia City Clerk Susan Nash, election of officers, other annual business, awards, and even a silent auction (thanks to Ken Manley). The overarching theme, Defending Democracy, was emphasized throughout. One advantage of the virtual convention was that non-voting delegates could also register and attend for a nominal fee.

Many thanks to the 12 LWVKA voting delegates:

Aedin Clements	Jules Isenberg-Wedel
Barbara Dircks	Millie Lambert
Fran Eckenrode	MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
Connie Ferguson	Linda Pell
Karen Gustafson	Sue Rosko
Kathi Harris	Courtney Winell

2021-2023 LWVMI BOARD

Denise Hartsough was re-elected as Treasurer of the LWVMI Board and Rebekah Fennell is a newly-elected member of the Board. Paula Manley and Ken Manley are going off-board and were thanked by President Christina Schlitt for their many valuable contributions over the years.

Awards

Maryann Mahaffey Community Service Award

Congratulations to Denise Hartsough!!! Winner of the Maryann Mahaffey Community Service Award.

This prestigious award, bestowed by LWVMI, honors an individual who demonstrates outstanding commitment to their community and its citizens and who exemplifies the principles of the League and League leadership. LWVKA is proud that Denise is a member of our League.

Belle Ringer Awards (named for the first president of the League of Women Voters of Michigan, Florence Belle Brotherton)

The Belle Ringer Award nominees are selected by local leagues to acknowledge support of critical League priorities; one each in Advocacy, Voter Service, Member Recruitment & Engagement and Strategic Planning and/or Fundraising.



News from
National

LWVUS Update

Paula Manley

LWVUS has issued the 2020 Election Impact Report which highlights how the League served voters during the 2020 Election. Nationwide, the League educated 6 million voters. VOTE411 was fully translated into Spanish for the first time allowing 2.2 million Spanish speaking voters to access the information. LWVUS offers a social media toolkit to help Local Leagues share the impact we had during the recent election. Go to lwv.org to the league management section to view the report and the toolkit.

LWVUS recently sent Action Alerts to all members on the following issues:

- Congress Must Protect the Nation from Gun Violence
- Tell Your Senators to Support the For the People Act
- Ask Your Senators to Support DC Statehood

The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial was unveiled in Occuquan, VA. Thirty-nine State and Local Leagues, as well as LWVUS, contributed almost \$40,000 for this memorial. It tells the full story of the suffrage movement, mentions the founding of the LWV and includes a statue of Carrie Chapman Catt. ✓

LWVMI Convention: Observer Corps Workshop

David Allen of the Marquette County LWV who initiated and leads the Observer Corps for their League was the presenter. He pointed out that the purpose of an Observer Corps is to let sunshine into government action; thus, national Sunshine Week in March that places a focus on the process and substance of what government bodies at all levels are doing. Among the benefits of an Observer Corps that David highlighted were 1) better questions for candidate forums; 2) placing the League in tune with local hot topics; 3) increasing the expertise and credibility of League members about their local government; and 4) increasing visibility of the LWV. Attendees were reminded that if they had observers at the Board of Canvassers following the 2020 election or have observers at the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission meetings we are engaged in Observer Corps activities! ✓



Redistricting Testimony

Denise Hartsough, LWVMI MICRC Observer Team

The Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC) has embarked upon its travels around the state to learn from the public at 16 hearings. The Commission seeks input about the shared interests of geographically defined groups, known as Communities of Interest (COIs).

At the Kalamazoo public hearing on May 13th at Wings Event Center, the MICRC heard from 67 people, including members of these COIs: Battle Creek-Kalamazoo (12 speakers); lakeshore communities (4); Berrien-Cass-Van Buren tri-county community (4), Van Buren-Allegan (3), rural and vocally anti-college students (3); college students (2); farmers (1); border counties (1); youth (1).

Kay Perry of LWVKA testified on behalf of a statewide criminal justice reform organization, urging that incarcerated persons be counted for redistricting in their home communities, not where they are imprisoned. Lynn Ward Gray of the Calhoun Geo Unit testified as a member of Delta Sigma Theta who experiences the strong ties between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo.

For a wealth of information on the MICRC, including the public hearing schedule, please visit www.michigan.gov/micrc ✓

Membership

In April, we welcomed two new members—**Bonnie Tefft** of Kalamazoo and **Janet Schoenmeyer** of Marshall. And we bid farewell to our members from the Grand Rapids area as their unit takes the next step toward independent operations.

Help us keep our records up to date! If you have new contact information, please email Membership Chair Jennifer Snyder, jsyndergaardsnyder@gmail.com.

WELCOME
New Members!

LWVMI Convention, continued from page 1

The Kalamazoo Area League nominated candidates from both Kalamazoo and Calhoun Counties for each award category. Congratulations to these award winners:

Belle Ringer Category	Calhoun County	Kalamazoo County
Voter Service	Lori Kline Classon	Jule Isenburg-Wedel
Membership Recruitment & Engagement	Mary Jo Bryne	Jennifer Snyder
Advocacy	Paula Manley	Connie Ferguson
Strategic Planning / Fundraising	Linda Pell	Terry Hluchyj

Lt. Gov. Gilchrist's Address

Contributed by Aedin Clements

Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist thanked the League for being on the front lines of defending democracy for a hundred years. He spoke of recent challenges, particularly attacks on democracy, remembering not only January 6th of this year, but also April 30, 2020. Despite the fact that in Michigan, the November election was the most secure in our state's history, there are some who continue to argue that the 2020 election was stolen, and to use this to make barriers between the people of Michigan and the ballot box.

Defending democracy is a priority of the Governor, and this means working against the national strategy to limit access to our democracy, because democracy works best when all people have access to the ballot box. Another priority of the Governor is equity and inclusion: public servants should reflect the people they serve, and Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist noted the diversity of the current administration and that he is the first Black lieutenant governor in the history of the state.

Michigan has a number of ethnic commissions, but until last year there was no commission for Black Michiganders. Governor Whitmer created the Black Leadership Advisory Council in 2020. Michigan was one of the first states to track demographic data on the Pandemic, resulting in the creation of the Michigan Coronavirus Task Force on Racial Disparities. Bias training has been carried out in state government for medical professionals, and the State is continuing its commitment to diversity and to addressing inequities in society. The Task Force collected data that showed that COVID was killing black Michiganders at five times the rate of white Michiganders. This resulted in many services being offered in different communities, and the disparity has been flattened. This task force is now a model for the Biden/Harris Administration. The focus is now on vaccines, and the Lieutenant Governor is traveling throughout the state to promote vaccines. He ended by thanking the League for its work.

Panel Discussion — “Challenges Facing Democracy and How to Address Them” with Jocelyn Benson, Michigan Secretary of State and Susan Nash, Livonia City Clerk.

Contributed by Linda Pell

Susan Nash expects to have criticism thrown at her. Her philosophy is duck, take cover, dust off and recover. She loves being a City

Clerk and believes that voters who have concerns deserve to be heard. She encourages 1:1 conversations to share the facts. “They might not believe you but will respect you for listening”. She likes to point out that, “if a ballot is fraudulent—the WHOLE ballot is fraudulent”.

Jocelyn Benson believes we need to start from a place of truth to protect democracy. November 3, 2020 was the most secure election with the highest turnout ever in Michigan. Election results incurred unprecedented scrutiny and the hard data (truth) of 250+ local audits uncovered no fraud or security breaches. “Good people (clerks and judges) stood guard during a massive misinformation campaign that threatened people’s faith in the election process”.

She urged us to stay vigilant because those behind the misinformation effort will be back in 2022 and 2024 and will be more strategic and better funded. Cyber Ninjas are already asking rural counties in MI, GA, NV, PA and WI for access to ballots and Republican candidates are using this as a fundraising strategy.

What can LWV do to counter the misinformation and voter suppression efforts?

- demand accountability and truth from elected officials
- stay engaged as poll workers and challengers
- speak out against voter suppression – be specific about what a bill will or won’t do
- urge more good citizens to be involved
- don’t get worn down, build endurance for the long haul

Resources:

2020 Election Fact Checker
SOS Analysis of Voting Bills
Senate Election Committee Bills

Program Proposal: Concurrence with the California Position on Criminal Justice

Contributed by Barb Dircks

The League advocates for issues using its national, state and local positions. Every two years prior to state convention, the local leagues review state positions and any recommendations for changes or new state study proposals are submitted to the LWVMI Board. They determine whether to pursue updates of existing positions or to adopt any proposed new studies in order to meet current or upcoming advocacy needs. This year no revisions were recommended to state positions. However, the Midland League proposed that our Michigan League vote in concurrence to adopt the California Criminal Justice Position. A concurrence is an agreement by League members to adopt a position reached by another State League. Once a position is studied and adopted by one state League, other state Leagues can agree to adopt it in its entirety, or not.

Paula Bowman led the discussion of pros and cons. Midland League President Kim Steinke explained the advantages, given the current interest in criminal justice, incarceration issues and overall police oversight efforts. Also mentioned was the added benefit in cost savings to adopt a position that another State has already researched and documented. Two questions were raised. First,

Continued on page 4

did the study bring both sides to the table; did the police have representation? Secondly, was funding discussed, and were monies allocated for programming in the proposal? Both questions were addressed. The study was done so that the California League would have a position to advocate for Criminal Justice once proposed legislation was raised. Input from all parties would be involved at the point of creating legislation, as would funding for ensuing programs. Following additional discussion, the motion of Proposed Concurrence passed and LWVMI will adopt California's Position on Criminal Justice.

Behind the Scenes—Virtually!

By Connie Ferguson

Since I served as Convention Parliamentarian, I got to see some of the nuts and bolts of what goes into a large virtual convention. It was amazing! The LWVMI board made the wise decision to hire Romela Productions to stage the event. They worked closely with Convention Chair Paula Bowman and President Christina Schlitt, among many others, to work out detailed scripts so that things would appear reasonably smooth to participants. This involved many meetings. I wasn't included until about a month ago, but have spent many hours online with LWVMI and Romela since then. When should they share which slides? Whose microphones should be turned on when? Whose video should be enabled? Does this motion need a second? How long should polls be left on screen? Who would monitor the Q&A and Chat? Many decisions! Romela did comment that our convention had lots more moving parts than most meetings. Last week there were three dress rehearsals, plus meetings between Romela and various speakers to check on lighting, camera alignment and microphone quality. Everything had to be planned ahead of time, since we were all in separate places and couldn't have those quick whispered-on-the-spot conversations. However, since things inevitably arise at the last minute, there was a "backchannel" text string connecting Romela, Christina, Paula, and a couple of others of us. One more thing to monitor!

Overall, the virtual platform had the advantages of larger participation and lower cost for participants. However, we all missed the electricity generated when so many Leaguers gather in one place. Those chance meetings with someone can lead to long-term League connections and friendships. Looking forward to Lansing in 2023!

Directions to the Board

By Fran Eckenrode

The following statement was submitted on behalf of the Kalamazoo League during the "Directions to the Board" portion of the 3rd plenary session. This statement encourages the Michigan Board to be involved in National Popular Vote efforts. The multi-League initiative originated in LWVKA by member Connie Ferguson.

"The League of Women Voters of Kalamazoo Area and 15 other local Michigan Leagues are looking forward to learning more about how LWVMI will be getting involved with the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact efforts in Michigan. We understand that this is likely to be a long process. However, in accordance with the LWVUS position, we believe that until it is possible to change the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College, we need to be open to interim approaches that assure that the election of the president reflects the will of the people."

LWVMI Convention, continued from page 3

Workshops

Workshop — Making Your Voice Heard in Lansing: LWVMI Advocacy

Contributed by Connie Ferguson

Sue Smith, LWVMI VP Advocacy, and Judy Karandjeff, Advocacy Committee Chair, provided a primer about how LWV advocacy works at the state and local levels. Adopting a position provides a basis for advocacy as bills are introduced and issues arise. The decision on whether or not to act on a specific bill depends both on the substance of the bill and the likelihood of that bill progressing in the legislature. Both Sue and Judy have extensive experience as advocates in Lansing and represent League in a professional manner. They also talked specifically about what's going on with several issues, including redistricting and voter suppression, and how the League is involved in these issues at the state and local levels.

Workshop — Promoting the Truth And Overcoming Myths

Contributed by Barb Dircks

Promoting the Truth was the topic of a riveting hour worth of presentation and conversation. It couldn't have been more relevant and imperative given the current state of affairs in this country and, given the League's Mission of Defending Democracy. The panel of experts was introduced by Betsy Cushman: Zaineb Hussein, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Michigan Department of State; Sarah Courtney, the Senior Director of Communications and Digital Strategy; Shelly Belton, Michigan Bureau of Election Voter Specialist. Each identified an area of the subject and defined terms, explained issues and clarified actions that the League can pursue. The following highlights are worth repeating.

Misinformation: sharing false information without intent of harm. This occurs each time individuals spread and share on social media without verifying or looking for source credibility. This perpetuates misconception and adds validity.

Disinformation: creating and sharing false information with intent of harm. The hope is to ferment mistrust and make falsehoods mainstream. The plan is to have the public "do the dirty work".

How best to recognize them?

Consider source and check the author of what you read; look for legitimate credentials

Check article dates; look to see if current

Cross check; see if mainstream media is also carrying story

Read more than the headlines; Click bait is common- titles suggest one topic but ensuing article is unrelated

Question emotionally charged content

All three speakers emphasized our shared responsibility in being proactive to help in combating half-truths, misinformation and outright lies. It is always preferable to root statements and objections when speaking to other in facts, accurate sourcing and by referring to the Constitution and our shared Democratic narrative. They proposed:

Do NOT share or click on what you question (especially if emotional reaction is present) It encourages and boosts the algorithm, thereby increasing the sharing of inaccurate info., making it seem normal and popular.

Continued on page 5

LWVMI Convention, continued from page 4

DO NOT ENGAGE publicly; counter myths with messaging that is on your own terms and can be supported. I.e. transparent and safe voting was at an all time high.

Do report and/or block contact when possible

Yes, we all have a part in moving the needle on this issue, especially given our need to live our mission of Defending Democracy. Thank you to the three excellent presenters for sharing their wealth of knowledge on this very relevant topic!

Workshop — Building More Diverse, Inclusive and Equitable Leagues

Contributed by Millie Lambert

The DEI Workshop began with a brief introduction highlighting the “inward facing” nature of much of our work, and a very short highlight of some Michigan League statistics from the statewide membership survey earlier this year. Cathy McAdam, Gross Pointe League, and I each spoke for five minutes about our individual league’s work in the DEI area. Following the presentations, small breakout groups discussed what the League might look like in 2025 having had successful efforts to address DEI issues.

Following the small group discussions, the entire group met to debrief. Many of the shared ideas have already been adopted by LWVKA such as supplying book resources, sharing webinars, making DEI-sensitive changes in governance documents, leading strategic action plans, and adding DEI activities to monthly Board agendas. Additional suggestions included reaching out to youth voters, offering remote meeting access to include those who are unable to attend in person, making use of Equality Michigan trainer availability, and promoting

programs such as the June 17 LWVMI Sex, Gender webinar.

A future vision for LWV 2025 included a membership and board that reflect the demographics of the community. Individual League members can help achieve this vision by extending personal invitations to diverse friends and colleagues to join the League. Another idea is to offer trial memberships to prospective new members. Partnering with diverse community groups can help build personal relationships and leverage the common theme of “power in the vote.”

Workshop — Why and How Your League Should have an Observer Corps

Contributed by MerriKay Oleen-Burkey

David Allen of the Marquette County LWV who initiated and leads the Observer Corps for their League was the presenter. He pointed out that the purpose of an Observer Corps is to let sunshine into government action; thus, national Sunshine Week in March that places a focus on the process and substance of what government bodies at all levels are doing. Among the benefits of an Observer Corps that David highlighted were 1) better questions for candidate forums; 2) placing the League in tune with local hot topics; 3) increasing the expertise and credibility of League members about their local government; and 4) increasing visibility of the LWV. Attendees were reminded that if they had observers at the Board of Canvassers following the 2020 election or have observers at the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission meetings we are engaged in Observer Corps activities! 

Housing Issues in the Kalamazoo Area

How We got Here and What do We do Next

The LWVKA DEI Committee is hosting a virtual event on Thursday, June 10th, from 7pm to 8pm “*Housing Issues in the Kalamazoo Area – How We got Here and What do We do Next*”. We suggest accessing one or more of the references described below for background and joining us to discuss housing issues in the Kalamazoo area.

Please Join Us via Zoom, June 10 at 7pm

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZlTcOqtzwsHdal8cSd-I5xyYsCa3asEYW3>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

The DEI Committee looks forward to your participation in this event. We hope you learn and that you teach us!

Housing References

FIRST: How FDR Segregated Kalamazoo

www.kpl.gov/video/how-fdr-segregated-kalamazoo

This piece of local history was researched and presented in 2018 by Matt Smith, a KPL Librarian. Matt’s presentation runs about 54 minutes; the rest of the video is a six person panel Q&A with the audience. It is well worth the commitment.

Part of the importance of this video is that it is visual local history. People

familiar with the City of Kalamazoo can see how the introduction of Redlining, as part of FDR’s New Deal in 1937, still strongly influences the current structure of Kalamazoo’s neighborhoods.

SECOND: Housing Matters Videos

These videos link you to recently recorded Zoom meetings of people and organizations who are concerned with, and working on, affordable housing in Kalamazoo County. This includes the Housing Millage Kalamazoo County residents recently passed. All the videos are labeled as to when they were recorded and what they are about.

Let interest and curiosity be your guide.

THIRD: MiBiz: Bid for Lakeside Academy Fails

Kalamazoo County Regroups After Golden Opportunity for Housing Falls Through

Not every effort is a success. Read a short article.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Kalamazoo City Commission — March 15, 2021 (YouTube)

The Kalamazoo City Commission voted through the Hotel Intervention Project. The comments of Vice-Mayor Griffin can be found at 00:56:15, but at 1:01:38 more detail is provided. This has been billed by some as “a must listen piece”.

Bridge Michigan: Lumber Shortage Increases the Cost of New Housing 

DEI Meetings & Events:

By Millie Lambert



The DEI Committee invites members to explore resources from the LWVUS: lww.org/league-management/diversity-equity-inclusion.

The May DEI Committee will continue to move forward with our plans to provide various links for members to review prior to participating in the LWVKA Housing Event planned for June 10, 2021, 7:00 – 8:00 pm. Preregistration is required. Our June meeting will be on June 23, 2021, at 6:30 pm via Zoom. If interested in joining this committee, please notify MerriKay Oleen-Burkey or Millie Lambert.

June Events to Consider:

Have an event or resource that should be included? Email: millielambert3922@gmail.com.

Due to current COVID restrictions, many events have been cancelled or postponed. Check with the event sponsors.

Please subscribe to your selected organizations online and consider liking them on social media.

How We Got Here and What Do We Do Now: June 10, 7–8 pm. LWVKA DEI Committee. FREE Registration required. (See page 5)

Unveiling American Genius: Open Now – Kalamazoo Institute of Arts (KIA). The exhibition explores key stories that women, African Americans, Latinx and other artists have told about our culture, art, and history.

Yun-Fei Ji: Kalamazoo Institute Arts (KIA), June – Sept 2021. Exposes violence against Asian Americans, race based threats and contrasts the cultural Revolution in China to the propaganda, misinformation and fear that the U.S. is experiencing today.

Online Video Series:

Racism Has a Cost for Everyone. June 7, open hours. FREE. Registration required. Contact Kalamazoo Public Library (KPL) ONEplace@kpl.gov

How to Overcome Your Biases? Walk Boldly Towards Them. Mon., June 21, open hours. FREE. Registration required. Contact KPL ONEplace@kpl.gov

Institutional Anti-racism: KRESA. June 25, 10:00 am – 11:00 am. FREE. Registration required. Contact KPL ONEplace@kpl.gov

Webinar: Ableism 101 - June 3, 9am – 12pm. Pre-registration required. Contact Disability Network of Southwest Michigan (DNSWM) 269-345-1516 or www.dnswm.org

Webinar: Ableism 102 – June 8, 1:30 – 4pm. OR June 15, 1:30 – 4pm. Preregistration required. Contact DNSWM 269-345-1516 or www.dnswm.org

Juneteenth Celebration of Freedom: June 19, 1–3pm Live virtual event requires preregistration at kalamazoomuseum.org

Exhibit: The Global Language of Headwear: Cultural Identity, Rites of Passage, and Spirituality. July 17–Oct. 24. Preregistration required at kalamazoomuseum.org

Online Exclusives

Filling in the Gaps: The Art of Murphy Darden. Contact Kalamazoo Valley Museum (KVM) www.kalamazoomuseum.org

Close to Home: The Walker Brothers. Contact KVM. www.kalamazoomuseum.org

Online Introduction to Anti-Bias Anti-Racist Education Workshop – 2 days: Aug. 9, 9 – noon and Aug. 10, 9 – noon; sliding scale cost. Contact ERAC/CE – eracce.org

Online Introduction to Systemic Racism Workshop – 2 days: Aug. 25, 1– 4pm and Aug. 26, 1–4pm; sliding scale cost, Contact ERAC/CE – eracce.org

Online Understanding and Analyzing Systemic Racism. Analysis Workshop: 6 days: Dec. 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 2021; 1–4pm each day. Registration required and must attend ALL six sessions. Cost \$425. Contact ERACCE – eracce.org

Blog Event: Why do White People and People of Color View Policing so Differently? Contact ERACCE eracce.org

City of Kalamazoo – Landlord Fair Housing Training: June 3, 9am – noon, free; June 10, 5:30 – 8:30pm, free; Contact Fair-Housing-Center-of-Southwest Michigan, FHCSWMichigan. Register with eventbrite.com

Navigating the Culture Wars

With Douglas Murray and Ayaan Hirsi Ali: June 1, 2–3pm, Fee. Contact [eventbrite](https://eventbrite.com)

The Black Liberation Front Q & A: June 15, 1:30pm – 3:15 pm, FREE. Contact [eventbrite](https://eventbrite.com)

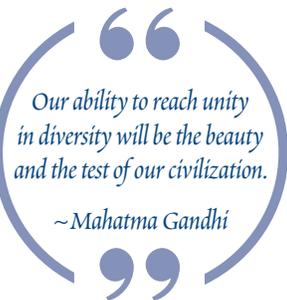
Pride and Joy – A Celebration of Intersectional Storytelling: June 16, 8pm. Contact OutFront Kalamazoo 269-349-4234 outfrontkzoo.org

#LivingOutFront - A Conversation with Delaware State Sen. Sarah McBride: June 24, 8pm. Contact Out-Front Kalamazoo 269-349-4234 outfrontkzoo.org

SHARE Organizational Racial Healing Program:

Five Phases – Pre-assessment, Healing/making connections, Facing history, Taking action, Evaluation and assessment. Contact sharekazoo.org

Kalamazoo Community Foundation Equity Series: Policies Impacting Immigrants During Covid 19 and Immigration Services in Kalamazoo. kalfound.org



Annual Meeting Summary

By Chris Kuthe

The LWWKA held its Annual Meeting on Monday, May 24th, via Zoom, at 6pm. Thirty-eight members were in attendance. The program included a recorded welcome message from LWWUS president **Dr. Deborah Turner** who spoke of the accomplishments of the national League and the importance of defending our democracy.

Our featured speaker was Kalamazoo County Clerk/Register of Deeds, **Meredith Place**. She spoke about the county apportionment process for commissioners

The business portion of the meeting included:

- Approval of the minutes from the 2020 Annual Meeting
- Adoption of the 2021-2022 budget
- Treasurer's reports for the general, endowment and education funds
- Report from the fundraising task force
- Discussion and adoption of by-law changes
- Adoption of local program
- Nominating committee report and election of the slate of officers and directors

Our co-presidents summarized our local League's accomplishments for the year which featured pivoting to doing all regular activities through Zoom. 

Calhoun County Geographical Unit

By Sue Rosko

The Calhoun County Geographical Unit held its first Town Hall on April 29. Willard Library co-sponsored the event. The library was a great partner as they helped market the event, provided the host and managed the technology. **Michael (Mac) McCullough**, director of the Community Development Department, has a keen interest in redistricting and the work of the League. As host he made the conversations inviting. We look forward to working on other projects with Mac and Willard Library. Thanks to him, Edward Woods III, LWWMI and Leelanau County, and the committee for their assistance with the project.

The Communities of Interest (COI) committee continues their work with the state project. Much information has been and is continuing to be shared. The Unit chair and COI committee chair were interviewed on Battle Creek Access Vision on "Be Scene on Air" on May 17, sharing information on the League and on the

Redistricting project. The chair of the Calhoun COI unit will present to area Senior Citizens on June 2 and our COI committee chair will present at the Battle Creek Rotary meeting on June 7. There has been nice interest in the county on redistricting and COI.

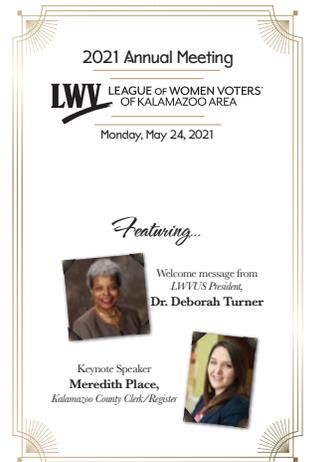
The legislative interview team held their first interview. **Rep. James Haadsma**, District 62, met in person with the three Unit members. With all being vaccinated they were able to meet (socially distanced) in person and had a good interview. The committee is reaching out to try to schedule the remaining interviews with Senator Bizon District 19, Rep. Matt Hall District 63 and Rep. Peter Meijer 3rd Congressional District (with Grand Rapids).

On May 14 the Calhoun Unit held an information and registration event for Battle Creek Central High School. On May 24 as Seniors drove through to pick up of their caps and gowns, members from the Calhoun Geographical Unit congratulated them, passed out voting information and registered those students who were not yet registered and wished to do so. The Seniors were offered congratulations and encouraged to share their voices in future elections. The Unit was joined during the day with volunteers from A. Philip Randolph Institute and friends.

Information was gathered and shared on the digital Vote411 site for the May 4 election.

The climate and environment committee sent a note of thanks to Battle Creek **Mayor Behnke** for his and the commission's *declaration of climate emergency by the City of Battle Creek!* The resolution was in support of Battle Creek Earth Keepers: Climate Action Now. Climate Emergency Declaration.

Two members attended the LWWMI state convention as voting delegates. Thank you for the opportunity to learn more about the League and issues confronting us as we move forward. We honored 4 Bell Ringers, featured on our Facebook page. The Calhoun County Unit continues with a keen interest in all of the current voter and legislative issues in the state and nation. Items are shared on social media and newspapers when appropriate as indicated by LWWMI or US. **Judy Karandjeff's** presentation and answering of questions was much appreciated and stressed the need for continued work to preserve our democracy and empower every voter. 



LWVKA Education Fund Board of Directors

Jessica Reiser, *Chairperson*
jcreiser@comcast.net

Susan Atkinson, *Vice Chair*
sls.atkinson@gmail.com

Paula Aldridge, *Treasurer*
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Tanya Potter, *Director*
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Thank you to...

LWVMI Convention Voting Delegates:

Aedin Clements, Jules Isenberg-Wedel, Barbara Dircks,
Millie Lambert, Fran Eckenrode, MerriKay Oleen-Burkey,
Connie Ferguson, Linda Pell, Karen Gustafson, Sue Rosko,
Kathi Harris and Courtney Winell

LWVKA Annual Meeting Volunteers

Chris Kuthe, Meeting Organizer, Paula Aldridge,
Fran Eckenrode, Ken Manley, Paula Manley,
Denise Hartsough, Kay Anderson and Tamara Carpenter

thank you



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



facebook.com/KalamazooCountyAdvocatesForSeniorIssues

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