

## Calendar

### December 2020

- 1 Giving Tuesday**
- 2 DEI Committee Meeting**  
6:30pm via Zoom, contact Millie Lambert,  
millielambert3922@gmail.com
- 7 Grand Rapids Unit Monthly Meeting**  
7pm via Zoom, contact Courtney Winell,  
winell22@hotmail.com
- 8 Calhoun County Unit Meeting**  
7pm via Zoom, contact Sue Rosko,  
lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com
- 9 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting**  
10am via Zoom, contact Ken Manley,  
kenmanley@hotmail.com

### January 2021

- 27 LWVKA Book Discussion Group**  
7pm via Zoom. Book by Elaine Weiss "The Women's Hour". Contact Aedin Clements,  
aedinclements@gmail.com

### February 2021

- 20 Founders Day Virtual Event**

### March 2021

- 6 Girl Scouts Celebration**  
Program to celebrate the 19th amendment  
601 W. Maple St., Kalamazoo



*Happy Holidays!*

## President's Column

*Fran Eckenrode, Co-President*

We are now post-election day 2020! Many Kalamazoo Area League members served our community by registering and educating voters in a variety of ways including producing and distributing voter guides, creating and publicizing Vote411, conducting virtual forums, and encouraging friends, family, and neighbors to be informed and vote. On November 3, Leaguers served as poll workers and poll observers, and in other ways. A big THANK YOU! to all those who were able to volunteer and also to everyone who supports the League by being a member. Regardless of political preference, we worked to make sure the integrity of the process was upheld and every vote counted.

After many months of election effort, few imagined we would be called upon to help safeguard our democracy immediately following election day. LWVMI organized local Leagues to observe their county Boards of Canvassers around Michigan (see the article in this VOTER). Leaguers from LWVKA, including the Grand Rapids Geographic Unit, participated.

As I write, we are waiting for the official declaration of a winner in the presidential race. We have a constitutional process that officially declares a winner. Before the declaration, votes are certified by the Board of Canvassers in each state, then by the Electoral College, and finally forwarded to the joint session of Congress on January 6th. Many of us have recently learned much about this process. Want to learn more? Visit: <https://files.constantcontact.com/b873d6d3201/50aa7899-9ba7-4ccd-b1c0-f984c56fb364.pdf> for a full explanation of the Electoral College.

Now we are looking ahead to the new year. LWVMI president **Christina Schlitt** informed the Michigan League presidents that if we thought we would be taking it easy after election day, we will not! Democracy is alive but needs to be protected. The League is needed now more than ever.

**Here are some of the many upcoming League activities in which you can participate.** The annual LWVKA member meeting on January 23, 2021 is our opportunity to discuss League positions and determine which issues merit study or advocacy during the coming year. Please plan to join this Zoom meeting. LWVKA is beginning to plan a virtual program for local Girl Scouts (March 6, 2021) that enables scouts to earn a citizenship badge focused on voting. This is a new activity that we hope will become a tradition and enable us to reach girls and young women in a way that we have not done in the past. Please consider volunteering to help with this program.

At the state level, we will continue to follow the progress of the Independent Redistricting Commission and participate in a new position study on Lame Duck sessions of the Michigan legislature (see article on page ?). At the national level, the People Powered Fair Maps™ initiative continues to make sure transparent, accountable redistricting processes are implemented across the country.

Has the long election season left us feeling fatigued? Well maybe for a day or two, but there are many exciting opportunities to help shape the future as we find our way through challenging times in pursuit of a more perfect democracy. 🇺🇸

## LWVUS Update

By Paula Manley

Vote411.org received more usage than ever before during this election cycle. LWVUS reports that 6 million people accessed VOTE411 and viewed more than 37 million pages in English and Spanish. 450 Leagues in 44 states and Washington D.C. entered candidate information on Vote411. 22,000 races in all 50 states were included on the website. Besides seeking information about the candidates, 170,000 people used the voter registration tool which was 4 times more than in 2016. More than 300,000 people used the check registration map which connected them to their state resources to confirm voter registration. Vote411.org has proved to be an invaluable nationwide tool to provide nonpartisan voting information.

The LWVUS Lobby Corps will be visiting members of the US Senate during the 116th lame duck session. They will discuss extending the statutory deadlines the US Census must follow when sending apportionment numbers to the President and redistricting data to the states.

To see the latest news from LWVUS watch for your biweekly *League Update* email.

Check the League Management site at [lww.org](http://lww.org) for resources such as webinar information. 

## LWVMI Election Protection Update

Denise Hartsough, LWVMI Board Member

- Recruited volunteers for the Secretary of State's Office to monitor polling places and drop boxes throughout the state on Election Day, reporting long lines and other incidents to SOS Office staffers.
- Mobilized teams of observers for Boards of County Canvassers throughout Michigan for up to 9 days of observation.
- Co-hosted a virtual press briefing featuring Michigan attorneys with expertise in election and Constitutional law discussing the duties of the Board of State Canvassers. Garnered state and national coverage, including CNN and the New York Times.
- Testified at the November 23rd Board of State Canvassers meeting. 

## Program Planning

By Denise Hartsough, VP Program

LWVKA members review League positions annually to discuss which issues merit study or advocacy during the coming year.

On Saturday, January 23 from 10am to noon we will review local and state League positions, which can be

found at [lwwka.org/LWVHandbook2020June.pdf](http://lwwka.org/LWVHandbook2020June.pdf) and [lwwmi.org/positions.html](http://lwwmi.org/positions.html)

Watch your email in mid-January for a Zoom meeting link! 

## Lame Duck Study

By Denise Hartsough, VP Program

The LWV of Michigan invites local Leagues to provide input for a new position on lame duck sessions of the Michigan legislature. LWVMI has provided excellent study material.

Intrigued? Study committee members are needed to review the material and decide how best to present the issue for LWVKA members to consider in a consensus process. Our input is due in March 2021.

If you would like to help guide this process, please contact me at [denise.hartsough@gmail.com](mailto:denise.hartsough@gmail.com) or 269-599-1801. 

## Board of Canvassers Observation

By Denise Hartsough, LWVMI Board Member

The 2020 General Election highlighted a formerly obscure aspect of the election process—certification of the vote by a board of canvassers. Each county in Michigan has a board with two Republicans and two Democrats. The board examines materials from each precinct, checking the number of voters in the poll book against the number of ballots tabulated. When the numbers do not match, board members work as detectives until they resolve the mismatch or decide to accept it as inexplicable.

This year LWVMI asked local Leagues to observe the work of their county's board of canvassers to ensure its work proceeded unimpeded. A huge thanks to these volunteers, who worked 54 2-hour shifts over 8 days in Kalamazoo County: **Mary Baggerman, Madeline Cimini, Aedin Clements, Barb Dircks, Fran Eckenrode, Karen Eddy, Stu Eddy, Rochelle Habeck, Terry Hluchyj, Jules Isenberg-Wedel, Kathy Keelan Pew, Chris Kuthe, Sheri Loomis, Linda Mah, KC Miller, Sara Wick.** The following volunteers observed the Kent County Board of Canvassers for 58.5 hours over 9 days under **Paula Manley's** leadership: **Teri Chaplin, Marcia Devos, Michael Dodge, Kathi Harris, Jeanne Helmrick, Karen Joseph, Gloria Koch, Joan Long, Judith Simonson, Margie Sweeney, Courtney Winell.**

Observers learned a great deal, gained respect for the careful process, and are eager to observe again after future elections.

If you would like to coordinate the observer team for the next election, please contact me at [denise.hartsough@gmail.com](mailto:denise.hartsough@gmail.com) or 269-599-1801. 



## Calhoun County Unit Volunteer Opportunity:

By Sue Rosko



The Calhoun County Geographical Unit has taken November as a month to celebrate the historical turnout of voters for the Nov. 3 election and then to continue to share the election process, security of the vote and upholding our democracy. For the election, two of our members served as poll workers (three others ran for offices). Both poll workers were very impressed by the procedures and people, counting this as a very positive experience. More will be taking part when Covid is under control. Three others covered the county watching poll lines and noting that all were running smoothly. It was gratifying to see the number of other non-partisan organizations who were joining hands in Calhoun County. Notes were taken to study how we can continue to improve our Unit messaging for the next election, in particular continuing to educate the public concerning where and how to vote. Since voter education is a critical part of ensuring that each citizen is provided the information and tools to vote, that they can trust the security of the elections and that our democracy is of utmost importance, the Unit will continue to work toward building programs and relationships within the county.

Thank you

It was exciting to see the Marshall High School Honor Society taking direct part in elections this year. The students worked shifts with for a local township clerk who was excited to include them. They kept equipment and the area sanitized and pitched in wherever needed. This was an excellent opportunity for the students to learn hands on about the workings of the election. The Calhoun County Geographical Unit will use this as a pilot program to encourage other high schools and more students to get involved in educating students on voting and in the election process. We were glad to empower and include our younger generation.



The Unit has continued to take part in the LWWMI meetings, discussions and action requests post-election and is supporting the work of the larger League. Information from LWWMI and LWWUS has continued to be shared on social media. Notes of appreciation have been sent to our county clerks and an article to the media thanking clerks, postal workers, and all those working to provide a safe and secure election.

With this election season hopefully drawing to a close, the Unit will be studying the Lane Duck information and building strategies and goals for our Unit as we move forward in our first year as an organization. The leadership of LWWKA, LWWMI and LWWUS encourages us and demonstrates the need for LWW now more than ever. We are eager to move forward with the League of Women Voters. We are thankful for their level of professionalism and outreach. ✓



## Volunteer Opportunity:

The LWWKA is upgrading its website! If you would be interested in serving on a Website Advisory Group, we would welcome your participation (via Zoom). We'll use a professional web designer and the Advisors will oversee the project to assure the website meets our needs.

If you would like to join us, email [moburkey30@gmail.com](mailto:moburkey30@gmail.com) or text to 1-913-302-1211 saying Website Advisory Group, your name and email or phone. ✓

## Volunteer Opportunity:

LWWKA is partnering with the Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan on a virtual program for the Suffrage Centennial on March 6, 2021. Girls will be working on their Women's Right to Vote patch. We are looking for members who would like to help plan this program. If you are a former Girl Scout all the better but it isn't a requirement to join the program planning for this fun event! If you would like to join us email [moburkey30@gmail.com](mailto:moburkey30@gmail.com) or text to 1-913-302-1211 saying Girl Scout Program, your name and email or phone. ✓

## Did you work at the polls on election day, November 3rd, or help with getting out the vote for the election?

If you did, send a quick note to [president@lwwka.org](mailto:president@lwwka.org) so we can count you in our League surveys for LWWMI and LWWUSA. ✓

## Volunteers Observe for DOS

By Fran Eckenrode

The Michigan Department of State called upon local Leagues to help be their "eyes and ears" on Election Day. Volunteers donned masks and hand sanitizer and visited polling places, clerk's offices, drop boxes and counting boards to report any observed difficulties and to help ensure that resources were deployed where needed.

A big **THANK YOU!** to LWWKA volunteers who observed in Kalamazoo County, Benton Harbor, and Battle Creek: **Aedin Clements, Fran Eckenrode, Marti Fritz, Warren Fritz, Regena Nelson, and Sara Wick.** ✓

## Give a Gift

Need a gift idea this holiday season? Consider the gift of a LWWKA membership. Contact **Jennifer Snyder** membership chair [jsnydergaardsnyder@gmail.com](mailto:jsnydergaardsnyder@gmail.com) or send a check with the gift recipient's information to LWWKA Treasurer P.O. Box 2106 Kalamazoo, MI 49003. ✓

# DEI Meetings & Events:

By Millie Lambert



The DEI Committee invites members to explore resources from the LWVUS: [www.lww.org/league-management/leadership-development/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-continued-learning](http://www.lww.org/league-management/leadership-development/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-continued-learning)

The October DEI Committee received an update from **Denise Hartsough** regarding the pilot demographics survey. The state league was appreciative of the suggestions. Everyone should now have received the final document. Please complete the state league survey as that is what will also be the base line for LWVKA. A discussion about webinars 5 and 6 was held. The committee also discussed the incorporation of DEI in monthly board meetings and how to continue to move forward in educating others. Due to the various holidays, we will have a combined Nov./Dec. meeting on **December 2** at 6:30 pm via Zoom. If interested in joining this committee, please notify MerriKay Olen-Burkey or Millie Lambert.

## December & January Events to Consider:

Have an event or resource that should be included? Send it to [millielambert3922@gmail.com](mailto:millielambert3922@gmail.com).

*Due to current restrictions regarding gatherings, many events have been cancelled or postponed. Please check with the event sponsor.*

There are several DEI initiatives in the area. Many of them are providing opportunities for the general public to participate. Unfortunately the event information is often not available early enough to include in this newsletter. No Martin Luther King Day Event information is available.

Please consider liking the various organizations on Facebook and/or subscribing to the organizations on line.

**November 25 – December 10: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.**

**December 1: World AIDS Day**

**December 1: Anniversary of Rosa Parks' Arrest (1955)**

**December 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

**December 6: 155th Anniversary of the 13th Amendment's ratification**

**December 26 – January 1: Kwanzaa**

**January 1 – Emancipation Proclamation which freed the slaves**

**January 20 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

**January 25 – Chinese New Year (three day celebration) starting the Year of the Rat**

**Unveiling American Genius:** opening late 2020, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts (KIA).

Demonstrates the KIA commitment to an increasingly more inclusive and diverse representation of American artists. The exhibition will explore key stories that women, African Americans, Latinx and other artists have told about our culture, art and history.

**KIA Cultural Encounters:** Open until January 17, 2021. Art of the Asian Diasporas in Latin America and the Caribbean 1945 – Present. This exhibition uses modern and contemporary art to consider how migration from China, Japan, India, and Indonesia influenced cultural exchange and fusion in Latin America and the Caribbean.

**ONEPlace Webinar: Accessible Content**

December 3, 10–11:30 am. In this webinar learn how to create content that is accessible to everyone. By using accessible content, people with disabilities who may not be able to see your page, read your words, or hear your recording can still get your message. Learn how to use best practices to be inclusive in your communications. Registration required. Contact Kalamazoo Public Library 269-553-7800.

**Web Movie: Carol of the Bells**

December 8, 1–3pm. A young father battles his struggle with his secret adoption. This is the world's first feature film where 70% of the production crew had a developmental disability. Register by calling the Disability Network of Southwest Michigan (DNSWM), 269-345-1516.

**Webinar: Abelism 101**

Dec. 10, 1–4pm or Dec. 16 9am – 12pm. This webinar will introduce the basic concepts of abelism and explore how the language we use around disability and either support equity or perpetuate stigma. Register by calling the DNSWM, 269-345-1516.

**Virtual Town Hall and Candidate Forum, YWCA**

Greater Atlanta and YWCA USA, Tuesday, Dec. 15, 12–1:30pm. Ahead of the January 5th Senate run-off, women in Georgia and guest speakers want to explore the economic, child care, and racial justice issues that matter most to the women of Georgia. Contact the YWCA in Kalamazoo.

**Unreeled – Essential Arrival, Michigan's Indian Immigrants in the 21st Century**

Dec. 17, 2020, 6:30–7:45pm, followed by a Q & A; via Zoom, sponsored by KIA. This film provides in-depth look at a new featured player on America's immigration

*Continued on page 5*

## DEI Events continued

stage, Indian immigrants. Contact Jessica Sundstrom [jessicas@kia.org](mailto:jessicas@kia.org)

### Webinar: Serving Customers with Disabilities

January 12, 2021, 10am – 12pm or January 28, 2021, 1-3pm. This interactive workshop explores ways a business or organization can be more welcoming and inclusive to persons with disabilities. Contact DNSWM for more information 269-345-1516.

### Web Movie: The R-Word

January 20, 2021, 1-2:30pm. The inappropriate use of the word retard(ed) as a derogatory slang term to put people down marginalizes and dehumanizes an entire population of people and their families and friends. But there is a social and cultural movement afoot and now is the time to leverage this momentum for change. The documentary film challenges viewers to put their mind where their mouth is and encourages everyone to think before they speak. Contact DNSWM for information 269-345-1517.

### Webinar: Rise Up! Disability Resistance History and Pride

January 22, 2021, 10am–12pm or January 26, 2021, 1-3pm. Discussion and activities that promote knowledge of disability history and support the journey to disability pride. Everyone is welcome. This is offered in celebration of Ed Robert's Day. Contact DNSWM for information 269-345-1517.

### On line Introduction to Systemic Racism: 2 Day Workshop (via Zoom)

December 2 – 3, 2020 **FULL**  
January 13 – 14, 2021 **FULL**

Contact ERACCE [eracce.org](http://eracce.org)

### ERACCE Eliminating Racism & Creating/

**Celebrating Equity:** Facebook page lists numerous resources including videos, film lists, articles, book lists, etc.

**Kalamazoo Community Foundation – Anti-Racism and Racial Equity Resources:** provides links to a variety of organizations as well as reading resources, etc.

**League of Women Voters US** – A variety of resources are available at this site including sixteen LWV Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Webinars which are available from March 2019 and continue to be expanded monthly. In addition a DEI Guide is available and What to Ask When Examining your Work through a DEI Lens

**Society for History and Racial Equity** – Resources are extensive and include lists of organizations, books, articles, videos, and websites. 

## Year End Donations

As you make your year end charitable donations, remember LWVKA. With your gift to LWVKA, you are helping to support our efforts to Make Democracy Work in our community. You may choose to donate to the General Fund, tax deductible Education Fund or tax-deductible Endowment Fund either online at [lwvka.org](http://lwvka.org) or by sending a check to LWVKA Treasurer P.O. Box 2106 Kalamazoo, MI 49003. 



## Is your contact information up to date?

We will update our annual Membership Directory soon! Please contact LWVKA Membership Chair Jennifer Snyder with address, telephone number or email address changes: [jsyndergaardsnyder@gmail.com](mailto:jsyndergaardsnyder@gmail.com), 269-929-8888 (call/text). 



## New members welcomed in October!

Sarah Carmany  
Rebecca Durkee  
Lynn Ward Gray  
Joan Long  
Kimberly Skeltis  
Elizabeth Williams  
Caralee Witteveen-Lane

**WELCOME**  
*New Members!*

## Special Tributes

In Memory of **Jean Tolin**

Paula Aldridge

In Memory of **Yolanda Mitts**

The LWVKA Education Fund Board  
to The Kalamazoo Nature Center  
Sugarbush Restoration Project



## LWVKA Education Fund Board of Directors

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

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

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

**Eileen Schoenfeld**, *Secretary*  
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**Rebekah Fennell**, *Director*  
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**Dennis Elmer**, *Director*  
dgelmer@comcast.net

**Tanya Potter**, *Director*  
lepottter1224@gmail.com

#GIVING  
TUESDAY™  
12.1.20



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**  
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**MerriKay Oleen-Burkey**  
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**Chris Kuthe**  
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**Denise Hartsough**  
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**Paula Aldridge**  
*Treasurer*  
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**Aedin Clements**  
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**Jennifer Snyder**  
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