

Calendar

October 2022

12 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting

10am via Zoom, contact: kenmanley@hotmail.com

23 Earth Day Election Edition Celebration

Bronson Park 12:30-3:30. Inclement weather site:
First Presbyterian Church, 321 South St

24 LWVKA Board Meeting

6pm via Zoom, contact ckuthe57@gmail.com

26 Calhoun County Unit Meeting

7pm via Zoom, contact: lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com

26 DEI Committee Meeting

6:30pm via Zoom, contact: moburkey30@gmail.com

November 2022

8 General Election Day

7:00 am - 8:00 pm

Get election information at <http://Vote411.org>

9 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting

10am via Zoom, contact: kenmanley@hotmail.com

23 Calhoun County Unit Meeting

7pm via Zoom, contact: lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com

23 DEI Committee Meeting

6:30pm via Zoom, contact: moburkey30@gmail.com

28 LWVKA Board Meeting

6pm via Zoom, contact ckuthe57@gmail.com

Leaves
ARE
Falling
Autumn
IS CALLING

President's Column

By Barb Dircks, Co-President

September gives way to October; the season of change is upon us; we feel the impact all around—light and darkness, slowing down and speeding up. We look to others for help, we alter our routines and we make list of things we need yet to get done. The League is feeling the same urgency to prepare for upcoming activities and events. Planning is underway in so many areas. This month read about ways you can help, actions that are being taken to reach out to voters in communities all across Michigan and essential planning that bolsters our mission of *Educating Voters and Defending Democracy*.

We do not work alone; our collaborative partners are the groups we have fostered, been invited to join and the countless community organizations that have coordinated with us in past endeavors. Bronco Bash, Kalamazoo Valley kick-off affairs and KCollege start-up events are connecting us to younger voters where the mutual supportive programming benefits us all. The League is grateful for this continued commitment of everyone involved, reaching disenfranchised, underserved, and citizens that need to make a plan for getting to the polls, and making their voices heard by way of casting a ballot in November is an ongoing mandate. We understand, "Voting is the most democratic thing residents of the United States do."

Multiple Zoom meetings later, training aimed at several initiatives has taken place. With the affirmative ruling on placing the three ballot proposals on the November ballot, LWVMI began outreach. There will be town halls and educational presentations in response to community requests to explain the Proposals. (Exact wording of each can be found on the Secretary of State website.) Under the leadership of **Denise Harsough**, presentations have begun. Thank you Denise! The proposals have an assigned number:

- Proposal 22-1 Voters for Transparency and Term Limits
- Proposal 22-2 Promote the Vote 2022
- Proposal 22-3 Reproductive Freedom for All

There will be additional opportunities to talk and share as we ALL encourage voters to take advantage of VOTE411.org. A website, invaluable for providing the candidate information voters request and need!

Dates and times are being set for three virtual **October Forums**: City Commissioner Candidates, 40th & 41st District Candidates, and 4th District Collaborative Virtual Forum with Holland and Berrien/Cass County. Voters will have the opportunity to listen and learn about candidates as they answer questions and share their positions on local and state issues. Watch for Action Alerts for further information.

Finally, this is the time of year voters have come to rely on Voter Guides for all things having to do with the November election. The Guides are set for distribution to the many locations in the community and surrounding areas. Thank you to **Terry Hluchyj**, **Jules Iseberg-Wedel**, and **Aedin Clements** for arranging, planning and management of this valuable resource at our local level!

LWVUS Update

Paula Manley

October is Voter Education and Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Other important dates this month include:

- Oct. 3-7—National Voter Education Week
- Oct. 10—Indigenous People's Day
- Oct. 24—UN Day
- Oct. 27—16 years of VOTE411
- Oct. 28—Vote Early Day 2022

What is Vote Early Day? This is a movement of non-profits, media companies, businesses and election administrators which was launched during the pandemic. The purpose is to ensure that all Americans know how, when and where they can vote early.

Remember members may subscribe to the biweekly Update League on the League Management site at lwv.org, to receive current news about League activities. 

LWVMI Updates

Denise Hartsough

Presentations for Nov. 8 Voters

Three proposed amendments to the Michigan Constitution—all endorsed by LWVMI—will appear on the November 8th ballot:

- Prop 1: Transparency & Term Limits
- Prop 2: Promote the Vote 2022
- Prop 3: Reproductive Freedom for All

Speakers from the League are available for: an educational presentation on all 3 ballot proposals; an advocacy presentation on the merits of Prop 2, Promote the Vote 2022; an informative presentation on identifying and countering mis- and dis-information

If a group is interested in hearing any of these presentations, please contact me at denise.hartsough@gmail.com. 

Be a League Expert for 4th Graders!

4th grade students in Muskegon who are studying the 19th Amendment are looking for League experts who will meet with them on Zoom starting in November. The experts will help students understand the 19th Amendment, the purpose of the League, and the issues the League addresses at present.

Students will study the 19th Amendment to understand how responding to inequalities can lead to positive social change. Students will read *The Hope*

Chest by Karen Schwabach, a book about women's suffrage. Students will do research, read books, explore current inequalities and then develop a plan to address an inequality in their community.

To volunteer, contact Judy Florian, LWVMI VP for Voter Services, jflo@comcast.net 

EVENTS Highlights

By Barb Dircks

The EVENTS Committee met September 17th for discussion and Q & A in the following areas:

- We want all voters to look to our website, VOTE411.org for candidate information. It's what sets us apart from other voter resources! In addition, we need to emphasize that it is a website and remember to include .org in all promotional efforts.
- Kristen Kern-Beaver is working with students in graphic design department to create t-shirts for future use. Suggestions were made to guide the process: simple design; inclusion of our logo and the use of our tagline, "Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy"
- Observation Corps continuing activity and next debriefing will be after our Board Meeting, on September 27th; the general statewide meeting will be on September 28th.
- Individuals with skill in creating brochures and flyers are needed who can prepare work in all social media formats. Please reach out if are interested.

Next meeting date mid-October — attend or send suggested areas of concern and promotion suggestions to barbdircks@gmail.com 

Observe the Board of Canvassers

After the November Election

By Chris Kuthe

After each election or primary, the Board of Canvassers for each county convenes to certify the election. The LWVMI has been working with the Secretary of States office to observe this process and report to the Secretary of State about our observations. League members who have volunteered to observe this process have found it to be interesting and important work. The next canvass will occur after the general election on November 8th. The canvass will start November 10th and continue until completion. Observers work in two hour shifts, so it is not a big time commitment. There will be a short training video to watch before you observe and a report form to fill out online after your observation. Contact Chris Kuthe at ckuthe57@gmail.com to volunteer. 



News from
National



Calhoun County Unit News

By Sue Rosko

The Calhoun County Geo Unit is continuing to grow in members, volunteer participation, committee development and community integration. We are now a part of a collaborative of non-partisan organizations in Battle Creek, working together on voter education and rights. Our partnerships in Albion have likewise strengthened as we continue to work together on such projects. In September a presentation was given at the Battle Creek AAUW Social Justice meeting. Voter Information and Registration tables were and will be held at each community event in which the unit presents or partners. In September the Voter Services team was present at the large Senior Fair in Battle Creek (Tekonsha in October), Festival of the Forks in Albion, and Battle Creek's Café Rica Breaking Bred Bazaar.

The Unit is receiving requests to host our Information and Registration tables at various events. On September 27 the Calhoun Unit participated via a Voter Education/Registration Table at "All In: The Fight for Democracy" hosted by Albion College, NAACP, AAUW, and Operation X o On October 9 the Unit will share Voter Education and Registration at our Battle Creek Collaboration's Candidate Meet and Greet. Willard Library will be hosting Calhoun's Unit LWVMI Ballot Proposal presentation on October 19. This will be in-person and recorded. Vote Riders and All Voting is Local are also partnering with the Unit. Our Voter Service Director is working hard with VOCES to get voter information in Spanish and shared with the Hispanic community. In receiving a \$400 Campus Takeover grant the Unit is planning and doing expansion in campus outreach.

With the addition of a Membership Director and committee, LWVKA Calhoun County will host a member-guest Meet, Greet and Mingle social at Twisted Rivers Winery in Marshall on October 6. The committee will also be contacting members to get better acquainted and encourage active participation with the Unit. We are hoping to get all members participating in any little way that they can. Recognizing the importance of the upcoming election, the Unit is doing several promotional projects. We have two styles of lawn signs available for purchase and to place in critical areas. Thank you to a sister Leaguer in the Glen Elyn, Ill chapter for sharing! MichiganVoting.org information signs will again be placed throughout the county and information shared. The Calhoun Unit is participating with the LWVMI postcard writing for new voters. Voter Guides, posters, flyers, voting information

booklets and bookmarks (thank for your help in this Kalamazoo) are being distributed throughout the county. Vote411 continues to grow thanks to the hard work of our 411 Director. Members are supporting our county clerks through assisting with elections and sharing factual information to help dismantle mis- and dis- information. We were excited to see our county and the Secretary of State recognizing and honoring our Lakeview High School in the High School Challenge. We look forward to the next program. A social media and community presence with activities and issues is maintained. We look forward to meeting "Skelly" on social media! The Calhoun LWVKA is doing our best to do our part in "Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy". 🇺🇸



“Calhoun County will host a member/guest Meet, Greet social at Twisted Rivers Winery in Marshall 10.6.22”



EARTH DAY ELECTION EDITION

Earth Day Election Edition

By Deb Freiman

On Sunday, **October 23, 2022**, the League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area will join other affiliates of the **Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition** for **Earth Day Election Edition** from 12:30-3:30 PM in Bronson Park. This event, which marks the date halfway between last Earth Day and the next in 2023, will combine the excitement of celebration with a message on the importance of voting for leaders committed to taking urgent action to significantly reduce carbon emissions to net zero in the next decades. Lively entertainment and science demonstrations will be interspersed with speakers whose brief, nonpartisan messages will reflect the cultural diversity of this area. League representatives will register voters and have information about our commitment to climate mobilization at all levels of government to restore a safe and stable environment through a just transition.

The event will be free, family friendly, and open to the public. Candidates from all parties will be encouraged to attend to listen, rather than campaign. In the event of severe weather, the event will be held at First Presbyterian Church, 321 W. South St., Kalamazoo. 📍

Candidate Forums

By MerriKay Oleen-Burkey

There will be a Candidate Forum for the Michigan House District 41 Candidates.

Julie Rogers (D) and **Rafael Wolf** (L) have agreed to participate in a virtual forum on **October 12th**. The forum will run from 5:30- 6:30pm and will be broadcast by **Public Media Network** on the League's Facebook page. **Gordon Evans** will be moderating. A recording will be posted to LWVKA.org following the event.

Forums for the County Commission candidates, Michigan Senate District 19 and the 4th Congressional District have been planned but are pending the willingness of candidates from two or more parties to participate. If we find that more of these Candidate Forums can be shown, we will let the membership know. 📍

High School Mock Elections Cancelled

By Chris Kuthe

Sadly, our tradition of holding mock elections in area high schools will not be happening this year. Jennie Hill met with the county and city clerks and they had to cancel for two reasons. First, there is an atmosphere of concern about our election security. The clerks do not feel comfortable letting the tabulators out of their control just three weeks ahead of the November election. Secondly, the clerks are experiencing a paper shortage for printing ballots and the mock elections would add to this problem. We hope this tradition will return in the future. 📍

Volunteers Needed for GOTV Postcard Project

By MerriKay Oleen-Burkey

We will be mailing *Get-Out-The-Vote* postcards to 2022 High School graduates from Kalamazoo and Portage — about 1090 potential new voters!

Colorful postcards, postage and mailing labels will be provided along with sample messages. We need volunteers to write messages on the postcards and Mail them before October 15th.

Can you help? Please contact MerriKay Oleen-Burkey Moburkey30@gmail.com or call (269) 270-3302. 📍



Women's Equality Day 2022

By Barb Dircks

The LWVKA joined forces with Planned Parenthood, and the YWCA to celebrate Women's Equality Day this year. The theme was, "Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow." Kristin Kern Beaver's enthusiastic welcome opened the event in Bronson Park, and in addition to a voter registration table, **Joe's Hot Dog** food cart and music throughout the afternoon, attendees heard a summary of League history by **Chris Kuthe**, and a call of supportive action by **Demetrius Wolverton**, from the YWCA. There were three guest speakers, **Emma Baratta**, (bi-lingual student ambassador from WMU.), **Shardae Chambers**, (Elections Coordinator for Kalamazoo County), and **Dr. Janice Werbinski** (numerous credits, in addition to being Clinical Associate Professor Emerita at W.M.U.) who took the stage to share perspectives and expertise. Each one encouraged voters to question, participate and work to elevate the voices and representation of voter's rights and choice in 2023. It was a successful, informative Women's Equality Day event! 🗳️

Membership

By Jennifer Snyder

The LWVKA was pleased to welcome the following new members in September:

Sandra Calderone, Battle Creek
 Pamela Davis, Marshall
 Jeffrey Dircks, Schoolcraft
 Jessica Glynn, Kalamazoo
 Terri McDonald, Portage
 Jessica Oakes, Plainwell
 Kate Racette, Kalamazoo
 Santiago Salinas, Kalamazoo
 Anne Stanfield, Battle Creek

WELCOME
New Members!

DEI Events to Consider

By MerriKay Oleen-Burkey

A new 4-part series executive produced by **Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.**, and directed by Stacey L. Holman will begin on Tuesday, October 4th at 9PM on PBS entitled, "**Making Black America: Through the Grapevine.**" This series explores areas of history that illustrate the triumphs of Black Americans.

'**Housing's "Fourth Box: Revisioning Housing Equity for Housing Justice**' is a series of two workshops presented by the *Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan* in October. The first will be available virtually through **OnePlace@kpl** on Thursday, October 13th, 9:30am to Noon. It will explore the interface between housing discrimination and housing justice in the Fair Housing Act. The second workshop will be available virtually on Tuesday, October 25th, 9:30am to Noon. It will explore resources for housing advocacy. You can participate in one or both workshops but you will need to register at **OnePlace@kpl** to receive the Zoom links.

Disability Network of Southwest Michigan is offering advice about options for voting where any type of disability exists. If you know someone who might benefit from learning about Voting assistance, let them know about the webinar, "**Vote! Know your Rights**" being offered on October 6th, from 10-11:30am. If that date is not convenient, there is a staff member at Disability Network who could offer advice at other times. 🗳️

Thank you Voter Registration Volunteers!

The following members and friends volunteered at one or more of the following events this past month: WMU 'Bronco Bash', KVCC 'KV Vibe Fest' at the three campuses and/or National Voter Registration Day at the Richland Community Library:

Aimee Bedard
 Martha Cohen
 Rebecca D'Angelo
 Deb Freiman
 Chris Kuthe
 Moira Macleod
 MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
 Cheryl Rodbard
 Jennifer Snyder



Thank You

LWVKA Education Fund Board of Directors

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Vice-Chair - Open

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Tanya Potter, Treasurer
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Dennis Elmer, Director
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Rick Freiman, Director
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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

President's Column, continued from page 1

An additional thank you to those who have written articles that follow that spread the word on the Board of Canvassers Observer opportunity, the Earth Day & Election Celebration in October, and all the voter registration events that are being arranged. We are fortunate to have active, interested and committed members in the League!

"It is not that the world is good or bad, the world is just what it is. What makes the difference is how you are engaged with it. As any performance driver will tell you, coasting is the most dangerous behavior of all. You have to stay involved with the pedals. You have to get into the game you're in." 

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