



Calendar

April 2023

5 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting

10am via Zoom, contact Ken Manley @
kenmanley@hotmail.com

7 World Health Day

Celebrate the founding of WHO

11 You're Invited" Share'n'tell

5:30-6:30, Lake Burger Tavern
6800 S Westnedge Ave, Portage

14 Calhoun County Unit Board Meeting

6:30 pm via Zoom. Contact Sue Rosko @
lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com

18 LWVKA Book Group

7 p.m., Kazoo Books, 2413 Parkview Ave. See pg. 8.

22 Earth Day

24 LWVKA Annual Meeting (in person only)

6:00 pm KNAC Kalamazoo Nonprofit Advocacy
Coalition. 315 W Michigan Ave. (formerly First
Baptist Church), downtown Kalamazoo.

May 2023

10 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting

10am via Zoom, contact Ken Manley @
kenmanley@hotmail.com

19

21 LWVMI State Convention

24 Calhoun County Unit Board Meeting

6:30 pm via Zoom. Contact Sue Rosko @
lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com

22 LWVKA Board Meeting

6pm via zoom, Contact Barb Dircks @
barbdircks@gmail.com

June 2023

Pride Month

14 LWVKA Development Committee Meeting

10am via Zoom, contact Ken Manley @
kenmanley@hotmail.com

19 Juneteenth

26 LWVKA Board Meeting

6pm via zoom, Contact Barb Dircks @
barbdircks@gmail.com

28 Calhoun County Unit Board Meeting

6:30 pm via Zoom. Contact Sue Rosko @
lwwkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com

President's Column

By Chris Kuthe

LWVMI State Convention– You Are Invited

Happy Spring! I hope you have crocuses blooming and daffodils pushing through the soil. Along with flowers, this spring brings our League's State Convention. This year, the convention will be held in person only, May 19-21 at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing, MI. Any League member may register and attend all or part of the convention as a non-voting delegate. The Kalamazoo League is large enough that we can send 14 voting delegates. (We currently have 271 members total in the Kalamazoo and Calhoun County Leagues.) If you are interested in representing us at the convention, please contact me at ckuthe57@gmail.com. As a voting delegate, your conference registration fee would be paid for, but hotel accommodations would be at your expense.

Six great workshops are planned for Saturday afternoon, May 20th. You would be able to attend two of the six. The workshops are:

- Gun Safety
- New Leaders Boot Camp
- LWV Engagement in Minority Communities
- National Popular Vote
- Creating a LWV Campus Unit
- Censorship, Including Black History

As the pandemic eases and we carefully start to gather together again, we hope you can cautiously join in, at the convention, or Annual Meeting on Monday, April 24th, or the "You're Invited" gathering on April 11th or the next book club. Like the daffodils I hope we can pop out of our houses again! 🌸

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.



LWVUS Update

Paula Manley

April 2023

Arab American Heritage Month

National Volunteer Month

16 DC Emancipation Day

16-22 National Volunteer Week

22 Earth Day




News from
National

What is DC Emancipation Day? On April 16, 1862 the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act freed over 3,000 individuals bound in labor in the nation's capital. This was eight months before the Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in the South. The Act offered reimbursement to those who had legally owned slaves and offered the newly freed men and women money to emigrate. This Act was notable also because DC was the only jurisdiction directly governed by Congress.

LWVUS recently shared its 2022 Election Impact report which noted the League reached more than 27 million voters. The report is available at lwv.org.

The LWVUS is in a new phase of transformation which is Framing the Future. All members will receive an invitation in early April to complete a short survey about their League experiences. Further information on the Framing the Future phase and next steps for the transformation process may be found on the League Management Site at lwv.org.

For the latest information about LWVUS and Leagues around the country, subscribe to the League Update which is sent biweekly to members. Simply go to the League Management Site at lwv.org to subscribe. 

LWVMI Updates

Denise Hartsough, VP for Programing

Be an Advocate!


The State League offers you the opportunity to contact your state elected officials about legislation that the League of Women Voters of Michigan supports or opposes, based on League positions on issues.

You may already receive LWVMI Action Alerts via email, asking you to advocate with your State Representative or State Senator on a particular bill. If you see an alert, please respond! It matters!

If you do not receive Action Alerts, go to lwvmi.org and click on the gold "Take Action" button in the upper right-hand corner. On the Take Action page, scroll down to current alerts. Click on the red Take Action button beneath the alert to contact your officials.

Advocacy Resources

- Briefing on gun violence: <https://lwvmi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/GunViolenceBriefing.pdf>

- Factual summary of the 2022 election: <https://lwvmi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Fact-Sheet-2022-Election.pdf>
- List of LWVMI advocacy actions: <https://lwvmi.org/advocacy-2023> 

Janet Scarrow (1933-2023)



Denise Hartsough, VP for Programing


We pay tribute to **Janet Scarrow**, Life Member of the League who served for 2 terms as LWV-KA's president in the 1970s. Janet impressed League members with her great interest in and knowledge of public affairs, masterful moderation of candidate forums, and the insightful, articulate observations that she backed up with facts. Members appreciated her run for local office, wishing she could have exercised her talents in local government. Members also remember Janet as a good listener and attentive friend.

Kay Perry shared this story:

I worked with Janet to convince delegates to a LWVMI Convention to support a project to create a biennial report card highlighting government activities that enhanced or diminished citizen access to government. What I remember most about that work was Janet's insistence that we be precise in what we requested and the rationale for the project. Close enough just wasn't good enough! We were successful in convincing the delegates and for a number of years, the League did publish the Citizen's Access to Government Report Card.

Terry Hluchyj noted:


Janet's diligence and wisdom helped keep us on track and navigate complex, and sometimes thorny, issues regarding local governance and election processes. Those studies are the basis of several current League positions.

For sharing memories, thanks to **Connie Ferguson, Terry Hluchyj, Janet Jones, Paula Manley, Kay Perry, Paula Presler, Diane Worden and Jackie Wylie.** 



You're Invited!

Barb Dircks

This month we are again extending an invitation to join others, in person, for a monthly share'n'tell opportunity. This time, we will meet at the Lake Burger Tavern Restaurant, 6800 S. Westnedge in Portage on April 11, from 5:30–6:30. We'll get acquainted and then consider the topic, *"Are there outside influences which might increase or decrease voter turn-out in the 2024 election cycle?"* Sharing our insights will be fun and lead to great conversation and food for thought. Questions, or a request for a virtual zoom meeting around the issue, can be sent to barbdircks@gmail.com. 

We Need You to Take Action

By Chris Kuthe

Are you wanting to make a difference in what laws our legislature passes? There is a quick and easy way you can make this happen from the comfort of your own home. Periodically you will receive an email from the President or Co-Presidents of the LWVMI saying "Action Alert" in the subject line. This email means that there is pending state legislation that is important to our League program. So far in 2023 there have been Action Alerts for gun safety laws, electing the President of the USA through a national popular vote not the electoral college and the Elliot-Larson civil rights act.

It only takes a few minutes to respond to an action alert. You will be asked to type in your address and the legislators for your area will automatically pop up. A letter is produced for you that you can preview and sign. Our legislators really do take notice when large numbers of people respond to an issue and LWVMI is 2,600 members strong!

Please, the next time you see one of these emails—TAKE ACTION! You can still respond to a previous Action Alerts by going to <https://lwvmi.org/> and clicking the "Take Action" link in the top right hand corner.

Here is a link to a short video about "Action Alerts." https://youtu.be/3_rHZDmBIMw 

Save the Date!


Kristen Beaver

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS* OF KALAMAZOO AREA Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting, Monday, April 24, 6:00pm at KNAC—Kalamazoo Nonprofit Advocacy Coalition, 315 W. Michigan Ave. (formerly First Baptist Church), downtown Kalamazoo. (This will NOT be a hybrid meeting.) In keeping with the theme of Earth Day and our equity theme this year, we are super excited about our speaker **Dr. Brandy Brown** who serves as the *Chief Innovation Officer* of Walker-Miller Energy services, the premier Detroit-based energy services. In this role, Brandy leads the Innovation Team and is responsible for guiding the development of advanced energy projects, workforce development, equitable mobility solutions.

Prior to joining Walker-Miller, Dr. Brown served as Climate & Energy Advisor within the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy. In that role, she headed the Office of Climate & Energy and was responsible for developing the policy and implementation strategy for state-wide decarbonization efforts, coordinating state departments on climate action, providing guidance to local governments, and advancing renewable energy throughout Michigan.

Additionally, Dr. Brown is honored to serve as part of the Environmental Justice faculty for University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability and as an appointee to Michigan's National Resources Trust Fund Board. for University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability and as an appointee to Michigan's National Resources Trust Fund Board.

We are currently gathering bids for food, and planning on serving dinner at the meeting. This will be an evening of environmental education, connecting with fellow League members and of course League business. Don't miss out! 




National Popular Vote!

By Chris Kuthe

LWWUS has made passing the National Popular Vote Compact by individual states a national priority. LWWMI has joined Michigan's National Popular Vote (NPV) Coalition and is an active participant in the Coalition's Legislative Campaign, according to **Sue Smith** the LWWMI VP of Advocacy. The LWWKA is also supporting the NPV Compact which means the Electoral College would not be used to elect the President of the United States.

A press conference was held at the Capitol in Lansing on March 1, 2023 to announce this initiative. LWWMI participated in this press conference along with the ACLU, Common Cause, Mothering Justice, and Voters Not Politicians. Representative **Carrie Rheingans**, who introduced the bill in the House, spoke about why it was important for Michigan to join the NPV Compact.

An informative Zoom meeting about the National Popular Vote was held for all LWWKA members on Wednesday, March 29th at 7:00pm. If you missed this meeting, a link to the recording of the presentation can be found at lwwka.org on the members area home page. 




EVENTS

Barb Dircks

E.V.E.N.T.S is an acronym. It is also the name of a group that addresses the questions and answers arising around the topics of Education, Voting, Engagement, Networking, Technology and Social Media. Everyone is welcome! The involvement of all who are interested in brainstorming and figuring out operational solutions to League actions is helpful. Our February meeting connected two new members, **Viv Abramowitz** and **Aimee Bedard**, to issues already under consideration. They will use a social media calendar to assist **Aedin** and **Kristen** in their preparation of posts.

A "Who's Who" volunteer roster in Google Docs, has been developed, as well. It will allow routine updates to lists of voter registration volunteers, possible speaker's bureau candidates and ideas for several other categories that we generate going forward.

The Observation Corps had its quarterly debriefing meeting at the end of the month. Updates will follow in the next month's Voter. If you have concerns, ideas and/or input to share on areas of interest, contact barbdircks@gmail.com. 


Legislative Interviews

Volunteers Needed

By Chris Kuthe

When the League of Women Voters was established 103 years ago, one of its main purposes was to educate new voters about the politicians running for office. League members would ask politicians questions and publish their answers about their stance on important issues. This tradition is still alive in our League today. Every two years, League members interview new and incumbent legislators to learn their stance on important issues.

In the next few months we will need volunteers to interview legislators who represent us in Kalamazoo and Calhoun counties. These legislators include: US Congressmen **Bill Hizenga** and **Tim Walberg**, Michigan Senators **Thomas Albert** and **Sean McCann**, and Michigan Representatives **Christine Morse**, **Julie Rogers**, **Matt Hall**, **Jim Haadsma** and **Sarah Lightner**.

The questions are provided for you. This year we are interested in finding out about stances on the environment, education and gun safety. Often League members work with a partner for the interview. This is a great way for new League members to get involved. If you are interested in conducting an interview, please contact Chris Kuthe at ckuthe57@gmail.com. 



Calhoun County Unit

Sue Rosko




The LWVKA Calhoun County Geo Unit has been most active with working to get gun safety legislation passed in the Michigan House and Senate. Several members (and their grandchildren and friends) have attended rallies at the Capitol. The Unit partnered with the Marshall United Methodist Church for a "Letters and Lemon Bars" letter writing campaign. Thank you to all of those who have taken part in letting legislators know our concern around gun violence.

All of our county clerks have been contacted to assess current needs, with only one precinct, city of Marshall, needing election inspectors at this time. Please sign up if you can help. For the May election there are limited ballot issues. Marshall and Marlee Schools have items on the ballot, as well as two districts that overlap with other counties. The Marshall and Marlee ballot items will be in the Vote 411 digital link.

The Unit is building information for the **National**

Popular Vote initiative and will be sharing materials in the county as well as sharing forums by other leagues. We also have a chair for the newly formed Money in Politics committee which has been formed by Washtenaw County. We are anxious to learn and share information on these two issues. Educational resources are being shared with Unit members. We are strongly encouraging members to respond to state and national "take action" alerts, building support by large numbers responding.

Climate Crisis Month learning opportunities have been presented to the Unit. Our membership committee is posting flyers across the county, providing our mission and contact information.

At this point the Unit is receiving and pursuing nominations for key openings for our board. We are anxious to add new perspectives, skills and energies to our group. Please contact us if you are willing to serve or know others who would be good candidates. We're looking forward to continued leadership growth. 

Looking for Kalamazoo Area League information? Find it on our website!



Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

FOR VOTERS

WHAT WE DO

WHY JOIN?

Annual Financial Review

Financial Review Committee: Barb Dircks, Rick Freiman, Chris Kuthe



The Annual Review of the LWWKA General Fund financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 took place March 1, 2023 and was presented to the LWWKA Board of Directors at their March meeting. The review noted a drop in membership dues with the Grand Rapids membership separating to become a State Unit under the Michigan LWW.

The following Financial Summary reflects the financial condition and operations of the League of Women Voters Kalamazoo Area as of June 30, 2022. The LWWKA is a 501(c)(4) Not-For-Profit organization using Cash Basis accounting.

Income from Membership Dues	\$11,475	Bank Balance 6/30/21.....	\$26,361
Income from Contributions	2,727		
Other Income	432	Net Loss	(7,612)
TOTAL INCOME	\$14,634		
		Bank Balance 6/30/22	\$18,749
Per-member payments to National and Michigan Leagues	\$14,700		
Other expenses	7,546		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$22,246		
NET LOSS	\$(7,612)		

Nominating Committee Slate

The following LWWKA members have accepted nominations for Officers, Directors and Nominating Committee before for the 2023-2024 LWWKA Board. **Voting occurs at the April 24, 2023 Annual Meeting.**



Co-President (1yr)	Barbara Dircks
Co-President (1yr)	Chris Kuthe
VP Organization (2yr)	Kristen Kern-Beaver
Secretary (2yr)	Deb Freiman
Board Members (2yr)	Aedin Clements
	Rick Freiman
	Aimee Bedard
Nominating (1yr)	Kay Anderson
	Regena Nelson
	Teresa Johnson

Current Nominating Committee members: Kay Anderson 269-649-2461 or kander314@aol.com

Off- board members: Regena Nelson and Teresa Johnson and Board members Angela Erdman and Lisa Fuller.

BUDGET PROPOSAL								
LWV KALAMAZOO AREA								
GENERAL FUND								
PROPOSED BUDGET YEAR JULY 1, 2023 THRU JUNE 30, 2024								
INCOME								
	Individual, Business Contributions					4000.00		
	Membership Dues					13400.00		
	Meetings Income					0.00		
	Ware Sales					150.00		
	Advertising in Bulletin					0.00		
	Interest Income					200.00		
						\$ 17,750.00		
TOTAL REVENUES								
EXPENDITURES								
	Website					300.00		
	Office Supplies					150.00		
	Postage, PO Box					250.00		
	Printings and copying					200.00		
	Telephone					430.00		
	<i>The Voter</i> Expenses					1200.00		
	Voter Registration					400.00		
	National PMP					7200.00		
	Michigan PMP					5200.00		
	PayPal fees					80.00		
	Donations to other organizations					0.00		
	Membership and Dues					50.00		
	Sponsorship					500.00		
	Membership Recruitment					1500.00		
	Meeting Costs					2000.00		
	Student Intern					500.00		
	Events Committee					0.00		
	Insurance (Directors & Officers)					200.00		
	DEI Committee					0.00		
	Development Committee					600.00		
	Calhoun County Unit					500.00		
	National/State Convention					2000.00		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES						\$ 23,260.00		
NET REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES						\$ (5,510.00)		
BUDGETED DRAW FROM GENERAL FUND RESERVES						\$ 5,510.00		
Note: When the budget proposal for the General Fund has a draw from the reserves there is enough money on hand to cover the necessary expenses budgeted for the year.								

LWVKA Education Fund Board of Directors

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

Vice-Chair - Open

Jessica Reiser, *Secretary*
jcreiser@comcast.net


Tanya Potter, *Treasurer*
lepottter1224@gmail.com

Dennis Elmer, *Director*
dgelmer@comcast.net

Rick Freiman, *Director*
richard.freiman@gmail.com

BOOK GROUP

The LWVKA Book Group's next meeting will be held at Kazoo Books, 2413 Parkview Ave., on Tuesday, April 18th at 7 p.m. We will discuss the book, *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*, by Kristin Kobes Du Mez. The book is available in libraries, and copies are available for purchase at Kazoo Books. Our next book, which we will discuss at our June 20th meeting, is *Ida B. The Queen, The Extraordinary Life and Legacy of Ida B. Wells*, by Michelle Duster.

Please join us at Kazoo Books for these discussions. Contact Aedín Clements (aedinclements@gmail.com) for more information or to be added to the email list. 



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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barbdircks@gmail.com

Chris Kuthe
Co-President
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MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
Past President
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