



Calendar

September

6 Vibe Fest

KVCC Texas Township Campus. Contact Aimee Bedard aimeembedard03@gmail.com.

7 Vibe Fest

KVCC, Anna Whitten Hall. Contact Aimee Bedard aimeembedard03@gmail.com

12 Vibe Fest

KVCC, Culinary and Allied Health Bld. Contact Aimee Bedard aimeembedard03@gmail.com to volunteer to educate/register new voters.

19 National Voter Registration Day

25 LWVKA Board Meeting

6:00pm, via zoom Contact Barb Dircks at barbdircks@gmail.com

28 Judicial Forum

Douglass Community Center, hors d'oeuvre at 5:30pm. Forum 6:00pm, This is a public event.

October 2023

11 Kalamazoo County Commission Candidate Forum

Sponsored by WeVote with partner LWVKA, 5:30 to 7:00pm. WMU Student Center, Gordon Evans moderator, public event

17 LWVKA Book Club

7:00 pm at Kazoo Books 2413 Parkview Ave. Kalamazoo. Discussing the book, "The Water Will Come: Rising Seas, Sinking Cities, and the Remaking of the Civilized World", by Jeff Goodell, contact Aedin Clements aedinclements@gmail.com

23 LWVKA Board Meeting

6:00pm, via zoom @ Contact Barb Dircks at barbdircks@gmail.com

President's Column

Upcoming Forums


By Chris Kuthe

The November elections are approaching and of course that means—candidate forums. We have two we are co-sponsoring so far. We hope you put them on your calendar and plan to attend!

Thursday, September 28th— Judicial Forum

This is a "first of its kind" forum as its purpose is to bring transparency to the criminal legal system here in Kalamazoo. This forum is being co-sponsored by twelve local organizations and led by the Campaign for Criminal Justice Transparency (CCJT) team. The CCJT vision is to, "continuously improve the institution of Kalamazoo County's criminal legal system by fostering transparency, justice, equity, fairness, impartiality, accountability, and trust between the community and those within the system." This event will take place at the Douglass Community Center located at 1000 W. Paterson Street, Kalamazoo. Free food and beverages will be available from 5-6pm. All 14 judges in Kalamazoo County have been invited. A question and answer session will be held from 6:00-7:45pm. You can register a question for the judges by using the QR code below by September 24th. We will be passing out fliers for this event, door to door in Kalamazoo neighborhoods, the weekend of September 22nd to the 24th. If you have questions about this event or would like to help pass out fliers please contact Chris Kuthe at ckuthe57@gmail.com or 269-501-3305.

Wednesday, October 11th Kalamazoo City Commissioner and Mayoral Forum

This forum will take place in the new WMU student center, Ballroom A. All Kalamazoo Commissioner and Mayoral candidates have been invited. Free food will be available from 5-5:30pm. The forum will take place from 5:30-7pm. Candidate introductions and opening statements will begin at 5:30pm followed by questions and answers. There will be prepared questions on public safety, housing and transportation accessibility and climate change. The audience will also be able to submit questions for the candidates. This forum is being co-sponsored by LWVKA, Western Student Association, WMUK, WeVote and Lee Honors College. RSVP by using the QR code on the attached flier. If you have further questions please contact Chris Kuthe at ckuthe57@gmail.com or 269-501-3305. We hope to see you at the forum. 

Have questions for the Judges? Register here!

<https://forms.gle/KERMCP3vHwbxG3dW9>

Register By Sept. 24th



OCTOBER 11, 2023 • 5 PM - 7 PM

WMU STUDENT CENTER, BALLROOM A

Join us for a vibrant discussion on public safety, accessibility, & climate change!
Submit questions in Slido.



FREE FOOD



SCAN TO RSVP



News from
National

LWVUS Update

Paula Manley

September

Sept. 4—Labor Day
Sept. 11-15—Disability Voting Rights Week
Sept. 15- National Hispanic Heritage Month begins and ends Oct. 15
Sept. 15—International Democracy Day
Sept. 17—Constitution Day
Sept. 19—National Voter Registration Day

Recent litigation includes the following:

LWV of South Carolina filed an amicus brief in a racial gerrymandering case *Alexander v. SC NAACP*. The US Supreme Court will hear the case this fall.

LWV of North Dakota filed a motion seeking to intervene on behalf of voters and LWVND members to defend against a challenge to the state mail-in voting process.

LWVUS has launched #WID23 which urges support for Women's Equality addressing Voting Rights, Constitutional Equality with the Equal Rights Amendment and Reproductive Freedom. Further information is available at lww.org/WID23.

LWVMI Advocacy

Denise Hartsough

Legislative Watch

Election bills signed by the Governor on July 18, 2023 that take effect 90 days after the end of the legislative session:

Enhanced tracking system for absentee ballots and applications

At least nine days of early voting and pre-processing and the early tabulation of absentee ballots eight days before the election if involving 5000+ people

Signature matching and curing process and prepaid postage for absentee ballots and applications

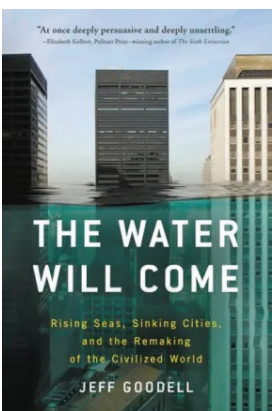
More types of identification allowed for voter identification purposes

Penalties for disclosing early voting results

Drop boxes required for every 15,000 voters with one accessible; video monitoring for all

Permanent mail ballot list established so voters sign one application to receive an absentee ballot for every future election

Increase size of Election Day precincts from 2,999 active registered voters to 5,000



Budget bill HB 4437 allocates funds to implement Promote the Vote 2022 with immediate effect.

National Popular Vote bills are on second reading in the House of Representatives, and in the Senate Elections & Ethics Committee. LWVMI advocates for their passage!

Voter transportation bill would remove the prohibition against transporting voters that is unique to Michigan. A lawsuit against the prohibition was filed in Oakland Circuit Court, as well.

To see all legislation for which the League has a position, go to www.lwvmi.org and click on Advocacy 2023. To see bills: www.legislature.mi.gov.

Thanks to LWVMI's Judy Karandjeff, VP Advocacy, for this information!

Observer Corps Update

Barb Dircks

The Observer Corps would like to grow! Interested members who want to learn how they can help should contact Regena Nelson at Regena.fails.nelson@wmich.edu. Training will be arranged and questions answered as people learn how provide this valuable service! Observer Corps volunteers are the "eyes and ears" in attendance of Board and Commission meetings and provide updates on actions taken. We look forward to increasing our presence!

LWVKA Book Group

The Book Discussion Group will have their next meeting on Tuesday, 17 October, in Kazoo Books on Parkview. The book is *The Water Will Come: Rising Seas, Sinking Cities, and the Remaking of the Civilized World*, by Jeff Goodell. Little, Brown, 2017.

Journalist Jeff Goodell's book discusses one of the impacts of climate change, the rising seas, and Kazoo Books has already ordered some copies in anticipation. Please join us in what promises to be an important discussion.

Membership

Jennifer Snyder


We are pleased to welcome **Anne Flynn** of Battle Creek to LWVKA!

WELCOME
New Members!

Registration Events

Aimée Bedard

We celebrated the 33rd Anniversary of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act by sharing information on Proposal 2 Voting Rights changes during Southwest Michigan Disability Network's ADA Signing Commemoration. Thank you to **Lisa Fuller** for her coordination and **Janet Jones** for staffing our information table.

We will celebrate Women's Equality Day by participating in the Black Wall Street Expo where we will register new voters and educate on changes to Voting Rights and Access in Michigan. September will provide us with opportunities to register and educate voters during back-to-school activities at WMU, Kalamazoo College, and Kalamazoo Valley Community College. We are looking forward to partnering with WMU and Kalamazoo Libraries to register and educate voters on National Voter Registration Day, September 19th. Please check the calendar section for Volunteer Opportunities and email Aimée Bedard aimeembedard03@gmail.com with questions. 

News From the Kalamazoo County Clerk's Office

By Shardae Chambers

Updated Automatic Voter Registration

Starting in August and going forward, SOS is integrating automatic voter registration (AVR) into additional driver's license transactions. The process for clerks will not change, but voter registration status updates will occur earlier and with more frequency for some driver's license holders.

Currently, automatic voter registration is included in mail transactions for driver's license renewals and changes of address. In addition to these transactions, AVR will now be included in mail transactions when a driver's license holder advances to Graduated Driver's License (GDL) Level 2 or 3, or when a GDL holder progresses to operator's license status. As with other mail AVR transactions, voters will receive a notice that they will be automatically registered to vote unless they opt out. This notice will provide the individual with 30 days from the date the letter was issued to opt out of AVR. The customer can opt out by mailing the letter to the Bureau of Elections (BOE) or through online services. If the customer does not opt out within the 30-day timeframe they will be registered to vote.


Address Confidentiality Program Act

In December 2020, Governor Whitmer signed the Address Confidentiality Program Act, Public Act 301 of 2020, MCL 780.851 et seq. The Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) was created to provide certain protections for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, or those who fear that disclosure of their physical address will increase the risk of harm. Information on how the program works and how to enroll are available on the Address Confidentiality Program website. The program is scheduled to launch at the end of August. For general questions about the program, you can email AG-ACP@michigan.gov

Because participants' voter registration (residential address) is protected, ACP also impacts the way participants receive election mail and appear in QVF and electronic poll books. Clerks and staff will be trained on the new protections so these participants can still vote with their address protected.


DropBox Procurement (Public Act 85 of 2023/House Bill 4697)

The Michigan Constitution and Public Act 85 of 2023 requires all jurisdictions to have at least one state-funded drop box for every 15,000 registered voters in the jurisdiction. BOE is required to facilitate the procurement and distribution of these drop boxes.

Every jurisdiction is entitled to at least one new state-funded drop box, even if one was provided in 2020. Clerks must ensure drop boxes are distributed equitably throughout the city or township. 

What is a DEI Lens?

There are questions that organizations consider when they want to improve diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) during planning. They look like this:

- Who are the stakeholders; who is involved?
- Who will be most impacted? Who will and who will feel the burden of actions taken?
- What are the intended, and unintended consequences, of solutions being considered? What evidence supports actions?
- Do actions align with the vision and mission?
- What short and long-term goals are going to benefit
- What, if any, policies or by-laws need to be considered
- What might be the benefits for partners and/or members of the community 





Calhoun County Geo Unit

By Sue Rosko

Having had the opportunity to hear the talented panel at the Women's Equality Day Luncheon (thank you LWWKA!) there is continued motivation as we step into the 2023-2024 work. A point made that drives us forward in membership was the emphasis on intergenerational and diverse relationships and work. For youth, it isn't that the future is in their hands...but NOW is in their hands. The energy, new ideas, experiences, contacts, lessons learned and ability to interact across generations and cultures is critical. Thus our continued push to diversify our membership. We welcome our new members and the gifts that they bring to our Unit.

The Calhoun County Unit served the Battle Creek and Albion communities through a registration/information table at Washington Heights Church festival and the Harrington Elementary School open house and family festival. Emphasis from voting rights partners is on not just posting or talking but getting into the communities, which these tables were. In both of the above events it was rewarding to interact with young families and their communities. With most people being registered, we were able to share information on implementation of Proposal 2 and individuals new rights and available resources. The addition of the SMART gun safety materials and gun locks at our table was enthusiastically received by the community. Sheriff Steve Hinckley supplied us with additional gun locks as they also support gun safety. The Calhoun

Unit will host a table at the September 16 Festival of the Forks in Albion and is working to participate in events at Kellogg Community College and Albion College for outreach to students. Two members served as observers for the Calhoun County Canvassing board as they certified the August election votes. Once again the board was meticulous and professional in ensuring that the election was secure and accurate. Thank you to all of our members who served throughout the month.

Emphasis this League year for our Unit will be on assisting our county clerks in implementing Proposal 2, educating the public on the importance of voting and their new options, and recruiting additional poll workers. In addition the Unit will host "Quick Bites" quarterly gatherings to share information, get to know each other better through a less formal setting, and increase member involvement/leadership. We are hoping to expand into environmental issues, will continue gun safety education, and will strongly advocate with state and national LWW on voting rights and equality issues. We are active on the Money in Politics committee and have connected with non-partisan partners in voter services, clerk engagement and combatting mis-dis-information. Our participation/representation on LWWMI meetings provides information, connection and the power of unity in reaching our mutual LWW mission and goals. A statement by the Women's Equality panel stressed the need for civics education beginning at a young age. They've come after the Black community, the LGBTQ community, and into Women's rights. The work can't wait. Calhoun County LWWKA members – watch emails for further updates on our local work. 📧

Women's Equality Day

Barb Dircks and Chris Kuthe

Women's Equality Day is a shared celebration! The 19th Amendment of the Constitution giving women the right to vote is more relevant then ever! Our League is considering it the start of a year of action! You will see a wide variety of opportunities to act and support voting rights in the coming months. Members from the Board joined the YWCA for their luncheon on August 22nd and were provided an intergenerational Q&A panel presentation. Four women spoke: **Chelsea Miller, Wendy Fields, Shanay Watson-Whittaker** and **Chanel Wilson**, each in turn sharing their perspectives on voting rights (and barriers) that are current, as well as a part of the past. We realize the work continues today, a century later, and as the youngest representative on the panel said, "If you are going to talk about it—be about it!" The elder on the panel finished with her wisdom, "If you know your history, you know why you vote!" Our mission and vision have never been more relevant! 📧



From left to right: panel members with League members: Chanel Wilson, Chelsea Miller, Barb Dircks, Chris Kuthe, Wendy Fields, Sue Rosko

LWVKA Board Roster

LWVKA Board Officers	Office	Email Address	Phone
Barbara Dircks	Co-President	barbdircks@gmail.com	269-569-3509
Christine Kuthe	Co-President	ckuthe57@gmail.com	269-501-3305
Kristen Kern-Beaver	VP Organization	kristenkernbeaver@gmail.com	734-355-2397
Denise Hartsough	VP Program	denise.hartsough@gmail.com	269-599-1801
Debby Freiman	Secretary	deb.freiman@gmail.com	815-871-7424
Tanya Potter	Treasurer	lepotter1224@gmail.com	269-330-1584
LWVKA Directors --Elected			
Jennifer Snyder	Membership	jsyndergaardsnyder@gmail.com	269-929-8888
Jules Isenberg-Wedel	Vote411/VoterGuides	julesisenbergwedel@gmail.com	269-743-9381
Lisa Fuller	Director at Large	lfuller6257@gmail.com	269-349-8292
Aimee Bedard	Voter Services	aimeembedard03@gmail.com	269-420-0484
Aedin Clements	Environmental Justice / Social Media	aedinclements@gmail.com	269-552-5570
Rick Freiman	Housing Advocacy	richard.freiman@gmail.com	815-871-7424
Shardae Jones-Chambers	Director at Large	Shardaeljones@gmail.com	Unlisted
LWVKA Directors - Appointed			
MerriKay Oleen-Burkey	Past President	moburkey30@gmail.com	269-270-3302
Sue Rosko	Chair - Calhoun County Geographical Unit	lwvkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com	269-317-7572
Paula Manley	Mentor - Calhoun County Geo Unit	pjmanley@hotmail.com	269-330-8578
Terry Hluchyj	Vote411/Voter Guides	hluchyberg@aol.com	269-342-6040

Thank you

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

Officers:

Barbara Dircks
Co-President
barbdircks@gmail.com

Chris Kuthe
Co-President
ckuthe57@gmail.com

MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
Past President
moburkey30@gmail.com

Kristen Kern-Beaver
First Vice-President (VP Org)
kristenkernbeaver@gmail.com

Denise Hartsough
Second Vice-President (VP Programs)
denise.hartsough@gmail.com

Deb Freiman
Secretary
deb.freiman@gmail.com

Tanya Potter
Treasurer
Lepottter1224@gmail.com

Jennifer Snyder
Membership Chair
jsyndergaardsnyder@gmail.com

Board Members:

Aedín Clements
aedincllements@gmail.com

Jules Isenberg-Wedel
Vote411/Guides
julesisenbergwedel@gmail.com

Rick Freiman
richard.freiman@gmail.com

Angela Erdman
amerdman@sbcglobal.net

Shardae Chambers
shardaeljones@gmail.com

Lisa Fuller
Lfuller6257@gmail.com

Paula Manley
GR & Calhoun County Unit Mentor
pjmanley@hotmail.com

Sue Rosko
Calhoun County Unit
lwvkacalhouncounty@yahoo.com

Terry Hluchyj
Vote 411/Strategic Plan/Archives
hluchyj@aol.com



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