



## League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

February 2014

[www.lwvka.org](http://www.lwvka.org)

Co-Presidents: Paula Manley and Denise Hartsough

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League Phone: 269-544-0303

### LWVMI Education Study Materials

By Denise Hartsough

The League of Women Voters of Michigan has asked local Leagues to provide input for an update of the state League's position on education. Members of the LWVKA are invited to discuss pertinent materials from the LWVMI, and to participate in a consensus meeting. The discussion will take place on Thursday, March 13, 7:00 p.m. The consensus meeting will convene on Thursday, March 27, 7:00 p.m. Both meetings will be held at the American Red Cross, 5640 Venture Court in Kalamazoo (just west of US131 off Stadium Drive).

The current LWVMI position, proposed changes and additions, and background material are available on the LWVMI website. Those who can attend the meetings will find it helpful to review the material before the meetings. Members who cannot attend the consensus meeting and wish to offer input may respond to the 24 questions on the "Education Response Form" and send it prior to the consensus meeting to Denise Hartsough, email [denise.hartsough@gmail.com](mailto:denise.hartsough@gmail.com). or mail to 2690 Timberleaf Lane, Kalamazoo, MI 49006.

The three sections of the current position show proposed deletions and additions, and include the consensus questions. This [link takes you to those three sections](#), as well as new proposals.

- Current position—1. Education: Structure, Financing and Goals
- Current position—2. Public School Academies
- Current position—3. Teacher Certification in Michigan
- Proposed Additions—4. New Proposals

[Link to Background Papers.](#)

[Link to Cover Letter and Education Response Form.](#)

Topics include: teacher evaluation; students and schools at risk; schools of choice; technology tools for teaching and learning, including distance learning and cyber schools; and common core

### Calendar

**Feb. 15 Founders' Day Brunch**

Sat. Ladies' Library Association  
10:30 am 333 S. Park St., Kalamazoo  
(reserve by 2/1)

**Feb. 18 LWVKA Board Meeting**

Tues. The Park Club  
219 W. South St, Kalamazoo  
5:30 pm Food available for purchase  
6:00 pm Meeting  
Questions? Call 269-544-0303  
or email [president@lwvka.org](mailto:president@lwvka.org)

**Mar. 10 Kalamazoo Environmental Council**

Mon. Legislative Breakfast  
7:30 am Kalamazoo Nature Center  
Watch for further info.

**Mar. 13 LWVMI Education  
Mar. 27 Consensus Meetings**

Thurs. American Red Cross  
7:00 pm 5640 Venture Court  
(north of Stadium Dr., west of  
11th street)

*Note: Board meets on 3rd Tuesdays. Members are welcome to attend all Board Meetings.*

**Founders' Day  
Brunch  
Saturday,**

**February 15, 2014.**

**See page 2 for more  
details.**

## LWVUS Agriculture Study Update

**Check out the LWV web site for more information.**

**By Paula Manley**

The Agriculture Study Update Committee (**Kay and Rick Anderson, Ruth Caputo, Fran Eckenrode, Martha Dalhinger, Janet Jones, and Paula Manley**) are reviewing the numerous articles provided on the LWVUS website. Anyone is welcome to consult the agriculture study update section of the LWVUS website.

Next month we will publish the consensus questions in preparation for the consensus meeting. Watch for the date of the consensus meeting in the March *Bulletin*. The deadline for consensus response to LWVUS is April 18. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact any of the committee members or email [president@lwkva.org](mailto:president@lwkva.org).

## Founders' Day Brunch

**Place your reservation before it is too late!**

The Founders' Day Brunch reservation deadline is February 1, 2014. Please make your reservation today at [feckenr@gmail.com](mailto:feckenr@gmail.com) or call (269) 544-0303.

Founders' Day Brunch will be held on Saturday, February 15, 2014, from 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Ladies' Library Association., 333 South Park Street. The brunch will include egg casserole, ham, cranberry relish,

cinnamon rolls, fruit, and your choice of juice, coffee, or tea. Following the brunch, there will be tours of the newly renovated Ladies' Library Association.

The cost of the brunch is \$15. Please invite people who may be interested in joining the League. There will be no charge for potential members or for those who joined LWVKA in 2013.

## Voter Registration

**Voter registration organizer still needed.**

**By Karen Eddy**

We continue to expect a League member to inquire about the Voter Registration Organizer position. This person will likely feel ready to engage in an interesting, mild and safe adventure - not alone but with many other enjoyable League members.

In the meantime, **Fran Eckenrode, Margaret McAllister, Sara Wick, and Karen Eddy** returned to Michigan Works on South Burdick and the Department of Human Services on Stockbridge to give folks the opportunity to fill out their application so they can vote in the 2014 elections. It is a privilege to represent the League while encouraging citizens to vote.

### LWVKA Received the Following Donations this Month

Dennis Elmer & Jessica Reiser in memory of Julia Costello.

Amy Sue Manley in honor of Tom & Mary Sanders.

## News From National and State

### **LWVUS**

#### **League Supports Smarter Sentencing Act of 2013**

The League joined with other organizations in a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee urging support for S. 1410, the Smarter Sentencing Act of 2013. The legislation would provide for reduction in lengthy sentences for certain people convicted of non-violent drug offenses, thereby addressing some of the causes for the unsustainable and unnecessary growth in the federal prison population. The League's support for S. 1410 is based on the LWVUS Sentencing Policy Position adopted by delegates to Convention 2012.

#### **LWVUS' blog**

*Voices of the League*, covers a variety of topics from all levels of League. It emphasizes work in local communities across the country on our priority issues, marks important national developments, highlights work to grow and strengthen the League, and so much more. We hope you'll take time to see what we've been up to each month [through this roundup](#). Thanks for making democracy work.

#### **League Sends Comments to Election Assistance Commission Regarding Proof of Citizenship Requirements**

The League of Women Voters of the United States joined with the League of Women Voters of Kansas and the League of Women

Voters of Arizona to file comments with the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) regarding the requests made by the Secretaries of State of Kansas and Arizona to modify the national mail-in voter registration form to include requirements that applicants supply documentary proof of citizenship.

#### **Presidential Commission on Election Administration Issues Solid Recommendations**

The Presidential Commission on Election Administration (PCEA) released their report to President Obama outlining how to improve the administration of America's elections. [In a press release](#), the League said "there are many good recommendations in the PCEA report and others that we will need to look at more closely to examine the real impact on American voters." We look forward to working with the Commission to implement the best of these recommendations and improve how elections are run across this nation.

#### **Voting Rights Act Fix Introduced in Congress!**

On January 16, Representatives James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), John Conyers (D-MI), Bobby Scott (D-VA), John Lewis (D-GA), and Senate Judiciary Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced common sense legislation that would repair and restore the Voting Rights Act. This bipartisan effort to fix the damage done by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby v. Holder* is necessary to restore and protect the rights of voters across the country. Please urge your elected officials

*continued on page 4*

## News National continued

to support this important legislation and encourage them to act swiftly to move toward final passage. [Read the LWVUS press statement](#) on the new bill.

### Support EPA's Limits on Carbon Pollution

President Obama and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have proposed a first-ever federal carbon pollution standard for every new power plant built in America. This is a game changer for the climate – especially because power plants are our single largest source of carbon pollution. [Submit a public comment to the EPA](#) in support of the standard and your voice will be part of the official record.

### LWVMI

LWVMI VP for Advocacy, Judy Karandjeff, has compiled a roll call spreadsheet for the Michigan House and Senate so you can see how your legislators voted on key legislation. Follow the link on [lwvmi.org](http://lwvmi.org).

### Remember! LWVMI Regional Workshops

Mark your calendar now for the LWVMI Regional Workshop at Davenport University in Holland on Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. You may choose between sessions on Voter Service (Vote411 and candidate forums) and on the Membership and Leadership Development Program. More information will be available closer to the workshop date.

LWVMI News is posted on [lwvmi.org](http://lwvmi.org) and on the League of Women Voters of Michigan Facebook page.

## LWVUS National Convention

The LWVUS 51<sup>st</sup> National Convention will be held in Dallas, Texas, June 6-11, 2014. The theme is “Power: Our Voices, Our Votes.” If you would like to join hundreds of local, state and national League leaders from around the country to learn about issues important to our organization and the nation, hear informative speakers, and attend interesting training sessions, consider being a delegate. Contact **Paula Manley** or **Denise Hartsough** at [lwvk.org](http://lwvk.org) for further information.

## County Boards Volunteers Needed

The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners regularly seeks area residents interested in serving on county-wide advocacy boards and commissions. Listing of vacancies, applications and additional information are available at the [county web site](#).

## Human Trafficking

**Human trafficking has replaced drug trafficking as the largest volume crime in the U.S.**

**By Janet Jones**

**H**uman trafficking in Michigan, in the country, and in the world has risen dramatically. This may be because there are many more incidents or it may be because incidents are more likely to be reported, or it may be a combination of both.

Trafficking means that someone benefits from the work of another person without the work benefiting that person him/herself. There are three criteria to trafficking in the legal sense: the act itself – the recruiting, transporting, receipt, or harboring of a person; the way it is done – through coercion, threat, abduction or buying the person; and the why – forced labor, prostitution, slavery or similar activities such as the harvesting of organs.

Victims of sex trafficking are usually young with an average age of 13 at the beginning and an average life expectancy of about 25. Victims of slave labor are often older -- domestic workers (e.g. maids, nannies), farm workers, and factory workers often recruited from foreign countries and entering the country illegally.

Because the legal system is reactive, it is difficult to prevent human trafficking. An estimated 1.8 people per 1,000 population are the victims of trafficking with less than 1% of them identified or helped.

Victims of human trafficking are often re-victimized by the legal system which may prosecute a child for prostitution in order to “protect” him/her in detention or may deport an exploited worker without identifying or punishing the exploiter. Even when a victim is willing and able to leave an exploitative situation, there are only three resi-

dential centers in the U.S. that can provide the medical, emotional and security services victims need. The HOPE Project in Muskegon plans to open a residential center to house up to 6 female victims of sex trafficking soon.

Much has been done in the last few years to focus attention on the issues of sex trafficking. Michigan’s Attorney General, William Schuette has headed a Human Trafficking Unit which recently issued a [report of needed legal reforms in Michigan](#). The report’s findings mirror in many ways the recommendations at the national level to prevent, protect, and prosecute cases of human trafficking.

The [Kalamazoo Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition](#) was founded locally in 2011 and works with the state level organizations to provide training for human services and criminal justice professionals as well as informational sessions for the community at large.

Human trafficking has replaced drug trafficking as the largest volume crime in the U.S. As one trafficker has observed, “once drugs are sold, they are gone but a person can be sold over and over.”

To report suspected human trafficking phone 888-373-7888.

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## Poverty Reduction in Kalamazoo County

The WMU Academy of Lifelong Learning, in cooperation with the new University-Community Empowerment Center, is presenting a five week seminar on poverty reduction in Kalamazoo County. The program is free and open to the public.

We all know that there are a disproportionate number of people at the poverty level in our community. The focus of these lectures is what we, as individuals and members of this community, can do about it. With the help of leaders in the field, we will look at the current situation and ways to tackle the problems.

Lecture dates and topics include:

- January 28—Education
- February 4—Income Security
- February 11—Affordable Housing
- February 18—Mental & Physical Health
- February 25—Legal Issues & Criminal Justice

Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Location: College of Health and Human Services,  
Room #4010

Cost: Free, but registration is required

Parking: Free parking in lot 104, adjacent to the  
College of Health and Human Services

[View topics, facilitators, speakers and register online.](#)