



## League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

October 2014  
President: Denise Hartsough

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

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League Phone: 269-544-0303

### Fall 2014 Candidate Forum

By **KC Miller**

LWVKA has partnered with Michigan United, YWCA, and WKZO to sponsor a Candidate Forum for Michigan Representative Districts 60, 61, and 63 and Senate District 20. The Forum is scheduled at the First Presbyterian Church, 321 W. South St., on Thursday, October 16 from 6:00 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

WKZO plans to audio record the Forum so that it can be accessed on their web site and at LWVKA.org. They may broadcast over the radio that evening.

We invite you to attend the Forum, and participate by submitting questions. If you are interested in helping with the Forum, contact **KC Miller** at 269-385-1385.

### LWVKA Presence at 2014 Women's Issues Forum

On September 11, Planned Parenthood offered a Women's Issues Forum at the Ladies' Library Association. This event was one of a series Planned Parenthood hosted around the state. Current elected officials including **Rep. Sean McCann, Rep. Kate Segal, County Commissioners John Patrick Taylor and Mike Seals** were present to answer questions from the audience about current and upcoming issues. No discussion of the upcoming election was allowed.

LWVKA was one of several organizations invited to have an information table. **Ken and Paula Manley** offered information about the League and voting information during the informal gathering prior to the Forum. The League welcomes all opportunities to provide voter education to the public.

### Calendar

- Oct. 7**      **Registration deadline to vote in general elections**  
Tues.
  
- Oct. 14**    **Ballot Proposal Pros and Cons**  
Tues.      First United Methodist Church  
6:30-8 pm    212 South Park St., Kalamazoo
  
- Oct. 15**    **Project Connect**  
Wed.      Kalamazoo County Fair Grounds
  
- Oct. 16**    **Candidate Forum**  
Thurs.    First Presbyterian Church  
6-8:30 pm    321 West South St., Kalamazoo
  
- Oct. 21**    **LWVKA Board Meeting**  
Tues.      The Park Club  
5:30 pm      219 W. South St, Kalamazoo  
6:00 pm      Food available for purchase  
Meeting  
Questions? Call 269-544-0303  
or email [president@lwvka.org](mailto:president@lwvka.org)
  
- Oct. 21**    **Mock Election KPS**  
Tues.      Juniors and Seniors

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



Mary K. Flegal, CPA

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## President's Column

**Yet more opportunities to get involved.**

**By Denise Hartsough**

**T**hanksgiving lies over a month away, and already I feel immense gratitude for the willingness of LWVKA members to lend their energy, expertise and varied experiences to the LWVKA's many projects. It is especially exciting when newer members or even potential League members join the ranks of active veteran members.

As noted last month, opportunities for engagement abound, whether you seek one-time or ongoing commitment: voter registration, promotion of voting, poll observation, candidate forums, youth mock election, and LWVKA strategic planning.

Could more opportunities have arisen? Yes!

1. Local Leagues from around the state are participating in a Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) Program. If you have ideas for increasing membership or fostering leadership that you would like to help implement, please contact one of the members of the local MLD team: **Kay Anderson**, **Jackie Wylie** or **Denise Hartsough**.

2. LWVKA will host the League of Women Voters of Michigan convention here in Kalamazoo on May 15-17, 2015. Activities we need to plan include a Friday evening reception and then dine-around. Interested in showing off our area to League members from around the state? Please contact **Ruth Caputo** to get involved.
3. The League of Women Voters of Michigan has prepared information on the state ballot proposals concerning wolf hunting. If you know of a group that seeks clarity on the ballot proposals and would like to offer brief, unbiased information, I can forward the PowerPoint to you.
4. You also have the opportunity to participate as an audience member at LWVKA events. Please put the October 16 Candidate Forum on your calendar for 6:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 321 W. South Street. Help demonstrate the strength of the LWVKA through your presence!

### Young Adult Voting Project

The Young Adult Voting Project takes place in October. We will be calling for volunteers the last part of September and the first week of October.

This is an interesting and informative program to teach students/young adults about how to vote, where to find information, and how to get involved in the political process. It will help our community have more involved individuals.

If you can volunteer for a day or part of a day, call or email **Georgiann McWilliams** at (269-685-1167), [georgiann@charter.net](mailto:georgiann@charter.net). or **Kay Anderson** (269-649-2461). Kay or Georgiann will get back with you.

## Voter Registration Update

**It's been a busy month for voter registration.**

**By Karen Eddy**

In September, LWVKA voter registration volunteers participated in the semester kick-off Cougar Connections events at KVCC Texas Township and Arcadia Commons Campuses as well as the WMU Bronco Bash and Kalamazoo College KFest.

On National Voter Registration Day, September 23, volunteers promoted voter registration at two important sites: Department of Human Services and Michigan Works. A visit by the "Nuns on the Bus" to Martin Luther King Park on September 26 was another opportunity to register voters and encourage voting in the fall election.

Follow-up visits to Kalamazoo College for lunch and dinner registration opportunities and WMU for an information and voter registration opportunity with the Student

Cultural Affairs group rounded out the September voter registration activities.

Although the last day to register to vote in the fall election is October 6, voter registration volunteers will participate in one additional event, Project Connect at the Kalamazoo County Fair Grounds on October 16, where they will be available to register voters for future elections and make the new November election *Voter Guides* available.

All of this has been possible thanks to the following volunteers: **Jessica Reiser, Paula Pressler, Sue Nelmes, Beth Amidon, Jackie Wylie, Marie Rogers, Sara Wick, MerriKay Oleen-Burkey, Paula Aldridge, Connie Ferguson, Carol Payne-Smith, Janet Jones, Beverly Byle, Cheryl Lyon-Jenness, Jen Richardson, Louise Robeck, Lyda Stillwell, Suzanne Cook, Stu Eddy and Karen Eddy.** Thank you!!

**REMEMBER—EVEN IF YOU HAVEN'T THE TIME FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION, YOUR MEMBERSHIP ALONE WILL STRENGTHEN OUR VOICE.**

- Yes! I want to Take Back the System. Please sign me up!
- I'm enclosing a check for \$60 for individual membership.
- I'm enclosing a check for \$30 for student membership.
- I'm enclosing a check for \$90 for household membership.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE HOME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE OFFICE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SECOND HOUSEHOLD MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_

- In addition to my membership, I'd like to make a contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_
- Please send me more information on the League of Women Voters.
- I can't join right now, but I'm enclosing \$\_\_\_\_\_ to support League activities.

Because we lobby at the local, state and national levels, membership dues and other contributions to the League of Women Voters are not tax-deductible.



Make check payable and mail to:  
 The League of Women Voters  
 PO Box 2106  
 Kalamazoo, MI 49003

## Ballot Proposal Pros and Cons

**Kalamazoo ballot proposals have significance for the entire region—join us for the discussion.**

**By Terry Hluchyj**

**A**t the November general election voters in the City of Kalamazoo will be asked to vote on five proposals that would transform the City Commission election process. These proposals include separate election of the mayor and four-year staggered terms for six commissioners.

With the importance of this issue for the City and its relationship to a core League interest – the election process – we are inviting members to participate in a discussion about these ballot proposals. Our objective is to identify implications, pros and cons, and strive to reach consensus in preparation for a Board decision to support or oppose them. We will use our position regarding Local Government Election Process as a basis for this discussion.

Whether or not you live in the City of Kalamazoo, please join us on Tuesday, October 14, at the First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo, 212 South Park Street, 6:30–8:00 p.m. The meeting will provide an interesting, provocative discussion on these important ballot proposals.

### **League Position—Local Government Election Process**

(1998, 2004, 2008)

The League of Women Voters supports measures to ensure that local government is accessible to all its residents and responsive to their needs, carries out its functions in an ethical, effective, and efficient manner, provides creative and constructive leadership in resolving both local and regional issues, and pursues policies that promote the physical, economic, and cultural well-being of the jurisdiction as a whole.

*The LWV supports an election process that:*

- Fosters an active discussion of issues and ideas

- Encourages qualified candidates representing the racial, economic, political and cultural diversity of the community to seek public office
- Enhances voter participation in the electoral process
- Promotes political equality among all residents
- Results in a local government that considers the well-being of the entire jurisdiction and is responsive to the needs of its residents

### **November 2014 General Election Ballot Proposals**

#### **Kalamazoo City Charter Amendment Proposal 1**

**Statement of Purpose:** Currently the City charter provides that the City Commission is composed of seven City Commissioners and the candidates who receive the most and second-most votes are elected as the Mayor and Vice Mayor. The proposal would provide that City Commission would be composed of a Mayor and six City Commissioners.

**Question:** *Shall Sections 5, 6, 8, 9, 32, 33 and 166 of the City Charter be amended to provide City Commission would be composed of a Mayor, as a separately elected office and six City Commissioners and that the City Commissioner candidate who receives the most votes be elected Vice Mayor?*

#### **Kalamazoo City Charter Amendment Proposal 2**

(Note: Adoption of proposal 2 is conditioned upon the adoption at this election of proposals 1, 3, 4, and 5.)

**Statement of Purpose:** Currently the City Charter provides that City Commissioners are elected every two years. The proposed amendments would provide that in 2015, three Commissioners would be elected to

## Ballot Proposal Pros and Cons continued

two-year terms and three Commissioners would be elected to four-year terms. Beginning in 2017 three Commissioners would be elected to four-year terms every odd-numbered year.

**Question:** *Shall Sections 5, 32, and 33 of the City Charter be amended to provide for the election of City Commissioners for staggered four-year terms of office?*

### **Kalamazoo City Charter Amendment Proposal 3**

(Note: Adoption of proposal 3 is conditioned upon the adoption at this election of proposals 1 and 2.)

**Statement of Purpose:** This Proposal addresses the method of election of the Vice Mayor if staggered four-year City Commissioner terms of office are approved. The proposed amendment provides that the City Commissioner candidate who receives the most votes in the biennial regular municipal election would be elected Vice Mayor for a term of two years.

**Question:** *Shall Section 8 of the City Charter be amended to provide for the election of the Vice Mayor as the City Commissioner candidate who receives the most votes in the regular municipal election for a 2 year term?*

### **Kalamazoo City Charter Amendment Proposal 4**

(Note: Adoption of proposal 4 is conditioned upon the adoption at this election of proposals 1 and 2.)

**Statement of Purpose:** This Proposal continues the current practice of the City Commission appointing a person to fill a vacancy in the office of City Commissioner but provides that such appointments, if in the first half of a vacated term, shall require the remainder of the term to be filled by voters.

**Question:** *Shall Sections 9, and 32 of the City Charter be amended to provide for the filling of the second half of a vacant four-year term in the office of City Commissioner by popular election?*

### **Kalamazoo City Charter Amendment Proposal 5**

(Note: Adoption of proposal 5 is conditioned upon the adoption at this election of proposals 1, 2 and 4.)

**Statement of Purpose:** The Proposal requires a City Commissioner in the midst of their term must resign their office in order to run for Mayor and that the vacated position is to be filled by voters.

**Question:** *Shall Sections 6 and 9 of the City Charter be amended to provide for the contingent resignation of a City of a City Commissioner in the midst of their four-year term in order to seek the office of Mayor?*

## Got Any News?

LWVKA Board Members and active committee members do their best to keep current on local government developments. Help is always appreciated. If you are aware of activities that may be of interest to other League members or if there are developments that you feel the League should be monitoring, let us know. Share that information with the League by calling 544-0303 or emailing [president@lwvka.org](mailto:president@lwvka.org).



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
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### **Wanted: Volunteer to send out *Bulletins* and email alerts to LWWKA members**

For several years, **Kay Perry** has been sending the *Bulletin* via email as well as action alerts and reminders to all members who have email addresses. She also mails a few *Bulletins* to those who prefer receiving it through the postal service. Kay is ready to give this task to another League member.

What are the requirements? The volunteer takes care of sending out the *Bulletin* each month and updating the member email list with information received from the treasurer. This person needs to have access to a computer and ability to print a few labels each month for the print *Bulletins*.

Interested individuals may contact **Paula Manley** at [pjmanley@hotmail.com](mailto:pjmanley@hotmail.com) or phone 269-330-8578.

### **Looking for Volunteers for the Public Advocacy and Voter Protection Project!**

The LWWKA is one of several Leagues in Michigan working on the Public Advocacy and Voter Protection Project. The goal is to ensure that all votes count in the November 4 election and to develop a voter information campaign, particularly targeting underrepresented voters. If you would like to assist in making democracy work, contact **Janet Jones** at [janetmjones48@gmail.com](mailto:janetmjones48@gmail.com) or **Paula Manley** at [pjmanley@hotmail.com](mailto:pjmanley@hotmail.com).