



THE BULLETIN



League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

November 2013

www.lwvka.org

Co-Presidents: Paula Manley and Michele McGowen

Vol. 59 No. 3

League Phone: 269-544-0303

Voter Registration Update

By Karen Eddy

Thanks to Jackie Wylie, Lyda Stillwell and Sara Wick for representing the League at Project Connect on November 13. After that event, we are taking time off from voter registration until January 2014.

In 2013, twenty-four League members assisted about 120 eligible citizens to register to vote or to update their voter registration. In January, we will be at it again and hope that those of you who could not join us this year are able to help out in 2014. It's an easy and rewarding way to be of service.

Volunteer Opportunity for You?

By Karen Eddy

I will be retiring as voter registration organizer within the next year. It is my hope that another League member will become familiar enough with our system within that time to take over and then organize it to her or his satisfaction after I retire.

All the tasks are interesting, but the best parts include interaction with other League members, and encouraging citizens to know the importance of their vote. Please call or email me: 269-599-6399 or Karen.eddy336@global.com if you would like more information.

Advertise in the *Bulletin*!

Interested in reaching a discerning local audience with your advertising message? For only \$50, your business card-sized announcement will appear in the *Bulletin* for at least 6 times in one year. The *Bulletin* reaches approximately 150 highly engaged, community-oriented League members in the Kalamazoo area. For more information please contact Cheryl Lyon-Jenness at cheryl.lyon-jenness@wmich.edu.

Calendar

Nov. 5

Tues.

7 am-8 pm

**Municipal Elections
VOTE!**

See lwv.org or Vote411.org

Nov. 13

Wed.

Noon-4pm

Project Connect!

LWVKA registers voters

Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds

Nov. 19

Tues.

5:30 pm

6:00 pm

LWVKA Board Meeting

The Park Club

219 W. South St, Kalamazoo

Food available for purchase

Meeting

Questions? Call 269-544-0303

or email president@lwvka.org

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



Voter Guide Available for Early Voters

**Thanks to all
for another
informative
– and early –
Guide!**

By Terry Hluchyj

It's been a goal to speed production of the *Voter Guide* so it's ready for absentee voters who want to cast their ballots ASAP. We edged closer to that goal in 2011 when the State of Michigan required cities to set a mid-August deadline for candidate filings. This year Vote411 – the online voter guide sponsored by the national League of Women Voters – enabled us to publish a full six weeks and two days before the election, on par with absentee ballot mailings. Because candidates submit their responses to our questions directly into Vote411, we can publish the *Guide* online before the print version has been laid out, a reversal of our traditional process when the print version was the sole basis of the electronic *Guide*.

While Vote411 was an important factor, we would not have a *Guide* at all without the efforts of many League members who helped write questions and/or distributed *Guides* to more than 140 locations in Kalamazoo and Portage. Those members included: **Amy Anderson, Amy Sue Manley, Betty Ongley, Carol Urban, Charlotte Russell, Cheryl Lyon-Jenness, Connie Ferguson, Denise Hartsough, Diane Worden, Fran Eckenrode, Janet and Keith Jones, Janet Scarrow, Karen Eddy,**

VOTE411.ORG
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED



LEAGUE OF
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Kate Ferraro, Kay Perry, Mabel and Jochanan Stenesh, Michele McGowen, Norma Clack, Paula and Ken Manley, Ruth Caputo, Sara Wick, Sue Nemes, Tanya Potter, and Yolanda Mitts. In addition, **Tamara Carpenter** put her talents to the task of making our *Guide* attractive and easy to use – no matter what the readers' interest. Special thanks also go to the Stuart Area Restoration Association whose members deliver our *Guide* door-to-door in that neighborhood, and to the A. Philip Randolph Institute for financial support, as well as efforts to deliver many *Guides*.

Thanks to all for another informative – and early – *Guide*!

SAVE THE DATE!
Founder's Day Brunch
Saturday, February 15, 2014.
Check in next month's *Bulletin*
for more details.

Kalamazoo City Commission Candidate Forum

This event was sponsored by LWVKA, Friendship Village, and WKZO.

By KC Miller

On October 5, 2013, LWVKA conducted a Kalamazoo City Commission Candidate forum. Friendship Village hosted the event and provided refreshments, while WKZO radio publicized the forum and recorded it for internet access.

Forty-five people listened presentations by 13 of the 15 candidates. **Paula Manley** moderated, **Denise Hartsough** timed, and **Karen Eddy, Ken Manley, and Fran Eckenrode** greeted guests. A new format that allowed candidates to select the questions they wanted to answer from a list provided by LWVKA made the Forum interesting and especially informative.



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 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.

NAME _____

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CITY _____

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Make check payable and mail to:
 The League of Women Voters
 Dawn Haley, Treasurer
 5098 Deep Point Drive
 Portage, MI 49002

News From National and State

LWVUS

SAVE THE DATE!!! TOGETHER WE "POWER: OUR VOICES, OUR VOTES" CONVENTION 2014

The LWVUS Board adopted the theme for the convention that brings us all together June 6-10, 2014, in Dallas, Texas - "Power: Our Voices, Our Votes." As they reflected on the powerful voice and impact the League has today, they also reflected on where the country will be in 2020 (our 100th birthday) and how we're prepared as an organization to be most effective in that time. We look forward to continuing that conversation with many of you when we see you at the National Convention in June!

League UN Observer Reports on United Nations General Assembly

The 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly opened on September 24, 2013. LWV UN Alternate Observer **Margery Cohen** filed a [report on the work of the General Assembly](#). In addition, October 1-11, the United Nations observed Eleven Days of Action leading up to International Day of the Girl (IDOG) on October 11 including a Speak Out. For up-to-date information on activities at the UN, be sure to follow **Rosalee Keech**, LWV UN Observer on Twitter: @Rokeech.

New Partnership with National Association of Women Judges

LWVUS has agreed to partner with the [National Association of Women Judges](#) on the ["Informed Voters, Fair Judges"](#) civic education project. The purpose is to increase citizens' knowledge of the of state-level courts

and judges and to provide non-partisan information about judges in states with judicial elections. This is a national project, but in 2014 activities will focus on eight states—Kansas, Tennessee, Missouri, Alaska, Florida, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Washington. If you have any general questions regarding this new partnership, please send an email to lwv@lwv.org.

LWVUS statement to Presidential Commission on Election Administration

LWVUS submitted a statement to the Presidential Commission on Election Administration outlining the five key suggestions the League proposes for improving the polling place experience for voters. These suggestions include Secure Online Voter Registration, Permanent and Portable Statewide Voter Registration, Expanded Early Voting, Improved Polling Place Management, and Electronic Streamlining.

Judge Admits He Erred when He Supported Indiana Voter Photo ID Law

A federal appeals court judge said he erred when [writing a decision](#) which served as a key precursor to the Supreme Court's 2008 ruling upholding the constitutionality of Indiana's voter ID law. Seventh Circuit Judge **Richard Posner** said his opinion finding the Indiana law constitutional was mistaken, due to the court not having sufficient information about how the law could be used to prevent or discourage people from voting.

EPA to Hold Listening Sessions on Carbon Pollution

The Environmental Protection Agency will hold 11 listen-

News National continued

ing sessions across the country to gather input from citizens as they develop guidelines for existing power plants to reduce carbon pollution emissions. The closest session will be on November 8, 9 am-4 pm, at the EPA offices in downtown Chicago. If you are interested in participating please contact **Jessica Jones** at jjones@lww.org.

National Voter Registration Day From LWVUS President Elizabeth MacNamara

—With reports still trickling in, we now know that Leagues helped 8,007 voters register or update their registration on September 24, National Voter Registration Day. Whether you helped two people or helped 200, your work has made the difference in the lives of voters—not only for this year, but moving into the important 2014 and 2016 election cycles, when so much will be at stake on the national stage.

See the [LWVUS Blog](#) for many more interesting articles.

LWVMI

Michigan Women's Hall of Fame Honorees

The 2013 class to be inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame on October 17 includes **seven** women with League ties: contemporary honorees **Judith Levin Cantor** of the Oakland Area League and **Marina von Neumann Whitman**, spouse of an Ann Arbor League member, and historical honorees, past LWVMI Presidents **Katherine Moore Cushman** (Dearborn) and **Dorothy Leonard Judd** (Grand Rapids) plus members **Vera Andrus** (Port Huron), **Ruth Gibson Butler** (Copper Country) and **Daisy Elliott** (Detroit) as part of the Con-Con Eleven (women delegates to the 1961-62 Michigan Constitutional Convention).

Loaves and Fishes

Program targets local food insecurities.

By Amy Sue Manley

The League hosted a program focused on local hunger issues at the Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes on Saturday, Oct. 26, 2013. The program was attended by 15 people, and **Phyllis Hepp** who is the Director of Organizational Development at Loaves & Fishes was the speaker. Ms. Hepp discussed local food insecurities and the ways Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes distributes food. She gave a tour of the facility, followed by a session on Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes legislative advocacy positions.

Audience participation was high, and a good discussion followed. Ms. Hepp pointed out that while the greatest need for donations at Loaves & Fishes falls in the month of August, they need volunteers and donations throughout the year. In just one day - Friday, Oct. 25 - they serviced over 500 people who needed food.

Overall, attendees enjoyed a very successful and informative program. Thank you to those who came and participated!

LWVUS Agricultural Study Update

Study update welcomes additional members.

By Paula Manley

As we mentioned in previous *Bulletin* articles, Leagues around the country will be reviewing materials to update the LWVUS Agriculture position. The LWVUS Study Update committee has identified three specific background documents that provide a broad and relatively neutral overview of the complex issues addressed by the US agriculture policy. If you would like to read these documents, you may go to LWV website and click on members, next click on advocacy projects and

studies, and then click on agriculture study update.

LWVKA members **Rick and Kay Anderson, Janet Jones, Fran Eckenrode and Paula Manley** are part of the Study Update locally. We welcome anyone who wishes to join us. The commitment involves reading materials provided by the LWVUS and one or two meetings before our consensus meeting next spring. It is a great way to learn more about this timely issue. Contact Paula Manley at pjmanley@hotmail.com for more information.

LWVMI Education Update

Education study group participants needed.

By Denise Hartsough

The League of Women Voters of Michigan is asking Local Leagues to provide input for an update of the State League's position on Education. The LWVMI Board will review consensus questions and background information at its November 9, 2013 meeting. Once approved, the information will be sent to local Leagues so we can study the issues and come to consensus on responses to the questions. Responses are due to the LWVMI by May 1, 2014.

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 state standards. The LWVMI offers a helpful PowerPoint overview.

If you are interested in joining the group that is organizing the Education Study, please contact **Denise Hartsough** at denise.hartsough@gmail.com.

In Memory of Doris Nathan

Doris supported League issues well into her 90s.

By Paula Manley

Long time LWVKA member Doris Nathan passed away October 13, 2013. She was one of the first female test pilots during World War II and a part of the Women Air Service Pilots (WASP). Doris joined the LWVKA after the League was reestablished in Kalamazoo in 1951. She was known as a faithful mem-

ber who supported League activities. In the past few years, she had been a resident of Friendship Village and was known for her active interest in politics. Even in her late 90s Doris was still working to get out the vote among residents at Friendship Village. It is the spirit of people like Doris which exemplifies the League's hands-on work to safeguard democracy.

Lake Michigan LWV Annual Meeting

Great Lakes ecosystem position enables effective advocacy.

By Ruth Caputo

This year's Lake Michigan LWV Annual Meeting was held mid-week in Sheboygan so participants could also attend the Lake Michigan: State of the Lake/Great Lakes Beach Association joint conference. The conference was a bit hampered by federal sequestration, but was still a worthwhile and lively event.

At the LMLWV Annual Meeting, the Great Lakes Ecosystem Position originally developed by Michigan and then adopted by the other Great Lakes states was adopted as the LMLWV program for 2013-2014. You can look at the [original Michigan position](#) on the LMLWV website. **Mary Lee Orr**, one of our state representatives to LMLWV and my travel partner for the meeting, was given the first Art Palleon Advocacy Award for her tireless pursuit of getting this position adopted by the other Great Lakes states. It is now possible for us to advocate effectively at the local, state, and national levels in the interest of the Great Lakes.

The following are items of interest I gleaned at the conference:

- The water level of Lake Michigan is at its lowest level since the current measurement system began in 1918. Lowering levels are expected as part of global climate change, due in part to the reduced ice cover allowing more evaporation during the winter. Along with threatening coastal habitats, this also affects the interchange of lake water with the surrounding groundwater. Chemicals in the groundwater will be increasingly moving into the lake as the levels go down. Increased withdrawals of water for fracking may have some effect on this.
- The impact of non-native, invasive species continues. The quagga mussel has

largely displaced the zebra mussel and has substantially changed the deep water environment of Lake Michigan. The water is now clearer, allowing sunlight to penetrate deeper. This is great for divers, but not so good for the ecosystem. The long-term effects are uncertain. Researchers continue to find evidence of Asian carp in the Lake Michigan basin, and efforts to stop them also continue.

- Invasive plants are also problematic. *Phragmites*, also known as common reed, is rapidly taking over wetland areas along the Lake Michigan shoreline and throughout the state. Efforts to control it are underway, and in some instances are successful.
- After years of controlling point sources of pollution going into the Lakes, the emphasis is now shifting to non-point sources such as agriculture and large animal-feeding operations. Stormwater run-off from cities into surface waters also contributes to this problem. Phosphorous is a primary concern, and may lead to dead zones like the one developing in Green Bay.
- There is also good news. Projects undertaken with funding under the federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative are cleaning up contaminated areas – including Blue Harbor in Sheboygan where this meeting was held.

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Spotlight on Karen Eddy, Voter Registration Organizer

Karen has served in many ways.

By Frances Eckenrode

Karen Eddy joined the Kalamazoo League around the time of her retirement about 15 years ago. During her career as a registered nurse Karen had roles in several organizations.

At the time of her retirement, she was Coordinator of the Parent-Family Education Program in a five-county area. Today, Karen remains very active. She enjoys Tai Chi, walking, singing in her church choir, and is a Deacon in the Portage United Church of Christ.

Karen has served a four-year term as Voter Registration Organizer in LWVKA, and is

looking for someone with fresh ideas to take over as organizer. Karen describes this League role as fun and interesting. Voter registration activities include registering voters at DHS; Michigan Works; welcoming events for local colleges and universities; and at community gatherings such as "Project Connect" and "Mothers of Hope." While the program is well organized, there is opportunity to implement new ideas if desired. Karen says she has found no down side to the job, which is especially exciting in election years. If you are interested in assuming this important role, please contact Karen at Karen.eddy336@global.com or 269-599-6399 or phone or email the League.

"The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Join us in making democracy work!"