



League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

March 2014

www.lwvka.org

Vol. 59 No. 6

Co-Presidents: Paula Manley and Denise Hartsough

League Phone: 269-544-0303

LWVMI Education Study

By Denise Hartsough

Just a reminder that the meetings for an update to the Education position for the LWVMI will be:

- Thursday, March 13, 7:00 p.m.—View PowerPoint and discuss background materials
- Thursday, March 27, 7:00 p.m.—Consensus meeting

Both meetings will be held at the American Red Cross, 5640 Venture Court in Kalamazoo (just west of US 131 off Stadium Drive).

Details about how to access the current position, proposed changes, and background information appeared in the February *Bulletin*. If you have questions, please contact **Denise Hartsough**, 2690 Timberleaf Lane., Kalamazoo, MI 49006 or denise.hartsough@gmail.com.

Agricultural Study Update

By Paula Manley

The LWVUS Agricultural Study Update Consensus questions are in this *Bulletin* starting on page 5. You may review them and access the LWV.org website—members—studies--agricultural study update section for background information. We will have a consensus meeting to discuss the questions on Wednesday, April 2 at 7:00 p.m. at **Paula and Ken Manley's** home, 5652 E. Brenda Lane in Parchment. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to add your comments, please send in your responses to Paula Manley at 5652 E. Brenda Lane, Parchment, MI 49004.

The consensus results from all Leagues are due to LWVUS by April 18. This is a complex topic and very timely as the Farm Bill recently passed and the Kalamazoo Community Read books are about issues regarding our food from farm to market. Please join us on April 2 for the consensus discussion!

Calendar

- Mar. 10 Kalamazoo Environmental Council**
Mon.
7:30 am
Legislative Breakfast
Kalamazoo Nature Center
Watch for further info
- Mar. 13 LWVMI Education & 27 Consensus Meetings**
Thurs.
7:00 pm
American Red Cross
5640 Venture Court
(north of Stadium Drive, west of 11th Street)
- Mar. 18 LWVKA Board Meeting**
Tues.
5:30 pm
6:00 pm
The Park Club
219 W. South St, Kalamazoo
Food available for purchase Meeting
Questions? Call 269-544-0303 or email president@lwvka.org
- April 2 Agriculture Study Consensus Meeting**
Wed.
7:00 pm
Paula & Ken Manley's home
5652 E. Brenda Ln, Parchment
- April 5 LWVMI Workshops**
Sat.
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Davenport University, Holland
Register at lwvmi.org \$15

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

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Welcome New Member Aedin Clements

Voter registration is a primary interest.

By Frances Eckenrode

The League is pleased to welcome new member **Aedin Clements**. Aedin is originally from Dublin, Ireland. She met her husband Paul in 1990 while working in Gambia, West Africa and came home with him to the US. They lived in Princeton, NJ, for his graduate studies and then came to Kalamazoo in 1996. Paul is a professor at WMU. Aedin is the Irish Studies Librarian at Notre Dame's Hesburgh Library. She specializes in Irish history and folklore.

Aedin and Paul have two daughters; Anna and Bridin. Anna is in Galway, Ireland, studying toward a master's degree in International Human Rights. Bridin is a theatre enthusiast attending NYU where she studies Stage Management. Mom-in-law Mollie Clements is also a member of LWVKA.

Aedin first became aware of LWV years ago when she was working in libraries and was involved in helping people register to vote. Now a US citizen, she is interested in making the voter registration process as easy as possible to improve access to voting. We welcome Aedin Clements to the League.

Year 2013 Update of Voter Registrations

The important work of voter registration continues.

By Karen Eddy

Even in a non presidential election year, LWVKA voter registration volunteers are at work. In 2013, we submitted 120 completed applications to clerks' offices county wide. Twenty-four members volunteered their time to assist with voter registration, and all seemed to enjoy the process.

I'm asking that you all re-volunteer in 2014 and that new volunteers join us. I also will

be retiring as voter registration organizer within the next year. It is my hope that another League member will take over this important League function. The tasks are interesting, the interaction with other LWVKA members very positive, and the process of encouraging citizens to know the importance of their vote a critical League service. This next election year is bound to be interesting. Call or email me so we can talk. **Karen Eddy** 269-599-6399 or Karen.eddy336@gmail.com

Travel to Cuba and Raise Money for LWVKA

The League of Women Voters of Florida Education Fund hosts week-long delegation visits to Cuba under a special people-to-people license. All League members, men and women, are eligible to participate. In 2014 they plan four trips. The dates are May 3-8 (Havana-Cienfuegos), October 13-19 (Havana-Cienfuegos), November 10-16 (Havana) and December 8-14 (Havana-Cienfuegos). To encourage participation from around the country, the Florida League is offering to donate \$50 to our League's Education Fund for every LWVKA member who travels.

The cost starts at \$2800 per person which includes round trip airfare from Miami; hotel accommodations in Cuba for six nights; a full schedule of people-to-people educational exchanges,; some meals, including six breakfasts, two lunches, and two dinners; all ground transportation; bilingual tour guide and League group leader; thought-provoking exchanges with academics and women leaders as well as visits to museums and historical sites. If you have an interest in this opportunity, email LWVF Office & Events Manager Heather Hernandez at LWVFoffice@gmail.com.

News From National and State

LWVUS

New Look for the Members Area of League Website

Based on feedback, they have redesigned our Members' site to be more user-friendly and allow for customization based upon the information each League leader and member most needs. *To access the League Forums, you must be logged into the LWV.org member system. If you don't know your login or need additional directions to get you started on the Forums, a quick guide is available on the lwv.org website under Members > League Essentials >> Blogs / Lists.*

LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2014

The LWVUS Board established the following as Legislative Priorities for 2014: Money in Politics and Voting Rights. In addition, the following were included as a second tier of focus for 2014: Affordable Care Act, Reproductive Choice, Immigration and the Environment. Other issues, third tier (watch) such as Fiscal Policy/Social and Economic Justice and Gun Safety may be acted on as opportunities arise for League action. The Board reviews these priorities throughout the year, making changes if necessary.

League Calls on IRS to Stop Dark Money

LWVUS submitted comments to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on their Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for 501(c)(4) organizations. The League believes that the IRS proposal is a tremendous opportunity to rein in the secret "dark money" that has been polluting our elections since the Supreme Court's terrible decision in *Citizens*

United. At the same time, the current proposal would significantly undermine the League's ability to conduct truly nonpartisan voter service activities across the country – and this must be changed. Read our press release on this topic on lwv.org: go to Our Work, Reforming Money in Politics, Money in Elections. Then follow the instructions on the LWVUS blog to **submit your own comment to the IRS**.

Keystone XL Report Deeply Disappointing, Misguided

The U.S. Department of State released its final Environmental Impact Statement on the Keystone XL pipeline project. The [League called the report](#) misguided and continues to share its concerns regarding the impact that this project would have on climate change, the ecosystem of America's breadbasket and our dependence on foreign oil.

League Joins Suit Supporting Reproductive Health Care in

ACA [LWVUS joined an amicus brief](#) in a challenge to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by employers who maintain they do not have to provide reproductive health coverage based on religious beliefs of owners. LWV has long supported access to health care including reproductive health care for women.

LWVUS Redistricting Task Force to be Appointed

An LWV Redistricting Task Force will be appointed to: (1) review the various methods and criteria that have been used in the states and the positions of state Leagues on redistricting; (2) consider how well the methods and criteria have worked; (3) develop materials to edu-

continued on page 4

News National continued

cate Leagues and communities; and (4) make recommendations on next steps. The League needs to be a more effective force on this issue. We plan to appoint the task force as soon as possible in order to finish the work of the task force by June 2015. If you are [interested in participating in this Redistricting Task Force](#), you must apply by April 1. More information on the League's work on redistricting is available in the Member Resources section of lww.org.

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.

LWVMI

Remember! LWVMI Regional Workshops Once again, your state Board is taking learning opportunities to the four corners of the state. Each workshop will be from 10 am-2 pm; cost is \$15 which includes coffee and muffins for early arrivals and a box lunch. The closest one to Kalamazoo is

Saturday, April 5, at Davenport University, 643 S. Waverly, Holland. The workshops will provide two tracks of two interactive sessions each.

Voter Service Track:

- 10 am – 12 noon - Planning and Moderating a Candidate Forum
- 1 pm – 2 pm - VOTE411 *Voter Guide* Roundtable

Membership and Leadership Development Track:

- 10 am – 12 noon - Techniques from the Membership Leadership Development program
- 1 pm -2 pm - President's Roundtable led by LWVMI President

You may sign up for any two sessions. Register and pay on-line or download form and mail with your check to League office. Deadline: March 31.

LWVMI News is posted on lwwmi.org and on the League of Women Voters of Michigan Facebook page.

LWVUS National Convention

The LWVUS 51st 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 lwwk.org for further information.

Agricultural Update Consensus Questions

There are 11 categories of consensus questions with sub-parts underneath. To help you find information on the issues more easily, we have added links to related LWVUS study papers. It is suggested that you review one question at a time, then click on the links and read the background information. We will have a consensus meeting to discuss the questions on Wednesday, April 2 at 7:00 p.m. at **Paula and Ken Manley's** home, 5652 E. Brenda Lane in Parchment. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to add your comments, please send in your responses to Paula Manley at 5652 E. Brenda Lane, Parchment, MI 49004.

Economic Health of the Agricultural Sector

<i>1. Should government financial support for agriculture be directed to:</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Subsidized agricultural credit (loans) Overview of Agricultural Subsidy page 6 has link to recommended reading that describes 10 agricultural loan programs.			
b) Disaster assistance Overview of Agricultural Subsidy page 3			
c) Crop insurance Overview of Crop Insurance			
d) Farms that supply local and regional markets Overview of Farm Management , pages 1-2 on Farm Characteristics and Consolidation, page 4 on Vertical Integration, and pages 6-7 on Small Farms, Urban Farms, and Local Food Systems; Overview of Animal Management , page 3 on AFO/local farm issues and pages 4-5 on issues of vertical integrations and consolidation.			
e) Subsidized implementation of best management practices 1. Overview of Soil Management , page 2 on Incentives for good soil management; 2. Overview of Water Management , several mentions of incentives to encourage good water management practices throughout the document; 3. Overview of Farm Management , page 5 on Influence of Government Policies provides an illustration of negative incentives for BMP			
f) Commodity crop programs, e.g., corn, soybeans, sugar, cotton, wheat 1. Overview of Animal Management , page 5 illustrates how commodity crop subsidies affect animal production choices; 2. United States Department of Agriculture , page 3 mentions current issues concerning commodity crop subsidies; 3. Overview of Agricultural Subsidy , pages 1-3 on descriptions of different types of current subsidies and many of the recommended readings			

Agricultural Update Consensus Questions continued

	Yes	No	No Consensus
g) Commodity livestock program Not mentioned specifically in any document but indirect subsidies affecting AFO production decisions are mentioned in Overview of Animal Management , page 5			
h) Commodity dairy program Not specifically mentioned in any document but a brief description of current price support program for milk producers is available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk_Income_Loss_Contract_Payments			
i) Specialty crops, e.g. fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc. Not specifically mentioned in terms of support programs but Overview of Farm Management , pages 1-2 on Farm Characteristics and page 5 on Influence of Government Policies is of some relevance			
j) Other production methods, e.g. organic, hydroponic, urban, etc. farms Not specifically mentioned in terms of government support but Overview of Farm Management , page 5 describes Organic Agriculture, and page 6 mentions a variety of other production techniques used by Small Farms/Urban Farms/Local Food Systems			
Comments for discussion:			

2. <i>What changes should government make regarding direct payment programs to farm operators?</i> Note: Farm operators can be anything between family farms to huge corporations. All of the Overview of Agricultural Subsidy paper should be read.	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) <i>Eliminate</i> direct payments to farm operators			
b) <i>Update</i> the rules for direct payments to farm operators to support sustainability Definition: A sustainable agriculture must be ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially responsible.			
c) <i>Broaden</i> the types of farms that are eligible			
d) <i>Broaden</i> the types of crops that are eligible Note: Mainly now only commodity crops – not fruits and vegetables.			
e) Effectively <i>enforce</i> existing rules			
Comments for discussion:			

Agricultural Update Consensus Questions continued

<p>3. <i>What changes to current crop insurance program should government make?</i> All of the Overview of Crop Insurance should be read.</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Extend to more types of crops			
b) Link to the use of conservation practices			
c) Limit insurance for the cultivation of marginal and environmentally sensitive land			
d) Cap amount of premium subsidy to a single farm operator (see note in question 2)			
Comments for discussion:			
<hr/>			
<p>4. <i>Should government act on any of the following?</i> All of the Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), Antitrust Enforcement Agencies and Legislation, Overview of Farm Management papers should be read. Overview of Animal Management – for consideration of local butchering</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Revise anti-trust legislation to ensure competitive agricultural markets			
b) Enforce anti-trust laws as they relate to agriculture			
c) Promote alternative marketing systems, including regional hub markets, farmer cooperatives, farm markets, etc.			
Comments for discussion:			

Animal Management

<p>5. <i>Which of the following approaches to animal management should government achieve?</i> http://www.lwv.org/content/overview-animal-management</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Transparently collect and disclose data about regulated animal feeding operations (AFOs) or aquaculture operations and about the health of animals in such regulated operations			
b) Apply and enforce existing clean air and clean water regulations to animal or seafood management facilities			
Comments for discussion:			

Agricultural Update Consensus Questions continued

6. Which of the following approaches to animal waste management should government require or bring about?	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies for all regulated AFOs			
b) Prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges (such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program, cost share, loans, etc.) rather than construction of new facilities			
Comments for discussion:			

Research and Development

7. Which of the following approaches to research and development (R&D) should government fund or accomplish?	Yes	No	No Consensus
<p>Note: For the purpose of these questions and some questions below, “developed using any new technology” or “new technologies” refer to any of many scientific processes for developing new crops or animals with genetic engineering, nanotechnology or other new techniques, which are not the traditional breeding or hybridization techniques.</p>			
a) Basic research			
b) Independent third-party (such as an academic institution) risk assessment of products <i>developed using any new technology</i>			
c) Research to assess the impacts of <i>new technologies</i> on human health and the environment, prior to their widespread adoption			
d) Research that advances the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems			
e) Seed banking, research, and other means that promote and preserve genetic diversity			
f) Both transparency in the reporting of research studies related to approval of new products and respect for intellectual property rights of private enterprises engaged in research			
g) Research on long-term effects of new crops, products and processes			
h) Development of new practices and technologies to promote conservation for all types of farms			
Comments for discussion:			

Agricultural Update Consensus Questions continued

Food Safety

8. Which of the following approaches to food safety should government perform or fund?	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for new foods and food additives <i>developed using any new technology</i> (see note below question 7) 8(a) to 8(c) Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System , pages 2-3 (Ht and Bt crops) and pages 4-6 (Regulatory Framework for GE Crops) Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies , pages 3-4 (Safety and Regulation of Nanotechnology) Food Labeling: FDA and USDA , page 4 (Bioengineered Foods) and page 9 (Future of Food Labeling)			
b) Require developers to monitor all food products <i>developed using any new technology</i> after releasing to the market			
c) Withdraw marketing approval if products are shown to be unsafe			
d) Require post-market monitoring of approved pharmaceutical applications in animal production for human health and environmental impacts 8(d) & 8(f) Overview of Animal Management , pages 8-10 (Pharmaceuticals in Animal Feed) Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System , pages 7-8 (GE Animals)			
e) Require developers of new products to provide data and other materials to independent third-parties (such as academic institutions) for pre- and post-market safety assessment as appropriate 8(e) and 8(g) Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System , page 5 (Deregulation paragraphs) Overview of Agricultural Subsidy , pages 4-5 (Indirect Agricultural Subsidies for Research and Development)			
f) Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to treat and control disease			
g) Fund independent third-party (such as academic institutions) risk assessment of long-term and multiple exposures from foods on human health and the environment			

Agricultural Update Consensus Questions continued

<p>h) Promote crop management practices that decrease dependency on added chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers)</p> <p>8(h)</p> <p>Overview of Farm Management, pages 4-6 (Sustainable Agriculture and Organic Agriculture)</p> <p>United States Department of Agriculture, pages 3-4 (Current Issues)</p> <p>Overview of Agricultural Subsidy, entire document provides insights on incentives provided by current programs</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
<p>i) Fund, train and add personnel for assessment and compliance functions of regulatory agencies</p> <p>8(i)</p> <p>Interaction of Federal Agencies with Food Safety Missions, page 4 (Current Issues)</p> <p>United States Department of Agriculture, pages 2-3 (Farm Bill and Budget Authorizations)</p> <p>Food Labeling: FDA and USDA, page 2 (FDA Funding Concern)</p> <p>Food and Drug Administration (FDA), page 3 (Federal and State Appropriations)</p>			
<p>Comments for discussion:</p>			

Food Labeling

<p>9. <i>How sufficient are the following regarding current food labeling?</i></p> <p>We recommend you read all of USDA's Role in American Nutrition and Food Labeling: FDA and USDA.</p>	Insufficient	Sufficient	Too much	No Consensus
a) Nutrition Facts on food labels				
b) Nutrition Facts on food labels as a means of consumer education				
c) Common allergen labeling				
d) Health and ingredient claims that consumers can understand				
<p>Comments for discussion:</p>				

Agricultural Update Consensus Questions continued

<p>10. Which of the following should government achieve regarding marketing and ingredient claims on food labels? We recommend you read all on Food Labeling: FDA and USDA.</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Define (and approve for use) health and safety marketing terms (e.g. immunity support, humane, pasture-raised, natural, etc.)			
b) Regulate the use of images or other sensory advertising			
c) Require that ingredient marketing claims accurately represent what is in the required ingredient list			
Comments for discussion:			

<p>11. Recognizing that each food developed using any new technology can be unique, and assuming that required food labeling should be useful to consumers, should the following generalized information relating to how products or components are developed be presented on food labels? See note below question 7. All these questions also assume some percentage threshold of new technology ingredients, such as the 0.9% used in the European Union. We recommend you read all of Food Labeling: FDA and USDA, Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System and Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies.</p>				
	Not Recommended	Voluntary	Mandatory	No Consensus
a) Contains ingredients developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved				
b) Does not contain ingredients developed using any new technology				
c) If meat, fish, eggs, or dairy products are from animals that have consumed feed developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved				
Comments for discussion:				



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Agricultural Update Consensus Questions continued

ALL of the LWWUS research papers, including a glossary of terms, and acronyms can be found on the [LWWUS Agriculture Update Site](#). They include:

[Leaders' Guide for the Agriculture Update Consensus](#)

[Overview of Key Agencies Supporting and Regulating Food and Agriculture](#)

[United States Department of Agriculture](#)

[USDA's Role in American Nutrition](#)

[Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)

[Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#)

[Food Labeling: FDA and USDA](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health](#)

[Interaction of Federal Agencies with Food Safety Missions](#)

[Patent and Trademark Office \(USPTO\)](#)

[Antitrust Enforcement Agencies and Legislation](#)

[Introduction to Agriculture Technology](#)

[Overview of Farm Management](#)

[Overview of Plant Breeding, Seed Industry, and Biodiversity](#)

[Genetic Engineering and Genetically](#)

[Modified Organisms in the Food System](#)

[Overview of Pesticide Management](#)

[Overview of Soil Management](#)

[Overview of Water Management](#)

[Overview of Animal Management](#)

[Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies](#)

[Overview of Agricultural Subsidy](#)

[Overview of Crop Insurance](#)

[Agriculture Update Acronyms](#)

[Agriculture Update Glossary](#)