

THE BULLETIN

League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

September 2013

www.lwvka.org

Co-Presidents: Paula Manley and Michele McGowen

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Women's Equality Day

By Denise Hartsough

August 26, 2013 marks the 93rd anniversary of Women's Equality Day, the date of passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution which guarantees U.S. citizens the right to vote, regardless of gender.

To celebrate the 93rd anniversary of women's hard-fought right to vote and to remind ourselves that women need to exercise the right to vote and to run for public office, the LWVKA and YWCA sponsored a luncheon held at the YWCA on August 26. A group of 35 heard greetings from YWCA Board Vice Chair **Namita Sharma** and YWCA Domestic & Sexual Assault Program Director **Misty Larthridge**. LWVKA Co-Presidents **Paula Manley** and **Michele McGowen** provided an overview of the League's activities, and recognized the former and current elected officials in attendance.

Guest speaker **Lori Mercedes**, Executive Director of the Hispanic American Council, focused attention on injustices suffered by undocumented women in this country. Due to their immigration status, undocumented women may face exploitation in the workplace, sexual harassment, and lack of help with health problems. Mercedes voiced concern that people discussing immigration reform in the media and in Congress remember that immigration laws deeply affect the lives of individuals and their children. Co-sponsoring the event were Church Women United, Kalamazoo Gay/Lesbian Resource Center, and the Kalamazoo Literacy Council. Thanks to LWVKA member **Paula Aldridge** for working with the YWCA staff to organize the 2013 Women's Equality Day event.

National Voter Registration Day

To mark National Voter Registration Day on Tuesday, September 24, LWVKA will register voters at the Bank Street Farmers' Market. Please stop by between 11a.m. and 2 p.m. to call attention to the importance of voter registration and voting rights.

Calendar

- Sept. 3 Cougar Connection—KVCC**
Tues. Texas Township Campus
9 am-4 pm LWVKA registering voters
- Sept. 4 Cougar Connection—KVCC**
Wed. Arcadia Campus
11 am-2 pm LWVKA registering voters
- Sept. 13 Bronco Bash—WMU**
Fri. LWVKA registering voters
3-6 pm
- Sept. 17 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
- Sept. 19 KFest—Kalamazoo College**
Thurs. LWVKA registering voters
3-6 pm
- Sept. 24 National Voter Registration Day**
Tues. LWVKA registering voters at
11 am-2 pm Bank Street Market
- 1st & 3rd Voter Registration at MI Works**
Tues. LWVKA registering voters
9-11 am
- 2nd & 4th Voter Registration at DHS**
Tues. LWVKA registering voters
9-11 am

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

News From National and State

LWVUS

DOJ Announces Lawsuit Against TX Voter Photo ID Law

On August 22 the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) announced that it was suing the state of Texas over their voter photo ID law implemented shortly after the Supreme Court's *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder* decision earlier this summer. The LWVUS issued a statement expressing its support for this action.

TAKE ACTION: Tell Congress to Fix the Voting Rights Act

Earlier this summer the U.S. Supreme Court erased fundamental protections against racial discrimination in voting that have been critical in protecting our democracy. The damage to the Voting Rights Act (VRA) can and must be fixed – Congress has the power to act swiftly to restore the effectiveness of the VRA. [Tell your member of Congress](#) to work quickly to repair and restore the VRA. Check out our most recent blog on *Huffington Post* about the 48th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act.

League Sends Letter to FEC Commissioners

The League joined other reform groups in a letter sent to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) regarding the agency's Enforcement Manual. The letter expresses opposition to a statement made by Representative **Candice Miller** (R-MI) and urges the FEC Commissioners to hold off approving the Enforcement Manual until a balanced commission can make sure that decisions are not being made on a partisan basis.

League Joins Amicus Brief in *McCutcheon v. FEC*

The League joined a brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *McCutcheon v. FEC*. The Supreme Court will hear arguments in this case during their fall session. The outcome will determine whether the overall caps on the amount of money that individuals can donate to multiple candidates or political parties violate the First Amendment.

Tell your Senators to Support Carbon Pollution Regulations

Power plants are the largest source of dangerous carbon pollution in the United States and carbon pollution is the leading cause of climate change. Despite this, there are currently no federal limits on the amount of carbon pollution power plants can release. Ask your [Senators to support the Obama Administration's plan to cut carbon pollution](#).

League Urges U.S. House to Vote No on Repeal of Presidential Public Financing Law

The League joined reform groups in sending a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives urging them to vote no on H.R. 2019, legislation that would repeal the presidential public financing system. The letter argues that H.R. 2019 would repeal an important anti-corruption campaign finance law which worked well for most of its existence and provided ordinary Americans with a critical role to play in financing presidential elections.

Update from the Agriculture Update Committee

The LWVUS Agriculture Update Committee has several highly technical and dynamic is-

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News National continued

sues to address and therefore is unable to begin releasing study materials in September as originally announced. Materials should be ready in time for Leagues to schedule consensus meetings beginning in January.

National League Board Nominations are open for the 2014-2016

Nominations are open for the 2014-2016 LWVUS Board of Directors and Nominating Committee. Consider applying yourself or recommending others you know as potential leaders. The [2014-2016 LWVUS Nominee Recommendation Form](#) is now available. Additional information, such as what skills and experience are needed, is available on this [FAQ page](#). If you have questions, contact Nominating Committee members at nominatingcommittee@lwv.org.

LWVMI

LWVMI on Facebook.

Go to <https://www.facebook.com/lwvmichigan>. Be sure to "Like" us.

Action Alert: Ask your Senator to expand Medicaid coverage. LWVMI supports HB 4714, passed by the House in June, which would expand Medicaid to approximately 400,000 Michigan residents who lack health care coverage. LWVMI support is based on the LWVUS Social Policy Position on Health Care which states "Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all US residents and controls health care costs." League members are encouraged to send a message of support to your State Senator as soon as possible. The state League has sent a letter to Senate committee members. Send snail mail to Senator **Tonya Schuitmaker**, PO Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909, or you may send an email to sentschuitmaker@senate.michigan.gov. More information is available at the Michigan Consumers of Healthcare website.

Voter Registration Update

By Karen Eddy

In August and September, we have provided opportunities for citizens to become better educated about voting and to apply for registration at the following sites: Mothers of Hope Ultimate Family Reunion, KVCC at Cougar Connection-Texas Township, KVCC at Hospitality Days-Arcadia Commons, WMU Bronco Bash and K College KFest, Bank Street Market, and weekly at Department of Human Services or Michigan Works.

Thanks to the following volunteers who keep us visible: **Sara Wick, Fran Eckero, Margaret McAllister, Martha Cohen, Charlotte Russell, Louise Robeck, Cheryl Lyon-Jenness, Denise Hartsough, Beverly Byle, Fran Eckero, Carol Payne-Smith, Stu Eddy, Lyda Stillwell, Paula Aldridge, Janet Hanson, Marie Rogers, Janet Nykaza, Connie Ferguson, Susan Nelmes, and Jessica Reiser.**



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
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Returned Service

New Member—Welcome!

Member returns to LWVKA

By Frances Eckenrode

Merrikay Oleen-Burkey has re-joined the LWVKA after several year's absence. A Minnesotan by birth, Merrikay worked for the Upjohn Company in Kalamazoo from 1985 to 1998 where she was part of several groups including Medical Affairs, Marketing, and Clinical Development. She subsequently worked for TEVA Pharmaceuticals in Kansas City, retiring in 2011.

Merrikay received her undergraduate degree in pharmacy from North Dakota State University in Fargo. She practiced as a hospital pharmacist in Illinois and then joined the Drug Information Center at Washington

State University in Pullman, Washington. She earned a graduate degree in Social and Administrative Pharmacy at the University of Minnesota in 1985.

Merrikay and her husband moved back to Kalamazoo in June to be close to family. They have two sons and five grandchildren. Merrikay, a long-time member of the LWV, joined local chapters as she moved around the country.

Merrikay enjoys volunteering. In Kansas she was a GED tutor and here in Kalamazoo she is involved with the Kiwanis Club and Loaves & Fishes. Please welcome Merrikay back to the Kalamazoo League.

League Programming

Your help is still needed! Your input is vital for interesting programs that will bring in the crowds. If you have a topic and a presenter for a League program, or partnering with another organization, I am happy to put it together. Please contact Amy Sue Manley at kzooleaguewv@hotmail.com if you have ideas to share. Thank you!