



League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

September 2014
President: Denise Hartsough

www.lwvka.org

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League Phone: 269-544-0303

Women's Equality Day

Once again the YWCA and LWVKA hosted the Women's Equality Day celebration August 26 at the YWCA. LWVKA and the YWCA have partnered for 19 years to host a community gathering each August 26.

This Equality Day marked 94 years since the passage of the 19th Amendment giving women the vote. **Dr. Carla Campbell-Jackson**, Vice-President of the Kalamazoo Branch of the NAACP, was the keynote speaker. In her speech "Stay Calm—But Rock the Vote," Dr. Campbell-Jackson discussed the barriers many voters still face in our country today and the need for voter empowerment.

National Voter Registration Day

This year, National Voter Registration Day is September 23. Leagues and organizations around the country will be promoting voter registration activities on this day. LWVKA will be joining over 300 Leagues in this national celebration of democracy. If you are interested in participating on September 23, contact **Karen Eddy**, Voter Registration Chair, at Karen.eddy336@gmail.com.

Calendar

Sept. 5 Voter Registration

Fri. WMU Bronco Bash
3-6 pm

Sept. 16 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. 18 Voter Registration

Thurs. Kalamazoo College KFest
3:30-6:30 pm

Sept. 23 National Voter Registration Day

Tues.

Sept. 27 Training for Voter Access Project

Sat. 10 am-1 pm
Parchment Community Library
401 S. Riverview Drive

Oct. 7 Registration deadline to vote in general elections

Tues.

Oct. 16 Project Connect

Thurs. Kalamazoo County Fair
Grounds

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

President's Column

There are many ways to advance the League's purpose — do what you can!

By Denise Hartsough

September marks the beginning of a busy and exciting fall for the LWVKA! I urge you to join in by participating whenever your schedule allows and in whatever activities help you live out your values.

Have you wanted to learn how to **register voters**? Stop by the Department of Human Services at 322 E. Stockbridge on a 2nd or 4th Tuesday morning, or the Michigan Works office at 1601 S. Burdick on a 1st or 3rd Tuesday morning to learn from experienced LWVKA volunteers. If you would like to support the loyal LWVKA voter registration volunteers, you could stop by DHS on Tuesday, September 23 to honor their work on National Voter Registration Day. If you seek deeper involvement with voter registration, please [contact me via email](#) or 269-599-1801 about a meeting on September 10.

Concerned about those registered voters' **access to voting**? Come to a training on Saturday, September 27, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Parchment Community Library, 401 S. Riverview to learn how to increase access and promote voting. The session will focus on a) organizing a poll observer corps for the November election, and b) using all types of media to disseminate voter information prior to the election.

Would you like to see more **straightforward communication from candidates** about their positions on key issues? If yes, you can help with candidate forums. We

will need people to provide input for questions crafted in advance, do set-up, welcome audience members, and time candidate responses. Please contact **KC Miller**, our chief forum organizer, [via email](#).

Are you especially committed to **youth increasing their civic engagement**? LWVKA offers an award-winning Young Adult Voting Project. League volunteers inform high school and young adult students about voting, and then conduct a mock election. Youth also have the opportunity to be trained and serve as paid poll workers during the actual election! If you enjoy working with youth, I'd be glad to connect you to the project coordinators.

Interested in shaping the next three years of the LWVKA? **Strategic planning** is in the beginning stages. Focus Teams have brainstormed to provide input about: issue study and advocacy; number and diversity of candidates for elected office; election administration processes; and voter outreach and education. Please watch for announcements about an overall strategic planning session that will work with the input provided.

We all do what we can to advance the League's purpose: "to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues." Whether you maintain your membership and read the *Bulletin*, volunteer once, volunteer regularly, or shoulder a leadership role--your community benefits. Thank you!

Flegal & Tibbitts

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The Public Advocacy and Voter Protection Project 2014

Join us to make sure all votes count.

LWVKA has been awarded a Public Advocacy and Voter Protection Project Grant (PAVP) from the LWVMI through the LWVUS. The goals are: to implement election observer programs in up to 10 communities in Michigan to help ensure all votes count; and to develop a voter information campaign for use throughout the area, particularly targeting under-represented voters.

A regional workshop will be held on Saturday, September 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Parchment Community Library, 401 South Riverview Drive. This workshop

will train election observers and also train local Leagues in the use of social media for election education campaigns. To register to attend the workshop, go to www.lwvmi.org and click on member resources/current projects. The deadline for registration is September 20.

Anyone who is interested in further information about assisting with this project may contact **Janet Jones** at janetmjones48@gmail.com or **Paula Manley** at pjmanley@hotmail.com. The project ends after election day on November 4.

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

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 _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP CODE _____

PHONE HOME _____

PHONE OFFICE _____



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



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Report from the Liaison to YWCA

LWVKA offers support to YWCA.

On July 28, 2014, **Sue Nelmes** and **Jessica Reiser** met with **Grace Lubwama**, Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA and **Jennifer Rank Brenton**, Program Coordinator Women's Initiatives for the YWCA.

The topics discussed included:

- The YWCA is a recipient of a Michigan Nonprofit Association mini-grant to register voters and encourage people to vote. To aid them in their efforts, we offered to supply them with *Voter Guides*. They asked if we could provide them with League people who would discuss the ballot issues on the November ballot. We agreed this could be done.
- In the discussion with Jennifer and Grace, we learned that they are interested in teaching young women how to choose what to advocate for and how to go about advocating. Grace asked if we could provide advocacy training for young girls. We thought the League might be able to accommodate this request. Jessica is checking with the LWVUS to see if there are materials available for use.
- Grace discussed the infant mortality rate in Kalamazoo County and the YWCA's concerns regarding this issue. She is in the process of deciding how to address this issue. We (Jessica and Sue) indicated that we are willing to represent the League, even though at this point, we have no idea what our role would be. We are checking our national, state, and local positions to see how we can advocate on this issue.