

THE BULLETIN

League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area

February 2012

www.lwvka.org

Co-Presidents: Connie Ferguson and Paula Manley

Vol. 57 No. 5

League Phone: 269-544-0303

Get-Acquainted Brunch Report

By Norma Clack

On Saturday December 3, at the historic Ladies' Library in downtown Kalamazoo, about 35 LWVKA members and prospective members gathered for a social occasion and brunch. We heard from co-presidents **Connie Ferguson** and **Paula Manley** about the League's two separate and distinct roles – citizen education and advocacy. We also heard about recent activities such as our candidate forums, the *Voter Guide*, and voter registration efforts, as well as future plans for the national Privatization Study and high school voter education.



There was time for socializing, networking, and meeting new people. We were pleased to note that our gathering of members and friends included a State Representative, a County Commissioner, two Kalamazoo City Commissioners, and a Kalamazoo Public Schools Board member. **Kay Perry** brought and displayed League-related items to sell and **Karen Eddy** garnered more volunteers for our voter registration activities. We also learned a little history about the Ladies' Library Association and their plans to add an elevator for easier access to the building. A grand time was had by all!



Voter Registration

By Karen Eddy

Thanks to **Charlotte Russell**, **Suzanne Cook**, **Cheryl Lyon-Jenness**, **Paula Aldridge** and **Barbara Huber** for volunteering at KVCC Texas Township Campus on January 9. As a result of this event, seven applications were turned in to the County Clerk's office.

Calendar

Jan. 21 Program Planning (LWVUS & LWVKA)

Sat. Disability Network
9 am 517 E. Crosstown Parkway,
Kalamazoo

Feb. 21 Board Meeting

Tues. The Park Club
5:30 pm 219 W. South St, Kalamazoo
Food available for purchase
6 pm Meeting
Questions? Call 269-544-0303
or email president@lwvka.org
for more information.

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

Welcome New Members

Amy Sue Manley

1833 Lakeway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
269-303-2122
queenofthelibrary@hotmail.com

Robert Cinabro

2525 Frederick Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
269-267-4352
cinabrolaw@aol.com

Kathleen Mechem

132 Minges Circle
Battle Creek, MI 49015
269-660-1784
mechemk@comcast.net

News From National and State

LWVMI has moved!

The new LWVMI office is at 600 W. St. Joseph St., Suite 3G, Lansing, MI 48933-2288. The Impression 5 Museum, where the office has been located for several decades, needs the space now. The new office is farther from downtown, but still within walking distance of the capitol.

LWVUS's New Website

The new LWVUS website (with the same address as the old one) was launched December 1! When you visit the site, you will notice more than new graphics on our site. While the member information that we hope you rely on regularly is better organized and easier to find, this site is aimed at the public as well as our members.

Join Us for the LWVUS 50th National Convention!

Registration is now open for the LWVUS 50th National Convention on June 8-12, 2012, at the Washington Hilton Hotel in downtown Washington, DC. The Convention registration fee is \$320, which includes all materials, plenary sessions, workshops, caucuses, and the Convention banquet. Learn more at on [their website](#). [Register online](#). Have questions? Contact **Natalie Testa**, NTesta@lwv.org.

ADVOCACY

League Endorses H.R. 2572, Clean Up Government Act of 2011

The League and coalition partners sent a letter to House Judiciary Chair **Lamar Smith** and Ranking Minority Member **John Conyers**, endorsing the Clean Up Government Act of 2011. H.R. 2572 would restore important tools for federal prosecutors fighting public corruption.

League President Testifies Before House Judiciary Committee Forum on Voting Laws Changes

On Monday, November 14, LWVUS President **MacNamara** was on the Hill to present testimony on the effect of recent voting legislation passed by a number of states in 2011. Among the numerous media reports were those from the *Huffington Post*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and *Governing Magazine*.

League Opposes Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution

The League of Women Voters joined with 277 other organizations in a letter to members of the House and Senate opposing passage of a so-called Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution. The League has long opposed the Balanced Budget Amendment as a danger to the economy and the balance of powers between the three branches of government.

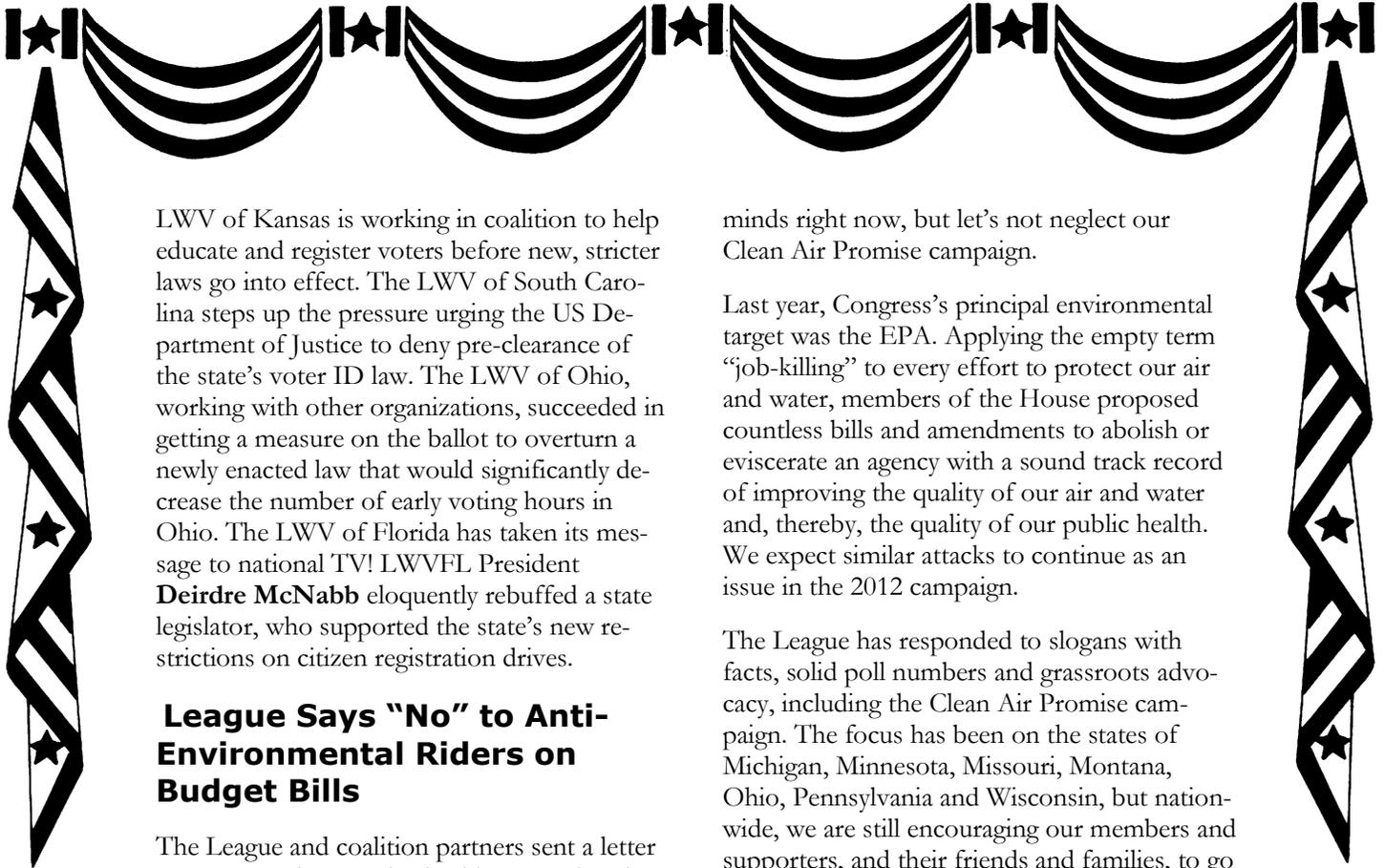
Elections: Voters Depend on the Attorney General for Real Action

Earlier this week, **U.S. Attorney General Holder** traveled to the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library & Museum in Texas to address the growing momentum behind anti-voter laws. In its statement, the League applauded Holder's speech, but expressed disappointment in the Department of Justice's record on voting rights enforcement. The League called on the DOJ to act more forcefully and without delay to ensure fair elections in 2012.

Elections: LWV Fights Voter Suppression Laws – Multiple Fronts in Multiple Ways

As voter suppression laws sweep the nation, the League is fighting back in a variety of ways. The

News From National and State



LWV of Kansas is working in coalition to help educate and register voters before new, stricter laws go into effect. The LWV of South Carolina steps up the pressure urging the US Department of Justice to deny pre-clearance of the state's voter ID law. The LWV of Ohio, working with other organizations, succeeded in getting a measure on the ballot to overturn a newly enacted law that would significantly decrease the number of early voting hours in Ohio. The LWV of Florida has taken its message to national TV! LWVFL President **Deirdre McNabb** eloquently rebuffed a state legislator, who supported the state's new restrictions on citizen registration drives.

League Says "No" to Anti-Environmental Riders on Budget Bills

The League and coalition partners sent a letter to Senate and House leadership, opposing the attachment of any anti-environmental riders to the spending and tax bills that Congress is trying to get done before the end of the year.

Obama/Jackson Mercury Rule is a Big Win for Public Health

On December 21, the Environmental Protection Agency released an historic rule regarding the emission of mercury and air toxic standards at power plants. The League applauded the efforts of the Obama Administration with a statement from **Elisabeth McNamara** and a joint statement with leading public health and environmental groups.

Clean Air Promise Campaign (from LWVUS President, Elisabeth MacNamara)

Happy New Year! I hope you are energized and ready to tackle the work ahead of us in 2012. Of course, the presidential elections and all our voter service work are uppermost in our

minds right now, but let's not neglect our Clean Air Promise campaign.

Last year, Congress's principal environmental target was the EPA. Applying the empty term "job-killing" to every effort to protect our air and water, members of the House proposed countless bills and amendments to abolish or eviscerate an agency with a sound track record of improving the quality of our air and water and, thereby, the quality of our public health. We expect similar attacks to continue as an issue in the 2012 campaign.

The League has responded to slogans with facts, solid poll numbers and grassroots advocacy, including the Clean Air Promise campaign. The focus has been on the states of Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, but nationwide, we are still encouraging our members and supporters, and their friends and families, to go to our website and make the promise. While we depend on our elected officials at the federal level to protect the public health by ensuring that we have clean air, the Promise is most effective when used as a means to demonstrate public support for the Clean Air Act. This legislation has been and will continue to be successful in its public health benefits if the EPA is allowed to do its job.

So as we start off the New Year, let's all resolve to take this opportunity to make the Promise and send a message to our representatives in Washington: Don't mess with the Clean Air Act; don't mess with the EPA!

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by Design**

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Redistricting Study

By Paula Manley

The League of Women Voters of Michigan is embarking on a study of the redistricting process in our state. If you have an interest in the redistricting process – how district lines are currently drawn, what problems could arise and what other procedures might be possible – then you have an opportunity to join our local League’s Study Committee. Although the lines have been drawn for the next ten years, now is the time to look at the process for future consideration.

The State Study Committee will be sending study materials in the near future and the consensus questions will be due June 1. This is a short term project involving reading materials and several meetings. Please contact **Paula Manley** at pimanley@hotmail.com or phone 345-7623 to join the Study Committee.

LWVUS Education Study

By Denise Hartsough

On November 9, 2011, LWVKA members gathered for a consensus meeting on the “Role of the Federal Government in Education.” With written input from two members, eight members discussed the 15 questions from the national office. Consensus questions focused on a) common core standards and assessment, and b) funding and equity, including funding for special education and early childhood education. The planning team consisted of **Kay Anderson, Denise Hartsough, Paula Manley** and **Carol Payne Smith**. The national office is compiling responses from local Leagues and will release a position paper in March.

**With two jobs and hard work
Some struggle each day
Earned income tax credits
Are part of their pay.**