

***EMPOWERING VOTERS
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY***



THE CAPITOL VOTER

***AUGUST
2021***

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LWVLA CALENDAR

Thursday, August 26, 5:30-7:30 pm. Equality Day, 101st Anniversary of the 19th Amendment, at the North Pavilion, Valhalla Park in Holt. See article below.

August 14-21, "Women's Suffrage and the Ongoing Quest for Equality" quilt exhibit, Bestsellers Bookstore in Mason.

Tuesday, September 14, 10-11:30 am. - Book Discussion Group - Zoom meeting to discuss *Firekeeper's Daughter*, by Angeline Boulley. See article below.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Donna Mullins



Have you ever wondered if all the work League members do really makes a difference? In June I received an email asking if we intended on holding a forum for the Lansing Mayoral Primary. I explained that FOX 47 had one, that we posted candidate forums with city council candidates on YouTube, and where he could find the voter guide. He sent a follow-up note after the election:

"I obtained a hard copy of the League's Lansing Voter Guide at a local restaurant. After reviewing it I tentatively decided my votes for the At-large Council seats. However, I later watched the League's entire video forum and that changed my vote. It was so

much more helpful to see how a candidate responds to questions, expresses herself, and has the personality to fit into the city council.

I thought the League's forum was very well done and handled in a fair manner. The League should be complimented for their commitment to integrity and a nonpartisan approach. In these polarized times, it is great to see a traditional expression of what makes our democracy great. Please continue this work."

Who deserves the credit for this? All of you. Even if your membership fee is the most you contribute, you support the work of the League. All the volunteers with Voter Services--nearly half of our membership--deserve a shout out. The advocacy groups who keep our name in public view enhance our reputation. A state and national League that ooze integrity make it clear that we are ready and *able* to protect democracy. Every contribution to this effort counts, and every success is yours.

So, it is appropriate that we celebrate 101 years of service to the principles of this country. Women's Equality Day is August 26 and the Centennial Committee has planned an event to honor it and you. Details on the celebration can be found in this newsletter, on Facebook and on our website. (And don't worry, we are keeping a close watch on the Delta variant and will follow best practices as recommended by the health department.)

Even though we have plenty to celebrate, we have plenty of work to do. There are plans to suppress voting in Michigan. We will relentlessly oppose those plans with every fiber of our bodies. That's what our members expect us to do. That's why we are here. That's who we are.

Together,

Donna

VOTING ISSUES

Donna Mullins, President

Legislation which could suppress voting has been submitted in Michigan. The situation is fluid but being followed by the state League; our own Judy Karandjeff leads the LWVMI response. Additionally, the League is very involved in redistricting. The state League is in nearly daily contact with the Michigan Independent Citizen's Redistricting Committee (MICRC). Our local league has provided support at hearings, sponsored townhalls and has been asked to speak about redistricting at a number of events in the community. The following summarizes what is happening as of this writing. You can find up-to-date information on the [state website](#). [Information on the MICRC](#) is also available. While everything is fluid, however, the League is diligently following every bend it takes and taking stands when need be. Be sure to read any emails you receive from us or the state as you may be asked to take action.



Here is a concise summary of the legislation from the state:

Thirty-nine bills were introduced in the Michigan State Senate on March 24, 2021, most of which are measures that restrict voter rights and suppress eligible citizens from voting. Christina Schlitt, President of the League, has issued a statement saying, "The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy and something that state lawmakers should be working to protect instead of attack. The bills that have been announced today are antithetical to fair elections and violate the clear will of Michigan voters who participated in record numbers in 2020."

To learn more, [click here](#) to see an explanation of the 39 bills plus a chart that details what each bill wants to accomplish and the League's position on each. Read the League's [press release in response to the passage of SB 285, 303 and 304](#) in the Senate on June 16. These bills make unreasonable and unnecessary changes to the existing voter ID laws in Michigan. And watch a [June 28, 2021 conference](#) concerning the Anti-Voter Legislation in Michigan, featuring Voting Rights Attorney Sharon Dolente and LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase-Solomon.



WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY
101st Birthday of the 19th Amendment

Thursday, August 26, 2021
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
North Pavilion, Valhalla Park, Holt
(4000 Keller Rd.)

You're invited to the **COMMUNITY CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY!** The celebratory event is scheduled for August 26, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the North Pavilion, Valhalla Park in Holt. Bring your own food and chairs to picnic (picnic tables are also available).

- Listen to the Lansing folk music duo **Mori and Mama Music**.
- Join in the singing led by Ten Pound Fiddle's **Sally Potter - Singer / Songleader**.
- Honor the 2020 "Celebrate 100 Years of Women's Suffrage...VOTE!" high school poster contest winners **Claire Daniels, Bella Spagnuolo and Jasmine Hernandez**.
- Michigan author **Debbie Diesen** (*The Pout-Pout Fish*) will be there with her children's book, *Equality's Call*.
- **Divas**, a quilt group, will exhibit Era II, an artwork highlighting the 19th amendment.

There's also a raffle, photo booth and other fun activities! And we'll end the evening with birthday cake!

The formal part of the celebration will begin at 6:00 p.m. LWVLA member **Kate O'Neill** will tell the story of her mother, a suffragist. **Jillian Reese**, Curator of Exhibits from the Michigan History Center, will discuss an exhibition opening soon on the history of voting rights in Michigan. She'll highlight the diversity of the Michigan suffragist movement and the work of African American activist **Lottie Wilson**. **Judith Ann Karandjeff**, Advocacy Chair of the League of Women Voters of Michigan, will provide a brief update on the Supreme Court's recent decision on voting and new legislation.

In 1971, Congress established "Women's Equality Day" to honor the 1920 certification of the 19th Amendment, granting many women in the U.S. the right to vote. The observance of Equality Day not only commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment but also calls attention to women's continuing efforts toward full equality and universal suffrage.

Please invite your family, neighbors, and friends as we celebrate the past and gear up for the future with this community celebration! If you have questions, please contact [Laura Smith](#) (812-369-9701). Valhalla Park is at 4000 Keller Road in Holt.



**MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO REGISTER VOTERS
THIS SUMMER AND FALL!**
Joanne Winkelman, Voter Service Director

The Lansing City Clerk's Office is coordinating voter registration drives. Below are the events where they are seeking volunteers for 2-hour shifts. If you are interested, contact [Shara Washington](#) directly in the Clerk's Office.

Although Shara is coordinating these events and you will receive confirmation from her along with any further information, please copy me on your offer to assist so we know how many League members volunteered. The Clerk's Office has sent this information to other organizations as well.

If you are new to registering or feel you need a refresher, feel free to [contact me](#) and I can run you through the process. It will only take a few minutes.

Lansing Community College Welcome Week – Outdoors on Washington Mall
Thursday, August 19, 10 am – 2 pm

Monday, August 23, 10 am – 2 pm
Tuesday, August 24, 10 am – 2 pm
Wednesday, August 25, 10 am – 2 pm

Eastside Summer Fest - Outdoors – Fairview/ Michigan Ave (Road Closed)

Friday, August 27, 4 - 8 pm
Saturday, August 28, 10 am - 8 pm

Lansing Community College Main Campus - Outdoors

Monday, September 27, 9 am – 4 pm
Tuesday, September 28, 9 am - 4 pm (National Voter Registration Day)
Wednesday, September 29, 9 am – 4 pm

Thank you for volunteering!



OBSERVER CORPS
Valerie Lafferty, Chair

In June, the LWVLA Observer Corps (OC) met outdoors for an enjoyable and lively discussion about their observed city, county, school district and regional groups and about being an observer. In July we joined LWV Washtenaw County OC to share our experiences and talk about what's next. Most notable was the beginning of an important conversation for the OC about federal money that has been or will be authorized to come into our area through the state, counties, cities, etc. There should be transparent discussions of where the money will be spent and how much. To that end, the OCs of Lansing Area and Washtenaw County LWV are planning a joint educational webinar to help our OC members better understand the flow of money from federal to state to local and report on the transparency of local government and the accountability of its elected officials.



The OC is doing important and interesting work—and we could use more volunteers! Please reach out to [me](#), [Donna Mullins](#), [Cele Friestater](#) or [Beth Moore](#) with your questions or to sign up. It's a great way to contribute to the mission of the League by volunteering a few hours a month. For a better understanding of what we do, read the [Observer Corps Summary](#) for July.

Valerie Lafferty
517-349-6660

REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED ANTI-VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Melinda Frame, Co-Chair, Public Health and Safety Committee

The rise in gun violence within the Lansing area this year has become an increasing threat to the public's health and safety. As of July 31, 15 people within the city of Lansing have been shot and killed. If this trend continues, Lansing is on pace to exceed last year's record of 21 homicides, the highest number of annual homicides within Lansing in at least 30 years (Kyle Kaminski, *City Pulse*, July 31, 2021).

To help curb the escalating gun violence and deaths within the city, Lansing officials are taking several steps to address gun violence, including investigating community-based anti-violence programs as an addition to traditional policing methods.

One such program is Advance Peace, an intensive anti-violence program that is geared towards breaking the cycle of gun violence within a community. The program focuses on neighborhoods where there is a high concentration of gun violence and works to identify individuals within the neighborhood who are known to have either committed violent crimes or are at risk of becoming victims of a violent crime. Mentors within the Advance Peace program then work intensively with these individuals, providing them mentorship, job training and education and connecting them with local job opportunities and social services. The Advance Peace program, founded by Eastern High School graduate DeVone Boggan, has been used in several cities throughout the United States and targets a 50 percent or more reduction in firearm assaults within a community during the 3-year program (Craig Lyons, *Lansing State Journal*, March 9, 2021).

Advance Peace would be a new initiative for the Lansing area. The program was initially presented last year to the Lansing City Council and has broad support from several Lansing agencies including the Ingham County Health Department, the Ingham County Board of Commissioners, the Lansing City Council, Mayor Andy Schor, and Ingham County Prosecutor Carol Siemon. A large portion of the estimated \$1.95 million that will be needed to operate the program over the next 3 years has been identified in a joint effort by Ingham County and the City of Lansing, with the remainder of the funding being requested through House Bill 5174, recently introduced by State Rep. Kara Hope (D-Holt). Although the final details for the initiative are still being worked out, local officials hope to have the program launched within the Lansing area by mid-October.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP
Donna Mullins

We'll be covering *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley in September. "This novel is a character-driven crime thriller packed with Ojibwe culture and high-stakes tension with themes of identity, trust, and resilience. The journey of 18-year-old Daunis Fontaine is told in four parts overlaid by the four directions of Ojibwe medicine wheel teachings. Native cultural aspects, such as the central role of Elders in tribal life, the special relationship between aunts and nieces, and decentering of the individual in favor of the tribe are included, as are some darker aspects of life including drugs, violence, and sexual assault...Characters are fleshed out, relatable, and believable, and Daunis's journey to become a strong Ojibwe woman is compelling" (*School Library Journal*).



This is a Young Adult book, so not as dense as some of our recent reading, but our group thought that a fiction thriller might be fun and stimulating. It's going to be a Netflix movie soon from the Obamas' production company! Easy to get, as it's a bestseller.

For October we chose *Second Shift: The Inside Story of the Keep GM Movement*, written by local authors about Lansing's successful effort to keep GM alive in the city. It's available [here](#) as well as online at Amazon; used copies abound. There's a good chance we can get an author or two to join our discussion.

Please send recommendations for future books to [Donna Mullins](#). You're welcome to join the discussion even if you haven't read the book. Please contact Donna Mullins if you would like to get the email information about the meetings.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND DECIDING OUR FUTURE

Ellen Link, EAG Co-chair

Most people are probably aware that the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) recently issued its [sixth assessment](#) of the global effects of climate change. The picture it paints is a dire one and deserving of everyone's attention. Among its findings:

- *It is unequivocal* that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land.
- Human influence has warmed the climate at a rate that is unprecedented in at least the last 2000 years.
- In 2019, atmospheric CO₂ concentrations were higher than at any time in at least 2 million years.
- Global surface temperature has increased faster since 1970 than in any other 50-year period over at least the last 2,000 years.

- Evidence of observed changes in extremes such as heatwaves, heavy precipitation, droughts, and tropical cyclones, and, in particular, their attribution to human influence, has strengthened since AR5 (Assessment Report 5). *All regions of the globe* are expected to be negatively impacted.

This fall the 2021 [United Nations Climate Change Conference](#), also known as COP26, is scheduled to be held in the city of Glasgow, Scotland. It is hoped that the attending nations will all agree and commit to “secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach;” “adapt to protect communities and natural habitats;” “protect and restore ecosystems;” and “accelerate action to tackle the climate crisis through collaboration between governments, businesses and civil society.”



That’s where each of us comes in. First, contact your legislators to voice your support for the goals of the conference. Next, have faith in the potential for individual actions—your own and those of each of the billions of people worldwide—to stem the tide of environmental destruction. In support of that transformation, the Environmental Advocacy Group (EAG) plans to hold a forum this fall designed to inform and guide each of us on what we can do. Tentatively titled “Making Informed Energy

Decisions,” it will expand on the [Citizens Climate Commitment](#) we told you about in the June CV. So stay tuned and, as they say around here, Go Green.

ONE THING

Rather than rely on air conditioning 24/7, close up your house early in the day to retain the cooler air. That way you won’t need to use the AC until later in the afternoon.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Marie Wicks, East Lansing
Leslie Watson, Grand Ledge

Total membership as of August 1: 206

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK
All committees would welcome new members. Contact the chairs for more information.

VOTER SERVICE: Contact [Joanne Winkelman](#).

K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Contact [Bettie Menchik](#).

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY/GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE:
Contact [Marty Couretas](#) or [Melinda Frame](#).

ENVIRONMENT ADVOCACY GROUP: Contact [Ellen Link](#) or [Elaine Fischhoff](#).