



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTHEAST MICHIGAN

NEWSLETTER

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Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

CAN WE CALL FORTH OUR BETTER ANGELS AND TREAT THOSE WHO HAVE DIFFERENT VIEWS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT?

As Americans, we are hungry for a respectful tone in our politics and public life. Many people of faith believe we can overcome our bitter divisions by following the ethical principle we call the Golden Rule: “do unto others as you want them to do unto you.” Easier said than done, but we’ve all experienced the power of the Golden Rule when we’ve practiced it in our own lives. It is both a spiritual practice and a practical strategy which can help create breakthroughs between individuals and groups. Golden Rule 2020 is a call for Americans to accept the challenge of applying this principle to our political discussions and activities in the coming election year.

The site is GoldenRule2020.org

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.

2019-2020 Board

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Mission Statement:

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 14, Friday, 1:00 to 3:00pm - Women Power the Vote Day of Action. Join us at Alpena County Library, second floor conference room, for an open house celebrating 100 years of the League of Women Voters and of women having the vote. This event is in conjunction with hundreds of Leagues across the nation celebrating women’s activism and the vote.

February 19, Wednesday, 7pm - Census Forum in conjunction with A.L.L., at the Alpena Library, second floor conference room, 211 N. 1st St.

February 21, Friday, Noon - Lunch Bunch at Hunan Chinese Restaurant, 1283 M-32, Alpena

March 12, Thursday, 1:30pm - A.L.L. event: PFAs Presentation. The PFSJ Environmental Committee will present to A.L.L. at the Madeline Briggs Room, Alpena Community College. Open to the public.

March 20, Friday, 11am - Book Club before Lunch Bunch, at The Nucleus at Fresh Palate. Book will be “Hillbilly Elegy,” by J.D. Vance.

March 20, Friday, Noon - Lunch Bunch at The Nucleus at Fresh Palate, 109 N 2nd Ave, Alpena

Power the Vote

February 14... Happy Valentines Day! Don't you just love having the vote? Please celebrate the day with the League of Women Voters of Northeast Michigan.

On February 14 the League will be hosting an open house at the Alpena County Library from 1:00 until 3:00 pm. We are joining leagues from across the country for this National Day of Action, on the 100th birthday of the League of Women Voters.

We will have information available on the Census, on Voting Rights, and on the Redistricting Commission being formed for legislative districts.

In addition, we will have absentee voter applications, voter registration applications, and post cards to send to state or national legislators. Look over the collection of books from the Alpena Library on women's issues and history gathered together for us by Jessica Luther. If you have an Alpena Library card, you may check out some of the books.

This is our part in joining over 750 communities across the United States to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters. For 100 years, the League of Women Voters has informed voters, advocated in legislatures, and worked to encourage active participation in elections. The League is non-partisan, and neither supports nor opposes candidates. Membership is open to both men and women.

Help us commemorate passage of the 19th Amendment.

CENSUS FORUM

Our League is partnering with the Association of Lifelong Learners (ALL) for a presentation of Census information on Wednesday, February 19, at 7 p.m. at the Alpena County Library, Second Floor Conference Room. Join Tim Kuehnlein, Alpena Community College Instructor and Patrick Heraghty, Exec. Director of the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan for an explanation of why the census is so important to our community. This meeting is free and open to the public, so invite your friends.

PFAS: WHAT ARE THEY?

PFAS are man-made chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products worldwide since the 1950's. A lot of PFAS have been used in fire-fighting foams. Learn what they are, where they are and what citizens can do. The People for Social Justice (PFSJ) Environmental Committee has been studying these substances and will report on PFAS contamination and containment within the Alpena area. This presentation is open to the public, and will be held in the M. Briggs Center, at ACC from 1:30-2:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 12.

Making Democracy Work

The League of Women Voters of Northeast Michigan held a “Making Democracy Work” presentation at Alpena Community College on January 29, 2020.

The Presentation focused on three important topics: 1) New Voting Rights. 2) Redistricting. 3) 2020 Census.

New voting rights were enacted as a result of Ballot Proposal 3 being overwhelmingly supported by Michigan voters in November of 2018. Before 2018, Michigan had some of the most restrictive registration and absentee voting policies in the country. Now, Michigan has put into place on-line voter registration, the ability for citizens to register up to (and including) election day, and no-reason absentee voting

Redistricting take place after the 2020 Census. Because of Ballot Proposal 2 being passed in 2018, legislative districts will now be chosen by a state-wide citizens’ redistricting committee. Previously, the districts were designated by politicians. Michigan, by 2018, had become one of the most gerrymandered states in the nation. The new process will be more open, and fair. The process of selecting a redistricting committee has already begun through Michigan’s Secretary of State. The new commission will contain thirteen members (four Republicans, four Democrats, and five who are neither Republican nor Democrat). Applications are available on-line through the State of Michigan Secretary of State Website.

Finally, the program gave a brief overview of the 2020 Census. Voting Districts, as well as billions of dollars are at stake. In addition, local governments, schools, and businesses use census data for planning for the future.

Another bonus for our evening presentation was that two young people, who were not registered to vote, took home voter registration forms. It’s always a good time to register citizens to vote!

For more census information, the LWVNM is partnering with the Association of Lifelong Learners (ALL) for a more detailed presentation. Tim Kuehnlein, Alpena Community College Instructor, and Patrick Heraghty, Executive Director of the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan, will be presenters on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at 7:00 pm at the Alpena County Library. Come and see how you can help insure an accurate count for our communities. We all win when everyone is counted!

LWV OBSERVER CORPS

We need some volunteers to be part of our League Observer Corps.

An observer goes to a township or city meeting and observes, no need to make a statement. But why?

The first reason for observing public meetings is to watch their general operations. What issues are being discussed and how is the meeting being conducted? Does the agency comply with the open meeting laws?

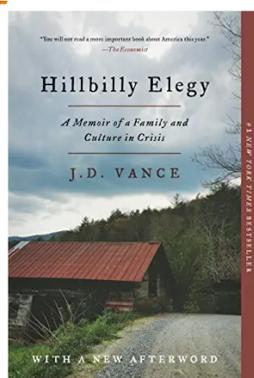
The second reason for observing public meetings is to watch for issues on which the League should be taking action - speaking out. If an item that is being discussed is related to one of our Leagues positions, then include that in your report. We'll look into it and see whether it's something that the League should be speaking out on.

Finally, and maybe most importantly, observing makes a statement that the community is watching the process of government. The League observer is the representative of the public at these meetings.

If you would like to volunteer to attend any of the many township meetings in our 3 county area, please contact Vernie Nethercut (gvnethercut5@charter.com).

If you don't have enough time for this, would you volunteer to read the minutes of the meetings? Just reading the meeting minutes might show up some issues that the League could be interested in.

BOOK CLUB



We are reading "Hillbilly Elegy," by J. D. Vance, for our discussion at The Nucleus (in The Fresh Palate) on Friday, March 20, at 11 am, before Lunch Bunch at noon.

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER, NAMED BY THE TIMES AS ONE OF "6 BOOKS TO HELP UNDERSTAND TRUMP'S WIN" AND SOON TO BE A MAJOR-MOTION PICTURE DIRECTED BY RON HOWARD

"You will not read a more important book about America this year."—The Economist

Take Action for Equal Rights

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE TODAY

On January 27th, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)– crossing the three-fourths threshold of support required of states for this amendment to become enshrined into law.

But there is more to do to get this across the finish line. Reach out to your Representative now and urge them to support legislation to remove the ERA's ratification deadline.

When the ERA passed Congress in 1972, lawmakers attached a 1977 ratification deadline to it, which they later extended to 1982. Legislation introduced by Congresswoman Jackie Speier will remove the deadline and the final obstacle to accepting the ERA as part of the U.S. Constitution. This legislation is moving to the floor of the U.S. House for a final vote next week.

The League has worked for decades to pass the ERA and now is the time for it to become a permanent part of the U.S. Constitution; there is no time limit on equality. This is our moment and the perfect way to celebrate the 100th anniversary of women earning the right to vote. It is time for Congress to remove the ERA deadline and make this amendment a reality!

Despite the significant legal and legislative advances that have been made in recent decades, women continue to face discrimination on the basis of sex. The symptoms of this systemic discrimination are clear in the ongoing fights against unequal pay, workplace harassment, pregnancy discrimination, domestic violence, and limited access to comprehensive healthcare. It is not enough to treat the symptoms; we must address the root cause of inequality by amending the Constitution.

As a country we are on the cusp of a victory for this long-awaited amendment. Congress must do the work to eliminate the timeline, so that the amendment can go into effect immediately.

TAKE ACTION HERE: [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/W73BAZT](https://tinyurl.com/w73BAZT)