



## Meet your Board Members

Caucuses, Primaries! Supreme Court Nominee! Flint Michigan! So many attending-grabbing headlines this past month. With the field of Presidential candidates narrowing down, it's easier to follow the debates and to expect more of the remaining candidates. Still a long way to go, but definitely time to pay closer attention to what the candidates say and to hold them accountable for those statements.

You'll notice a new photo below. Most of you are familiar with our board members; but we've welcomed some new members since last fall, and I want to be sure you recognize them next time you see them. The three shown here are (l to r): Karen Ristau, Secretary; Better Pierman, our Environment chair; and Donna Dutton, Membership. Will "introduce" more next month.

Please be sure to read the articles that follow by Barb Lackner reporting on voting matters and the information provided by Bette Pierman on environmental issues.

Stay tuned - membership activities are being planned!

Chris



## Voter Registration Activities

Since being elected to the Voter Services Chair of the League of Women Voters of Cass and Berrien Counties, we have had several highly successful voter registration drives. The first one was September 22, 2015 at Lake Michigan College where we registered almost 200 students! We were enthusiastically received and college officials asked us to come back as often as we wanted. When I called League members they were more than happy to volunteer their time and Melissa Clapper, Betty Pierman, Marilyn Klawiter, Sue Petterson and I did shifts for the first event.

Since the first of the year we've had two registration drives....one at Southwestern Michigan College and another one at Lake Michigan College. Dr. David Fleming at Southwestern Michigan College reached out to us and

### LWVBCC: Contact Us

#### Our new mailing address!

P.O. Box 1032  
Niles, MI 49120

[lwbcc.org](http://lwbcc.org)



### Calendar

March 15, 2015 (Tue) 1:00pm  
Board Meeting.

April 11, 2016 (Mon) 10am.  
Book Club meeting at Lorraine  
Stepaneks home. 16695 White  
Oak Lane, New Buffalo.

### LWVBCC Board of Directors

Chris Zilke President  
John Ripley Treasurer  
Karen Ristau Secretary  
Donna Dutton Membership  
Barb Lackner Voter Service  
Bette Pierman Environment  
Liz Ennis Education  
Melissa Clapper At Large  
Karen Ristau At Large  
Marilyn Klawiter At Large  
Webmaster Mike McCaffrey

#### Board Meeting/Minutes

Board Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of most months. Members are encouraged to attend. The next meeting is March, 15 (Tue) at 1:00 pm at the Lakewood Estates Community Center, 8000 Warren Woods Rd, Three Oaks.

asked us to come....a very positive sign, signaling how important voting is and the fact that officials and administrators in colleges, universities, schools and libraries look to the League to fulfill that role. The students at both campuses were delighted to see us. We interacted with a great number of them and they wanted to know about voting, the process, what it means, when they would get their notification, and where they should go to vote. More importantly, they were engaged in the importance of voting, what the issues were and how they would affect them. They asked pertinent questions, and we told them of various web sites they could access to get more information....

On October 10,2016, we co-sponsored a mayoral debate in Benton Harbor with the local NAACP. It was a huge success! We had over 100 residents in attendance, and all of them spoke positively about the forum, the fairness of the questions, and the work and attention to detail that was given to the debate. Charles Jennings was our contact person at the NAACP, and I was impressed with his knowledge, commitment to Benton Harbor, and his passion concerning the issues that face that community. If we can interface with young people with those ideals, we're in good hands!

Lastly, we League volunteers had fun!! We got to know each other better, shared our feelings and concerns about what is facing us today, and what we can do to make it better and help our community. The League is a great place to volunteer and make a difference!

-Barb Lackner

## "Are You Aware" Environmental News

From LuAnne Kozma and the Committee to Ban Michigan Fracking:

MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED in time for the March 8 presidential primary. Can you spare a few hours of your time that day to help circulate petitions? You must be a US citizen and 18 years old or older to circulate a petition in Michigan to ban fracking. Sign up now at <http://www.letsbanfracking.org/index.php/volunteer>

## From the Alliance for the Great Lakes

"The Great Lakes face the first test of a critical accord put in place to protect their waters. The city of Waukesha, Wis., - located in the Mississippi River Basin - has proposed a plan to divert water from Lake Michigan for its own use. The Great Lakes Compact, supported by all eight Great Lakes states and signed into law in 2008 to protect the Great Lakes from large-scale diversions of water, was created for scenarios like this. The compact allows any of the eight Great Lakes states to reject a diversion request. Every Great Lakes state has a voice - and a stake - in this decision. A diversion must be a last resort. But the city's request fails to meet this standard." You can take action here <https://secure3.convio.net/agl/site/Advocacy.jsessionid=5B6AA37B3C6F49B577EEA9454333FA94.app317b?pagename=homepage&page=UserAction&id=275&autologin=true>

Powerful Stop the Great Lakes Nuclear Dump video just out--please email Canada's Prime &

Minutes are posted after they are approved by the Board.

[January, 15, 2016](#)

[November, 17, 2015](#)

[October 20, 2015](#)

[September 15, 2015](#)

[August 18, 2015](#)

[July 21, 2015](#)

[May 20, 2015](#)

[April 21, 2015](#)

### Quick Links

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### A Woman's World?

Approximately 34% more women than men are graduating from college.

Encourage membership in LWVBCC!

## Environment Ministers!

Stop the Great Lakes Nuclear Dump is very excited to release its powerful new video. (It's only three minutes long!) Urge them to cancel Ontario Power Generation's proposed radioactive waste dump targeted at the Great Lakes shore, which would threaten the drinking water supply for 40 million people in eight U.S. states, two Canadian provinces, and a large number of Native American First Nations. Please share this video and action alert widely. And there's still time to sign their petition if you haven't already, and to spread the word about it.

## Do you have a right to know what is in your food?

The fight to label GMO food continues. Last year the House passed a bill to block states from labeling GMOs, and now there's an effort in the Senate to follow suit. Why is Congress trying to take away the right to know what's in our food? "The only thing these lawmakers seem to favor consistently is protecting corporate interests," says the New York Times.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/25/opinion/a-bad-effort-in-congress-to-thwart-states-on-food-labels.html?ref=todayspaper&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/25/opinion/a-bad-effort-in-congress-to-thwart-states-on-food-labels.html?ref=todayspaper&_r=1)

## LWVBCC Book Club

Check last month's newsletter for the list of books chosen to be read.

Lorraine Stepanek has graciously agreed to host the book club meeting on April 11, 2016, at 10 a.m. Her address is 16695 White Oak Lane, New Buffalo. A call to let her know you plan to attend will help her to plan refreshments.

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Be sure to like us!

## League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region

[League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region](#)

Learn how saving on homeowners starts in your garage.



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## The League: A Valuable Resource in Our Communities



**Helping to Make Democracy Work**

**Interested in joining the League? Go to our [website](#) or  
contact our Membership Chair [Donna Dutton](#)**