



## Presidents Newsletter

The presentation this past Friday evening, dedicated to learning more about the appointment process of U.S. Supreme Court justices, was as informative and enjoyable as had been expected. If you missed it, go to our website and view the video.

I attended a workshop in Lansing this past Saturday presented by LWVMI. The topic: Defending Democracy by Making Democracy Work. Gretchen Whitmer, former Michigan Senate Democratic Leader, was one of the speakers. One of the many startling statistics she pointed out is that when she initially was elected to the Senate, there were twelve women senators. Today there are only four (4!).

I googled "women legislators by state" in the U.S. According to 2013 data, women represented 18.9% of Michigan's legislators. Colorado had the greatest representation at 41% and in only 2 other states did women represent more than 35%! It has been documented again and again that having women in the top echelon of large corporations makes those businesses a better place to work and results in better profits for said business.

Having more women representing us in Washington would, I believe, likewise make life in the U.S. more fair, more equitable, more successful for millions of people. Please support women candidates in this election cycle.

Chris



Chris Zilke and Vina Mikesell promoting LWVLMR in Lansing.

## LWVBCC: Contact Us

P.O. Box 1032  
Niles, MI 49120

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



## Calendar

May, 17 (Tue) at 1:00 pm. Board Meeting at the Lakewood Estates Community Center, 8000 Warren Woods Rd, Three Oaks.

June 23rd (Thur) Annual General Meeting & Dinner  
Pebblewood Golf & Banquet Hall.  
9794 Jericho Rd. Bridgman, MI.

July 11th (Mon) Book Club Meeting at Chris Zilkes' house.  
10726 Red Arrow Highway,  
Bridgman.

## 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 Advocacy  
Marilyn Klawiter At Large

Webmaster Mike McCaffrey

## Board Meeting/Minutes

Board Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of most months.

## ABSENTEE VOTING

Absent voter ballots are available for all elections. They provide voters with a convenient method for studying and casting a ballot when they are unable to attend the polls on Election Day.

### As a registered voter, you may obtain an absent voter ballot if you are:

- age 60 years old or older
- unable to vote without assistance at the polls
- expecting to be out of town on election day
- in jail awaiting arraignment or trial
- unable to attend the polls due to religious reasons
- appointed to work as an election inspector in a precinct outside of your precinct of residence.

A first-time voter or a person who registers to vote by mail must vote in person in the first election in which he or she participates. The restriction does not apply to overseas voters, voters who are disabled or voters who are 60 years of age or older. (Voting in person on one governmental level clears the restriction on the other levels.)

**Your request** for an absent voter ballot must be in writing and can be submitted to your city or township clerk (where you are registered to vote). You may also download a copy of the APPLICATION by going to: [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).

Your request must include **one** of the six statutory reasons stated above and your signature. You must request an absent voter ballot by mailing the application, large print application, a letter, a postcard, or a pre-printed application form obtained from your local clerk's office.

**Requests to have an absent voter ballot mailed to you must be received by your local clerk no later than 2 p.m. the Saturday before the election.** Absent voter ballots may be issued to you at your home address or any address outside of your city or township of residence.

After receiving your absent voter ballot, you have until 8 p.m. on election day to complete the ballot and return it to YOUR local clerk's office. Your ballot will not be counted unless your signature is on the return envelope and matches your signature on file.

If you received assistance voting the ballot, then the signature of the person who helped you must also be on the return envelope. Only you, a family member or person residing in your household, a mail carrier, or election official are authorized to deliver your signed absent voter ballot to your clerk's office.

If an emergency, such as a sudden illness or family death prevents you from reaching the polls on election day, you may request an emergency absent voter ballot. Requests for an emergency ballot must be submitted after the deadline for regular absent voter ballots has passed but before 4 p.m. on election day. The emergency must have occurred at a time which made it impossible for you to apply for a regular absent voter ballot. **Your local clerk**

Members are encouraged to attend. The next meeting is May, 17 (Tue) at 1:00 pm at the Lakewood Estates Community Center, 8000 Warren Woods Rd, Three Oaks.

Minutes are posted after they are approved by the Board.

[March 15, 2016](#)

[February 15, 2016](#)

[January, 15, 2016](#)

[November, 17, 2015](#)

[October 20, 2015](#)

[September 15, 2015](#)

[August 18, 2015](#)

[July 21, 2015](#)

## Quick Links

- [Consider Membership](#)
- [Membership Form](#)
- [Donate to the League](#)
- [League Information](#)
- [Election Information](#)

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will have more information about emergency absent voter ballots.

Voting is one of the most cherished and fundamental rights in our country. If you are eligible to obtain an absent voter ballot and cannot attend the polls on election day, use of the absent voter ballot is strongly encouraged.

## Annual General Meeting & Dinner

Once again it is time to make plans for our annual general meeting and dinner of the League of Women Voters of Berrien and Cass Counties. Please "save the date," Thursday, June 23, and plan to join friends and other members for this event. This year we will meet at the Pebblewood Golf and Banquet Hall. It is located at 9794 Jericho Rd.in Bridgman, MI

The Annual Meeting provides opportunity for the membership to approve the annual budget, approve new board members, and learn of our yearly plans and goals. This year the board will recognize some individuals who have made a significant contribution to the ongoing success of our league. We will also enjoy an introduction to a recently published book by our fellow member Fred Lighthall. His book,Disastrous High Tech Decision Making, takes a look at the tragic Challenger space mission.

Reservations for the Annual Dinner Meeting will begin on May 16 and end on June 10.

Three dinner entrees will be available: Roasted Pork Tenderloin, Tuscany Chicken, or Vegetable Lasagna. The cost per person is \$28.Reservations can be made by sending a check for number of guests and menu choices directly to treasurer John Ripley at P.O. Box 1032, Niles, MI 49120.

[Click here for a handy RSVP form to print and send to John.](#)

To reserve and pay by credit card online, click on the following choices and give us the names of each person ordering each dish:

For pork, [click here.](#)

For chicken, [click here.](#)

For vegetarian lasagna, [click here.](#)

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON JUNE 23. PLEASE JOIN US

## Keeping Track

We're making an effort to assemble a database of WHEN each of you joined the LWVBCC. If you would kindly either call or e-mail me informing me, to the best of your ability, the date you joined the League, it will be most helpful. It's not necessary to have the exact date, but a year would certainly help our efforts.

Contact me at [269-449-2225](tel:269-449-2225) or [chris\\_zilke@yahoo.com](mailto:chris_zilke@yahoo.com).

## A Woman's World?

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

Encourage member-ship  
in LWVBCC!



Learn how saving on homeowners starts in your garage.

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 Tom Rossman, Agent  
Bus: 269-449-2442 Toll Free: 866-849-3266  
[www.torrossman.net](http://www.torrossman.net)

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Thanks! And thank you for being a member.

## LWVBCC Book Club

Dark Money: The Hidden History Behind the Rise of the Radical Right by Jane Mayer is the next book for discussion by the LWV book group. We will meet at the home of Chris Zilke on Monday, July 11, 2016. This book has been described as the most important political book of the year, and one reviewer has said, "Dark Money is a book that must be read by anyone who cares about the future of American Democracy." At 400+ pages, readers might want to get an early start in order to complete it before the discussion.

As always, a call or an email to Chris will be helpful in planning the refreshments. Her address is 10726 Red Arrow Highway, Bridgman.

## Putting it Together

This newsletter is the composite work of several people each month. Articles come to me -sometimes solicited, sometimes "from the cloud." I edit them, forward them to Mia Doerschner who puts them into a logical order, then sends a draft to me. After my own editing, Mia goes through the process again. If it all looks good, I forward it to two readers: John Ripley and Liz Ennis.

Their ideas on improvements/corrections come back to me for a final look after which time Mia is asked to hit the "send" button and each of you receives your e-mail edition.

I appreciate input and help from all who contribute and especially want to thank Mia for having taken over the assembling and sending functions. This is the 8th month Mia Doerschner has taken care of this important means of communicating with you, our reader.

Thanks, Mia! We'd have a hard time completing the task without you!

## News on Jean Sharp

Our long-time member, Jean Sharp, has reported from Utah, where she's been since February, that she's seeing some improvement in her health and thoroughly enjoyed a gorgeous Spring in Salt Lake City.

We all wish you the best, Jean, and hope to see you back in Harbert before summer is over.

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Visit the LWVBCC Facebook Page.

Be sure to like us!

## League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region

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

**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](#)**