

Save the Date MiARA Biennial Convention Set for April 18, 2018

The Michigan Alliance for Retired Americans (MiARA) will convene its Biennial Convention on April 18, 2018 at UAW Region 1, 27800 George Merrelli Drive, Warren MI 48902.

The convention will feature a full agenda, including speakers, and voting for MiARA officers. Registration will begin at 9 a.m. and the convention will convene at 10 a.m.

Delegates will be briefed on a series of state and federal legislative issues that impact retiree security and standard of living, including reports on MiARA legislative advocacy and political programs, and other important retiree issues.

The Biennial Convention will include a general election for the top five officers of MiARA: President, Executive -Vice President, First Vice - President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Information about how you can register will be included in the February Newsletter.

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MiARA Newsletter Tackled Important Issues in 2017

It's been quite a year. The past twelve months have provided the MiARA editors with an abundance of material on issues important to Michigan retirees. The following list of our top headlines from 2017 highlights the issues we faced last year, the work we did, and the work we must continue in 2018.

January: Women and Their Allies March in Solidarity; Prevailing Wage Laws Under Attack

February: Appointment of Betsy DeVos Comes Under Attack.

March: Women's Month Honors Labor Women; Coalition of Labor Union – A Proud history; Groups to Explore Future Redistricting Issues.

April: Taking a Sober Look at the Next Four Years; Sen. Peters Pushes to Protect Great Lakes.

May: AFSCME President Speaks on First 100 Days; Labor History: Flint Sit-down Strike; AT&T Wireless Workers Strike.

June: UAW Mural Gets New Home.

July: Net Neutrality is at Risk; Beware of Fake Petitions; MiARA Celebrates Birthdays of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

August: Three Dead as White Nationalist Rally Sparks Violence: AFT Leaders Respond on Gary B. vs Snyder Federal Court Case.

September: Thousands of Union Members March in Detroit Labor Day Parade; Workers Aid Hurricane Recovery Efforts.

October: The Janus Case: U.S. Supreme Court May Force "Right to Work" Rules on All Public-Sector Unions; 2018 Social Security COLA Will Not Offset Medicare Part B Premiums.

November: Keystone Pipeline Spill Highlights Concerns for Great Lakes; JFK Remembered;

December: MiARA President Dick Long's End of Year Comments.

Detroit NAACP Head: Donald Trump - How to Make America Hate Again

The following is an excerpt of January 13, 2018 press statement issued by Detroit Branch NAACP President Rev. Dr. Wendell Anthony. The statement can be read in its entirety on their website, www.detroitnaacp.org.

It will take more than a presidential proclamation creating a historic park for Martin Luther King Jr. to bring to an end the divisive, hateful, and racist rants of America's 45th president.

For the president to use the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday as a smoke screen to camouflage his own vicious and vile racism, does a disservice to the one known as the Drum Major for Peace and Justice.

Trump said, in proclaiming the nation's newest park, "Today we celebrate Dr. King, for standing up for the self-evident truth Americans hold so dear; that no matter the color of our skin or the place of our birth, we are all created equal by God. Yet, in his remarks identifying persons from Haiti, El Salvador, and African nations as coming from "shithole countries" only 24 hours earlier, it clearly demonstrates the innate contractions residing deep within the spirit of this president.

Often in the law enforcement community, in order to determine whether or not an individual has a propensity for certain types of behavior, they look for a pattern. In identifying Donald Trump as a racist (one who uses prejudice plus power), the pattern has long been established. Let us review some of his history:

- Donald Trump has been identified in several lawsuits of racial discrimination against blacks concerning his real estate property in the state of New York.
- Trump never apologized for his wrongful attack, calling for a return to the death penalty for black and Latino youth, in the case of the Central Park Five, exonerated

after being accused of assaulting and raping a white woman in 1989.

- Donald Trump is the prodigy of a father who was identified by the New York Times in 1927 for being arrested after a near riot involving the Ku Klux Klan and New York's Police Department.
- Mr. Trump is the originator of the birther movement, spreading the lie that America's president was not born in America, but in Kenya.
- He identifies Muslims with very little distinction, as being "radical Islamic terrorists."
- He views Mexicans as "rapists and murderers."
- Trump has called the judge overseeing the case against Trump University as biased "because he is Mexican."
- Haitians, according to Trump, "all have AIDS."
- Nigerians, according to Trump, "will not want to go back to their huts" after coming to America.
- NFL players taking a knee over police brutality are "sons of bitches."
- Nazi's and KKK members protesting in Charlottesville Virginia, where civil rights activist Heather Heyer was killed are viewed as "good people."
- Puerto Ricans who still do not have adequate power and medical supplies are viewed by the president as "wanting everything done for them," as he made a visit to throw out rolls of paper towels to the victims of Hurricane Maria.

We are forced to help save America from itself. America is better than Donald Trump. Therefore, the people must stand up to him and his policies.

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Detroit NAACP *continued*

If Trump is not impeached for breaking the laws of the nation or violating the duties of his presidency, he must be *un-elected*. The actions of Donald Trump cannot be normalized, excused or condoned. The very survival of our nation is at stake. Therefore, we must all step up in the mid-term elections in 2018.

We must step out in the national elections in 2020. We must mobilize and organize against his policies, standing up against the efforts to return America back to a time when black folks had no rights that white folks had to respect. *Take your souls to the polls and vote like the future of our nation depends upon it, because quite frankly, it does.*

AFSCME Launches Commemoration of King Assassination

On January 15, 2018, we celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by remembering his birthday. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Rev. King's assassination in Memphis, where he had gone to support a strike by 1,300 sanitation employees, represented by Local 1733 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). In June, AFSCME announced a months-long commemoration of the life of Dr. King, Jr., and the 1968 sanitation workers' strike in Memphis.

According to an article in the on-line publication *AFSCME Now* (Clyde Weiss, June 27, 2017), AFSCME President Lee Saunders pledged that the union "will build a movement of dedicated activists who can continue the unfinished work of realizing Dr. King's dream."

Dr. King was assassinated just one day after he delivered his "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech in Memphis.

Soon thereafter, the strikers – known by their iconic sign, "I Am A Man" – won their fight for dignity and respect on the job, an achievement that became an important milestone not only for AFSCME, but for the civil rights movement.

"To truly celebrate his life, to carry his values forward, to keep faith with everything he preached and practiced, we need to do more," Saunders said. "We need more than a commemoration; we need a call to action."



"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." –Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Run for Precinct Delegate in the August Primary

The Precinct Delegate is the smallest unit of government in the country. Both major parties in Michigan have Precinct Delegates. All Precinct Delegates are elected at the August Primary.

Precinct Delegates are elected directly by voters of each local voting precinct to serve as a bridge between voters and their political organization.

More information on the duties of delegates and how to become a delegate will be available in an upcoming newsletter.

Activists March Again to Mark One Year Anniversary of Women's March

Marking the one-year anniversary of last year's massive Women's March, millions of women and their allies once again took to the streets in the U.S. and around the world to protest the policies of Donald Trump and to make sure that their issues were heard.

Marches were held throughout Michigan, including a diverse group of more than 5,000 activists of all races, religions, gender identities and sexual orientations who participated in a January 21st rally on the steps of the Michigan State Capitol.

The theme of this year's Lansing rally was **Power to the Polls**. Participants were encouraged to register potential voters and to run for political office.

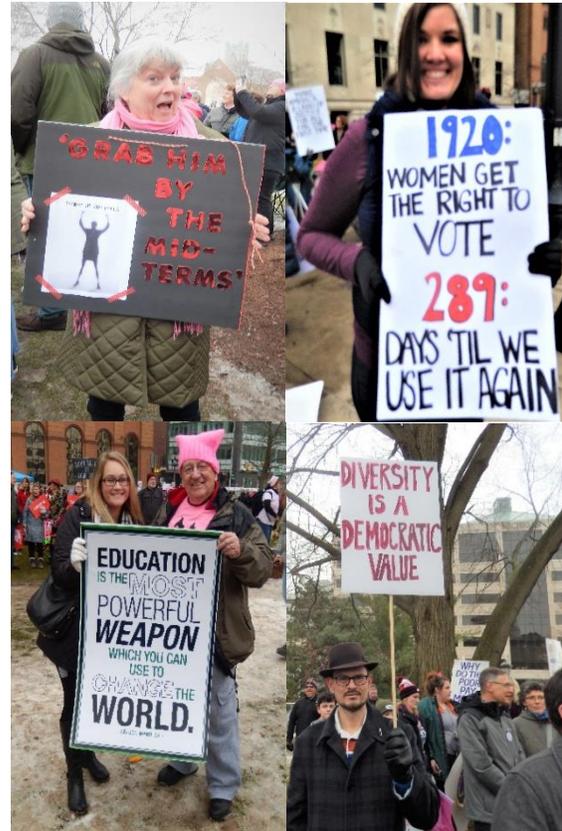
Michigan was just one of many states participating in the weekend's activities. The media reported that well over one million people turned out at 200-plus planned Women's March events, with crowd estimates of more than 200,000 marchers in New York; 600,000 in Los Angeles; 300,000 in Chicago; and tens of thousands in Washington D.C., Philadelphia, Austin, Denver, Seattle, and hundreds of other cities in America and across the world.

The "official" March was held in Las Vegas, drawing tens of thousands. Nevada is a swing state, and organizers hope that the march might build momentum to help bring about future electoral victories in that state.

Cindy Garcia, addressed the Lansing crowd. Her plight has drawn national attention after her husband was deported to Mexico as part of a Trump administration crackdown on undocumented immigrants

Marchers chanted "Hey, hey, ho, ho! Donald Trump has got to go!" and "This is what Democracy looks like." They carried signs with messages like "Rise Up"; "Make America Kind Again"; and, "Grab 'Em by The Ballot Box."

Below are some photos of signs held up by marchers at the Lansing rally.



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