

# MiARA Newsletter

March 2017

## MiARA Membership Meeting Keynote Highlights Threats to Senior Health Plans

More than one hundred MiARA members and activists turned out for the general membership meeting on Thursday, March 9, 2017 to hear speakers and gear up for the fight ahead.

MiARA President Dick Long provided opening remarks, reminding members that we have much work to do in the next two years. He stated that Michigan retirees will be facing difficult battles over our pensions and health care.

Roll was called and the following officers and board members were present: Dick Long, Henry Lykes, Richard McInerney, Charlie Robinson, Judy Foster, Bob Sisler, Warren Danford, and Jack Schneider. Minutes of the previous meeting and the financial report were presented by Charlie Robinson and approved.

Following those important business items, Marjorie Mitchell, executive director of MICHUHCAN, provided the Keynote address on Medicare and Medicaid, posing the question: What do we want America to be?

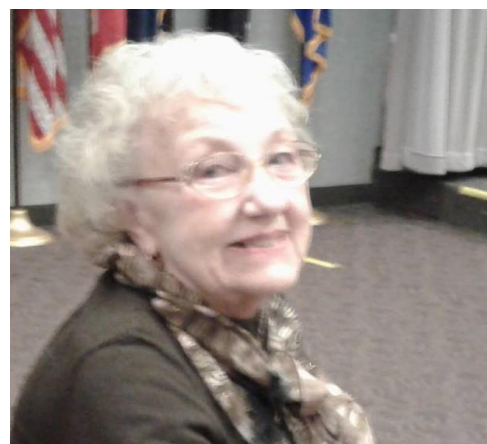
According to Mitchell, current plans to change Medicare and Medicaid in Washington, D.C. are designed to cut federal spending. But, she noted,

these plans simply shift that spending responsibility to the states. She said many of the Republican proposals change tax subsidies, resulting in older Americans paying more for coverage and fewer people insured. Mitchell commented that, "There should be lots of debates to come."

While the most recent Republican proposal to do away with the Affordable Care Act never reached the floor of the House of Representatives, Congress will no doubt be back with similar proposals. Mitchell highlighted some of the problems that would have occurred if the Republican bill had become law, including the creation of a high-risk pool. Mitchell pointed out that in the long run this plan would never have succeeded because the dollars do not grow in high-risk pools.

Mitchell noted that the health savings accounts pushed in the Republican plan would only be feasible for a few, and would not solve problems for most middle- and low-income people.

*(Meeting continued on page two)*



*Marjorie Mitchell's keynote address urged MiARA members to stay on top of proposed changes to Medicare and Medicaid and keep contacting their elected representatives.*

### In This Issue

1	<b>MiARA Membership Meeting Report</b>
2	<b>Women's History Month</b>
3	<b>Activist Spotlight</b>
4	<b>Labor History – CLUW</b>
5	<b>Redistricting</b>

## Meeting Continued

Mitchell called on MiARA members to stay active and informed, and encouraged them to keep up pressure on their elected officials on the following issues:

- We need to demand lower drug prices.
- We need to ask Congress to require all providers to be nonprofit.
- We need to demand the medical loss ratio is renegotiated.
- We need to see that Community Health Services are better planned.
- We need to see that both city and rural areas have equal services.
- We need more education for consumers of medical services.

Following Mitchell's remarks, representatives of the Michigan Nurses Association, Liz Rilley, Tara Fugate and Eric Smith spoke about big business takeovers of hospitals. Nurses are being overloaded, putting patients at risk. *(See photo below).*



The final speaker was James Tignanelli, president of the Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM), which has 530 local chapters across the state. The governor proposed cuts to police retirement and health care. POAM protested at the capital during the recent Lane Duck Session. *(See photo to the right).*



## Woman's History Month Honors Labor Union Women

*Information for this article was taken from the website of the National Woman's History Project. Additional biographical information on the 2017 honorees can be found on their website, [www.nwph.org](http://www.nwph.org).*

March is Woman's History Month. The theme for 2017 is to honor women who have successfully challenged the role of women in both business and the paid labor force.

Women have always worked, but often their work has been undervalued and unpaid. The 2017 honorees represent many diverse backgrounds whose influence spans three centuries of America's history.

Five of this year's honorees have a direct tie to labor unions.

**Lilly Ledbetter (1938- ):** fair pay advocate;

**Kate Mullany (1845-1906):** founder of the all-woman Collar Laundry Union;

**Lucy Gonzalez Parsons (1853-1942):** radical labor union organizer and orator;

**Barbara "Dusty" Roads (1928- ):** flight attendants' union activist.

**Addie L. Wyatt (1924-2012):** first African American woman to be elected V.P. of an international union.

These women successfully challenged the social and legal structures that have kept women's labor underappreciated and underpaid.

Facing stark inequities in the workplace (lower wages, poor working conditions and limited opportunities), they fought to make the workplace a less hostile environment for women. They succeeded in expanding women's participation in commerce and their power in the paid labor force.

As labor leaders, they defied the social mores of their times by demonstrating the ability of women to create organizations and establish their own businesses that paved the way for better working conditions and wages.

## MiARA Activist Spotlight Julie Wasung Bauman

Julie Wasung Bauman has been an MiARA member since attending the 2012 founding convention in Detroit. She has attended National Alliance conventions in Las Vegas and St. Louis. "It's a great group to be involved with," she said.

Pre-retirement, Julie was an active union member of AFSCME Wayne County Local 101. She served her local union as a trustee and secretary-treasurer. Retirement has not slowed Julie down. She is active in the Wayne County Retirees Sub-Chapter Number 38 where she is a member of the executive board, the election committee, and chairs the PEOPLE committee.

"Too many things have changed since I retired, and I don't want that to happen to others," Julie noted. Her retirement pay shrank with the tax on pensions, and in 2015, her healthcare was reduced. "My medical benefits were replaced by a stipend that does not go far in the market place," said Julie. "I want to support our present and future retirees and work together to fight the injustices forced on us."

Julie grew up on the eastside of Detroit in a union household. Her father was active in the Democratic Party. One of her fondest memories was, as an eleven-year-old, when her dad took her to a rally at Cobo Hall and she met then presidential nominee Herbert Humphrey and Governor G. Mennen Williams.



*Judy Wasung Bauman with Rep. Darrin Camilleri and her two "greatest accomplishments."*

Politics is in Julie's blood. In 1980, she was first elected as a Democratic precinct delegate. She has also been a delegate to the Democratic State Central Committee.

Over the years, Julie has marched in many parades and demonstrations, and has worked to elect numerous Democratic candidates. This past election, she was proud to have worked on the campaign of Michigan House Rep. Darrin Camilleri (D-Brownstown Twp.), who won in a district that went for Donald Trump.

In 2005, the American Cancer Society Relay for Life came to Dearborn Heights. Julie helped make the event a huge success as part of the planning committee. Later she served as the survivorship chair and a team captain, and in 2008 co-chaired the event. Julie, who had lost her mother to cancer, did this work in her honor.

In addition to her union activities, her political and charitable work, Julie always remained very involved in her children's school and sports activities. She chaired fundraisers, worked various events and served on the PTG. She calls her children, now grown, her "greatest accomplishments."

Julie has worked hard to help make the world a better place for all people. She stands up for MiARA principles and American values.

## Coalition of Labor Union Women – A Proud History

*Editor's note: Labor has a long tradition of fighting for the rights of workers. It is important that as MiARA members we remember and share the legacy of our struggles. This month we look back at the founding of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.*

In March of 1974, after months of discussion and planning, more than 1,200 union women from across the U.S. convened in Chicago to form an organization to address the critical needs of unorganized working women and make unions more responsive to the needs of all working women.

*(CLUW continued on page four)*



## CLUW Continued

Out of this meeting, the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) was established as an arena for working women to share common problems and concerns and develop action programs within the framework of unions.

At its founding convention, CLUW adopted four basic goals of action: to promote affirmative action in the workplace; to strengthen the role of women in unions; to organize the unorganized women; and to increase the involvement of women in the political and legislative process.

These four original goals continue to be the cornerstone of CLUW's activities, as members speak out for equal pay, child and elder care benefits, job security, safe workplaces, affordable health care, contraceptive equality, and protection from sexual harassment and violence at work.

Today, CLUW remains the only national organization exclusively for union women, functioning as a nonpartisan organization within the union movement.

With members from 54 international and national unions across the U.S. and Canada, CLUW has a strong network of more than 40 chapters. CLUW is endorsed by the AFL-CIO and its international and national unions.

Local CLUW chapters educate members, keep them up-to-date on a variety of issues of concern to working families, and provide a support network for women in unions.



*CLUW members at a 1984 protest in Los Angeles. Photo from the Walter P. Reuther Library in Detroit, MI*

Current CLUW projects include: Making Change at Walmart; the Contraceptive Equity Project; and, the Cervical Cancer Awareness Program.

Visit the CLUW website at [www.cluw.org](http://www.cluw.org) to learn more about their history and get more information about their events.

## Groups to Explore Future Redistricting Ballot Issue

Grassroots organizations are beginning to look at the issue of redistricting and how to make Michigan's electoral maps more equitable.

Currently, the state legislature draws new lines for legislative and congressional districts every ten years following the U.S. Census. This system has allowed lawmakers to put their own interests ahead of their constituents.

Experts point out that even though Michigan is evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats, the GOP wins a lot more seats because of gerrymandering.

These grassroots groups will be hosting town hall meetings in April to assess the feasibility of putting a question on the 2018 ballot to make the process for redistricting more transparent and fair.

MiARA will be monitoring this issue and bringing you more information as it is available.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **MiARA Executive Board**

**Dick Long, President, (UAW)**

**Henry Lykes, Executive Vice-President, (AFSCME)**

**Richard McInerney, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, (USW)**

**Charlie Robinson, Treasurer, (AFT-MICHIGAN)**

**Judy Foster, Secretary, (MEA)**

### **Board Members from State Sustaining Organizations**

**Warren Danford, (UAW)**

**Arthur Kroll, (USW)**

**Jack Schneider, (MEA)**

**Bob Sisler (AFL-CIO)**

**Newsletter Editor: Jack Schneider**

**Copy Editor: Krista Schneider**

\*\*\*\*\*

