



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Brandi Tambasco, Adult Services Librarian

Howell Carnegie District Library

517-546-0720 x131

tambasco@howelllibrary.org

Preserving the Legacy of Detroit's "Other Rosa Parks"

Howell Library, League of Women Voters, and Livingston Diversity Council Celebrate MLK Day with The Sarah E. Ray Project Virtual Event

Howell, MI: In celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, the Howell Carnegie District Library, in partnership with the League of Women Voters of Livingston County and the Livingston Diversity Council, will host a virtual presentation, The Sarah E. Ray Project with Desiree Cooper and Aaron Schillinger, on Monday, January 17, 2022 6:30pm - 8:00pm.

Until now a Detroit civil rights pioneer named Sarah Elizabeth Ray has been largely forgotten.

"As we honor the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, the LWV of Livingston County is proud to co-sponsor this event as we join with the Livingston Diversity Council and the Howell Carnegie library in saying the name of **Sarah Elizabeth Ray**," Ellen Lafferty, chairperson of the League of Women Voters of Livingston County, said.

Seventy-five years ago, a 24-year-old African American secretary was denied a seat on the segregated Boblo boat SS Columbia. Like Rosa Parks, she refused to back down, taking her fight for integration all the way to the United States Supreme Court. Represented by fabled NAACP lawyer Thurgood Marshall, Ray won her case. Scholars argue that she paved the way for the seminal 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education*, which found that separate was inherently unequal.

"The Livingston Diversity Council is proud to partner with the Howell Carnegie District Library and the League of Women Voters to bring the Sarah E. Ray Project to light and to share her critical contribution to desegregation in Detroit," said Nicole Matthews-Creech, MA, CFLE, president of the Livingston Diversity Council Board of Directors.

Presenting this virtual event will be Desiree Cooper, 2015 Kresge Artist Fellow, Pulitzer Prize nominee, former attorney, and 2017 Michigan Notable Book author, and Aaron Schillinger, the director of *Boblo Boats: A Detroit Ferry Tale*. Attendees will learn from Cooper and Schillinger about Sarah E. Ray, Detroit's Other Rosa Parks, and the efforts of The Sara E. Ray Project (www.detroitsotherrosaparks.com) to save this civil rights activist's legacy from obscurity.

Registration is required to receive the virtual event's Zoom meeting link and password; sign up on the Library's website at: <https://bit.ly/saraheray>. For more information about the event, visit www.howelllibrary.org, or call the library at 517-546-0720.

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About the Howell Carnegie District Library

The Howell Carnegie District Library creates opportunities that transform lives through knowledge, for every age at any stage, one exceptional experience at a time. Located at 314 West Grand River Avenue in Howell, MI, the Library is open for new hours starting January 3, 2022: Monday-Thursday 9am-7pm and Friday-Saturday 9am-4pm, and Sunday (September-May) 12pm-4pm. Visit us online 24/7 at www.howelllibrary.org.

About the League of Women Voters of Livingston County

The League of Women Voters of Livingston County began in 2018 as the LWV Brighton-Howell Geographical Unit under the mentorship of the LWV Ann Arbor Area (now LWV Washtenaw County), becoming an independent state unit, the LWV of Livingston County, in October of 2021. Our goal is to encourage citizens to be actively engaged in Livingston County and our government through increased understanding of local issues and connection with those who represent (and want to represent) us. We strive to uphold the inclusive, civil, non-partisan reputation which is the hallmark of The League of Women Voters. For more information about the League of Women Voters of Livingston County, visit lwvlivingstonco.org.

About the Livingston Diversity Council

The Livingston Diversity Council is a grassroots organization of Livingston County business people, private citizens, educators, government officials, and clergy who embrace and advocate for the virtues of diversity and inclusion. The organization is a change agent for diversity, equity, inclusion, and access that collaborates, educates, and empowers to build a thriving community. The group believes Livingston County will be a transformative community that embraces and empowers all people for their uniqueness and contributions. For more information about the Livingston Diversity Council, visit livingstondiversity.org.