

July 2013

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Arrrrrrr! Pirates!



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League of Women Voters
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The VOTER

Bulletin of the LWV of Lawrence-Douglas County, KS

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influencing public policy through education and advocacy.

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National League	www.lwv.org		202-429-1965

League Calendar

Saturday, July 20th	7 - 9 pm	Land Use Committee Meeting. <i>Community Mercantile Meeting Room, 901 Iowa St.</i>
Monday, August 5th	9:00 pm	VOTER Submission Deadline. Please send submissions to lightwatcher@gmail.com
Thursday, August 8th	7 - 9 pm	LWVL-DC Board Meeting. <i>Co-President David Burress' House, 912 Holiday Drive. All League members are invited to attend.</i>
Tuesday, September 17th	10:30 am	Naturalization Ceremony. <i>Dole Center, 2350 Petefish Drive, KU Campus.</i>
Thursday, September 19th	11:30 am	Brown Bag Lunch. <i>Douglas County Courthouse, 111 E. 11th Street. County Administrator Craig Weinaug on The State of the County.</i>

Co-Presidents Message: On Volunteering

Volunteerism was the leading theme at our Board retreat in May--indirectly as well as directly. Anything we want to do to expand our program or improve our effectiveness comes back to volunteers.

LWVUS has a small paid staff at the National level, but volunteers are the sole source of local and Kansas-wide LWV energy and strength. Moreover the National staff are paid out of dues and funds raised by local volunteers. When a League representative speaks up at city hall or the State Capital, everyone knows they're saying what they believe based on conscience and good evidence and League Consensus, and that no one paid them to be there. Lots of times we are the only disinterested citizens who show up to defend the common good. Sometimes that makes all the difference.



Just this week, LWVK President Delores Furtado put a lot of pressure on the Brownback administration by simply asking for the names of candidates being vetted in secret for the Kansas Court of Appeals. That request got state-wide coverage she wouldn't have received without the cumulative influence of all those LWV volunteers over the years. In the end Brownback didn't release the names, but he was seriously embarrassed and this issue will not die. (I'm hoping there will be a lawsuit.)

Volunteerism is our greatest strength, our widest opportunity, and our Achilles heel. It takes constant effort by volunteer leaders to recruit other volunteers and put them to work. We often fall down on the job. We don't reach out as much as we should to find new recruits. We haven't done a good enough job of involving new members and inactive old members in our work. When a job needs doing we keep turning to the same old experienced hands because that is the easiest way to get the job done. At least until they aren't there anymore and no one quite remembers the best way to do that particular job. Also newcomers sometimes face a daunting hurdle of competing with oldtimers steeped in LWV inside lore and cumulative expertise. We must do better at bringing more folks into the inner circle and opening up the circle to face outward, not inward.

The Board is taking steps to make that happen. We're still working out plans, but here is some of what we've got so far:

- We have a new position for Outreach and Diversity Chair, which Scott Criqui has agreed to fill.
- The membership committee, headed by Margaret Arnold, is planning to hold monthly Brown Bag meetings with speakers and panels, cooperating with other organizations whenever possible. In a low key way, we will use these meetings to meet and stay in touch with new and potential members. After each brown bag we are hoping to give a 10 minute League Lesson, focused on some arcane yet significant bit of League Lore.
- We know that our steep dues structure is one of our biggest barriers to recruitment. That's hard to address, because most of our dues go to cover State and US Per Member Payments (PMPs), which we have no control over. We do have a confidential scholarship program, but we haven't got the word out about it as well as we should, and in any case a scholarship is a poor substitute for having low dues in the first place. So we are talking about whether we can offset dues with more active fundraising.
- We know we need to do a better job of identifying small non-intimidating tasks by which newcomers can make a real contribution, and then matching tasks with volunteers.
- We are working with a state-level coach, Gwen Elliott, who is supported by the LWVUS AMLD Project (in League newspeak, MLD=Membership Leadership Development). She is plugged in with National advice and ideas and resources.
- We know we need to figure out how to keep new member and volunteer recruitment front and center in all of our programs.

Now I completely understand that lots of LWV members join simply in order to support us financially and don't have time to volunteer. Also many members join just to keep up with the information the LWV has to offer. And those are perfectly good reasons for joining.

However I also know there are many members and would-be members out there who would volunteer for the right role if they were asked nicely. And in an ideal world your leaders would volunteer enough of their own time and energy to get



them all asked, one on one. And hopefully we will get a good bit of that done this year.

In the meantime, I'm asking you to help us out. If there's a chance you might do something for the League if you found the right job, then give me a chance to match you up with a job. It might be big or little, leadership or support, ongoing or one shot. Please just give me a call at 749-128, or email me at d-burress@ku.edu. I'm betting that I can make you glad you did.

If you are looking for an ongoing leadership or coordinating role, we always have openings. Right now we are especially looking for event chairs for each of our recurring annual meetings: Fluker Award Luncheon, the Annual Meeting, the Meeting with our legislators. We also need chairs for the Fluker Award Selection Committee and the Stucky Scholarship Committee. We still need a chair for a review of LWV-LDC policy on appointments and procedures for local commissions and boards. And the LDC Voter is always looking for guest editors

For less demanding roles, we can use more help on any of our committees. We have standing committees for Voter Services, Membership, Fundraising, Land Use, and Observer Corps. We have committees for each of the awards and each of the annual events. We have committees working on programs and studies--state study on fracking, local review of policy on commission appointments, sidewalks task force, open meetings initiative, and a new initiative to develop on-line scorecards of legislator=s votes on LWV=s issues.

And if you want to either pioneer something new or break out a particular organizational function, there are any number of service and activism roles that could use a chairman, coordinator, or spark plug to get them started. Some examples include an Action List Manager (encouraging letters and phone calls to officials on LWV issues); a Public Relations Officer; a Meeting Arrangements Chair; and, yes, a Volunteer Coordinator.

So give me a call. - *David Burress*



Letter to the Editor by Co-President Cille King

Published in the Lawrence Journal-World on June
25, 2013

To the editor:

I participated in Senator Pat Roberts' town hall meeting on June 20. One man thought the Affordable Care Act would reduce his Medicare access. Sen. Roberts could have corrected this man's misunderstanding by listing the benefits to Medicare under the ACA: 1) more preventive services without charge, 2) lower cost on drugs in the "donut hole," 3) more support for doctors to assure treatments are consistent, 4) maintained Medicare-covered benefits and continued choice of doctors, and 5) extended life of the Medicare Trust fund at least 12 years.

Sen. Roberts could have said that the ACA was originally a Republican idea and is similar to former Gov. Mitt Romney's "Romneycare." After six years, more businesses have provided insurance coverage for their employees, costs are not rising as fast as before it was enacted, more people are covered, and after a short



adjustment time, wait times for patients have returned to normal.

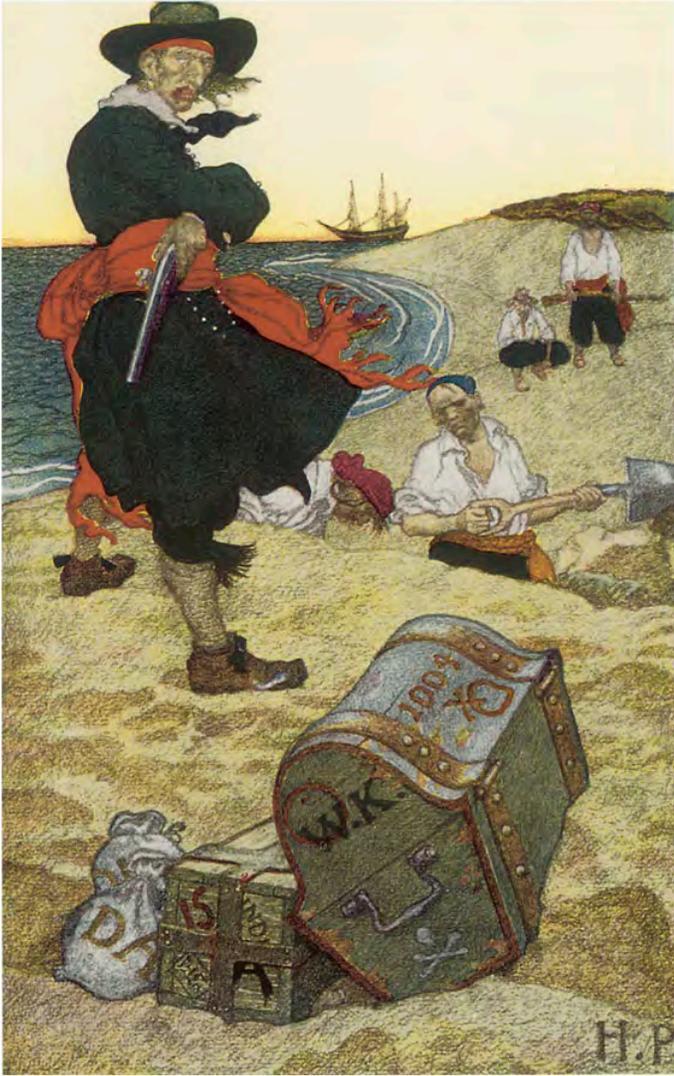
Sen. Roberts could have mentioned that the ACA will help reduce costs as more people are insured, preventive care is stressed, and there's more competition between insurers. The ACA allows children under the age of 26 to stay on their parents insurance and no one will be denied coverage for being sick.

But Sen. Roberts instead said that the October marketplace deadline might not be met, giving Congress an opportunity to get rid of the ACA, so we can go without these benefits and still be the country with the highest health care costs for the lowest of outcomes.

Highlights of the June Board Meeting

12 June, 7:10–9 pm, home of David Burress, 912 Holiday Dr. Present: David Burress (Co-President), Cille King (Co-President and President Elect), Marci Francisco (Vice President), Marjorie Cole (Treasurer), Caleb Morse (Secretary); Directors: Margaret Arnold, Scott Criqui, James Dunn, Ruth Gibbs, Midge Grinstead. Absent: Caroljean Brune, Marlene Merrill. Guest: Marilyn Roy. Treasurer's report. Marjorie reported total income for May of \$250.00 and expenses of \$678. Net outflow was \$428.68. Current balances as of 31 May: Checking Account = \$3225.75 ; Money Market = \$2101.84; Stucky = \$6373.24; Judiciary = \$593.58; Education Fund (LWVEF) = \$1501.98. Appointments.

David announced the creation of a Database Management and Voter Distribution Committee, with members Cille, Margaret, Marjorie, and Ruth. David will work with the members to schedule a meeting. Contribution to Plymouth Church. James (Marjorie) moved to authorize a contribution of \$50 to Plymouth Congregational Church as a thank-you for allow us to hold Board meetings there last year; no discussion, adopted by unanimous consent. Homeless Shelter Bus Stop. David brought it to our attention that the Board had never actually voted on a resolution regarding the Lawrence Transit System bus stop that serves the Community Shelter (see April meeting). Marci (Margaret) moved to support the notion that there should be a free bus stop serving the shelter. James noted that the group seeking this action should have brought the issue before the Public Transit Advisory Committee, which it never did. Also, the City Commission has already voted the request down, on the theory that other groups will ask for similar treatment. The motion was approved 5-1-3. Organizational Goals. A motion to adopt [a] 1 year organizational goals and [b] 1 year program priorities was discussed at some length. [a] Brown Bag Lunches will begin in September. Scott volunteered to serve as an outreach coordinator, and will take on the challenge of increasing diversity of representation and student member recruitment. The phrase "expand quantity and quality of membership" was modified by general consent to "expand quantity, diversity, and participation of membership". Midge volunteered to serve as



the Observer Corps Chair. Scott and Midge were appointed to fulfill these roles with the unanimous, even joyous, consent of those present. [b] Marci volunteered to organize a local study in conjunction with the LWWK study on hydraulic fracturing, adopted at the 2013 State Convention. Marci and Cille offered to collaborate on an effort to gather information on how legislators voted on League issues during the 2012-2013 sessions, beginning in August. However, the motion to adopt 1-year goals (as modified in discussion) was not formally adopted.

- Caleb Morse

Land Use Committee

The Land Use Committee met at the Merc public meeting room on June 22 to discuss the Planning Commission (PC) June, 2013 meeting Agenda. We decided to write three letters.

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The first letter was on Agenda Item No. 3D, the Preliminary Plat for Kellyn Addition, located immediately north of Overland Drive and West of Queens Road. This is a 40-acre + development the developer for which is requesting rezoning of single-family RS7 and RS5 Districts and RM12 conventional multiple-family zoning. The multiple-family portion shows one lot for almost 16 acres of the RM zoning. This large-lot type of multiple-family development is a major source of concern to the Land Use Committee because our zoning ordinance was not written to control the internal development of single large lots unless zoned as planned developments—PUDs or PD Overlay Districts. The internal land of RM single lots is privately owned, and requirements that regulate public land do not apply. Private driveways provide internal circulation and have reduced paving requirement standards compared to public streets and their guaranteed public maintenance. There may not be any internal storm drainage considerations. Only three feet are required between buildings (Fire Code). Internal trees are not required—only those in public street right-of-way, which is external to the lot. The new zoning code requires landscaping only in parking lots, but only under certain conditions that can be avoided. There is no maximum size for these multiple-family lots—only minimum sizes—and their size, therefore, is limited only by the location of public streets, which can be on the edges of section lines, theoretically allowing single lots as large as a whole section or 640 acres.

Planned developments, on the other hand, were written specifically to apply to these large lots, and have all of the requirements that are missing in the conventional districts. This isn't a problem in single family districts because they are written to allow only a single principal building on each lot. It is for this reason that we object to the use of conventional zoning for multiple-family districts on these large lots. In answer to our objections, the planners indicate that the site plan requirements are the remedy. However, the site plan ordinance does not have written into it the missing regulations that are included in the Planned Development Overlay District regulations, especially in Section 20-701(k). OUTCOME: The PC approved this 15-acre single-lot Preliminary Plat for the RM12 District. For this reason we forwarded our PC letter to the City Commission asking that they send the RM12

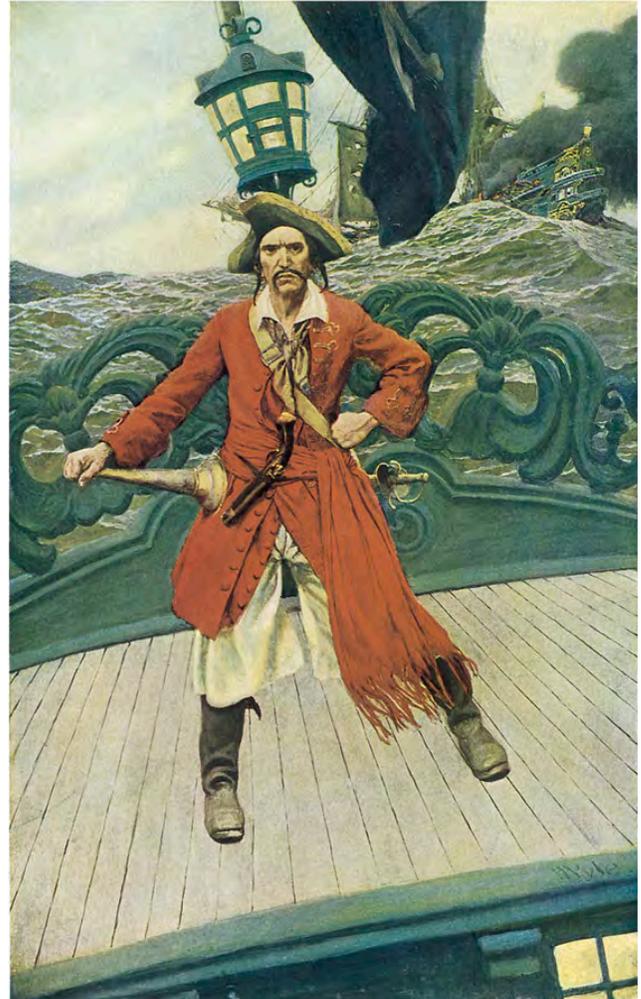
Arrrrrr! Pirates!

rezoning request for conventional zoning back to the Planning Commission with the instruction that they require the lot be developed as a Planned Development Overlay District. **OUTCOME AT CITY COMMISSION:** The City Commission approved the rezoning request for conventional RM12 unanimously.

Our second letter was on Item No. 5, a Text Amendment to the Land Development Code (LDC) on Accessory Dwelling Units. These accessory dwelling units were originally intended to apply only to owner-occupied single-family houses and could add only one additional person beyond the total permitted for one single-family unit. They were intended as residences for elderly family members or to encourage owner-occupancy by providing a source of income through this accessory unit. It was available only for single-family districts with densities not less than RS7 or 7,000 square feet per unit. It was proposed here in Item No. 5 to include the RS5 District (having densities of 5,000 square feet per unit). Residents of some older neighborhoods such as Old West Lawrence were concerned because the term "owner" might be construed as meaning a "corporate owner," and they brought this to public attention. We wrote a letter requesting that the term "owner" be defined to make clear the distinction and not include any meaning other than that of "an adult human person with direct legal ownership rights to occupy the residence," pointing out that this situation applied to all residential neighborhoods at all densities in the city, not just the older ones. **OUTCOME:** The PC deferred the text amendment to make clear that the term "owner-occupant" does not include corporate ownership in the meaning of the term.

Item No. 6, the subject of our third letter, was a Text Amendment to the LDC modifying the requirements of the Retail Market Study as it applies to retail commercial rezoning applications. We asked a series of questions that we believe need resolution in the proposed new regulations. For example, (1) when the staff report indicates a negative effect on our retail commercial inventory, what causes the staff to recommend denial; (2) is the new recommended threshold to trigger a review too high; (3) when the staff analyzes the market only every two years, don't they miss substantial changes in the intervening years; and (4) what parameters does the staff use to determine oversupply of commercial land use? **OUTCOME:** The

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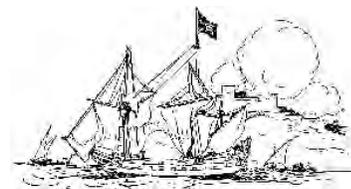
PC recommended approval of staff proposed changes to the LDC on the Retail Market Study.

Item No. 7, Proposed Parking and Access Standards Text Amendments to the LDC, was continued on to future meetings in order to receive public response.

Editor's Note - Why Pirates?

The theme of the VOTER this month may seem incongruous, but your editor would like to encourage you to visit the National Geographic exhibit "Real Pirates" showing at Union Station in Kansas City until January 5th. More information is at

<http://www.unionstation.org/realpirates/>



Arrrrrr! Pirates!

Join or Re-Join the League!

Complete form, enclose check made out to LWV L/DC, and mail to LWV L/DC • PO Box 1072 • Lawrence KS 66044

(Please note: new or renewed memberships after September 30, 2012 are valid through March 31, 2014)

Our dues support the National and State Leagues as follows: \$31 National and \$18 State per member. Total: \$49/member

Our local League retains only \$6 from Individual membership dues and \$5.75 each for Household membership dues.

Date _____ New member _____ Renewing member _____
_____ Individual Membership (\$55) _____ Household Membership (\$85) _____ *Student Membership (\$20)

*University student enrolled full or part time in an accredited institution.

I'm interested in joining the League...please send me information on financial aid available for membership.

I have enclosed a contribution of \$ _____ to help sponsor a League membership.

I have enclosed a contribution of \$ _____ for the League General Fund.

I have enclosed a contribution of \$ _____ for the League Education Fund*

*This contribution is tax-deductible

_____ I am not a member, but would like to support the League with my contribution as indicated above.

PLEASE PRINT

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

As a League member, I would like to help support League activities by participating as follows:

General Membership Meetings:

- ___ Set up and/or tear down
- ___ Hospitality (provide coffee/tea/dessert)
- ___ Taking notes/writing up report of meeting

Promotion of League to our Community

- ___ Public speaking
- ___ Attend community events as League representative

Membership

- ___ Recruitment
- ___ Mentor/follow-up with new members
- ___ Provide a ride to a fellow member
- ___ Phone members without internet access about special updates

___ Observer corps (attend/report on government meetings)

___ Help with research for League studies on issues

___ Serve on the Board of Directors

Voter Services

- ___ Register voters
- ___ Help with voter education

I have the following skills:

- ___ Editing articles/reports
- ___ Database management
- ___ Proficient in Microsoft Word / Excel / Quickbooks
- ___ Website/Social Media design/management

My interests include: _____