

JANUARY 2014

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League of Women Voters
P.O. Box 1072
Lawrence, KS 66044-1072



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.

Co-Presidents:	David Burress & Cille King	president@lawrenceleague.com	
Membership:	Margaret Arnold	membership@lawrenceleague.com	
Voter Editor:	Ruth Lichtwardt	lightwatcher@gmail.com	
Local League:	www.lawrenceleague.com	www.facebook.com/lwvldc	www.twitter.com/lwvldc
State League:	www.lwvk.org	lwv.kansas@gmail.com	785-234-5152
National League:	www.lwv.org		202-429-1965

League Calendar

Sunday, January 19th	3 - 5 pm	Afternoon with the Legislators. 3144 Campfire Drive. League members and their guests. RSVP to president@lawrenceleague.com
Saturday, January 25th	7 - 9 pm	Land Use Committee Meeting. Community Mercantile Meeting Room, 901 Iowa St.
Saturday, February 1st	Noon - 2 pm	Biennial Program Planning Meeting. Stewart Ave. Fire Station, 19th and Iowa Streets.
Monday, February 3rd	5:30 pm	Suspended Voter Registration Task Force. Home of Co-President David Burress, 912 Holiday Drive
Wednesday, February 12th	9:30 am - 3 pm	LWVK Day at the Capital. Capitol Plaza Hotel, 1717 SW Topeka Blvd, Topeka. Watch your email for program details.
Wednesday, February 12th	7:00 pm	Lawrence Pedestrian Coalition. Basement Conference Room, Carnegie Building, 200 West 9th Street.
Thursday, February 13th	7 - 9 pm	LWVL-DC Board Meeting. Home of Co-President David Burress, 912 Holiday Drive. All League members are invited to attend.
Friday, February 14th	9:00 pm	VOTER Submission Deadline. Please send submissions to lightwatcher@gmail.com
Thursday, February 20th	11:30 am	Brown Bag Lunch: Public School Education Financing: State Decisions and Lawrence Schools. Watkins Community Museum, 1047 Mass St.. Guests welcome.
Thursday, February 25th	6:30 pm	Movie: Girl Rising. New York Elementary School Gym, 936 New York St. Cosponsored by New York Elementary PTO and LWVL-DC.
Saturday, March 22nd	TBA	Helen Fluker Open and Accessible Government Award Luncheon. Smith Center at Brandon Woods, 4730 Brandon Woods Terrace.
Saturday, April 19th	TBA	Annual Meeting. Smith Center at Brandon Woods, 4730 Brandon Woods Terrace.

Co-Presidents Message: Reprise on LWVL-DC Volunteering

Some LWV members join us for our educational programs. Some join to contribute financially to our work. However the deepest and most rewarding League experiences come from working together actively with other League members to advance our cause (or several causes).

And now is an excellent time to get involved. We are past the holidays and you may have a little more available time. This is the season of the year when the League has the largest number of irons in the fire and needs all help it can get. If you want to help out



your League in any way, please email me at president@lawenceleague.com .

Volunteering comes in all shapes and sizes. Here is a low commitment, limited term role that starts right away:

Stucky scholarship committee member. Each year a LWV-LDC committee selects a meritorious high school senior who will receive a \$1000 scholarship. This role only requires reading some scholarship applications and attending what should be at most 2 meetings in order to deliberate and choose an awardee.

The next two roles are somewhat more challenging but also limited in term:

Fluker Award committee member. Each year we give an award to a Douglas County activist who has made a significant contribution to open and effective local government. Part of this committee role is similar to the Stucky committee role, and involves reading nomination materials and deciding on an awardee. In addition, this role involves helping with the planning of the annual Fluker Award luncheon in March.

Nominating Committee member. This committee will nominate officers and new Board members for the 2014-2015 year.

Here is yet another role that has a limited term of commitment:

Spring fund-raising event committee member. This is a new fundraising event intended to raise money to make up lost revenue due to our reduction in dues. This year are getting our feet wet with what will probably be a relatively low key event.

And of course we always have open roles that involve a longer commitment.

We need local committee members for two ongoing study committees-one on Kansas fracking policy, one on National agricultural policy.

The voter registration committee, the land use committee, and the membership and events committees are very active but can always use more help.

Also, there are always openings for interim Board appointments (made by the Board itself), which will typically lead to full term appointments at the next election.

There are also many possible roles that no one is currently performing, and even roles that we haven't yet thought of or defined. For folks who are willing to serve as committee chairs, let us know your skills and we can probably define a committee that uses them. Call and talk it over with me at 785 749 1218. - David Burress



FEBRUARY BROWN BAG LUNCH

Please mark your calendars to attend our first brown bag lunch of 2014. The topic is "Public School Education Financing: State Decisions and Lawrence

Schools." This topic is timely for our information and action because several public school financial decisions will be made early this year. The state Supreme Court will issue its ruling about adequate school funding, while the Legislature will debate various bills that affect local public schools. Funding, of course, influences programs. We will meet at 11:30 on the 20th to have lunch and visit. At noon Vanessa Sanbern, member of our local school board, will join with a representative from the Kansas National Education Association to address the topic and answer questions. Please plan

to come and bring guests. This is a unique opportunity to voice our concerns while vital decisions are on the table.

- Margaret Arnold



LWV-LDC BOARD INPUT TO LWVUS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

In December the LWVUS advised us as follows:

LWVUS Legislative Priorities (Reminder)

In January, the LWVUS Board of Directors will be setting the League Legislative Priorities for the upcoming year. Setting these priorities for LWVUS action at the national level is an annual responsibility for the Board. Once again, the Board is soliciting suggestions for LWVUS advocacy priorities from members. While the LWVUS has numerous positions under which we might take action, the Board must prioritize and consider those issues where we might be able to make a difference.

On behalf of the LWV-LDC Board, I sent the following message to the National LWV committee working on legislative priorities for the next year.

The Board of Directors of the Lawrence-Douglas County KS League has directed me to advise you of their preferences for LWV-US legislative advocacy, which are as follows:

1. National legislation and enforcement on voter registration rights.
2. Birth control rights, with the goal of universal free birth control means provided by health insurance, as the most effective known method of reducing abortion.
3. Fighting on all fronts to reverse the effects, and ultimately the fact, of the Citizens United decision. One small mechanism worth pursuing is to define corporate political expenditures as part of taxable income rather than as legitimate business expense---thus putting corporations on a more level playing field with households.

- David Burress, Copresident, LWV-LDC



BIENNIAL LWV PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

When: Saturday, February 1, 2014, Noon-2:00 PM

Where: Stewart Ave. Fire Station, 19th & Iowa

“Program” in League jargon means our major research, educational, and advocacy activities over a two year period. These activities are planned biennially, but only in terms of general focus and priorities. (Detailed events are planned throughout the year.) The first round of planning for both local and national programs will occur at a single meeting in February.

Be aware that any new League studies or modified League positions need to be authorized during this process. If there is something you want the League to be working on over the next two years (especially at the local level, but also at the national level) you really need to show up at this meeting.

LWV-LDC Program Planning procedure. Our February meeting will arrive at a specific proposal for our program activities during the next two years. That proposal will be adopted (perhaps with modifications) at the Annual Membership meeting in April. Note that our bylaws make it almost impossible to introduce new topics at the April meeting that were not discussed in February. However topics voted down at the February meeting can sometimes be resurrected by the membership at the April meeting.

LWVUS Program Planning procedure. Our February meeting will make general recommendations that will be sent the LWVUS. As at the local level, these recommendations may include new positions and new studies. A committee at LWVUS will collate responses from all the local Leagues and make recommendations to the National Board and the National Convention. The final national program will be adopted at the 2014 National Convention.

Note that Local and national program planning occurs in even-numbered years. State program planning occurs in odd numbered years and will not be discussed at this meeting.

Background: all local, state, and national positions are available at <http://lawrenceleague.com/Positions.html>.



HELPING VOTERS IN SUSPENSE WITH REGISTRATION

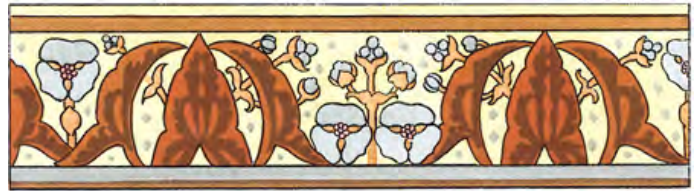
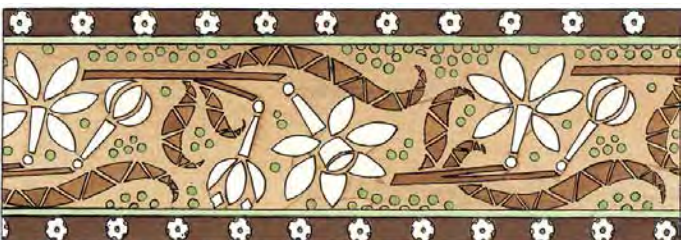
We have a small committee of members who are calling people on the Douglas County "Voters in Suspense" list (over 800 citizens) in an attempt to get needed "proof of citizenship" to the County Clerk. Only some on this list have given a phone number or email. So, after we have called or emailed all we can, the committee will plan on going to the listed addresses.

Kansas Secretary of State, Kris Kobach's Arizona law requiring "proof of citizenship" was struck down by the Supreme Court in June 2013. Because Kansas was not a party to this lawsuit, Kris Kobach's Kansas law requiring "proof of citizenship" still stands. It will take our Kansas Legislators and Governor Brownback to repeal the law, or another trip to the Supreme Court.

This law is a barrier to the citizens of Kansas in getting registered to vote, is probably the most poorly implemented law ever – in that about one – fourth of the people who attempted to register to vote since January 2013, have not been able to finish their registration.

Please contact your state representative and senator to let them know your opposition to this law. If you are interested in helping the committee, contact president@lawrenceleague.com or call 785-766-6992.

- Cille King



GRANT FROM LWV NATIONAL TO HELP REGISTER YOUTH VOTERS

We have received a small grant from LWV National to help register young people in their classrooms in Douglas County this spring semester. LWV grants are going to 34 leagues in 15 states. Only one half of 18 year olds are registered to vote, so, this is a very un-represented age group. Of high school students who are not continuing to college, it is the last opportunity to catch them in an educational setting. Registering students in the spring is 3 times as effective as waiting until fall, as most of those of eligible age have already graduated.

We look forward to registering young people and could use volunteers to help with this project. If you are interested in helping with this, either a little or a lot, contact president@lawrenceleague.com or call 785-766-6992.

- Cille King



LEAGUE MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

There was only one letter from a League member in the Lawrence Journal World this month, but it is well worth reading if you missed it. It's from Melinda Henderson, and may be found at <http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2014/jan/04/letter-insurance-boon>.

- Marjorie Cole



LAWRENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY

December 16, 2013 - 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: : Joan Golden, Chair; Chris Burger; Fran Devlin; Brady Flannery; Ursula Minor; Deborah Thompson; David Vance.

Absent: Gould/Evans Architects.

Library Staff: Brad Allen, Director; Sherri Turner, Assistant Director; Kathleen Morgan, Library Foundation Director.

Guests: Gordon Fitch, Friends of the Library; Elliot Hughes, Lawrence Journal reporter; Elinor Tourtellot, League of Women Voters.

Consent Agenda

Joan asked for approval of the minutes of the special December 11, 2013 meeting. The purpose of that meeting was to consider whether to authorize the city to include the library in the city's resolution to exempt city buildings from the concealed carry law for another 4 years. The Board agreed with the city's plan to extend security but decided on a separate policy letter to be submitted to the Kansas Attorney General. Chris Burger wanted the wording of the resolution to include "does not prevent weapons from entering the building". The additional wording was added to the agreement and the minutes were approved.

Library Director's Report for December 2013

Building Renovation/Expansion - With almost all the structural steel up, the construction crews are now beginning to frame the exterior walls. The roof is almost finished and the building should be closed in soon.

Readers' Services Interviews - The Library began screening applicants for the new Readers' Services Coordinator position.

Out and About - Brad met with United Way Executive Director Erika Dvorske to learn more about the United Way's vision for the community and ways the library and United Way can collaborate to achieve their missions more effectively. He and some staff members met with Kevin Willmott to discuss a short film about the library for the grand opening. Kevin agreed to do the project for the library. Rich Minder and Janice Friedman invited Brad to speak at the "Success by 6" annual breakfast in January. He also has been asked to speak at the Altrusa dinner in January to talk about the library. Lastly, he was on Jeremy Taylor's "About the House" program on KLWN in December.

Library Foundation Director's Report

NEH Challenge Grant - The Foundation announced that it was one of fifteen organizations selected nationwide to receive a 2013 Challenge Grant from the National

Endowment for the Humanities. The grant provides \$275,000 in federal matching funds to support humanities programs at the library. The NEH grant will create the Greatest Expectations Fund, a permanent endowment for humanities programs in the new space. Annual earnings from the fund will bring dynamic speakers to the library, support community reading and literacy programs, and advance the humanities through technology. For every \$3 donated to the Greatest Expectations Fund, NEH provides a \$1 match. The Foundation must raise a total of \$825,000 by 2017 to fully earn all the matching funds. Thus far, the Foundation has raised approximately \$400,000 in donations and pledges. The goal is to build a \$1,000,000+ endowment for programs at the library.



Friends/Foundation Annual Letter - The Friends and Foundation joint fundraising letter was mailed to 3,600 households in late November.

"Toast to the Library" Update - As reported at the last Board of Trustees meeting, the Foundation has formed a committee to plan "A Toast to the Library"--a sneak peek fundraising party to take place on the Thursday night prior to the official library opening. The focus is on seeking "Signature Sponsors" for this event and to date, three local businesses have signed on: Stevens & Brand Law Firm, Crown Automotive, and NIC, Inc.. Foundation board members are actively recruiting volunteers to help with the planning.

US Bank Grant - US Bank has approved the Foundation's grant request of \$5,000 for book lockers at the new library. This is the second installment that US Bank has made toward this project. Book lockers will be installed in the west side exterior wall of the new building so that patrons can retrieve library materials 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Swing and a Miss - The Foundation's application to the Kansas Health Foundation (KHF) grant for a summer reading grant did not win approval. The library can reapply for the grant in March, 2014.

The Library Friend's Report - Gordon Fitch said the Friends will have a retreat on January 6 to discuss planning for donations. Brad added that the Friends agreed to fund the library's request for a \$48,000 grant that will help with the summer reading program.

Ongoing business -

Renovation/expansion update - The Board enjoyed the tour of the new space and commented on the lighting and materials. The schedule of construction is dependent on weather.

New Business

RFID - Brad reported that the RFID book sorter expense accounted for \$320,000 of the total \$500,000 grant. The remaining funding will be spent on things like security gates and self-checks. Biblioteka was chosen to supply the self-checks that will take both cash and credit cards for fines. The Board approved seven self checks, one going in the children's area.

- Elinor Tourtellot, observer



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

December 12, 7:17–9:18 pm, 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, Caroljean Brune, James Dunn, Midge Grinstead, Marlene Merrill. Absent: none. 2015 LWVK Annual Convention preparations. Prior to commencement of the meeting, Cille provided a report on preparations for the 2015 LWVK Annual Convention. Margaret (Marlene) moved to choose Holidome as the official venue and to notify LWVK that they should bear risk; there was no discussion and the motion carried by unanimous consent. CK offered to put together a letter for the LWVK board about the arrangements. Items distributed with the agenda. Minutes of the Nov meeting; Treasurer's report; a draft of a letter to the Hospital Board regarding KOMA; a request from the New York Elementary School PTO for cosponsorship of a film; and a memo from Holiday Inn Hotel. Treasurer's report. Marjorie reported total income for Nov of \$0 and expenses of \$25. Current balances as of 30 Nov: Checking Account = \$2547.65; Money Market =

\$2102.54; Stucky = \$5625.61; Judiciary = \$581.93; Education Fund (LWVEF) = \$642.10. Letter to Hospital board regarding KOMA and open meetings. Caleb (Margaret) to send the letter, which David has circulated previous to the meeting. Margaret suggested a minor revision to the letter, so that it read "Although the purpose", correcting a typographical error; the amendment was accepted. Marlene asked what action do we hope for? David replied that we would like a response. Marlene noted that that this is not quite what was stated, so David suggested "we request a reply"; also accepted. CJ suggested replacing "compliance" with "conformance"; again, accepted. There was no further discussion and the motion to send the letter with noted revisions was adopted by unanimous consent. Co-sponsorship of film with New York Elementary PTO. David referred us to a request from Lily Mason of the New York PTO that League cosponsor a screening of the film "Girl Rising" on February 25. There was general agreement that we should agree to contribute funds to defray the cost, and discussion ensued about how much. Several members offer personal donations. Marjorie noted that we can't afford to contribute the full amount needed without special contributions, since we have already donated to other causes, but could probably afford \$50. There was a collective motion (CJ) to donate \$50 of League money, plus whatever personal contributions members care to make. Marjorie offered to collect the latter, noting the sooner the better. David set 19 Dec as the deadline for making additional contributions. League will set up a table at the event. LWWUS advocacy priorities. David informed us that comments are due by Jan 11. Marjorie thought our big priority should be voter registration. David suggested revising this to asked LWWUS to figure out at national level how to support efforts in states that limit registration. Marlene suggested advocating for gun control. Marjorie opined immigration. CJ thought advocacy for reproductive choice (abortion, birth control) and opposing Citizens United. David asked us to decide on our



priority issues, and voter registration, birth control, and Citizens United won the day. David offered to write up our recommendations for the Voter. Student membership definition clarified. Caleb (Margaret) moved to adopt a policy making eligible for student memberships anyone enrolled in high school or at least part-time in an accredited post-secondary institution; Marci suggested adding and "eligible to vote in next election", which Caleb and Margaret accepted as a friendly amendment. The motion carried by unanimous consent.
 - Caleb Morse

cerned a 19+ acre tract on the southwest corner of Monterey Way and Peterson Road, an assisted living and independent living retirement facility proposed by "Americare." The RS10 tract was requested to be rezoned to RM12-PD, along with the Preliminary Development Plan (also serving as a Preliminary Plat). We complimented the staff and developers for seeking a Planned Development because of the design control and predictability of this overlay district, but had questions about some features: (1) the possibly inadequate parking, (2) the possible overbuilding of retirement facilities and (3) in the event the projects fails, would it revert to a standard RM12 District? We suggested that the developer could achieve the same result with a Special Use Permit and single family zoning. The Staff Report characterized the development as conforming to the Comprehensive Plan (CP), even though it is shown in the CP as low and very low density. We pointed out that because our CP shows only low, medium and high residential densities, there is no predictability for neighborhoods as to potential residential zoning or what residential use will actually be built, a problem confronting all Lawrence neighborhoods.



LAND USE COMMITTEE DECEMBER MEETING

The Land Use Committee (LUC) met at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 14, 2013 at the Community Mercantile meeting room. We discussed the agenda items on the upcoming December Planning Commission (PC) Agenda, and decided to write two letters to the PC. One item not on the Agenda before December 16 was the report by Lynn Zollner on the nominations of three new historical buildings for the Lawrence Register of Historic Places because these applications came on-line after our Saturday meeting. However, they should be noted because of their significance: 627 Ohio Street; 1040 New Hampshire Street (English Lutheran Church); and 1047 Massachusetts Street (the Watkins Bank Building). These applications will be considered by the PC in January. We sent two letters to the PC and Lucille King represented the League at the meeting.

The first letter that we sent was on Items No. 2A and 2B. This letter con-

The second letter we sent was on Items 5A & 5B, the annexation and rezoning to RM12D and RM12D-FP (duplex development-flood plain) on an almost 15-acre tract wedged in between the proposed OS (Open Space) pump station on the east, the proposed OS-FP addition of Naismith Park floodplain on the south, and an older RM12D duplex area

on its north. Our Committee members expressed concern that this tract was lower than the adjacent duplex area that had flooded soon after its development many years ago. Worse, the subject 15-acre area had been filled by the owner with questionable fill that possibly would not compact properly. We pointed this out in our letter as a major concern and asked the PC to consider some use other than residential for this tract, such as parkland.

Outcomes: All items,



including the two on which we sent letters, were approved unanimously by the PC except those received for future action—Items 3 and Miscellaneous Item 1.

We did not send letters on the following items reviewed by the PC, but are listing them because of their significance:

Item 1 was a new Preliminary Plat (PP) that had expired, submitted by the City for the 537 acre Wakarusa Wastewater Treatment Plant. The new treatment plant is located on the south side of the Wakarusa with its northern boundary configured by the Wakarusa and its eastern boundary by Coal Creek.

Item 3 was for the PC to receive information on needed amendments to the county Agritourism Regulations which will be considered by the PC in January. This issue was precipitated by a proposal that was much more intensive than had been originally anticipated for this use—the “Pumpkin Patch.” Before sending this request for modified regulations to the PC, the County Board of Commissioners had placed a hold on new Agritourism applications until these regulations could be modified.

Item 4a was for an 8+ acre site owned by the City on the northwest corner of Louisiana and 31st Street to be rezoned Open Space (OS) and Flood Plain (FP) to accommodate a major pump station for wastewater to the new treatment plant (see Item 1). Item 4b was for the preliminary plat (PP) for this tract.

Items 6a and 6b were for the annexation and rezoning to OS (Open Space) of 21+ acres—an expansion of Naismith Valley Park to the east and south. (Good news: this serves as a block to further expansion of commercial zoning along 31st in this area in addition to adding to Naismith Park and preserving the stream).

Item 7 was a revised Final Plat of Langston Heights that differed enough from the previously approved Preliminary Plat to warrant taking it to the PC instead of the usual administrative approval. The original single linear Lot 1, Block 1 was now proposed to be subdivided into separate lots to allow 15 duplexes (30 units) in place of the original single-lot townhouse

configuration of 62 units. In addition, the requirement to extend its main access, Renaissance Drive, to the south to Bob Billings Parkway before being developed was dropped.

Miscellaneous Item No. 1, procedural options regarding camping, will be taken up in January.



NEW MEMBER WELCOME

Please welcome our newest member, Melissa Wick, who has attended some of our fall meetings. As a field representative for the Census Bureau, Melissa brings skills important to understanding and working with lists of people. She has already joined the League committee dealing with Douglas County voters in suspense. We look forward to sharing more of her story with you in the future. - Margaret Arnold



IN MEMORY OF CAROL NALBANDIAN

We will miss long-time League member, Carol Nalbandian, who died January 7, 2014, in her home. As an active board member, she was well known for her interest in and knowledge of local government issues. She sought diversity among League members and worked with various League committees. She was also active on boards of other organizations, notably the Lawrence Public Library. Her family has suggested tributes in her name to the library; they may be sent in care of Warren-McElwain Mortuary, 120 W. 13th Street, Lawrence, KS 66044. A nice obituary for Carol was published at <http://www2.ljworld.com/obituaries/2014/jan/09/carol-nalbandian/>.



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

Membership

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

Voter Services

- Register voters
- Help with voter education

Promotion of League to our Community

- Public speaking
- Attend community events as League representative
- Observer corps (attend/report on government meetings)

Help with research for League studies on issues

Serve on the Board of Directors

I have the following skills:

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

My interests include: _____

