



The VOTER

Bulletin of the League of Women Voters of Lawrence–Douglas County, Kansas
 PO Box 1072 • Lawrence KS 66044-1072

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

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|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
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| National League: | http://www.lwv.org | | (202) 429-1965 |

League Calendar

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Tues Aug 9 3–5 pm | LWV L–DC Board meeting. <i>Lawrence Public Library Meeting Room C, 707 Vermont St. All League members are invited to attend.</i> |
| Fri Aug 12 | Deadline for submissions to the August VOTER. Email submissions to caleb.morse[at]gmail.com . |
| Thurs Aug 18 11:30 am–1 pm | Hot Topic Education and the Common Core: What are the issues? <i>Watkins Community Museum of History, 1047 Massachusetts St. All are welcome. [See announcement below.]</i> |
| Sat Aug 20 7 pm | LWV L–DC Land Use Committee Meeting. <i>Lawrence Community Mercantile, 901 Iowa St. All League members are invited to attend.</i> |
| Tues Aug 30 6–9 pm | Film and discussion on gun control: Making a Killing: Guns, Greed, and the NRA , sponsored by Brave New Films; panelists from the League and from Local Organizations will respond. <i>Lawrence Public Library Auditorium, 707 Vermont St. All League members are invited to attend.</i> |
| Tues Sep 13 3–5 pm | LWV L–DC Board meeting. <i>Lawrence Public Library Meeting Room C, 707 Vermont St. All League members are invited to attend.</i> |
| Thurs Sep 15 11:30 am–1 pm | Hot Topic Presentation of a LWV L–DC position on economic development and community development , chaired by David Burress. This committee’s work was noted at Annual Meeting, but is now open for a progress report and discussion. <i>Watkins Community Museum of History, 1047 Massachusetts St. All are welcome.</i> |

**Don’t miss our August Hot Topic
 Education and the Common Core: What are the issues?
 Thurs Aug 18, Watkins Community Historical Museum, 1047 Massachusetts St
 Informal gathering with light refreshments, 11:30–12 pm; program begins at 12 pm.**

Speaker Judith Roitman, retired KU professor of mathematics, has been involved in math education for most of her career, running workshops for elementary and secondary math teachers and observing them in the classroom. She states that such topics as the Common Core have been politicized to the point that most of us need accurate information. She has insisted, “There is no math war.” Free and open to the public. Please plan to attend and bring friends for this promising session.

Message from Co-President Marlene Merrill

June and early July have been busy months for the League. First I will report on the National Convention which was held in Washington D.C., June 16-19. About 800 League members attended the convention which was a mix of presentations and plenary sessions. Some of the highlights: 1) a resolution responding to gun violence in American and a resolution to restore research on gun safety and gun violence and provide funding for the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) to do this research; 2) a resolution supporting statehood for the people of District of Columbia; 3) a resolution supporting U.S. ratification of the UN COP 21 Paris agreement; and 4) a resolution for the League to continue working for full implementation of the EPA Clean Power Plan. The LWVUS budget was approved and the by-laws were amended lowering the age for full membership to age 16 and to encourage all regardless of immigration status for membership. There was a lot of discussion about age 16 and most of the Kansas delegation was not in favor but it did pass. Among the good news is that Kansas was awarded the Strengthening Democracy Award.



LWV L-DC delegates to the LWV National Convention (L to R) Cille King, Deborah Duncan, and Marlene Merrill front of the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

On July 14, the League co-sponsored with the Lawrence Voter Education Coalition a potluck and candidate speed dating event. The weather was beautiful. Biemers BBQ, HyVee and Dillons helped support the potluck; their contributions were appreciated. Everyone who came agreed that the food was plentiful and delicious. A special thanks to Steve Mason and Freshpicked who entertained everyone with music during the social hour and during dinner; the music was delightful. Twenty candidates attended and had opportunity to speak for two minutes each. Then candidates moved among tables speaking with folks present. It was a great opportunity to ask questions of candidates and to speak about issues with office seekers.

Our next board meeting will be **August 9** in room C at the Lawrence Public Library. We will start at 3 pm with Jocelyn Lyons, who will talk with the board about proposed cuts to senior services. Remember our board meetings are open so visitors are welcome.

Some dates for your calendar! On **August 18**, Judith Roitman will speak to League on the Common Core education initiative. (For details, see announcement on p. 1). The Kansas State Board of Education previously passed and had begun to implement Common Core Standards. Now the Legislature is seeking to rescind these educational standards. On **August 30**, League will participate in a film viewing and panel discussion on gun violence. On **September 15**, David Burress will present information on the League's economic development study. (For details, see calendar on p. 1.)

A Thank You from our Stucky Award recipient

I am so honored to have received the League of Women Voters of Lawrence/Douglas County Mabel Stucky Memorial Scholarship. As a person who has always considered political activism and community involvement to be of utmost importance, it is heartening to know that there are organizations committed to similar values. I pledge to support LWV initiatives and I am thankful for efforts made to truly make democracy work. Your organization's leadership on access to the ballot box, expanding educational opportunities for all, and defending the environment are incredibly important and I am so humbled to be associated with such a group. Thank you!

Warm regards, Stefan Petrović

LWVK wins national award

The Strengthening Democracy award is to showcase the work of Leagues that activate their grassroots network to advocate change around key issues, including protecting voter rights or increasing voter registration and turnout. The four state Leagues that were chosen as finalists were: LWV California, LWV Ohio, LWV Wisconsin, and LWV Kansas. *We (Kansas) won!*

LWVK has been working diligently to Push Back the Purge! – a purge of the voter rolls of incomplete voter registrations due to a documentary proof of citizenship requirement by the Secretary of State. The Kansas League has been working with partners to fight for the 20,000 voters whom have already been purged and the 4,000 more voters who are added to the list each month. LWVK has been involved in a lawsuit against the unnecessary hardships and complexities of the proof of citizenship requirement which disproportionately impacts students, minority communities and the elderly.

– LWVK Co-President Marge Ahrens



LWVK Co-Presidents Marge Ahrens and Carole Neale, with the Strengthening Democracy award, at the LWVUS Convention in Washington, D.C.

Two summaries of our June *Hot Topic* with LWVK Observer Paul Johnson

Summary 1! Paul Johnson, legislative observer for the League, summarized the “self-inflicted crisis in Topeka” at the June 16 *Hot Topic* meeting at the Watkins Museum. (You can also watch it on the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRoyILyewXM&feature=youtu.be>.)

Speaking about the yet unfinished legislative session, Paul said “We are at a defining moment for the state of Kansas. We have to rebuild the quality of life.” He gave us a brief history on the changing tax laws, beginning in the 1990s when Governor Bill Graves decided to cut taxes. This was continued in succeeding administrations including Governor Brownback who lowered income taxes and did away with taxing the top income earners. This brought us to the extreme economic crisis we find ourselves in today, he said. The State made promises to send money back to the counties but those promises were never kept. In the 60 years prior to 2008 revenue was never down more than 1%. That figure rose to 7% by 2010. In trying to come up with ways to balance the budget, the majority of legislators seemed to ask “Which hide are we going to take it out of?”



LWVK Admin Asst Natasha Martinez, at the LWV US Convention in Washington, D.C.

Paul covered many topics including a review of the school funding issue, higher education, concealed carry, KanCare, rural hospitals, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP (Kansas now ranks 46th in the country in helping people put food on their plates), prisons, water plan, community mental health, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or TANF, affordable housing, utilities/energy costs, renewable energy, and water depletion. Paul said in 2000, Kansas had one wind farm, now we have 20, with four more planned. Two-thirds of Kansans, he said, rely on the 14 reservoirs for their water. Also, it is estimated the Ogallala Aquifer will be 70% depleted by 2050.

Paul summed up his review with the “hope for more moderate voices to be elected this fall.” – Ann Carlin Ozegovic

Summary 2! State Revenue and Budget Crises. The main issue facing the state is funding of Kindergarten through Grade 12 education. Related to this is the number of Limited Liability Companies (LLCs) in the state that are exempt from state income tax. **History.** In 1992, the legislative and executive branches sought to rebalance tax revenues. It was felt there was too much reliance on property taxes. Governor Graves sought to have the state funded by 1/3 property taxes, 1/3 sales taxes, and 1/3 income taxes. Also, motor vehicle taxes and taxes on business machinery and equipment were to be reduced. Counties would continue to rely on property taxes and sales taxes. During the administrations of Governors Sebelius and Parkinson, ending balances for budget years were spent down. **Governor Brownback's approach to state taxes and funding:** Eliminate state income taxes the same as the states of Texas, Wyoming, and Florida. Eliminate state income taxes on the wealthiest Kansans. Eliminate state income taxes on non-wage income of small business LLC's. It was anticipated this would reduce state revenues by \$160 million to \$180 million per year. The actual annual reduction has been \$250 million per year. There is no definition of what is considered a "small business." Kansas has the second highest sales tax on food in the United States. The average family spends 25% of their income on food. One in 6 households in Kansas are food insecure. Kansas is 50th in the Union in funding meals for at-risk children. **Other comments related to state funding for education.** School finance is approximately 50% of the state of Kansas budget. There is a proposal to limit state aid for construction. There is also a proposal to eliminate limits on tuition that can be charged by institutions of higher education. An unrelated issue is how to institutions of higher education should address firearms on campuses. **Medical care for low income Kansans.** There are three companies that administer Medicaid programs for the state. Approximately 425,000 Kansans are served under the program. Forty percent of live births are paid for by Medicaid in Kansas, and 50% of the adult care home beds in Kansas are funded by Medicaid. Missouri and Arkansas have expanded Medicaid, but Kansas has not. **Children in state care.** There are approximately 7,000 children in foster care in Kansas. There are 29,000 child care slots in Kansas, but the policy may be to reduce the total to 14,000. **Other issues.** Kansas state prisons are at capacity, so more beds are needed. The State Water Plan is not adequately funded. Community mental health centers are underfunded. In May, 2016, state revenues declined. **Paul Johnson's "wish list."** Vehicle fuel tax should be increased to fund highway repair and construction. State income tax should be changed so that LLC non-wage income exempt from income tax doesn't exceed \$100,000 per year. Reinstating taxes on the wealthiest Kansans. Ninety per cent of highway needs should be funded. There are 1.2 million housing units in Kansas, 40% of which are rentals. How will the costs of electricity and gas be affected by the merger of Kansas City Power and Light Co. with Westar Energy? Summer is the peak season for use of electricity. There are 20 wind farms in Kansas with 4 more to be constructed. Twenty per cent of electricity is currently produced by wind power.



Douglas County Clerk incumbent candidate Jamie Shew talks with constituents at our Candidates Potluck.

– Dan Dannenberg



Douglas County Commission District 3 candidate Michelle Derusseau talks with constituents at our Candidates Potluck.

NOTE: Paul spoke at the *Hot Topic* meeting one week before the extra wrap-up session of the legislature. To get his final take on the entire session, check out his June 29 blog at:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwzR1oVeQS2gX3pTNHhTbnZSbUk/view>

Voter Registration Report



Kansas House of Representatives District 44 incumbent candidate Barbara Ballard talks with constituents at our Candidates Potluck.

LWV L-DC has held 19 voter registration events since April and has received 178 voter registration applications, and several advance ballot by mail applications. Some people ask if our time is well spent. We did an analysis after the November 2014 election, and found that of the 250 people that we registered between May-September 2016, 97% had completed their registration, and over 80% had voted in the November 2014 election. So – YES! – our time is well spent.



Kansas Senate District 2 incumbent candidate and LWV L-DC member Marci Francisco talks with constituents at our Candidates Potluck.

who filed a voter registration application, but have not turned in their proof of citizenship have until the eve before the election to submit documentation to county election officials. The suspense list includes those who filed to vote at the DMV and will have only Federal election votes counted. Those who submitted their registration applications in any other manner – by mail, on line, by FAX, in person, or through a voter drive – will not have any votes counted, *unless they have successfully presented their proof of citizenship by August 1*. You can check your voter registration by entering your name and date of birth at myvoteinfo.voteks.org. This website also gives your registration address and polling place, lists all your voting districts, and lets you know about your past voting history.

The Douglas County Clerk's website for elections provides the list of candidates; information about early voting dates, times, and locations; the application for Advance Voting by Mail, and ways to submit your documents and ballots. Visit the website at www.douglascountyks.org/depts/voting-and-elections. You can view the July 10 Voter Education Coalition forums on YouTube by clicking on these links: Kansas House Districts 42, 44, and 45 are at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKIBjquf3WQ>; Douglas County Commission District 3 is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ys7FYijp2FM&feature=youtu.be>.



Douglas County Commission District 3 candidate Jim Weaver talks with constituents at our Candidates Potluck.

– Cille King

Welcome to New Members!

Please welcome new members Jamie Benvenuti, Steven Davis, Marilynn Fullerton, Penny Hotchkiss, Thea Perry, and Paula Slater. We are delighted to have you join us! – Marjorie Cole

In Memoriam: Bob Fluker



J. Robert Fluker, Sr., 97, a long time League Member, died June 28, 2016. After a long career with the US Department of State in a number of positions both in Washington, DC, and in South and Southeast Asia, he returned to Lawrence in 1974. In addition to working as an international and domestic consultant to U.S. companies, he was active in community activities, serving on the board of Kansans for Improvement of Nursing Homes and as a member of the League of Women Voters. He established the Helen N. Fluker Award for Open and Accessible Government in memory of his late wife. The Fluker award recognizes a Douglas County citizen who has made valuable contributions to open and accessible government. League members will miss him at the annual luncheon presentation of the award, along with many members of his family.

Highlights of the June 14 LWV L-DC Board Meeting

Lawrence Public Library, 4:12–5:45 pm

Present: Debra Duncan and Marlene Merrill (Co-Pres), Cille King (Vice Pres), Marjorie Cole (Treas), Sharon Brown (Secr), Margaret Arnold, Ann Carlin Ozegovic, Tamara Cash, Janice Friedman, Kim Gibson, Carol Klinknett, Melissa Wick. Absent: marci francisco, Midge Grinstead. Guest: Steven X. Davis.

Melissa moved and Margaret seconded that minutes of the previous meeting be approved. **President's report.** Debra handed out copies of the History of the Wichita LWV that was published in 1951. Debra announced that the general meeting at Conroy's on May 14th was well attended and members were very engaged. **LWVK/Voter Service report.** Cille announced voter registration events at the Farmer's Market and Lecompton Territorial Days. July 12 is the last day to register to vote in the KS primary. Detailed election information is available online.

There are 17,000 names on the suspended list. Only federal names will show up on the state website. **Treasurer's report.** Marjorie reported income of \$400 in May and expenses of \$2,480.10 ; net outflow was \$2,080.10. Balances as of May 31 were: checking acct \$8,374.30; money

market acct \$2,105.60; Stucky acct \$3,632.12; Education Fund 339.27. Ann moved and Janice seconded that the treasurer's report be accepted. Motion passed. **Membership Committee report.**



Douglas County Commission District 2 incumbent candidate Nancy Thellman talks with constituents at our Candidates Potluck.

Kim presented new membership proposals that include Welcome Packets and a new survey of interests, with changes to the membership application. Her report is filed with the June minutes. **Old business.** The Hot Topic speaker schedule was reviewed. The October meeting will feature City Manager Tom Markus, but the November meeting is still open. In December, there will be a presentation on League History with a holiday party. Janice asked to be given time to speak at the Hot Topic meetings to recruit Observer Corps members. **New business.** The June 15 LAN letter regarding proposed changes to the implementation of local economic development planning in Lawrence was discussed. Consensus

of the board was that we cannot sign the letter at this time. A copy of the letter is filed with the June minutes.

– Sharon Brown



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF LAWRENCE / DOUGLAS COUNTY

Make a Difference – Join/Support the League!

Return this form with a check made out to LWV L/DC, and mail to LWV L/DC, PO Box 1072, Lawrence, KS 66044.

(Membership is open to anyone who will be eligible to vote in the next November election. New or renewed memberships received now will expire March 31, 2017.)

Date _____ Renewing member
_____ New Member. I heard about the League via (Facebook, Web Site, Friend, Other): _____

Suggested voluntary membership assessment:*

| Approximate Household Income | Individual membership | Household membership |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Student** | _____ \$17 | _____ \$29 |
| Under \$25,000 | _____ \$20 | _____ \$35 |
| \$25,000 to \$50,000 | _____ \$35 | _____ \$55 |
| Over \$50,000 | _____ \$55 | _____ \$85 |
| Sustaining member | _____ \$100 | _____ \$150 |
| Life member (of 50 years) | _____ \$0 | |

* Our membership assessment supports the National and State Leagues at \$50/member (\$32 National and \$18 State).

** High school or postsecondary student enrolled at least part time in an accredited institution.

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

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. Write check to "LWV Education Fund."

PLEASE PRINT

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

As a League member or supporter, 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
- ___ Represent League at community events
- ___ 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
- ___ Microsoft Word / Excel / Quickbooks
- ___ Website/Social Media design/management

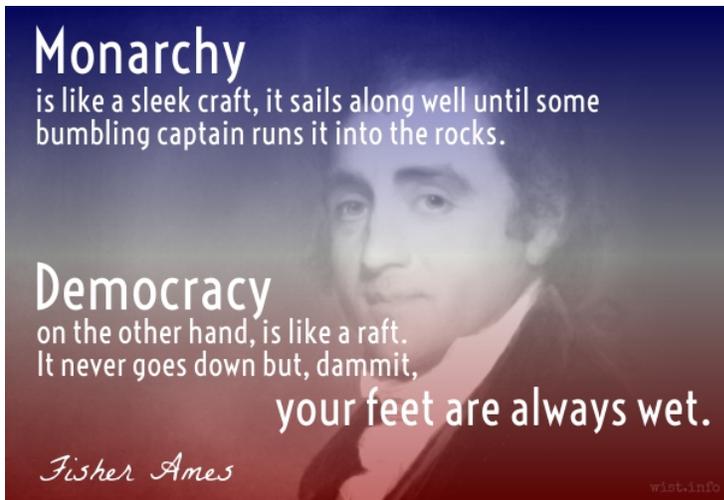
My interests include:

PO BOX 1072 • LAWRENCE KS 66044-1072

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July 2016

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