



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 advocacy.

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League Calendar

Tues, Oct 11 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>
Sun, Oct 16 3–4:30 pm 4:30–5:30 pm	Voter Education Coalition Candidate Forum <i>City Commission Meeting Room, City Hall, 6 East 6th St. Open to the public.</i> Kansas House of Representatives, Districts 42, 44 and 45 Kansas State Senate, Districts 2 and 3
Mon, Oct 17 7–7:30 pm 7:30–8:30 pm	Voter Education Coalition Candidate Forum <i>City Commission Meeting Room, City Hall, 6 East 6th St. Open to the public.</i> Kansas State Board of Education, District 4 Douglas County Commission, Districts 2 and 3
Tues, Oct 18 7pm	Hot Topic! Informed Voters, Fair Judges Project – Justice Marla Luckert & Justice Carol Beier. <i>Carnegie Bldg. 200 W 9th St. League members and the general public are invited. [See announcement below.]</i>
Sat, Oct 22 7pm	LWV L–DC Land Use Committee Meeting <i>Lawrence Community Mercantile, 901 Iowa St. All League members are invited to attend.</i>
Tues, Nov 15 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>

Don't miss our October Hot Topic!

Informed Voters, Fair Judges Project with justices Marla Luckert and Carol Beier **Tuesday, Oct 18, 7 pm, Carnegie Building, 200 W 9th St**

At this month's *Hot Topic!*, Kansas Supreme Court Justices Marla Luckert and Carol Beier will speak on the *Informed Voters, Fair Judges Project*. This is a non-partisan project started by the National Association of Women Judges <https://ivp.nawj.org/> to educate voters on the role of the judiciary and the importance of fair and impartial courts. As you probably know, this is an extremely important topic in Kansas. Five of our seven state Supreme Court Justices and six of the 14 Court of Appeals Judges are up for retention in the General Election. This event is free and open to the public, so be sure to tell a friend!

For background information on Justice Luckert, visit <http://www.kscourts.org/kansas-courts/supreme-court/justice-bios/luckert.asp>; for background information on Justice Beier, visit <http://www.kscourts.org/kansas-courts/supreme-court/justice-bios/beier.asp>. For the results of the Kansas Judicial Review Survey, visit <http://www.kansasjudgereview.org/retention-opinion-summaries-for-all-justices-and-judges.html>.

Message from Co-President Debra Duncan

August and September have been busy, busy months. We had a one-day garage sale in August and made \$408.30. We had *Hot Topics* on Common Core Education and Local Economic Development, held a community discussion on guns, co-sponsored an event on climate change, participated in the KU Volunteer Fair and held numerous voter registration events. Volunteers registered voters at the Kansas State Fiddling and Picking Championships, a federal Naturalization Ceremony at the Dole Institute, at the Art Center on Final Friday and at both Lawrence high schools. We are continuing to register voters at the Farmer's Market every weekend; and at the library. The last day to register to vote is Oct 18 and we will continue to register voters through that date. Check out Cille King's update below for dates and times. **We need volunteers!**

2016 Legislative Highlights Available

Each year the state's Legislative Research office publishes *Legislative Highlights*, a review of the legislation adopted in the past year. Bills that were passed during the 2016 session and special session are summarized and grouped into topics. A copy of this year's highlights can be found at <http://www.kslegresearch.org/KLRD-web/Publications/LegislativeHighlights/2016-legislative-highlights.pdf>.

Thanks to League member marci francisco who has provided paper copies of the *Highlights* for our members who still receive a paper copy of *The VOTER*.

If you aren't available during any of times we have scheduled to register voters but would still like to help, don't give up. Think about the people you know - your friends, co-workers, the organizations you belong to, the people at the church you attend... are they all registered to vote? You can get federal forms from us or print your own out: (http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/Documents/Federal%20Voter%20Registration_6-25-14_ENG.pdf) and hand them out. If you want to hold your own LWV voter registration event, just let us know. We can provide materials, tables, chairs, even training, and find you some help if you need it. And remember, not everyone who registers voters has to be a League member; we are more than happy to accept volunteers!

Hot topics! We have two very interesting *Hot Topics* in the works - you won't want to miss either of them. On Oct 18, Kansas Supreme Court Justices Marla Luckert and Carol Beier will talk about the *Informed Voters, Fair Judges* Project (see announcement on p. 1). Also, our new City Manager, Tom Markus, has contacted us and asked to meet with the League. We are checking dates with his office and will hopefully have something scheduled soon. We will let everyone know as soon as we have nailed down the date and time of this important event!



In Memoriam: Joe King

Joe King died August 19. Joe worked for the League mostly behind the scenes: he served as photographer, providing documentation of Annual Meetings and other events at Holcom Center and at Smith Center; he was invaluable with setting up and taking down equipment at many, many League voter registration events; he was a great support to Cille in her roles as our League president, voter service chair, and representative to the Kansas League of Women Voters. He was always friendly and thoughtful. Cille doesn't drink coffee and Joe especially endeared himself to co-workers by providing her with a cup of hot chocolate at a chilly winter voter registration event. We shall miss him.

Welcome to New Members!

Please welcome new League members Patricia Blex, Shannon Gerstner, Pam Houston, Kathryn Schartz, and Carol Williamson. We are delighted to have you!

—Marjorie Cole

Voter Service Report

League has been registering voters at the Lawrence Farmers Market, Lawrence Public Library, High Schools, Naturalization Ceremonies and other venues. We will continue registering citizens until the Tuesday, Oct 18, deadline for the Nov 8 General Election. Early voting in Douglas County starts on Wednesday, Oct 19, at the Douglas County Clerk's office. See their website for other times and places

(<https://www.douglascountyks.org/depts/voting-and-elections>).

Scheduled voter registration drives

Lawrence Farmers Market: Saturdays, 8 am–noon, through Oct 15

Lawrence Public Library Sundays, 1:30–4:30 pm, through Oct 16;

Wednesday, Oct 12, 2–7 pm; and

Tuesday, Oct 18, 1:30–4:30 pm

Let us know if you would like to volunteer to help, or have a place that you want us to help register voters.

Kansas list of Voters in Suspense. There were 23,901 Kansans on the voter suspense list as of August. 862 were in Douglas County. These are citizens who filled out a voter registration application, but failed to provide a copy of their proof of citizenship (usually a US birth certificate or US passport) to the County Election Office.

You can check the list, sorted by county, then alphabetically by last name on the League of Women Voters of Kansas website: lwvk.org.

Check your Kansas Voter Registration status by entering your first and last names, and your birthday at: myvoteinfo.voteks.org. This site also gives your polling place, voting districts, and voting history. Call your County Election Office if you think you should be a registered voter but don't find your name.

Lawrence Voter Education Coalition. The VEC met on Sep 15 and confirmed **candidate forums to be held at the Lawrence City Commission chambers** and recorded by Channel 6 to later broadcast:

Sunday, Oct 16, 3–4:30 pm, Kansas House of Representatives, Districts 42, 44, and 45; 4:30 – 5:30, Kansas State Senate, Districts 2 and 3

Monday, Oct 17, 7–7:30 pm, State Board of Education, District 4; 7:30–8:30 pm, Douglas County Commission, Districts 2 and 3

KTWU Forum for 2nd Congressional District, US Senate. A 2nd Congressional District candidate forum is tentatively scheduled on KTWU (Channel 11) for Monday, Oct 17, 7 pm. Interviews with the U.S. Senate candidates are tentatively scheduled either following at 8 pm, or on Wednesday, Oct 19, at 7 pm. We will update members as we know the final schedule.

—Cille King

LWVK recommends using the Federal Voter Application Form for new registrants

Members of the League of Women Voters of Kansas should start using the Federal Voter Registration Form when registering new voters, especially for high school and college students. Judge Robinson ordered that all voters registering at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or on the Federal Form may vote in Federal, State and Local elections on a "standard" ballot, by advance voting, by requesting a mail-in ballot, at the polls or any other means allowed. Their ballots will not be "provisional". Instead those registrants will be entered on official Voter Rolls and vote a full ballot. Those Kansans who already attempted to register using a Kansas form and who did not complete their registration should either submit their proof of citizenship to complete their registration or re-register using a federal form.

Generally, the County Election Offices do not have copies of the Federal Voter Application Forms, nor is this form available for online submittal. Find it on our state LWV website: <http://lwvk.org/>.

League members registering voters should carry the completed applications to the local County Election Office, if that is your usual practice, or applicants may mail or carry it themselves.

As long as litigation continues, the most secure registration in Kansas continues to be one accompanied by a birth certificate, passport, or other form of allowed ID. Right now, however, LWVK leadership recommends that every effort be made to register all new voters, and use of the Federal form is the best way to ensure they will be able to participate in the upcoming election.

Highlights of the July 12 LWV L-DC Board Meeting

Lawrence Public Library, 4-6 pm

Present: 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, Midge Grinstead, Carol Klinknett, Melissa Wick. Guest: Steven X. Davis. Absent: Debra Duncan.

President's Report: Marlene reported on the June LWV National Convention which she attended with Debra and Cille. The age limit for full League membership was lowered to 16.

Issues discussed included gun violence, statehood for Washington D.C. and the EPA Clean Power Plan. The Kansas League of Women Voters received the Strengthen Democracy Award.

LWVK/Voter Service Report: Cille reported we had 19 registration events in Douglas County since April and had turned in 178 voter registration applications. There are suspended voter lists on both our website (988) and the LWV-K website (22,816). The LWVK co-presidents have been busy with testimony, conferring with the ACLU and LWV national attorneys on lawsuits. They continue to update Kansas leagues on the status of registration and

voting laws as the lawsuits wind through the hearings, decisions, injunctions, and appeals. A new LWVK website is under development and should appear soon.

Treasurer's Report: Marjorie reported income of \$1,135 and expenses of \$545.45. Net income was \$407.55 Current balances as of June 30: Checking Account \$8,966.85, money market \$2,105.70, Stucky Account \$3,3632.27, Education Fund \$339.27.

Old Business: Planning was done for the July 14 Potluck/Candidate Speed Dating Event. Steve Mason's band will play from 5 to 6 pm.

There will be a registration table at the Sidewalk Sale.

New Business: A proposed legislative bill to eliminate the SHICK program was discussed. Consensus was to get more information on the subject, have a Hot Topic program on this subject, and write an informative letter to the editor from the LWV. Jocelyn Lyons, executive director of JAAA, was invited to speak at the August board meeting.

– Sharon Brown

Tell a friend that...

**Voter registration ends on Oct 18 @ 5 pm
Advance voting begins on Oct 19**

Summary of our August *Hot Topic* on the Common Core

What's wrong with Common Core? "Absolutely nothing," according to Susan Gay, associate professor of math at KU. Gay presented "Education and the Common Core: What are the issues?" at the League's Aug 18 Hot Topic meeting at the Watkins Museum. Motivation for Common Core is to standardize education since states vary wildly. "It is not a curriculum or a detailed plan for day to day teaching, but a set of learning goals and expectations," she said.

Common Core is a proposed set of standards at each grade level for students in order to coordinate curriculums from state to state. It is not a curriculum itself, but standards for students to reason abstractly in reading, math, writing, speaking and listening. For example she said reading standards for third graders' literature would include how to ask and answer questions, determine meaning of words, know part of the story, and distinguish point of view. Teacher may use any lesson plans they choose that will support the standards.

During the Q & A it was asked how the politics affects the issue. Gay responded, "Well, the pro Common Core people won their elections."

Professor Emeritus Judith Roitman was scheduled to speak at the Hot Topic meeting but was unable to attend. She offered the following summary about Common Core.

"The general criticism of the Common Core is that it's a left-wing federal conspiracy to force a curriculum with unnecessarily complicated math and offensive required texts. Furthermore it is simultaneously too hard and dumbed down.

Federal conspiracy? Nope. Common Core was overseen by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. They were concerned about the effect of uncoordinated state curriculums on actual students who move from one place to another, and the sharp differences among states on national and international tests of student achievement. States can sign on or not as they wish. The tests are mostly written by private companies and consortia (Pearson and PARCC are the two biggest); KU's Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation wrote the Kansas and Alaska tests. Contrary to myth, student data is held where it always has been held, in local school districts and maybe state bureaucracies. No feds anywhere in sight.

Common Core is not a curriculum. It is a set of standards of what students should be able to achieve at various grade levels. For example (math): multiply two two-digit numbers. For example (language arts): cite strong and thorough textual evidence. States and districts and teachers can do anything they like to help students be able to perform these tasks. So while you can find lots of videos online about horribly complicated math techniques mandated by Common Core, these techniques have nothing to do with Common Core. And while you can find lots of complaints about horrible required texts (too sexy, too un-American, too...), there are no required texts.

Common Core does have a list of exemplary texts at different grade levels, but the list is way too long for anyone to actually teach all the texts. You could teach none of them and still satisfy

Common Core. As for a radical left-wing plot, there are no history/social study standards, and the list of exemplary (not required) texts range widely over various ideologies.

Is Common Core too hard? Too easy? One can easily make a case to shift this or that standard up or down a grade. You can quibble about any of the specifics – I personally find the suggestion that students read Euclid in math class a little, shall we say, silly. But over-all, Common Core is a good approach for delineating what U.S. students should be able to do. If you're curious about the details, check it out online. And when you hear horrible things about Common Core, understand that it probably has nothing to do with Common Core at all."

– Ann Carlin Ozegovic

Highlights of the August 9 LWV L-DC Board Meeting

Lawrence Public Library, 4-6 pm

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

Co-President's Report (Marlene): After Jocelyn Lyon's presentation on how state funding cuts are affecting the Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging (*see below!*), Marlene reported on the Land Use Committee's letter to the planning commission, expressing concern about the proposed Naismith Creek addition which would create 65 single-swelling residential lots on 15 acres adjacent to Naismith Creek, an area which has been flooded in the past. No drainage plan was indicated in the Preliminary Plat.

The July 14 potluck at Centennial Park was declared a success, with about 70 people attending to enjoy the music of Steve Mason's band, Beimer's Barbecue, and "speed-dating" as 20 candidates moved from table to table to create question-asking opportunities and listen to small groups of attendees.

Co-President's Report (Debra): Back from her travels, Debra announced an upcoming event in Topeka, a program on *The Role of Courts in our Democracy* about the Informed Voters (Fair Judges) Project, a project of the National Association of Women in September.

Reverend Eleanor McCormick of the Plymouth Congregational Church will be meeting with Debra to discuss ways of increasing voting and voter registrations.

Monthly conference calls are now being scheduled for the presidents of the nine Kansas Leagues. League Day will be held in Manhattan on Oct 15.

Vice President's Report (Cille): We have had 20 voter registration events since April. The last one was the sidewalk sale on July 21, where we took in 16 voter applications and a few advance

ballot-by-mail applications. League members Cille King, Margaret Arnold, Annette Beck, Tamara Cash, Marjorie Cole, Janice Friedman, Carol Klinknett, Marlene Merrill, Ann Carlin Ozecovich, and Melissa Wick manned a table at the July 21 Sidewalk Sale to register voters and answer questions about voting. Other registration events were held on Aug. 16, 20, and 28.

LWVK Report: (Cille): LWVK's new website is up (lwvk.org), in a "soft" release. If you find a problem, please report to Cille.

A postcard went out to 187 new naturalized citizens who registered to vote after the ceremonies. It listed their polling place and places to get voter information.

Cille and Marge Ahrens (LWVK co-president) met with Stephanie West, the Communication and Outreach Director for the Disability Rights Center. She is interested in partnering with the League to promote registering and voting for the mentally and physically disabled. There are over 268,000 Kansans in this category. Her "Assistance in the Voting Booth" information sheet is informative.

Treasurer's Report (Marjorie): Income for July was \$484.05. Expenses were \$2,054.49. Net Outflow was -\$1,570.44. Current balances were Checking Account, \$7,396.41; Money Market Account, \$2,105.78; Stucky Account \$3,632.42.

Hot Topics! (Margaret): Susan Gay, substituting for Janice Roitman, spoke on the Common Core, Aug 18. A program on Gun Violence was held Aug 30. Portions of a film, *Making A Killing* was shown and followed by a panel discussion. On Sep 15, David Burress spoke on the Economic Development League Study. To learn more about this presentation, see LawrenceLeague.com.

Voter Education Coalition Report: (Debra and Cille) reported on the Aug 4 meeting. Four fall candidate forums being planned.

– Marjorie Cole, substitute secretary

Report to LWV L-DC Board on How State Funding Cuts are Affecting the Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging. Jocelyn Lyon, executive director of the Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging (JAAA), made a presentation to the board on Aug 9, on how state funding cuts are affecting the Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging (JAAA). The mission of JAAA – to make it easier for older persons to live independently in the comfort of their own surroundings – is not only cost effective, it is the preferred choice for hundreds of older adults in Shawnee, Jefferson and Douglas Counties. For over 40 years, this agency has been assisting with caregivers, meals, housekeeping, personalized emergency response, and other services. In the 90's the agency began to receive state dollars, not just federal money, and clients were placed on a sliding scale. Now aging services have been placed on a back burner by the state. A 39.2% cut has created a waiting list, laid-off staff, and such a reduction in provided services that some clients must leave their homes to be placed in long term care facilities, an even more expensive option. There is a need for client-focused publicity and public education on this problem.

Land Use Committee Report

In July, the Land Use Committee sent a letter to the Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission (PC) in regard to agenda item 5C: preliminary plat for Naismith Creek Addition (751 W 29th Terr), a development that would create 65 single-dwelling residential (RS) lots on approximately 15 acres adjacent to Naismith Creek. Following the LWV L- DC Environmental Position that “development should avoid hazardous building sites such as unstable slopes, un-compacted or undesignated fill, or areas subject to flooding” and the Subdivisions Design regulations that require a drainage plan be shown, the LUC argued that the area should be left as open space. Short of that, LUC suggested that there should be a buffer between the creek and the buildings. A second letter, sent by League members Joyce and Ron Wolf, made arguments along similar lines. Both letters appeared in the report to the City Commission on this PC issue when it went before them for approval on Aug 16.

Betty Lichtwardt notes that the problem is the floodplain regulations that we have adopted and our current stormwater management regulations. The critical issue is the need for detailed minimum building site elevations on each lot and detailed stormwater runoff patterns between buildings *in addition to* minimum runoff elevations at entrances and exits to plats at the preliminary plat stage. This should be mandatory for all residential preliminary plats in areas subject to flooding. Given the likelihood of future storms becoming increasingly more devastating, we shouldn't be developing areas subject to flooding at all. Thus, the request in both letters was for maintaining the floodplain areas as open space.

Outcome: The Planning Commission approved this item (the Preliminary Plat) 9-1 and the floodplain rezoning (on which LUC did not send a letter) had only one dissent, also. The City Commission recently approved the rezoning to RS, but it is uncertain what will happen with the Preliminary Plat or whether it will go to any commission beyond the Planning Commission.

Join the League and make a difference! Our dues are reasonable and the rewards are undeniable! To download a membership form, visit our website at http://lawrenceleague.com/files/LWV_L-DC_membership_form_2015-2016.pdf.

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Of interest to League members...
Jayhawk Audubon presents
***When the Well Runs Dry*, a film by**
Stephen Lerner (KU)

**Monday, Oct 24, 7:30 pm Trinity Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall, 1245 New Hampshire St**

The film explores the challenges and consequences of water use in western Kansas. Following the film and commentary by Tom Averill (Washburn Univ) and Matt Sanderson (KSU), there will be ample time for questions from the audience.

Free and open to the public!



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