

The Kansas Voter



January 2013

League of Women Voters of Kansas

Working together...for Kansas

Two Important Days Coming Up

■ Day at the Capitol and Convention 2013

L league Day at the Capitol is scheduled for February 13 this year. In this Legislature there are many, many issues about which the League has concerns. This is a chance to learn about those issues and to meet with your local legislators.

LWVK's legislative expert, Paul Johnson, will update us on what's going on in the statehouse. There will also be a speaker on "IS There Something the Matter with Kansas?" and a chance to discuss voter registration issues. The schedule goes from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with lunch included. The total for lunch and registration is \$26. You may wish to invite your legislators to lunch. We will meet at the Kansas Bar Association Building at 1200 S.W. Harrison Street. See the registration form in this Voter

Convention 2013 will take place on Saturday, April 27, 2013, with the theme "Off the Bench – Into the Fray." The Johnson County League "invites all Kansas League members to join us as we celebrate our successes of the past year, elect new officers, approve a budget, adopt the revised LWVK Finance position, and choose a new two-year study. It is a time to renew past League friendships and make new ones. We will be challenging everyone to become more active in the democratic process and offering opportunities to become more effective Leaguers." Elizabeth

McNamara, LWVUS President, has been invited.

Mary Sanchez, Editorial Columnist for the Kansas City Star, will be the keynote speaker at noon. She is a weekly syndicated columnist with Tribune Media Services, specializing in Latin American issues, immigration, politics, and culture. She also writes a monthly column for Poder, a business magazine geared to Latin America and has been a correspondent for EFE, a wire service based in Madrid, Spain. She will speak about current immigration law, how it affects Kansans, and discuss possible changes at both the state and federal level. A registration form appears on the last page of this Voter with information about time, place, and lodging. A few Johnson County members are opening their homes for Bed and Breakfast for those who might prefer not to stay in the hotel.³

President's Message League Pauses on Voter Registration

I've been in touch with a number of experts around the country about the Jan 1, 2013 change in voter registration requirements. One such adviser is Tim O'Brien, the LWV US expert on all these new voter laws. We have been advised to hold off registering voters for a while until we get a more definitive instruction as to how the League can do that without putting us in legal jeopardy if we try to copy personal citizenship documents. You can have people fill out the voting application and leave it to your county election office to contact the applicant for the citizenship document—which they do.



Ernestine Krehbiel,
LWVK President

The concern is that in making a copy of the document, the copying gadget leaves an e-copy in the machine (or cell phone or whatever does the copying). The fax machines and photocopiers keep electronic copies. Some have a small cache that might wipe out the previous copy when you copy the next one but most keep a substantial number of copies of documents that are put through them.

This copy problem could leave the local League itself and the members who do the voter registration
continued on page 2

First Call to LWVK Convention

April 27, 2013

OFF THE BENCH
INTO THE FRAY

Holiday Inn
8787 Reeder Road
Overland Park, Kansas

President's Message,

continued

vulnerable to legal liability should there ever be someone to claim that s/he has had identity stolen and we had handled the personal citizenship proof document like a birth certificate. We should never send personal identity copies (or financial accounts) by regular unsecured email, of course.

ACORN nationwide was brought down by the bad luck of just one local affiliate and some at the national office think that the League nationwide is being watched for errors AND MAY EVEN BE TARGETED as we are the next biggest organization that registers low-income voters.

The Florida League quit registering voters when heavy fines were enacted there for forms turned in later than 48 hrs. The Arizona League quit for a while until their law was overturned by the Court of Appeals; they are the ones with a law almost identical to ours as Kobach wrote both. The Arizona case is being heard before the US Supreme Court on March 18 with a decision expected in June.

Registering voters hasn't been a part of our 93-year history though it seems it ought to have been. We began in the 1980s and it became wide spread after the 1993 "Motor Voter" Act (National Voter Registration Act that provided a federal voter registration form).

We thought for a while that the use of the federal voter registration form might get us around the Kansas documentation of citizenship law. While the Constitution says that federal law supersedes state law, apparently states can make STRICTER laws than Federal laws under some circumstances so it isn't entirely clear what will be the outcome when the Arizona case is heard before the Supreme Court requiring proof of citizenship to register to vote. Leagues will still do voter registration at Naturalization Ceremonies because the number on the citizenship document can be used in this case.

The state DMV says that by fall of this year all those renewing drivers' licenses, as well as first-time applicants, will have to show proof of citizenship and it will be marked in some way on the Driver's License itself. This is because of federal law that came about after 9/11/2001.

So all Tim or the state board can do is tell all local Leagues what the concern is--local Leagues would be the vulnerable ones. It's less than a month until League Day (Feb 13) when after lunch ACLU attorney Holly Weatherford will help us think through as members what are the best practices for helping voters but not getting our members OR the League sued.

Continuing to seek greater wisdom and ways to keep the League and its members out of legal hot water. Ernestine, your president 3.

Notes to Local Leagues from LWVUS

■ League Forums are OPEN!

Come and join the discussions in the League's new online community that was built exclusively for League members and leaders.

Get Started on the Forums:

Now is the time to get started with your discussions on the new League Forums. In order to do so, go to www.lwv.org, click on LOGIN. Once logged in, use the Forums link in the left navigation bar or go to <http://forum.lwv.org>. (You will need to be logged into the lwv.org system to use the Forums.) Members interested in learning more are welcome to view a recorded webinar introducing the new Forums.

Why should I join the League Forums?

Like the discussion lists, the League Forums provide you with an opportunity to interact with fellow League members around the country on specific topics and to share your experiences.

■ Growing the League...Winning for Your League AND Our Democracy!

All Leagues are invited to participate in our January effort to showcase our growth! Because as we GROW the League we help strengthen our muscle for positive impact on things we care about. Let's show how we've grown as we've helped our democracy "Power the Vote" in 2012.

We have a three-part opportunity to share your successes.

1. Reach out to prospective members by January 11 and your League could win some great visibility tools: LWV buttons!

2. Update ALL the expiration dates on member records in the national database by January 25 for your League and be eligible to win a \$25 Staples card!

3. Show a net growth in membership numbers from Jan. 2012-Jan. 2013 by the deadline of January 31 to be eligible to win a free registration to the LWVUS Convention in 2014 in Dallas, Texas.

We will publicly celebrate the winning Leagues in the Leaders' Update in the coming weeks. For questions or support, email membership@lwv.org.

■ Reminder: Renew Members and Update Membership Rosters

Now that 2013 is here, it is time to renew your League members and update your League's membership information in the LWVUS database. Customize a renewal letter template (available online) to reach out to current members. The deadline for updating your League roster is January 31, 2013. Please contact Betty Taira at BTaira@lwv.org for database assistance and include your League's ID number (example CA123) in the subject line.

The Details

“ ...As citizens we need to look at the details. Anytime tax policy changes someone is affected. Who and how is what we need to know. Budgets need to add up. Some programs are mandated by federal law and must be funded. Sometimes when we make cuts in programs the long-term costs are much greater than if we had funded the program in the first place. This is true in prevention programs for troubled youth. Keeping kids in custody later because we did not try to keep them from getting into trouble with the law is much more expensive to the taxpayers.

To be effective in making an impact on issues that matter to you, I recommend you do the following:

1. Focus on two or three issues you really care about and have knowledge about.
2. Follow the committees that deal with those issues. What bills have been introduced? Where are these bills in the process? Should you testify about these bills?
3. Know your personal representative and senator. Your impact is greater if you have actually met them, talked with them, and asked them questions. Go to town hall meetings, call them, and visit them at the capitol.

Whether we get the kind of government we want depends on the degree to which we make our voice heard. What you think and believe is important. Your elected officials need to hear from you. 3

From Our Kansas Voice Blog by former state senators, Jean Schodorf and Dick Kelsey, "The Devil's in the Details" by Dick Kelsey

Vote 411

A League Investment

A year ago the state League board agreed to take two actions: 1. To apply for an international intern from South America to spend a few months in Kansas, and 2. To pay \$5000 for access to Vote 411 statewide, including areas beyond local Leagues. The two decisions were made jointly as one of the activities we proposed for the intern was to enter the Vote 411 data and to oversee the project.

Vote 411 is a program developed by LWVUS to provide voters with information about their voting district, candidates, and polling place. Any voter can enter his/her zip code and get the information needed. If their local candidates respond to the questions emailed to them by the League, the voter will also have information about their positions on issues important to the League.

The intern who was available to us was a highly-trained international lawyer, and we all agreed that our project was probably not appropriate for her skills and interests. So we hired someone else to collect all of the candidate information from the Secretary of State's office after it was compiled in mid-June (delayed due to court redistricting). After that data was entered, a standard letter was emailed to each of the candidates giving them their access code to enter their responses to the questions in Vote 411.

There were a good number of candidates for whom the Secretary of State did not have email addresses. In some cases, if candidates lived within local League areas, the local League worked with them to get their information into Vote 411. In non-League areas, candidates may have had no contact.

LWVUS provided webinars and consultation to all local Leagues in managing Vote 411. However, there was a change in the system mid-way

through the election cycle which created glitches and lost some candidate responses.

Feedback has been that Vote 411 raised questions and new technology challenges for local Leagues, but that it will be much more comfortable to use next time. It provided access to information to many Kansans who would not have it in any other way.

There were a total of 8,423 visits to Vote 411 in Kansas, making the cost/visit \$.59. The most visits came from Topeka, followed by Wichita and Overland Park. Interestingly, some of the areas where there is no League also had fairly high visitor rates: Hays with 91; Pittsburgh - 78; Hutchinson - 77; and Atchison - 43. Usage was highest in the more populous areas of the state, but there were hits from all parts of Kansas, from Dodge City to La Cygne.

There are a few local Leagues which still put out a paper voter's guide, but probably not for much less than \$.59 each. And, as we all move forward into the technology age, having this information available statewide and online will surely promote our goals of educating and encouraging active involvement in the voting process.

Ernestine was the most frequent user — she responded to many calls that came through the LWVK phone number or web site from voters asking for their polling place, new district, and candidates. She had several callers asking for information about judicial retention elections, and had to tell them that the judicial evaluation process that had been available online was not funded this year, so no information was available. 3

\$

NOTE: The LWVK web page at lwvk.org now allows donations and event payments by credit card or PayPal.

Notes from Local Leagues

■ **TOPEKA:** Talk about visibility! Topeka Shawnee County League celebrated exceptional television exposure recently with a segment on KTWU "Sunflower Journeys" featuring Bernadette Forge, Voter Service Chair, and their numerous League voter registration events. It will be available for viewing at our April Convention. They succeeded in registering 900 voters. The January 8th Topeka *Capital Journal* gave extensive coverage to a League meeting during which Shelley Bulkley explained the League's Finance Position and the recently proposed revisions.

■ **EMPORIA:** In January, February, and March Emporia Leaguers continue their tradition of co-sponsoring "Eggs and Issues" with the Chamber of Commerce. Their state representatives join members of the two organizations as well as interested local citizens in different locations around the city to discuss topics of interest. At a recent event legislators commented to President Eleanor Browning about her recent letter to the editor stating League's position on judicial selection. They are currently in the process of revising their by-laws to re-structure their leadership from a Board of Directors to a Leadership team.

■ **MANHATTAN:** A discussion of possible top priorities prompted non-stop ideas from the Manhattan/Riley County board. "We had to move on with our agenda," said co-president Enell Foerster, "but they didn't want to stop discussing possibilities." The topic stemmed from a guidance issued by LWVUS' Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) project. "In addition to possible priorities, we got some really good ideas for upcoming programs," noted co-president Jean Lee. "We'll take them to our program planning meeting later in January." Both Lee and Foerster are on their

local MLD team, along with Membership chair Cathy Hedge. They hold a monthly teleconference with their state MLD coach, Ellen Miller.

■ **SALINA:** The LWV of Salina is continuing its long tradition of holding "Lunch and Learn" Meetings, featuring various speakers on topics of interest to the League, which are held on the second Tuesday of the month. The League is having its annual finance drive dinner in January. At this event, the Finance Director prepares dinner for board members, and they stuff solicitation letters after dinner. The League is partnering with another community organization to co-sponsor a candidates' forum in February for a local election to be held in April. Co-presidents Carla Strand and Lori Trow also serve as the MLD members for the Salina League.

■ **LAWRENCE:** LWV of Lawrence/Douglas County has been planning nominations and selections for its Fluker Award, which is open to members of the community. The League hosted an "Afternoon with the Legislators" on January 19th, which more than 40 people attended. Their new president, Melinda Henderson, has prepared a packet to send to new members. Their local study on housing is emphasizing low-income housing with a "brown bag gathering" on January 26th to be followed by another gathering on the housing study in February. Margaret Arnold and Bonnie Dunham are the conscientious members of the MLD Team for the Lawrence League.

■ **LEAVENWORTH COUNTY:** Twenty-two Members-at-Large in Leavenworth County are actively working on their application to become a new Local League of Women Voters in Kansas. Within the next few months they hope to work through the process of securing approval from the LWV Kansas Board and then the LWVUS Board. In the

meantime, they will be monitoring local city/county elections this spring. Last fall the group partnered with the Leavenworth-Lansing Area Chamber of Commerce to hold four candidate forums which were well received. During a two-day registration drive in September, they registered 30 people to vote. And in November, they held an educational seminar on the Affordable Care act targeted to senior citizens. In January, the group will have a general membership meeting to plan programs and activities.

■ **JOHNSON COUNTY:** The Johnson County League has appointed two official "hostesses" to welcome newcomers to all of the regular meetings of the League. They have updated their web site and have a new webmaster. And, they host an annual Preview Party each year to attract new members. They provide information about the League, its plans and projects for the next year, and, as at all meetings, membership brochures. Last year they registered hundreds of voters, knowing of the difficulty new registrants would have this year.

■ **WICHITA:** The Wichita League continues to work with coalitions. They worked with a student group at Wichita U. in a very successful effort to register voters. They often invite other groups to their "Tuesday Topics," such as the excellent program they held this fall on immigration issues. Their web site, too, has just been updated and a new webmaster is being sought. One of their largest events each year is their annual scholarship progressive dinner fundraiser; this year they raised \$750.

More from local Leagues on page 5

Notes from Local Leagues,
continued

■ GREAT BEND: After taking a survey of the membership in the fall of 2012, the League of Women Voters of Great Bend voted to continue as a local League. Pres. Krehbiel visited, providing encouragement and some additional suggestions. Speakers at our monthly luncheons have provided updated information on a variety of topics. We have had better attendance by using calling, email, media announcements, and web site postings to reach as many as possible. Last fall we successfully registered voters and had an excellent candidates forum before the November election. We have gained two new members recently, bringing our count to 24. 3

MLD Program is Working

“The MLD (Membership, Leadership, Development) program is working,” says Ellen Miller, MLD State Coach and LWVK Board member. The hard work of Local League MLD Teams and their coaches has paid off. Th3 strategies they had implemented to increase membership and develop new leaders are paying off. Penney Van Vleet, LWVUS Coach, says the MLD program is more than a set of best practices for local Leagues to use. It is also a network of League leaders dedicated to making the League strong and vibrant in communities across the United States to make the best impact on our democracy. See the chart at right for the membership numbers.

Gwen Elliott, Topeka, is MLD Coach for Salina and Lawrence; Donna Lauffer, Johnson County, is Coach for Leavenworth; Linda Johnson, Leavenworth, is Coach for Wichita and Johnson County; Ellen Miller, Johnson County, is Coach for Manhattan; Diane Kuhn, Johnson County, is Coach for Topeka and Emporia (stepping in for Denae Lyons, Wichita, who is moving to Seattle). 3

LWVUS Provides Exciting Opportunities for Leaguers

Are you ready for stimulating new growth experiences? Or do you know other Leaguers with exceptional leadership skills?

Your LWVUS nominating committee is beginning its outreach to local and state Leagues for the two-year 2014 slate of nominees for the national board as well as the nominating committee. This is the time to consider all that you and your colleagues have to offer our organization and our country and respond positively to our call! We live in interesting times, and you can help shape the future.

We understand that some local and state Leagues are loath to share the talented and capable Leaguers in their midst. But we want to assure you that when your members complete their work with LWVUS, they will return reinvigorated and with renewed dedication to our cause.

Now is the time for reflection on your future League plans and/or those of the other talented Leaguers you know. We would be delighted to hear from you with any questions that you might have regarding the process.

We will send out the official call for nominations in a few months, at which time you can nominate yourself or others you see as potential national leaders. Contact us at: NominatingCommittee@lww.org. 3

LWVUS Convention Highlights

The national convention was held June 8-12 in Washington, D.C.

Delegates passed:

- i Concurrency with the Sentencing Policy position of the Washington, D.C. League which includes the language “The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.”
- i A comprehensive program to educate members and communities on the issue of campaign finance.

Delegates to Convention approved one new national study: **an update of the (LWVUS) 1988 position on Agriculture.** (The motion called for a review that will investigate genetic modification, consolidation in the food industry, money in the regulatory process, and the consumer’s right to accurate and comprehensive food labeling.)

Among the impressive array of speakers were Kathleen Hall Jamieson from the Annenberg School, political pollster John Zogby, and The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton (the Washington D.C. non-voting Congress member) along with participating panelists political journalist Eleanor Clift, former Congressman Mickey Edwards from the Aspen Institute, and former FEC Chair Trevor Potter from the Campaign Legal Center. 3

1	state	league_id	league_name	Jan_12	1/7/13	12 mos.
2	KS	KS000	LWV of Kansas	28	33	17.86%
3	KS	KS001	LWV of Lawrence	122	128	4.92%
4	KS	KS002	LWV of Manhattan/Riley Co.	77	86	11.69%
5	KS	KS004	LWV of Topeka/Shawnee Co.	91	114	24.27%
6	KS	KS005	LWV of Wichita Metro	69	78	13.04%
7	KS	KS009	LWV of Johnson County	140	147	5.00%
8	KS	KS013	LWV of Salina	48	51	6.25%
9	KS	KS016	LWV of Emporia	50	51	2.00%
10	KS	KS018	LWV of Great Bend	27	22	-18.52%
11			TOTAL	652	710	8.90%

LWVK Lobby Corps Report

Former LWVK president Janis McMillen said last spring that she didn't know when the League had had so many issues that are important to us, challenged in a single legislative session. As Janis and Diane Kuhn before her, Ernestine tried to represent the voice of the League in as many hearings as possible, but even with the help in testifying by members living closer to the Capital, we were not able to make our views heard on lots of the changes contemplated and passed as laws.

This year, fortuitously for LWVK, Topeka member, Camille Nohe has decided to retire from her law practice and has agreed to lead the expansion of our presence in the Capitol by heading up our new LWVK Lobby Corps. We are gathering commitments from other local League members all over who will be willing to keep track of specific legislation online and research the topic for facts and background info and perhaps actually help write the testimony that may be submitted in writing and sometimes orally also. Then we want those who

would be willing to give the testimony at committee hearings (and maybe write their own testimony on their topic). We are trying to set up portfolios to have our expert testimony of any issues on which we have positions -- either LWVK or LWVUS. We will want to file these, also, as sadly, some of the same issues come up time and again and past testimony can help with future documents as we continue the fight.

Starting in 2011-2012, members of the Topeka League created an LWVK Legislature Observer Corps for us. They faithfully became both legislative committee watch-dogs for the League and eyes and ears for us to know when public hearings were coming up in which we needed to testify or deliver our written remarks. In a number of cases they braved the bad weather and gave oral testimony. What is more, their very presence with their League buttons on acted as a "heads-up" to many committees to know that someone was paying attention.

The state League has been and will continue to be well served by Paul Johnson as our legislative liaison who, during the weeks the Legislature is in session, writes our timely report on issues of importance to the League. He is truly our expert on the subtleties -- which bills are for show and the ins and outs of the politics -- as well as keeping us informed in a timely manner so we can contact our legislators about topics. 3

By-law Proposal

On January 5, 2013, the LWVK Board voted to approve the following amendment to the League of Women Voters of Kansas by-laws, Article IV, Section 1, Enumeration and Election of Officers to allow for a copresidency. The first sentence will now state: **The Officers of the LWVK shall be a President or Co-Presidents, a First Vice President, a Second Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.**

Members will vote on this proposal at the 2013 Convention. 3

League of Women Voters of Kansas
2013 League Day at the Capitol
Wednesday, February 13, 2013
8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Kansas Bar Association Building
1200 S.W. Harrison Street, Topeka KS 66612

In this Legislature there are many, many issues about which the League has concerns.

8:30–Registration, Rolls, and Coffee or Tea

9:00–League Day Welcome and Session I Round Robin Groups on Topics in the Legislature that Touch League Issues

10:30–Break

10:45–Session II - LWVK legislative expert Paul Johnson updates us on legislature.

11:30–Break and Lunch with speaker “IS There Something the Matter with Kansas?”

12:45–Conversation together to talk about our Voter Registration Legal Dilemma of needing birth certificate copy. ACLU lawyer invited.

2:30–Adjournment (LWVK Board Meeting following).

Park West of KBA Building

Call Maryanne Quilty at 785-234-6925 with questions.

Reservations due by Feb. 10. Use LWVK.org for PayPal or mail checks to LWVK, PO Box 2366, Topeka KS 66601
Local League Name _____

Payment Check(s) Amount \$26 each x number _____

1. Participant _____

2. Participant _____

3. Participant _____

4. Participant _____

5. Participant _____

2013 KANSAS STATE CONVENTION

Saturday, April 27, 2013

Holiday Inn & Suites Overland Park

8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. 8787 Reeder Road, Overland Park, KS 66214

REGISTRATION FORM

Registration Deadline: April 19, 2013

Name	Local League
Street Address	City/State, Zip
Phone (include Area Code)	Email Address
Name Preferred on Name Tag	

Are you?

- Local League Delegate* (\$60/person)
- State LWVK Delegate (\$60/person)
- Non-voting Attendee* (\$60/person)
- Attending Lunch Only (\$20/person)

Are you?

- LWVK Board Member
- Local League President
- Local League Officer
- Local League Member

Lunch Entree: Chef's Salad, chef's selection of soup, fresh-baked breads, and dessert.

Gluten-free

The \$60 registration fee includes continental breakfast, lunch, snacks, and convention materials.

Please include payment with Registration Form.

Make checks payable to "LWV of Johnson County."

Mail to: LWV of Johnson County

c/o Treasurer Anita Kaiser

12408 W. 126th St.

Overland Park, KS 66213-2429

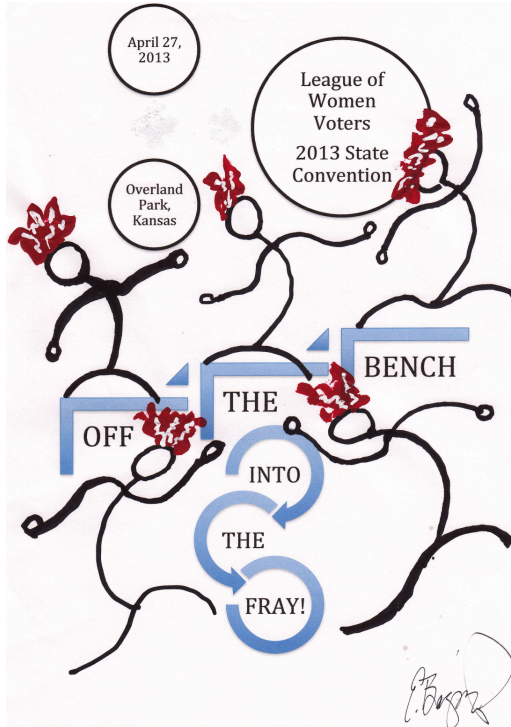
Hotel Reservations: A block of rooms has been reserved at Holiday Inn & Suites Overland Park.

To reserve a discounted, non-smoking room, call 800-825-7538. Mention LWV State Convention.

To inquire about staying in a Leaguer's home, contact Diane Kuhn, 913-631-9499 or dkuhn15416@gmail.com.

Parking is free at the hotel.

*Each League is allotted one voting delegate for every 15 members but may send as many members or guests as desired.



In this issue:

- Convention 2013 April 27
- League Day at the Capitol February 13
- A Pause in Voter Registration
- Highlights from National Convention
- Notes from Local Leagues
- Lobby Corps
- Vote 411

League of Women Voters of Kansas
 515 South Kansas Avenue, Suite C
 P.O. Box 2366, Topeka, KS 66601
 (785) 234-5152
lww.kansas@gmail.com

The *Kansas Voter* is published by the League of Women Voters of Kansas, a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. LWVK is affiliated with the League of Women Voters of the United States and with local Leagues in Kansas communities.

President Ernestine Krehbiel
 Editor Linda R. Johnson
www.lwvk.org