



# THE VOTER

LOCAL LEAGUE: [www.lawrenceleague.com](http://www.lawrenceleague.com). [www.facebook.com/lwvdc](http://www.facebook.com/lwvdc). [www.twitter.com/lwvdc](http://www.twitter.com/lwvdc)

Sunday, January 17th

2:30-5:00 pm

Smith Center, Brandon Woods

**AFTERNOON WITH OUR STATE LEGISLATORS**

**MEET AND GREET STARTS AT 2:30**

Questions with Legislators Starting at 3 pm.

This event is free and open to the public.

Please **RSVP** (so we can estimate refreshments) to:

lawrenceksleague@gmail.com or leave a message at: 749-0433

## League Calendar

- Sun. Jan. 10th      New Member Orientation  
1pm - 3 pm      Smith Center, Brandon Woods
- Thurs. Jan 14th      Of possible interest to league members  
3pm - 4pm      Documentary about Water in Kansas  
Apollo Theater, Nichols Hall, West Campus (see page 6)
- Thurs. Jan 14th      LWV-L/DC Board Meeting  
7 pm - 9 pm      Lawrence Library meeting room A  
707 Vermont Street
- Sun. Jan. 17th      Afternoon with State Legislators  
2:30pm-5:00pm      Smith Center, 4730 Brandon Woods Terr.  
Guests Welcome.
- Fri. Jan 22nd      Voter Deadline
- Sat. Jan. 25th      Land Use Committee  
7 pm      The Merc Co-op  
901 Iowa Street

- ARE YOU A "NEW" LEAGUE MEMBER?
- HAVE YOU EVER HAD A LEAGUE ORIENTATION?
- ARE YOU A LONG TIME LEAGUE MEMBER AND YOU WANT TO BE BROUGHT UP TO DATE?

**THEN SAVE THE DATE!**

Sunday, January 10, 2016

1PM - 3 PM,

Smith Center (Brandon Woods)

4730 Brandon Woods Terrace, Lawrence, Kansas.



## President’s Message

As we gear up for the new year I thought it would be interesting to compare what is happening at the state level now vs. where we were a few years ago. Fortunately, our Voters make it easy to do that.

**In December, 2011 (the end of Governor Brownback’s first term in office)** Kay Hale discussed the following five issues:

- 1. Financial support for the Kansas Arts Commission has been eliminated;**
- 2. The Legislature passed a budget that included the largest cut to public education in state history**
- 3. Department of Social and Rehabilitation Service is being restructured with various functions assigned to other agencies;**
- 4. A \$31 million federal grant that would have made it easier for thousands of Kansans to access more affordable health care was rejected and plans have been announced to reform the Kansas Medicaid system;**
- 5. Administrative plans are underway to restructure the Kansas tax code.**

So now, in December, 2015. (the end of Governor Brownback’s second term in office.) here is a brief, very brief, (because these have all become complicated issues) summary of what has happened to the five issues mentioned by Kay in 2011:

**Kansas Arts Commission** - The Arts Commission and the Kansas Film Commission were combined with the Kansas Department of Commerce. Funding for the Art’s Commission in 2013 was \$700,000 but it dropped to around \$200,000 in 2014 and 2015. Current state funding (which includes some fees) is expected to total around \$248,000. The State has been notified that they must have \$473,000 in funding by January 15, 2016 or the Arts Commission will lose \$591,000 in federal matching funds.

**Education Funding Cuts:** - 2011’s largest cut to education in state history may have been topped by 2016’s education cuts, depending on your point of view. The Governor and Legislature eliminated the 50 year old school finance formula

and provided funding to schools via block grants. According to the Governor’s office, it is the largest increase in education in the state’s history. Others disagree since the Governor is counting retirement system payments which were never included in the formula. Duane Goossen of the Kansas Center for Economic Growth, discusses the issue (and this chart) on his blog, “The Kansas Budget” <http://www.kansasbudget.com>.

<b>State General Fund</b>		
<b>FY 2016</b>		
(July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016)		
(Dollars in Millions)		
Beginning Balance	\$71	
Consensus Revenue Estimate	\$6,325	← Revenue includes approximately \$180 million in one-time transfers.
Net Shortfall through September	<u>(\$42)</u>	
Total Available	\$6,354	
Approved Expenditures	\$6,372	
Expenses Carrying Over from FY 2015	\$16	
Governor’s Cuts	<u>(\$38)</u>	
Net Expenditures	\$6,350	
Ending Balance	\$4	← The general fund should have an ending balance of at least 7.5 % of expenditures or \$476 million.

**Department of Social and Rehabilitation Service is being restructured with various functions assigned to other agencies** - SRS was restructured into the Department for Children and Families (DCF) and the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services. Last year DCF was accused of aggressively auditing Head Start programs. <http://www.kansas.com/opinion/editorials/article2831532.html>, and in the last few months DCF has been in the news due to problems with its foster care and adoption system. Problems range from the deaths of two children (one in foster care and one by his mother) last year, to allegations of the agency illegally screening potential foster or adoptive parents based on religion or sexual orientation. In addition, there is a substantial increase in the number of children being removed from their homes. The Governor recently said he supports a thorough review of the state's foster care and adoption programs.

**A \$31 million federal grant that would have made it easier for thousands of Kansans to access more affordable health care was rejected and plans have been announced to reform the Kansas Medicaid system** - Kansas still does not have Medicaid Expansion Neither the Governor nor a majority of the Legislature are in favor of Medicaid expansion.

In 2014, the Governor signed HB 2553. which allows Kansas to join 8 other states (so far) in a Health Care Compact. The Compact, which would have to be approved by Congress, would allow the participating states to opt out of federal control of Medicaid, Medicare and the ACA.

**Tax Reform** - The Kansas tax code was revised in 2012. Income taxes were reduced and taxes on owners of Sole Proprietorships, Limited Liability and S Corporations were eliminated. This caused a budget crises resulting in major changes to the tax code during the 2015 session including: an increase of the state sales tax from 6.15% to 6.5%, raising the cigarette tax from 79 cents a pack to \$1.29 per pack, providing a one-time tax amnesty for any taxes unpaid as of December 31, 2013, most deductions were eliminated. Itemizers will still be able to deduct 100% of their charitable deductions and 50% of their mortgage deductions, low income earners (single filers below \$5,000 and married below \$12,500) from the income tax, requires voter approval for cities and counties to spend property tax revenues about the rate of inflation, re-imposes income tax on guaranteed payments received by members of pass through businesses or payments of judgments, and, finally, if revenue growth exceeds 2.5% per year, income taxes will be reduced started in the year 2019.

All of these issues, combined with severely declining revenue, continue into 2016. Education, medicaid expansion and independence of the Judicial Branch are all poised to be hot button issues in the upcoming legislative session. Our work educating and registering voters continues to be invaluable.

Thank you everyone for your support and help this year.

AFTERNOON WITH OUR STATE LEGISLATORS - SUNDAY - JANUARY 17TH 2:30-5 pm.  
BRING GUESTS! There will be a question and answer period but -  
IF YOU HAVE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS YOU WOULD LIKE ANSWERED PLEASE  
SUBMIT THEM TO: lawrenceleagueks@gmail.com  
  
Number of voters registered in 2015: 640

## Highlights from the November Board Meeting

Present: Debra Duncan (President), Cille King (Vice-President), Marjorie Cole (Treasurer), Margaret Arnold, marci franciso, Janice Friedman, Midge Grinstead, Carol Klinknett, Marlene Merrill, Austin Turney. Excused: Marlaine Stoor, Melissa Wick

**President's Report:** Debra reported on our participation (Janice Friedman, Melinda Henderson, marci Francisco, Debra Duncan, Cille King, Marjorie Cole, Marlaine Stoor, Austin Turney, Melissa Wick and Patrick Wilbur) in the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association (ELNA) board election. 238 ballots were cast; there were 6 provisional ballots.

**Vice-President's Report:** VOTER NOTES (newsletter from the LWV-K) have featured information on gearing up to repeal the Death Penalty in Kansas and an appeal for observers to observe the legislature, offering support and training to league members who are interested. Another VOTER NOTES featured work of the League's Campus Initiative, including the development of a syllabus and a video to train college students to register voters. The LWV-K is researching voting machine recommendations to be used in advocacy (Johnson, Sedgewick, Shawnee and Wyandotte will be purchasing new voting machines).

**Treasurer's Report:** There was no income in October and expenses of \$524.36 (for state per-member-payment (pmp), library rental for Hot Topic, and Voter printing). The Net Inflow/Outflow was -\$524.26. Current balances as of September 30 were Checking Account, \$7965.44; Money Market Account, \$2,104.99; and Stucky Account, \$3,631.07.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Voter Service Report:** Cille reported that there would be a large Naturalization Ceremony December 14, with 300 new citizens and their guests, held at the Lied Center. We will need a large number of volunteers to man six registration stations.

Cille also announced that both Free State High School and Lawrence High School would accept presentations from us during the next four weeks.

**Land Use Committee:** Debra reported discussion at the Oct. 17 meeting focused on the proposed rezoning of Sunrise on Fifteenth Street. The neighborhood is not expressing opposition but wants more time to examine the issue. No action was taken. There was concern about the short time given between the recommendations of the Planning Staff and the Commission meeting that leaves little time to study issues. Marci suggested that the staff should be asked about this and Debra said she would contact them.

**Hot Topics!:** Margaret reported that the next Hot Topic! Meeting will be November 19, in the Lawrence Library Auditorium from 11:30 to 1, on Tax Abatements. It was suggested that the City Attorney provide a short description of Tax Abatements prior to the speakers (Larry McElwain and Allan Ford) presenting the pros and cons for the city. The need to develop a calling tree to notify/remind members of meetings was brought up.

**New Business:** On January 10, we will have an orientation meeting, Sunday, 1 pm-3 pm. Ellen Miller, the Membership Director on the LWV-K board will assist.

**Future Planning:** Margaret has arranged for three upcoming events to be held at the Smith Center: Afternoon with the Legislators Sunday, January 17, 2016, the Fluker Award Luncheon Saturday, March 5 and the Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 16<sup>th</sup> with a luncheon at 11:30 am. — *Marjorie Cole*

### **NEWS FROM OUR NATIONAL LWV:**

*Supreme Court Considers the Idea of Representation*

By: Jessica Jones 12/11/2015

#EveryoneCounts

*The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments this week in a case that could forever change the way we view the political map. *Evenwel v. Abbott*, a case out of Texas, has the potential to upset the criteria for drawing state and local legislative districts so that districts would be determined by the total*

*number of voters instead of total population. This case only effects state legislative districts as Congressional apportionment is covered in a different provision of the Constitution and would not be directly impacted.*

*Currently, state legislative districts are drawn using data collected by the Census Bureau and are based on the total number of people who live in a community or state. Total population includes not only voters, but also children, non-citizens and unregistered voters. If the plaintiffs in *Evenwel v. Abbott* were to win their argument, state legislative districts across the country could be unconstitutional and practically all state legislative maps would need to be redrawn. The whole concept of representation would be changed and the influence of minority communities and those districts with significant numbers of children would diminish.*

*Changing the criteria for how we establish legislative districts in the states would not only have far reaching impacts on equal representation and geographic distribution of power, but it would put many states in limbo for years to come. The last time the Supreme Court considered the question of representation in the 1960s, it took nearly a decade to settle the matter through the court system. Moreover, there is no reliable measure available to determine the number of voters in a state – the Census directly counts total population but citizens self-identify on voter registration questions during their surveys, making the data unreliable for so important a purpose. Lawsuits are sure to be filed as soon if a decision in favor of the plaintiffs is reached, in every state across the country challenging district lines*

*The League submitted an amicus brief in *Evenwel* that supports the current practice of drawing district lines based on population counts. Counting population ensures that every man, woman and child has an equal representation in our democracy. Population counts ensure that everyone has a seat at the table and is simply the fairest way to protect our democracy and ensure equal representation for all. A decision in this case is expected by June 2016.*

***The League is invited to watch Steve Lerner's documentary -January 14th, 3 pm.***

Susan Stover, a geologist and the Outreach Manager for the Kansas Geological Survey has invited members of the LWV Lawrence - Douglas County to view "When the Wells Run Dry", a 31 minute documentary about Kansas Water. It will be shown at 3:00 p.m., Thursday, January 14, 2016, at Apollo Auditorium, Nichols Hall, west campus, KU.

There will be an informal comment and discussion period after the screening, including with the film maker Steve Lerner.

As you know, the LWVK has a strong position on water and water conservation.

It was last updated in 2009 so it may be an issue that our league will want to address in the near future.

To read the LWVK positions on water go to:

<http://www.lwvk.org/LWVKPostiionDetails.html#water>



**A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT WATER IN KANSAS**

**WHEN THE WELL RUNS DRY**

3:00 p.m., Thursday January 14  
Apollo Auditorium, Nichols Hall  
West Campus, University of Kansas

Public Welcome  
Commentary & Discussion with Steve Lerner  
Moderator: Rex Buchanan

Screening sponsored by:  
Kansas Geological Survey  
Kansas Biological Survey

In this 31 minute film, ranchers, farmers, and residents of small Kansas towns tell their heartfelt stories about water: the one resource upon which their lives and livelihoods most depend.

By Reuben Aaronson and Steve Lerner  
In collaboration with NGO Films

  /wellrunsdry  
 /thewellrunsdry

Funded by the Kansas Humanities Council.  
For more information call 785-554-0298 or email [stephenlerner@gmail.com](mailto:stephenlerner@gmail.com)

## National Voter Registration Act (NVRA or Motor Voter Act).

1. The [actual text](#) of the NVRA

Here is a summary of portions of the law pertinent to the suspense list:

National Voter Registration Act of 1993 - Requires each State to establish Federal election voter registration procedures by: (1) application made simultaneously with a driver's license application; (2) mail; and (3) application in person at a designated Federal, State, or nongovernmental office, or at the applicant's residential registration site in accordance with State law.

**Save the date!**  
**The LWVs' 52nd**  
**National Convention**  
**Washington, DC,**  
**June 16 – June 19,**  
**2016**

Section 5: Declares that each State motor vehicle license application (or renewal application) shall simultaneously serve as a voter registration application with respect to Federal elections, unless the applicant fails to sign the voter registration application. Sets forth provisions regarding: (1) forms and procedures; and (2) transmittal deadlines.

Section 8: Requires each State to: (1) assure that any eligible applicant who submits an application by a certain deadline is registered to vote in the election; (2) require the appropriate State election official to notify each applicant of the disposition of the application; (3) provide that the name of a voter may not be removed from the official list of eligible voters except by reason of death, criminal conviction, mental incapacity, change in residence, or voter request; (4) inform applicants of voter eligibility requirements and penalties provided by law for submission of a false voter registration application; (5) conduct a general program that makes a reasonable effort to remove from the official lists any voters ineligible by reason of death or change of address; and (6) ensure that the identity of any voter registration agency where a particular voter registered is not publicly disclosed.

For more information see the United States Election Assistance Commission: [www.eac.gov](http://www.eac.gov)  
 Federal regulations [http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/workflow\\_staging/Page/27.PDF](http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/workflow_staging/Page/27.PDF)

**JUST IN CASE YOU MISSED IT -**

**This was posted in November on the [LWV.org](http://www.lwv.org) blog:**

Bending Over Backwards in Kansas

You are here

Home › Blog › Bending Over Backwards in Kansas

By: Wylecia Wiggs Harris 11/19/2015

Support the Kansas League

We have a day for giving thanks. We have Black Friday and Cyber Monday two-for-one deals. And now we have Giving Tuesday for giving back to the community! #GivingTuesday is propelled by those who believe that passion and commitment can make a difference.

Talk about adding insult to injury.

A state senator defending Kansas' outrageous proof-of-citizenship voter registration requirement claims it's out of "kindness" that his state is "bending over backwards" to help people register to vote.

Here's what's really going on:

First, a restrictive law in Kansas, championed by their Secretary of State, requires voters to present a birth certificate or other proof-of-citizenship when registering to vote.

But because most people don't carry that type of documentation around with them, tens of thousands of voters, mostly young people, who have attempted to register to vote have had their applications "suspended" until they could present proof-of-citizenship.

Then, last month, Kansas' Secretary of State ordered county election officials to begin purging all suspended applications more than 90 days old—forcing tens of thousands of potential voters off the rolls without enough time to provide the needed proof-of-citizenship. What's worse is that many people who are purged won't even know it until they show up to vote on Election Day!

In other words, the elected official charged with ensuring fair and free elections in Kansas is "bending over backwards"—to make voting MORE difficult for citizens.

It is a profoundly outrageous action.

And it's something the League of Women Voters of Kansas (LWVKS) refuses to accept. The League immediately launched an emergency initiative to reach all affected voters and help them complete their applications before they're purged from the rolls.

It's a massive undertaking—and I hope you'll take a quick moment to join me in sending the Kansas League your message of support.

And please accept my thanks for standing with the League in defending voting rights and protecting our democracy by increasing citizen participation—in your state and all across the country!

League supporters across the country do everything in their power to see that we're Making Democracy Work®, but the fight requires the help of all of our supporters. From fighting to protect voting rights, to curbing the influx of big money into politics and leading efforts to prevent climate change, the League is committed to informing and engaging Americans around the major public policy issues that impact our daily lives. On #GivingTuesday, December 1st, we ask that you think of the League as you reflect on the need to strengthen our great democracy through increased political participation.





LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF LAWRENCE/DOUGLAS COUNTY

**Make a Difference – Join/Support the League!**

Complete form; enclose check made out to LWV L–DC, and mail to the address listed below.

*(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, 2016)*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ *Renewing member* \_\_\_\_\_ *New Member* \_\_\_\_\_ *I heard about the League via (Facebook, website, friend, other):* \_\_\_\_\_

**Suggested voluntary membership assessment: \***

<i>Approximate Household Income</i>	<i>Individual membership</i>	<i>Household membership</i>
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 \$49/member (\$31 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

**Promotion of League to our Community:**

- \_\_\_ Public Speaking
- \_\_\_ Represent League at community events
- \_\_\_ Observer corps (attend/report on government meetings)

**Membership:**

- \_\_\_ Recruitment
- \_\_\_ Mentor/follow-up with new members
- \_\_\_ Provide a ride to a fellow member
- \_\_\_ Phone members without internet access

- \_\_\_ Help with research for League studies on issues
- \_\_\_ Serve on the Board of Directors

about special updates

**I have the following skills:**

- \_\_\_ Editing articles/reports
- \_\_\_ Database management
- \_\_\_ Microsoft Word/Excel/Quickbooks

**Voter Services:**

- \_\_\_ Register voters
- \_\_\_ Help with voter education

\_\_\_ Website/Social Media design/management

My interests include:



League of Women Voters  
Lawrence-Douglas County  
PO Box 1072  
Lawrence, KS 66044-1072

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