



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

League Calendar

Tues May 10 4–6 pm	LWV L–DC Board meeting. <i>Lawrence Public Library Meeting Room C, 707 Vermont St. All League members are invited to attend.</i>
	<i>Please Note: The Hot Topic presentation for May has been cancelled due to an unforeseen scheduling conflict. The presentation, <i>Education and the Common Core</i> will be rescheduled.</i>
Sat May 14 12 pm	All Member Meeting on registering voters prior to the upcoming elections. <i>Conroy's Pub, 3115 West 6th St (in the shopping center east of Sonic). Appetizers and non-alcoholic drinks provided.</i>
Sat May 21 7 pm	LWV L–DC Land Use Committee Meeting. <i>Lawrence Community Mercantile, 901 Iowa St. All League members are invited to attend.</i>
Fri May 27	Deadline for submissions to the June VOTER. <i>Email submissions to caleb.morse[at]gmail.com.</i>
Thurs Jun 16 11:30 am–1 pm	Hot Topic Legislative Wrap-up with LWVK Observer Paul Johnson <i>Watkins Historical Museum, 1047 Massachusetts St. All are welcome. [Details to be announced in the next VOTER.]</i>
Thurs Jul 14 5–9 pm	Meet the Candidates: Picnic and Speed-dating <i>Centennial Park East Shelter, 2203-2269 W 9th St. All are welcome. [Details to be announced in the next VOTER.]</i>



Don't miss our ALL MEMBER MEETING

This Saturday, May 14th, 12 pm, Conroy's Pub, 3115 West 6th St
 in the shopping center east of Sonic

Please help us create a “strategic plan” to register as many voters as possible before the 2016 primary and general elections. Lawrence is a high energy city with a lot of activities and events, all of which create an opportunity for us to reach potential voters. We need a plan. Long-time members already know what will work, and new members bring enthusiasm and new ideas. Together we are a powerful force! Thanks to our Secretary of State, we now have over 150 members. Just imagine what we can accomplish with a little planning! You'll leave happy and excited after an hour spent with new and old friends, drinking ice tea, and eating appetizers! See you on Saturday!

And the birds are (with thanks to the Internet Bird Collection [http://ibc.lynxeds.com/])... **p. 1** Tennessee warbler (migrant); **p. 2** Yellow warbler (summer resident); **p. 3** Northern oriole (summer resident); **p. 4** Brown thrasher (summer resident), **p. 5** Yellow-rumped warbler (migrant) and Blue jay (year-round); **p. 6** Carolina wren (year-round); **p. 8** Swainson's thrush (migrant).

Message from President Debra Duncan

Our last 12 months (April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016) have been very busy and very productive. During this period, we:

- Hosted the 71st Biennial Kansas League of Women Voters Convention in April, attended by over 70 representatives from nine Kansas Leagues. Highlights included presentations by KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little, a panel of the KU “February Sisters” and a state government budget presentation by Duane Goossen and Annie McKay of the Kansas Center for Economic Growth.
- Registered over 600 voters at multiple voter registration events including the Juneteenth Celebration, the 4th of July Party in the Park, the library on KU’s campus on National Voter Registration Day, two local Naturalizations Ceremony, two Educate Lawrence events, several library voter registration days and multiple trips to Free State and Lawrence High Schools, both in the classroom (where we are often allowed an opportunity to educate) and the lunchroom.
- Continued our work on the suspended voter list, by attempting contact by phone, email and in person. After the Secretary of State implemented the rule to wipe people off the list after 90 days, we published the list on our website with instructions there and in the newspaper asking citizens to check it, explaining where to go and what to do to complete a registration.
- Held monthly *Hot Topic* meetings on: Jails and Mental Health, Overview of the 2015 Legislative Session, Agricultural Issues in Farming, including Environmental Sustainability, Reproductive Rights, Same Sex Marriage is Legal, so now what? The Pros and Cons of Tax Abatements, Afternoon with our State Legislators, Foster Care in Kansas, Guns in Public Facilities in Lawrence and we were one of the co-sponsors of Current Healthcare Issues in the State of Kansas, a Conversation with Sheldon Weisgraw. All of the *Hot Topic* presentations are now being recorded and posted on YouTube. Links to the videos are on our website: www.lawrenceleague.com.



In addition to our *Hot Topic* presentations, we also held a new member orientation; registered voters at three naturalization ceremonies (2 in Lawrence, 1 in Fort Scott); attended a state league day in Topeka; had our own league day in Topeka; held a garage sale, had a member social; assisted the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association with their board election (238 ballots were cast); and awarded the 2016 Helen Fluker award to Ruthie Rapp and the \$1,000 Stucky Scholarship to LHS senior Lynn Oyler.

This year our membership has increased 19%, and we have added, or re-acquired, 22 new members just since January 31.

Cille King, our Vice President, and Voter Registration chair, created a “yellow card” that does a terrific job of promoting/explaining the online voter registration site for Douglas County. Our Facebook and Twitter presence is much better, and increased dramatically after the LVWs were referred to as “communists”.

We still have some areas to work on, however. In the last few years, our Observer Corps has virtually disappeared. We also have a number of other committees – one that makes phone calls for various voter registration or League events, Hospitality (which includes everything from welcoming new members, arranging for “treats” at Hot Topic meetings or sending flowers or cards when necessary), Voter Registration (we need a LOT of people involved so instead of 3 or 4-hour shifts we can have 1 or 2-hour shifts), Membership (do you like to plan social events? We need to recruit new members!), Hot Topics, Publicity/Social Media, and Fundraising (this year we sent a donation letter, held a garage sale and are receiving donations for t-shirts, totes and LWV magnetized bumper stickers – and we are open to all suggestions!). And finally, the Pedestrian Coalition and the Land Use Committee always need members. If you want to know about the inner workings of the city of Lawrence, Land Use is definitely the committee to join. I know everyone has busy, busy lives. Please consider making a little time for a League committee. We need your energy and your ideas!

LWVK Council Report

LWVK held its biennial Council meeting in Salina on April 23. Thirty-five members attended, representing eight of the nine local leagues: Emporia, Great Bend, Johnson County, Lawrence, Manhattan, Salina, Topeka, and Wichita. Leavenworth was unable to send a representative.

Co-Presidents, Marge Ahrens and Carole Neal spoke about LWV's accomplishments this year:

- Produced, with the help of Washburn students and KTUW, an instructional video entitled "The Kansas Campus Initiative" (coming soon in Spanish).
- Pushed back against the purge of citizens in suspense, provided more than 40 *Voter Notes*, frequently testified in support of League positions.
- Filed two lawsuits. One pertains to a decision made by Brian Newby, the recently appointed Executive Director of the Federal Election Assistance Commission. Mr. Newby, a former Johnson County Election Official, unilaterally determined that the federal government would follow the state's voter registration proof of citizenship requirements. LWVUS and the ACLU are also parties to the lawsuit. The Brennan Center is representing the League. The Justice Department has declined to represent the FEAC. Instead, the FEAC is being represented by Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach. LWVK has also joined a federal class action lawsuit regarding the federal "Motor Voter Law" The case, *Fish v. Kobach* was filed last fall by the ACLU.

Ahrens encouraged conference attendees to stress to their members that they can make a difference. LWV L-DC member Alan Cowles, without the support of League, did so much work studying open meetings laws, including help draft and introduce a bill to the Kansas Legislature.

Saline County School Superintendent William Hall delivered an eye-opening presentation on the "Effect on Schools by State Education Funding." Because the state now uses block grants instead of the school funding formula, the administration calculates funding spent per student by including a number of non-teaching items in the total: KPERs payments, bond and interest state aid, capital outlay, head start programs, adult education, and Parents as Teachers. This inflates the average per pupil spending. Some amounts were not included before, and some are not K-12 funding at all. Base-state-aid-per-pupil was at a high of \$4,400 in FY 2009, and is now \$3,852. Local option budgets (money raised by local districts) weren't counted before as state aid, but now are (included in State Aid of Schools). He discussed the most recent education bill, introduced last week, which includes the "Kansas Education Freedom Act," which would allow 70% of base aid to be diverted into individual accounts to attend private schools. Text of the bill (HB 2741) may be found at http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2015_16/measures/documents/hb2741_00_0000.pdf.

Heidi Mehl, Director of The Nature Conservancy's Healthy Streams Initiative, spoke about her new position. It's her dream job, working for a non-profit and educating people on water. She told us about the problems we have in Kansas with erosion and pollutants, which are harming Kansas water quality, quantity, people and wildlife. Two-thirds of the world's population will face water shortages by 2025.

LWVK Officers and board members for 2016-2017, some continuing, some appointed to fill vacant positions, and some newly elected are:

Co-Presidents – Marge Ahrens, Topeka, and Carole Neal, Wichita

1st Vice-President – Cille King, Lawrence (Voter Service)

2nd Vice-President – Melissa Carlson, Johnson County (Communications)

Secretary – Betty Wyckoff, MAL

Treasurer – Anita Kaiser, Johnson County

Directors – Jari Marietta, Great Bend (Development/Fundraising Chair); Martha Pint, Wichita (Membership/Development Chair); Ellen Miller, Johnson County (Membership Chair); Betty Arnold, Wichita (Public relations Chair); Teresa Briggs, Emporia (Advocacy Chair); Gwen Elliott, Topeka (State Study Chair); and Alan Cowles, Lawrence (Legislation Chair – to be appointed after elections)

Nominating Committee – Ann Zimmerman, Salina (Chair); Cathy Hoy, Emporia; and Jurina Watts, Manhattan.

The LWVK Biennial Convention is scheduled for April 2017, tentatively in Topeka.

– Cille King



Annual Meeting Report

The 2016 LWVL-DC Annual Meeting was held on April 16 at Brandon Woods Smith Center. Forty-four members were present. After the luncheon, guest speaker Rep. Boog Highberger from the 46th District presented a legislative update. He gave information on Senate and House bills relating to education, juvenile justice reform, local control issues, sanctuary cities, sex education policies, prohibiting air rifles in schools and ordinances affecting employee work schedules. Boog answered questions from the audience during his talk.

President Debra Duncan introduced new members attending the meeting: Tamara Cash, Kim Gibson, John Gibson, Marilyn Hall, Dorothy Hoyt-Reid, Ann Carlin Ozegovic, and Courtney Shipley. Debra called the meeting to order and the order of business was adopted. This included appointment of the parliamentarian and a committee to read the minutes; attendance report; adoption of meeting guidelines; and the report of 2015 minutes committee. Highlights from Debra's President's Report are included in her report (on page 2).

Treasurer Marjorie Cole presented the financial report for 2015-2016. Debra announced the Statement of Financial Audit submitted by Diane Oakes. Both of these reports were voted on and accepted by the membership. Marjorie then presented the Proposed General Account Budget for 2016-2017. After discussion this budget was adopted.



The Nominating Committee report was given by Mary Lou Wright. She read the proposed slate of candidates.

Co-Presidents – Debra Duncan and Marlene Merrill

President Elect – (vacancy)

Secretary – Sharon Brown (first year of two-year term)

Treasurer – Marjorie Cole (first year of two-year term)

Directors – Tamara Cash and Ann Carlin Ozegovic (first year of two-year terms)

Nominating Committee for 2016-2017 – Mary Lou Wright, Chair; James Dunn; Lee Ketzler

It was moved and seconded to request the secretary to cast a unanimous ballot for the slate of nominees. The motion carried. The newly elected officers and directors were vested by President Debra Duncan. She also presented the shared gavel to Marlene Merrill who joined Debra to preside over the rest of the meeting.

Marlene acknowledged Austin Turney's valuable service as he completes his term and leaves the board.

An announcement regarding national program planning was made. For 2016-2018 the LWVUS asked local leagues to consider a nationwide program focus *Make Democracy Work*. Instead of new studies, leagues would take action on the principles and positions arising from the 2014-2016 studies: Voting Rights, Money in Politics and Redistricting. The consensus at our local planning meeting was to agree with this request.

Also at the local planning meeting there was consensus for carrying the Economic Development and Community Development Study over for one more year. Originally David Burress, chair, was slated to give an update at the beginning of the annual meeting on this committee's work but due to time constraints his presentation will be made at a later date. He did say a few words about money in economic development not being seen and easy to waste, and that information about the study is on the league website. It was moved and seconded to accept the recommendation to carry the study over for one more year. Motion carried.

The third consensus was to update the 1971 LWV-L/DC position on local transportation with a particular focus on the location of the hub and transportation for the elderly and people with disabilities. It was moved and seconded to adopt this study for 2016-2018. Motion carried.

Marlene thanked the speakers and members for attending. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

– Sharon Brown

Welcome to New and Returning Members!

We have nine new members, and one returning member, this month. Please welcome Annette Becker, Judith Bellome, Jane Imber, Judith Meyer, Janice Melland, Annette Rouleau, Susan Schrepel, Gina Spade, Joan Welch, and Harriet Shaffer. Harriet is rejoining after a period of years. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events.

– Marjorie Cole

Voter Registration Drives

Lawrence League held four voter registration drives in April: on April 12 at Free State High School; on April 13 at the Lied Center for Justice Matters' Nehemiah Assembly; on April 19 and 20 at Eudora High School; and on April 23 at the Earth Day Celebration in South Park. We thank the many volunteers who helped with these events, where we registered 51 voters and answered many more questions. Before this issue of *The VOTER* is published, we will have registered voters at Art in the Park on Sunday, May 1.

Presidential election years draw many new voters and the League plans numerous voter registration opportunities from now until registration closes on Tuesday, October 18, prior to the November 8 General Election. We have tentatively scheduled for voter registration at the Lawrence Farmers Market on May 21 and 28, and June 18, with more to follow. We would like to help with voter registration at the Lawrence Public library on Tuesdays from 3–6 pm (coinciding with the Tuesday markets outside) and on several other days as volunteers are available. We will ask to be at the Busker's Festival from May 27–29 and at the July 4th celebration in Burcham Park. Let us know if you have an organization or event that the League could help voters with information and registration. Email cilleking@gmail.com, or call 785-841-6018 if you would like to volunteer for a voter registration drive, or have an event for us to attend. — Cille King



Report from the March *Hot Topic*

“Guns in Public Places” was the theme of the March 24 Hot Topic at the Lawrence Public Library. Maria Kaminska Garcia, Assistant City Attorney, and Craig Weinaug, County Administrator, spoke and answered questions regarding the new gun law and how it will affect the community. Garcia works primarily as the city’s public safety adviser. In that capacity, she works closely with the Lawrence police and fire departments as changing laws affect public safety. Weinaug, who has been the Douglas County Administrator since 1992, has been focusing on reforming the Douglas County Jail and working with “Justice Matters” and Bert Nash on mental health issues.

Garcia explained that the legislature passed a law in 2013 regarding guns in public places. A four-year exemption was offered, giving cities and counties until January 1, 2018, to comply with the law. The law states that if a public building does not offer adequate security a person would be able to carry a concealed weapon into the building. Adequate security would mean having metal detectors or wands plus security officers. As of July 1, 2015, public buildings in Kansas lacking security measures had to allow anyone 21 or older to carry concealed guns. KU will need to comply with the law by 2017. However, the County Law Enforcement Center is the only place here with the required security in place. This comes with a hefty price tag, approximately \$200,000 annually, Weinaug explained. He also said because of a budget lid law, to increase security would force cuts somewhere else.

Weinaug stated that the 1903 Douglas County Courthouse would need \$1.3 million to install security (taking 30% of the ground level space) plus the \$200,000 annual cost to operate it. The city/county Health Department and Bert Nash Center would cost \$80,000 in improvements and would need security at two entrances requiring four security personnel. Other county and city facilities, such as Rock Chalk Park, the community recreation centers, and the Douglas County Fairgrounds would have unique security requirements.

Complying with the security requirements for this open carry gun law would mean huge tax increases. Weinaug said that the chances are near zero that anything will happen in the near future. There also have been “zero” requests from the community for such security, Weinaug added.

Weinaug said he “had hoped for some rational gun legislation to come about after the tragic school shootings. We will need a sea change in the makeup of the legislature for any hope in having some sensible gun laws in Kansas. Our priorities for the county are working for better mental health care and improving conditions at the county jail. We are focused on those priorities,” he said. You can view a video of the event at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIRpw-mBx5s>.

— Ann Carlin Ozegovic



Highlights of the March 10 Board Meeting

7 pm, Lawrence Public Library

[The new day and time of future board meetings will be the second Tuesday of the month from 4-6 pm at the Lawrence Public Library.]

Present. Debra Duncan (Pres), Cille King (Vice Pres), Marjorie Cole (Treas), Margaret Arnold, Midge Grinstead, Carol Klinknett, Marlene Merrill, Austin Turney, Melissa Wick; guests Ann Carlin Ozegovic, Sharon Brown. Absent: marci francisco, Janice Friedman.

President's report. Debra reported on the February Planning Meeting: locally, members recommended a one year extension of the Economic Development and Community Development Study led by David Burress; nationally, there will be no new studies. Instead, LWV-US encourages local leagues to take action on established positions on voting rights, money in politics and redistricting.

LWVK/Voter Service report. Debra and Cille journeyed to Meriden KS on February 6 for a meeting with United Methodist Women from five counties. There were about 100 attendees. Issues and the KS Legislative website were discussed. The State Board will now have meetings one month and conference calls the following month. Several positions are open on the board at this time.

Treasurer's report. Marjorie reported income of \$954.52 in February, and expenses of \$901.73. Current balances as of March 1 were: checking acct \$8,252.55; money market acct \$2,105.34; Stucky acct \$3,631.66; Education Fund \$984.27. The proposed annual budget for 2016-2017 was presented and discussed. The following suggestions were made: increase TOTAL MEALS AND HOSPITALITY from \$1,000 to \$1,700. Increase PMP to \$2,850. This would

increase the proposed TOTAL EXPENSE from \$9,155 to \$9,900. Marlene moved and Austin seconded that the proposed budget with the above changes be approved. The motion passed.



Committee reports. Membership. Marjorie reported that we have 10 new members. She read a letter of support from Michael Doudoroff that included a contribution in memory of his late wife. **Fluker Award.** Melissa reported on the upcoming luncheon. **Nominations.** Sharon presented the 2016-2017 slate prepared by the Nominations Committee. The board accepted the report.

New Business. The national LWV has recommended: "Although most board meetings will probably take place in person, by-laws may authorize electronic meetings if they are conducted by a technology (such as telephone or video conferencing) that is available to all and allows all persons participating to hear each other at the same time. E-mail is useful for communications between boards meetings, but official decisions may be made by e-mail only if the by-laws specifically authorize them and discussion/debate procedures have been adopted in advance." Melissa moved and Cille seconded that we adopt this change in our by-laws. The motion passed

Debra reported that new members are often asking about attending meetings. She suggested we plan for a general membership meeting on elections to be held this summer, before the August primary election.
— Sharon Brown

Lawrence Pedestrian Coalition Report

April 13, 7 pm, Carnegie Building, 200 West 9th St

Erin Paden presided over the meeting. It was decided to change the nickname of the group from LPC to PedCo. Logan Isaman of the Lawrence Public Library described the summer reading program, which will focus on wellness. Participants will track steps/miles to reach destinations from *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. The program is called "Walking to Rivendell." Three KU students discussed the digital storytelling program they are developing to educate people about pedestrian safety. This is in the Film & Media Studies Department. Goals for the year 2016 were considered and four were selected: 1) Achieve \$500,000 annual City funding for sidewalk repair and infill. 2) Fully implement the Public Awareness Campaign, 3) Take the lead in applying for and achieving "Walk Friendly Community" status. 4) Improve the current school crossing guard policy, including responsibility for supervision. The Coalition's next meeting will be on May 11. — Alan Black



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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www.facebook.com/lwvldc • www.twitter.com/lwvldc

May 2016

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May is a very birdy time of year in Lawrence. This issue of the *Voter* features photos of species I've seen in my backyard this month, and which you can probably find in yours, too! Some are year-round residents; some are here for the summer; some are just passing through on their way to points north. How many can you name? (Answers are on page 1.)



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