

# July - August 2011

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# The VOTER

Bulletin of the LWV of Lawrence-Douglas County, KS • *Volume 59 No. 3*  
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

Thursdays, July 14th, August 11th, September 8th	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	<b>LWVL-DC Board Meeting.</b> <i>First Methodist Church, 946 Vermont St.. All League members are welcome to attend.</i>
Saturdays, July 23rd, August 20th, September 24th	7:00 PM	<b>Land Use Committee Meeting.</b> <i>Community Mercantile Meeting Room, 901 Iowa St.</i>
Friday, Saturday, August 26th, 27th		<b>Membership &amp; Leadership Development Training for local Leagues' team members.</b> <i>Manhattan, location TBA.</i>
Saturday, September 10th	9:00 PM	<b>VOTER Article Submission Deadline.</b> <i>Please send submissions to <a href="mailto:lightwatcher@gmail.com">lightwatcher@gmail.com</a>.</i>
Saturday, September 24th		<b>LWVK Fall State League Day.</b> <i>Topeka, location TBA.</i>

## A Note from President Kay Hale

This issue of the VOTER contains great news about the League. I believe we are taking all the right steps to make our objectives a reality.

Carrie Lindsey facilitated a dynamic membership recruitment meeting! A follow-up news article was published by the Lawrence Journal World on June 26th. The Education Study Committee chaired by David Burress is well underway. Our ever faithful Land Use Committee addressed three letters to the City Planning Commission about critical issues. These are visible actions. I know that other action steps are quietly being taken in the background to achieve League objectives.

Speaking of objectives, I am pleased to announce that the LWV-L/DC Board of Directors recently adopted organizational objectives for 2011/2012. They are:

- 1) Assure financial sustainability of the organization;
- 2) Increase League membership by five percent;
- 3) Enhance visibility of the League;
- 4) Participate in the LWV-US Study about the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education;
- 5) Implement voter service and education activities leading up to the 2012 election;



- 6) Participate in the LWV-K Restudy of the 1993 Finance Position; (More about this next month)
- 7) Facilitate a local study on the question of how to increase voter registration and participation in local elections and arrive at conclusions that will not require changing current law;
- 8) Sponsor a series of League Issues or "Hot Topics" meeting for members and the public.

Yes, these are ambitious objectives. But I know they can be achieved if we work together.

More good news - League committees have almost been filled. I want to thank all of you who volunteered to serve on committees. Your names are listed in the article - "Who is Doing What in the League." If I missed anyone, please let me know. This brings me to accountability. We must hold ourselves to be accountable for our responsibilities in the League. Our continued success depends upon it.

## Who is Doing What in Your League?

### 2011/2012

#### **Voter Service Committee**

Caleb Morse, Chair  
 Melinda Henderson  
 Lee Ann Duver, VEC representative  
 Diane Oakes, VEC representative

Carrie Lindsey  
 Caleb Morse  
 Milton Scott  
 Austen Turney  
 Eleanor Wenger



#### **Membership Committee**

**Carrie Lindsey, Chair**  
 Bonnie Dunham, public relations  
 Bob Duver, hospitality

#### **Nominating Committee**

Sharon Brown, Chair  
 Carol Nalbandian  
 Nate Lindsey  
 James Dunn  
 Marjorie Cole

#### **Stucky Scholarship**

Aline Hoey, Chair

#### **Communications Committee**

Milton Scott, Chair  
 Chris Lempa, accidental webmaster  
 Bonnie Dunham, public relations  
 Ruth Lichtwardt, VOTER editor

#### **Observer Corps**

James Dunn, Chair  
 Elinor Turtellot, observer  
 Peggy Baker, observer

#### **Local Study Committee**

Carrie Lindsey, Chair

#### **State Study Committee**

Carol Jacobson Co-Chair  
 Forrest Swall, Lawrence member

#### **Land Use Committee**

Allan Black, Chair  
 marci francisco  
 Melinda Henderson  
 Betty Lichtwardt

#### **Helen Fluker Award**

Janet Roth, Chair  
 Marjorie Cole  
 Audrey Kamb-Studdard

#### **National Study Committee**

David Burress Chair  
 Marjorie Cole  
 Gary Hale  
 Betty Shaffer (new member)

## Membership Recruitment Meeting Report

There was good attendance and press coverage for the membership recruitment meeting held on June 25, 2011 in the Jayhawk Room at Lawrence Fire Station No. 5. Carrie Lindsey facilitated the meeting (and

is submitting this report). Approximately 25 people attended, including 6 individuals who were not League members. (Seven if you include the reporter from the Lawrence-Journal World!)

As stated in the Lawrence-Journal World's article the next day, the focus was on the League's mission of educating voters and why that is important, "Lindsey said she wants to promote the intelligent discussions

that prepare voters to make informed decisions.... 'We have this time in our country where education and knowledge about the issues actually seems pretty low of a priority of why we form our opinions'."

The meeting overviewed the policy issues being focused on locally including by National and LWV Kansas (LWVK). Janis McMillen, former LWVK President and current member of LWWUS Board, spoke on the League's policy and process for undertaking issue study. In addition, she addressed the current National studies of the *Role of the Federal Government in Public Education and Privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector*. One noted concern in that area is the recent privatization of libraries. Lawrence will be scheduling meetings on both of these studies in the future. If you are interested in finding out more information prior to that, you can find it at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

The presentation was closed with encouragement to join the League and a quote from Carrie Chapman Catt, "To the wrongs that need resistance, To the right that needs assistance, To the future in the distance, Give yourselves."

Several audience members asked excellent questions and the net result is one new member, and others who are interested in receiving more information.

## LWVLDC Education Study Committee

### Appointed, Volunteers Wanted

LWVL-DC is participating in the LWWUS consensus process on national education policy. Our local study committee is chaired by David Burress. Its members currently include Kay and Gary Hale, Marjorie Cole, and Betty Shaffer. New members are welcome; contact David Burress at 749-1218 or [d-burress@ku.edu](mailto:d-burress@ku.edu).

The study's charge is defined as:



The Education Study scope is broad and includes the following areas under the role of the federal government in public education (preK through grade 12): the history, funding and equity issues which are addressed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the common core standards/assessments which are required for many federal grant programs but are national, not federal.

The national study committee has drawn up a detailed list of 13 consensus questions. Background materials are available on the LWWUS web site at:

<http://tinyurl.com/3cpqnr>

The LWVLDC committee has planned the following general schedule of activities:

June, July, August	Committee research on issues Committee effort to reach a consensus that can be recommended to LWVLDC.
September	Public forum on curriculum standards and assessment
October	LWVLDC consensus process
November	Approval of consensus statement by LWVLDC Board, submission to LWWUS

## League Participates in Medicaid Reform Meeting

On June 22nd the League of Women Voters of Kansas participated in a public forum on Medicaid Reform held in Topeka. This forum was the first of several to be held around the state organized by Lt. Governor Jeff Collyer, who is the leader of a working group appointed by Governor Brownback to remake Medicaid in Kansas.

These forums will provide Kansans with the opportunity to give their input about healthcare in their communities," said Collyer.

LWVK advocate, Linda Johnson, participated in the Topeka Forum. She reported that state officials kicked off the forum by explaining the enormous shortfall in the Medicaid program. Participants were then divided into three groups, to answer prepared questions about how to cut Medicaid costs. The groups focused on one of the following patient populations: persons living with disabilities, women and children, and the elderly.

A press release stated that the state's working group would launch a web-based tool for Kansans to submit comments and ideas about Medicaid reform within a few weeks. The public input process will culminate with a conference in August to be held in the 3rd Congressional District.

League members will be recruited to participate in the remaining two forums to be held in Wichita on July 7th and Dodge City on July 8th.



## Lawrence Library Observer Report June 20th

Gould Evans architects presented the current stage of design development. The architects reported that during their preliminary review with the Historic Research Committee (HRC), the HRC called for the Library design to have the main entrance on the Vermont Street side, to be "pedestrian friendly" and to be deferential to the Senior Center. The new design will have drive-through book-drop windows on Kentucky Street, an automated system for check in, and transparent materials connecting the outside and inside space of the Library. The interior design space will be flexible with the use of movable panels and walls to accommodate meeting rooms and changes in collection size as needed. Construction document bids will go out in March.

Library Director Bruce Flanders is exploring opportunities to participate with the KU Museum of



Natural History, the KU Spencer Museum of Art, and the Watkins Museum of Community History for placement of rotating displays of artifacts and artwork in the new Library.

Kelly Fann, IT Coordinator, reported that the technology and networking upgrade will bring the current two networks together internally, increasing security and making organization easier for management.

Library Foundation Director Kathleen Morgan reported that the Capital Campaign has raised \$475,000 which is 47.5% of the goal for the expansion and renovation project. Potential large donors are being contacted and plans are being made to submit applications for grants from foundations. The hope is to go public with the campaign later this summer and move into a community-wide fundraising phase this fall.

The Friends of the Library Board will continue to raise money to support various activities. The continuity of the Friends organization will be maintained during the two year construction period. There will be a mystery and fiction book sale at the end of July and the regular book sale will be held in October at the Library.

- Elinor Tourtellot, observer

## Willow Springs Township Meeting June 1

Present: Board members (Charles Wintermantle, Jerry Smith, Suzanne Evinger) Road management Tim Kohler; Fire Department chief & training office, Lyle Bowlin and Brian Mansur, and Matt Bowlin (fire department).

Minutes of the May meeting were read and approved. The Treasurer's Report was also read and approved. Balances of the general fund were \$176,839.61 and fire department \$24,398.66.

Board discussed Fire Department's joining Wakarusa in selling reflective street address signs, primarily to aid emergency crews. Purchase for \$7. Sell for \$15. Landowner to install. Approved.

**Fire Department concerns:**

Fuse box in Station #2 has water leak in rain. Hose testing will be done the week of the 29<sup>th</sup>. Cost will be \$.33 a foot, or about \$2,000. Department attended to 2 calls (grass fires) and 2 requests for aid. Old spare tank sold for \$2,000. Pressure washer needs replacement or repair. Decision to repair.

**Road Maintenance:**

Mowing has started. Requests to raise cutting level, as some banks are being scalped and will erode in heavy rain.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m. to enjoy cinnamon crumb cake provided by Mrs. Bowlin.

- *Peggy Baker, Observer*

**LWVK convention:** James, Carol, Caleb and Kay attended the LWVK Convention held in Emporia April 30, 2011. Following a LWV-US presentation on "Advocacy for Voter Protection Project, an action resolution to form a small group study was approved. This group will study whether to participate in a legal challenge to the Kansas Voter Photo ID law and provide a recommendation and action plan to the LWV-K board.



**Mabel Stucky Scholarship:** On May 10 Aline Hoey and Kay awarded the \$750 Stucky Scholarship to Lucas Smith at Free State High School. He will be attending Mcalester College in St. Paul, Minn., with a major in social policy.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Committee Appointments:** Melinda Henderson has been appointed to the Board to serve a one-year term. Carol Nalbandian will serve on the Nominating Committee as a non-board member and Melinda Henderson as a board member.

**Website Evaluation Report:** David and Chris recommended that we shift from our current website to League Easy Web, a non-profit website run by the California League of Women Voters. Chris, David and Kay will create a management plan for Easy Web, working with the Communication Committee (Ruth, Milton, Chris and Bonnie).

**Membership Recruitment Initiative:** Kay has received a formal invitation for members of our league to train in Membership Recruitment, August 26-27.

**Voter Publication:** *The Voter* publication date will be moved to mid-month, after the Board Meeting, so that highlights of the month's Board meeting might be printed in the same month.

**Land Use Committee:** It was decided that Carrie, Caleb, Kay and Milton will serve as a rotating group to sign official position letters. Because the committee meets on Saturday and letters must be submitted the

## Highlights of the Board Meeting

### June 9th

Kay Hale, president; Marjorie Cole, treasurer; Directors: David Burress, James Dunn, Bonnie Dunham, Bob Duver, Melinda Henderson, Carol Jacobsen, Ruth Lichtwardt, Chris Lempa, Carrie Lindsey, Caleb Morse, and members George and Mary Ann Brenner, Juanita Carlson and Gary Hale met May 12 at the First Methodist Church. Milton Scott, vice-president, was absent.

The treasurer's report included balances as follows: Checking Account \$1737.04, Money Market Account \$4385.64, Stucky Account \$7,844.30, and Judiciary Account \$1,288.58

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

**Civility Project:** Kay received an invitation to attend an informational meeting about an inquiry about civility and the way the public is involved in public policy in Lawrence at the United Way of Douglas County on May 18, 2011.

following Monday, there is often a time-crunch to get signatures.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Voter Services Committee:** Caleb reported that according to Ben Lampe, Douglas County Deputy of Elections, we can continue registering voters as before until the new proof of citizenship law takes effect in January 2012. Melinda is working on a pamphlet describing the new voter ID requirements that we can post on our website and distribute.

The Naturalization Ceremony will take place at the Dole Institute on Sept. 16, 2011. Bonnie is working on capturing the information in the LWV-Johnson County "Welcome New Citizen" booklet so that it can be modified as needed for Douglas County.

LWV-K will defray the cost of voter service activities by local leagues. They will pay half the cost of any voter service expense, up to \$500. They will also reimburse the full cost of the "Welcome New Citizen" booklets.

**Observer Corps:** More observers are needed as well as a chair for this committee. We once had many more observers. James mentioned the importance of observers listing participants at the public meetings they attend.

**Fund Raising:** Ruth reported that a League rummage sale is scheduled for September 3, Labor Day Weekend, preferably on a parking lot at a busy corner. She is seeking a location. (*Editor's note: The proposed location fell through and the sale will likely be postponed to spring 2012.*)

**Study Committees:** Kay distributed a list of "Opportunities for Study and Action, 2011-2012."

**How to Increase Voter Registration and Participation:** Carrie volunteered to explore and report on a study adopted at our 2010 Annual Meeting "to undertake a study to increase voter registration and participation in local elections that would not require a change a state law."

**Local study on Public Transportation:** Alan Black has expressed interest in this study, proposed at the 2011 Annual Meeting, which needs to have its scope defined.

**LWV-K Restudy of the 1993 Finance Position:** Carol is interested in developing an issue meeting on this subject.

**LWV-US Role of the Federal Government in Public Education:** This study is well underway. David will chair a committee to conduct a local study and take consensus by November.

## Land Use Committee Report

June 18th

The Land Use Committee (LUC) met at the Merc on Saturday, June 18, 7:00 p.m. to discuss the items on the June Planning Commission (PC) Agenda. There were several controversial issues on their agenda, some of which had appeared before. The LUC decided to send three letters.

Our first letter was on Item 2, the text amendment (TA) to the zoning ordinance of the Land Development Code (LDC) dealing with modifying the Planned Development Overlay District (PD) Section 20-701 of the LDC. The PC has been dealing with the issue of modifying this Planned Development (PD) district for several months to allow for easier infill in neighborhoods, and especially those that have a high concentration of multiple family uses, such as the Oread Neighborhood. The PD zoning district, because it is superimposed on the standard (base) zoning districts, is governed, with some exceptions, by the requirements of these base districts (the single family residential, multiple family residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) The minimum size of a PD district has been 5 acres, and the density calculations (number of dwelling units per acre) and parking requirements have generally followed those of the underlying base district requirements.



At the May PC meeting we had sent a letter concerning the proposed text amendments because a major proposal for changing the PD district text (Article 7) was to eliminate the buffer required between PDs and single family residential (RS) districts. The buffer plus the height restrictions came into effect if a PD building in a more intense district (that is, all other districts) were to be built adjacent to a building in an RS district.

In addition, the general code, Article 6, Density and Dimensional Standards, had similar height restrictions that came into effect when an RS district was adjacent to a proposed building in a more intense district. The restrictions required that unless the building from the more intense district was the same height as that of the adjacent RS building, the setback in the more intense district would have to be increased to equal the height of this proposed more intense building and any height increase beyond that required an additional setback. The new regulations eliminated these height restrictions on non-RS districts, and in their place much less restrictive standards were substituted. These substitutions severely reduced the height/setback protections for RS districts. This general text amendment (Article 6) is actually much more serious than the proposed more specific PD amendment (Article 7) since this change would affect every RS neighborhood in the whole city that has RS districts adjacent to multiple family (RM) and/or non-residential districts.

In our current letter, we repeated our objections to eliminating the height protections for RS districts adjacent to PD districts, but emphasized that the text amendment to the general districts, Article 6, was even more serious and should not be applicable to all zoning districts in the whole Land Development Code as is currently proposed.

OUTCOME: The PC approved the Text Amendments on height restrictions and setbacks to the Planned

Development Overlay District, Article 7. Regarding Article 6, Section 20-602(h)(2)(ii), at the PC meeting there seemed to be a misunderstanding on the interpretation of the proposed change: a question as to whether it applied to the entire code or just to Planned Developments. The staff interpretation voiced at the PC meeting was that the proposed amendment to Article 6 affected only the building height/setback requirements for the PD District. However, following the PC meeting, a second interpretation by a different staff member verified that, in fact, this amendment to Article 6 is a general provision and does apply to all zoning districts. Unfortunately, the PC had approved the change proposed for Article 6 based on the first staff interpretation

voiced during the PC meeting; that is, that Article 6 applied only to planned developments. Because most, if not all single family neighborhoods are adjacent to non-RS districts, this text amendment to Article 6 is a very far-reaching change that could negatively affect all neighborhoods if allowed to become law.

The other text amendments to the PD Overlay District approved by the PC now change density calculations for Studio and one-bedroom apartments to 0.4 units in density, and 0.6 units in density for two-bedroom apartments in PDs. The minimum size for PDs will be one-half acre instead of a minimum of 5 acres. Changes to the PD parking requirements allow the City Commission not only to decrease parking requirements as currently, but also increase them (a welcome change).

The second letter that we submitted concerned Item No. 6: the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Horizon 2020: update of Chapter 11, Historic Resources. We endorsed this chapter amendment with one exception: Goal 2. It read, "Conserve the Rural Character of Unincorporated Douglas County in Strategic Areas." To us this could be interpreted to mean that only the chosen "Strategic Areas" would be preserved and the remainder could be allowed development of a non-rural character. This



would have been very much counter to our League Position. Therefore, we suggested that it read: "Identify and conserve the historic areas and places in unincorporated Douglas County." OUTCOME: The PC approved the language that we suggested in our letter to replace the original wording of Goal 2.

Our last letter was on Item No. 11, "Text Amendment to City of Lawrence Development Code; Chapter 20; Synthetic Turf as Landscaping Material." Our Code does not permit artificial turf as landscaping material. However, the new apartment complex, "The Oread," used it in violation of the Code. Upon inspection this was discovered, and the deviation was approved by the Planning Director as an exception rather than making the developer rip it out. Consequently, another apartment complex has asked for the same approval to use artificial turf. This precipitated the current proposal to change the Code to allow artificial turf. The staff recommendation is for denial.

Our letter commended the staff for their very inclusive report, complete with supporting references giving critical environmental reasons for not allowing the use of artificial turf.

OUTCOME: the PC deferred the item until July with instructions to the staff to give specific evidence to support their position. They also wanted to hear more from the public on the issue.

To see the complete letters from the Land Use Committee to the June, 2011 Planning Commission meeting, please go to the Planning website at

[http://www.lawrenceks.org/pds/pc\\_agendas\\_minutes](http://www.lawrenceks.org/pds/pc_agendas_minutes)

In tribute to Mary Michener, we are reprinting Mary's League profile from the March 2010 VOTER:

Mary Michener's career with the League of Women Voters began in "1950 or so", when, as Precinct  
*July - August 2011, page 8*

## Tribute to Mary Michener

Committee Woman for what was then the Wakarusa Township, taking vote for a local election. Over the years, she and her husband Charles, an entomologist and bee specialist, traveled for his research to Africa and Latin America and raised 4 children. While Mitch, as he is known to friends and colleagues, kept busy with his University teaching career, Mary started and ran "Adventure", a local bookstore, for 23 years, simultaneously teaching "speed-reading" in the store basement. In 1995, she retired from her bookstore and began a new adventure as a community activist.

While volunteering at the local library, Mary's interests turned to public transportation. She tells this story:

"I don't remember when I joined the League...but when I did, it widened my world. In recent years, I volunteered as League Observer for the (public) library Board, and served on a committee that studied...mental health care in Kansas. But my greatest effort, 1996-2000, was Citizens for Public Transportation. We had public meetings where social service agencies told how their clients needed transportation----to bring the baby in for vaccinations, to get the kids to special activities, to get folks to the doctor, etc. we had speakers from successful transit systems in other cities. We were in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. We were at Earth Day. We had a petition (drive), and raised money for expenses. We wrote to every social and civic agency we could find, several hundred of them. We faced the City Commission---through two Commissions, in fact---and the State Legislature (more daunting than the PTA, I found). And finally, on a blizzardy day in December of 2000, the first bus pulled out. It still gives me a little thrill to see one of "my" buses go by."

For her efforts, Mary received the 1998 Community Access Award from Independence, Incorporated, the 2002 Peace and Justice Award from the Peace and Justice Coalition, and in 2000, the first Helen Fluker Open Government Award. She served on the subse-



quent City oversight committee for Public Transportation, was CASA volunteer, and until recently, taught writing to women in the County Jail. (Her dedication earned a gift from one family member that says "Please, don't let me volunteer for anything else!!) She describes herself as a "...natural born volunteer...always civic-minded."  
 - Marilyn Roy

## Welcome!

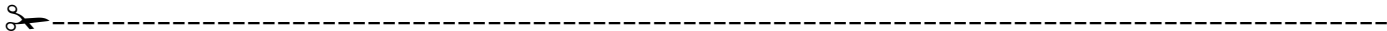
Welcome to new member, Tess Banion! Please update your directory by adding her name and information.

Tess Banion, 505 Rockledge Road, Lawrence, KS 66049 [785-842-3847](tel:785-842-3847) [Tess.Banion@gmail.com](mailto:Tess.Banion@gmail.com)



Joining at the local level automatically makes you a member of the State and National Leagues. Dues for LWV Lawrence-Douglas County are \$50 for a single membership and \$75 for a household membership (two members sharing one mailing address). Dues are used to cover our [per-member-payments](#) to LWV-Kansas and LWV-US. Money we raise ourselves covers all local expenses. The League year begins April 1 and ends March 31. The date listed above your name on the address

PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM BELOW AND RETURN TO:  
 Membership Chair, LWV L-DC, P.O. Box 1072, Lawrence KS 66044



PLEASE PRINT

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Joining \_\_\_\_\_ Renewing through March 31, 2012

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Membership (\$50) \_\_\_\_\_ Household Membership (\$75)

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Membership (\$20) - University student enrolled full or part time in an accredited institution  
 Student membership includes email-only newsletter; please give an email address.

I have enclosed a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help sponsor a League membership.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to be added to the LWV I-DC email listserv? Yes No

Would you prefer your VOTER printed and mailed, or emailed? Printed Emailed

(Emailed VOTERS are delivered sooner and include live links to the League website and other interesting places!) label on your VOTER is the date through which your dues have been paid.