



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

VOTER

League of Women Voters Wichita-Metro

February 2010

lwvwichita.org

PO Box 2411 Wichita, KS 67201

316-264-VØTE (264-8083)

The Quest for More Diversity Among Judges

Kansas League of Women Voters president and Wichita Metro League member Ernsetine Krehbiel will lead the program "The Quest for More Diversity in the Selection of Judges" at our next meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 9. Our guests will be members of the local branch of the American Association of University Women. Please join us at our new location, the Candle Club.

NEW LOCATION: Candle Club, 6135 E. 13th (west end of the shopping center)

NEW COST: \$15

SAME TIME: 11:30 a.m.

RESERVATIONS STILL NEEDED. Contact Sharon Ailsieger at 773-7420 or sailsieger@netscape.net.

See the January Voter for more information about the judicial diversity or go to www.lwv.org/fairandimpartialcourts. We hope to see you at the February meeting!

Co-Presidents' message:

Greetings to Wichita Metro League of Women Voters!

We started 2010 with an enthusiastic January meeting at the Candle Club. We like our new meeting location. We'll see how it goes should we outgrow our private dining room. The cost of the luncheon has gone to \$15, but the location is fairly good, parking is good and the food is very good!

At our January Program Planning meeting we decided to continue our study of Transportation. Sharon Ailsieger will lead this study that will begin in March. If you are interested in participating, please contact her. Our recommended National study is Privatization of Water Resources.

The topic for February's meeting is the Quest for More Diversity in the Selection of Judges. Ernestine Krehbiel will lead the discussion. Our guests will be members of the local branch of the American Association of University Women. This study will continue March 4th, with guest speaker Judge Karen Humphreys at a special event! This event, in turn, will lead on into spring and summer with the observance and celebration of the 90th anniversary of the passing of women's suffrage and the birthday of the League of Women Voters. The first local league was established in Wichita back in 1920.

Every one will have a chance to learn more with a series of books to read and discuss during the February through June book club. Look deeper into the Voter where you will find a list of the books and book presenter with place and dates.

The "2010 - 90th Anniversary 19th Amendment: Women Voter" flyer is on page 3. Please forward this flyer of our events to your family, friends, neighbors, co-worker, students, etc. We really need to get the word out about our planned activities. As stated in the January Voter, the national league funded some of the planned events, and we need to make sure we get a good turn out. As for the book club, even if you have not read the books, do plan to come to participate in or listen to the discussion.

These exciting plans will have successful outcomes only if all members take a responsible part participating. Be an active part of the solutions! The League needs each of us, and we need what we can do.....together!

-- Co-Presidents Sally Dewey and Denae Lyons

19th Amendment's 90th anniversary a cause for celebration

By Mary Knecht, Committee Chair

Thanks to the great planning of the "90th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment Committee," the celebration gets underway with the first book club at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 23. This discussion also honors African American suffragists (past and present) and was specifically scheduled during African America History month. Please refer to the flier in this newsletter that outlines the specifics of the first three types of events on the 2010 calendar.

The committee consists of: Denae Lyons, Pat MacDonald, Mary Ann Lawing and Mary Knecht for the LWV; Sally Dewey, AAUW (and LWV); Vickie Stangl, WSU Political Science; Kathy Williams, WSU Women's Studies; Julie Linneman, Wichita Public Library; Melanie Jenny, NOW; Donna Dillsaver, Wichita Professional Communicators; Cathie Yager, Senator Roberts' office; Rita Chavez, Hispanic Women's Network; Prisca Barns, Kansas African American Museum; Sharon Cranford and Carla Breckenridge, Links; Marie Gillespie; and Joyce Markley.

Of special importance is the presentation by U.S. Judge Karen Humphreys on March 4th (get it—march forth) on "Safeguarding U.S. Democracy: A Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary." Please plan to attend, and bring all your extended family and "gal pals" too. We'd like to fill the 550-seat auditorium in the 20th Century Club building at 7 that evening. There will be a stimulating discussion and a tasty reception afterward.

Get your vintage suffrage costume out and make sure it still fits, or round up a new one, so you'll be ready to march with us in the River Festival Parade on Friday, May 7. Other activities, not announced yet, are scheduled for the summer and fall including a free film series, a panel discussion on the judiciary, and, of course, the November election and party.

We are thankful that our grant writing was successful and that our activities are funded by the League of Women Voters Education Fund and the Transparency and Integrity Fund of the Open Society Institute.

2010 – 90th Anniversary

19th Amendment: Women VOTE!

**Join the League of Women Voters-Wichita Metro
and other women's organizations in the celebration.**

Listen – Learn – Read – Review – Vote!

1. Book Clubs

co-sponsored by the Wichita Public Library

Come for the discussion even if you have not read the book.

7 p.m., Rockwell Branch Library, 5939 E. Ninth

Feb. 23 - Rosalyn Terborg-Pen, "African-American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920,"

Leader, Daisy Kabagarama

March 23 - Elisabeth Griffith, "In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton,"

Leader, Carol Wolfe Konek

April 27 - Sandra Day O'Connor, "The Majesty of the Law: Reflections of a Supreme Court Justice,"

Leader, Vicki Stangl

May 25 - Jean H. Baker, "Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists,"

Leader, Pat MacDonald

June 22 - Leslie Sanchez, "You've Come a Long Way, Maybe:

Sarah, Michelle, Hillary and the Shaping of the New American Woman,"

Leader, Donna Dillsaver

(Information: 688-9361)

2. U.S. Judge Karen Humphreys

Thursday, March 4, 7 p.m.

Murdock Theatre at the 20th Century Club, 536 N. Broadway

"Safeguarding U.S. Democracy:

A Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary"

plus discussion and reception

(Information: 684-3461)

3. Recreate a 1920s Women's Suffrage March

Friday, May 7, River Festival Sundown Parade

Hundreds of women (and men) of all ages are invited to wear vintage costumes,

wave American flags to honor courageous women suffragists

and to remind women (and men) to VOTE.

(Information: 942-8068)

**Activities funded by grants from the League of Women Voters Education Fund and
The Transparency and Integrity Fund of the Open Society Institute.**

Legislative briefing

Following is a report from the Kansas League's lobbyist, Paul Johnson. For more information, contact Kansas League President Ernestine Krehbiel, League of Women Voters of Kansas, 618 S. Kansas Ave. Suite B, Topeka, KS 66604, 785-234-5152, lwwk@sbcglobal.net / lwwk.org.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF GOVERNMENT?

By Paul Johnson

Dec. 17, 2009

The 2010 Kansas Legislature will meet in January to debate what constitutes essential governmental services? After several rounds on budgetary cuts in 2008 and 2009, Governor Mark Parkinson has now implemented \$259 million in budgetary reductions to balance the 2010 budget that ends June 30, 2010. The budgetary picture for 2011 is further complicated by the reduction in federal stimulus funds that provided several hundred million dollars for the 2009 and 2010 State budgets. The federal stimulus dollars are completely exhausted by 2012 unless Congress appropriates new dollars. Will the Kansas Legislature have a substantive debate on adequate revenues and the proper mix of tax sources at the same time that further 'program eliminating' budget cuts are debated?

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL & REHABILITATION SERVICES (SRS)

As part of the Governor's budget reductions for 2010, several SRS programs were severely impacted. SRS now has a 17% (1 in 6 positions) vacancy rate at the area offices. SRS central office has a vacancy rate of over 30%. The Mental Health consolidated grant funds mental health services for the uninsured statewide and was reduced by \$3.9 million. Since 2007 this grant has declined from \$31 million to \$10 million. The support grants for the Developmentally Disabled were decreased by \$1.3 million and the waiting list is now 2,848. The General Assistance (GA) program for disabled single adults was shortened to just 12 months reducing the clients served by 480 on January 1, 2010. The GA program count has fallen from 4,461 clients in November 2008 to 2,323 today. The food stamp program has been increasing from 200 new households a month in 2007 to 2,087 new households a month today. The food stamp program now serves over 250,000 Kansans providing over \$30 million in benefits monthly. Projections are that the Temporary Assistance for Families households will increase 37% from 2009 to 2011 (12,571 cases to 17,724 cases). What pressure on limited SRS staffing!

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGING

The Kansas Department of Aging (KDOA) has very limited options to reduce budgets. 75% of KDOA's budget - \$365 million - funds nursing home care for 10,149 clients statewide. The Governor has ordered a 10% reduction in all Medicaid provider rates that will impact a range of medical care from nursing home care to primary care to mental health services. The Home and Community Based Services for the Frail Elderly (HCBS-FE) now assists 5,609 clients statewide with a budget of \$75 million. Unlike nursing home care that is a federally mandated under the Medicaid program, HCBS-FE is provided through a waiver granted by the federal Department of Health and Human Services. HCBS-FE has not had a waiting list in the past but that may change as budget cuts increase. KDOA's nutrition programs were preserved by \$1 million in federal stimulus dollars. If not restored by the Kansas Legislature for 2011, providing 3.5 million meals to seniors will have to be reduced. The Senior Care Act - that provides home care services with only state dollars to the elderly that have incomes just above Medicaid eligibility - now has a waiting list of 269. With these home care service options reduced, more senior citizens will end up in nursing homes at a much higher cost to Kansas' government.

KANSAS HEALTH POLICY AUTHORITY

Like KDOA, the Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA) has few options to reduce their budget. KHPA funds a private clearinghouse where applications for medical programs are processed. As KHPA reduces the contract to operate this clearinghouse, the backlog of 20,000 applications will increase significantly. KHPA is ending its customer service contract that handles 250,000 calls a year from providers and clients. The 10% reduction in

Medicaid provider rates will impact the availability of medical care especially for the underserved in urban and rural areas. KHPA estimates that 41% of the 41,000 births in Kansas last year were funded by Medicaid. Approximately half of all nursing home clients are funded by Medicaid. KHPA now provides medical services to 318,000 Kansans. KHPA is mandated by federal law to process a medical application in 45 days. With this latest round of staff reductions and cuts to contracts, the 45-day rule may not be met and the accuracy of processing claims will suffer! (Check out the new, reformatted Kansas Health Institute website for the most comprehensive coverage of medical/social service issues. www.khi.org)

KANSAS REVENUE

The best estimate is that the Kansas Legislature will start developing the 2011 budget (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010) with a deficit well over \$200 million. Kansas has experienced three years of declining revenues and this has not happened since the Great Depression. Since state budgeting was fully formalized in 1966, the State General Fund had experienced just 3 years of decline (1986, 1999 and 2002) and all were single years of decline. Kansas has not had a complete review of our tax system since the Bill Graves administration in 1995.

Combined state and local tax revenue in Kansas is now 31% property tax, 28% income tax, 26% sales tax and 15% from several minor sources. Property tax is the most politically unpopular tax but also the primary source of income for counties and cities. The income tax is the most progressive tax and Kansas needs one more bracket for higher income households. The sales tax is the most regressive tax especially in Kansas since we tax groceries. There are dozens of services that are exempt from the sales tax. Kansas needs to stop providing more sales tax exemptions and review all existing exemptions every 5 years.

OTHER ISSUES

The process is now starting to redraw the 4 Kansas Congressional districts, the 125 Kansas House districts and the 40 Kansas Senate districts. The final bill to redraw these districts will happen in the 2012 Kansas Legislative session. Projections are that Kansas will not lose a Congressional district as we did in 1990. Iowa is the only state in the country that has established a non-partisan committee to develop their Congressional map with an eye towards community balance. Most redistricting in this country is a partisan war among the Democrats and Republicans. The net effect is to design safe Congressional districts for one party thus subverting a necessary civic dialogue to compromise and solve our country's most troubling problems. For the Kansas House and Senate districts, rural representation will decline further as the population continues to shift to northeast Kansas and areas around Wichita.

The debate to develop a new 10-year Comprehensive Transportation Plan will increase in the coming Legislative session. The first 10-year plan was 1989 to 1999 and the second plan started in 2000 and now ends in 2010. The Kansas Legislature will wait to see whether Congress can pass a new transportation plan? The Federal Highway Trust Fund is under-funded and must be made solvent. With the push for more jobs, highway funding along with some high-speed rail development is considered most promising for employment. The last 10-year Comprehensive Transportation plan in Kansas was \$13 billion – 9% of total state spending. The new request will be closer to \$16 Billion. There should be an extended discussion on how this plan should be funded so as not to compromise funding sources for other vital educational and social service needs.

First call for National Convention this summer

The 2010 LWVUS Convention will be in Atlanta, Ga., June 11 to 15 at Atlanta Marriott Marquis, 265 Peachtree Center Ave. See Convention 2010 At-A-Glance at

http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Council_and_Convention&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=14636

Anyone interested in attending is asked to call Sally Dewey or Denae Lyons, Wichita co-presidents.

Know your government brochures available

“Things to know about your government” is a brochure chock full of useful information from Wichita City Council members names and phone numbers to Kansas legislators and their contact details to Washington, D.C. info. Voter registration information is included. Visit the Web site for a copy, or call 264-8083.

Wichita League study recommendations

On Tuesday, Jan. 12, the membership agreed to the following studies:

State Studies - 2010 and 2011

Carried over Transportation and Selection of Judges

National Study - 2011

Privatization of Water Resources

These recommendations will be forwarded to the state and national leagues on behalf of the Wichita members.

-- Denae Lyons

League ‘speakers list’ more than a slide show

Wichita League Speakers Chair Joyce Cavarozzi is promoting a variety of interesting, entertaining and informative programs to area organizations.

Topics include:

- Suffragist re-enactors (costumed portrayals of women who worked for our right to vote)
- The 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote 90 years ago. How did it happen?
- Current issues in voting (D.C. voting rights, national/local issues)
- Kansas water issues
- Could you pass our nation’s citizenship test? A discussion of the requirements
- Women you wish you had known
- How much do you know about government; interactive talk
- A Stage of their Own: Early Suffragist Playwrights
- PowerPoint presentation on the first African American women voters
- A slide show on Kenya visitors to Wichita
- A slide show on Russian visitors to Wichita

The League does not charge a fee to present the programs; donations are accepted and are used for education, scholarships and outreach.

Joyce is also available to help League members prepare a re-enactment.

For more information, contact Joyce at 316-258-1785 or joyce.cavarozzi@cox.net.

Mark your calendars these upcoming events

Feb. 9 – Unit meeting, Candle Club, 11:30 a.m., Diverse Judiciary, presented by Ernestine Khreibel

Feb. 14 – 90th anniversary of the League of Women Voters (the first local league was formed in Wichita, Kan.)

Feb. 20 – Board meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran, 10 a.m., all members welcome

Feb. 23 – Voter deadline; e-mail editor at bhershberger@pmma.org

Feb. 23 – 19th Amendment's 90th anniversary book discussion, "African-American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920," Rockwell Library Branch, 7 p.m.

March 4 – "Safeguarding U.S. Democracy: A Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary," 90th anniversary of the 19th Amendment event, Judge Karen Humphreys, Murdock Theatre, 7 p.m.

March 9 – Unit meeting, Candle Club, 11:30 a.m., Information for the local League study (tentative)

March 13 – League members invited to AAUW meeting, Larkspur, 10:30 a.m.

March 19 – League members facilitate voter registration after the Naturalization Ceremony, Century II, 11 a.m.

March 20 -- Board meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran, 10 a.m., all members welcome

March 23 -- Voter deadline; e-mail editor at bhershberger@pmma.org

March 23 – 19th Amendment's 90th anniversary book discussion, "In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton," Rockwell Library Branch, 7 p.m.

April 11 – Unit meeting, Candle Club, 11:30 a.m., Discussion and voting on local study (tentative)

April 17 -- Board meeting, St. Paul's Lutheran, 10 a.m., all members welcome

April 20 -- Voter deadline; e-mail editor at bhershberger@pmma.org

April 27 – 19th Amendment's 90th anniversary book discussion, "The Majesty of the Law: Reflections of a Supreme Court Justice," Rockwell Library Branch, 7 p.m.

May 4 – Local League Annual Meeting, details TBA

May 7 – Recreation of a 1920s Women's Suffrage March, River Festival Sundown Parade

May 25 – 19th Amendment's 90th anniversary book discussion, "Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists," Rockwell Library Branch, 7 p.m.

June 22 -- 19th Amendment's 90th anniversary book discussion, "You've Come a Long Way, Maybe: Sarah, Michelle, Hillary and the Shaping of the New American Woman," Rockwell Library Branch, 7 p.m.



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THE VOTER
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Unit meeting information p. 1
Co-Presidents' message p. 1-2
19th Amendment turns 90; task force update p. 2-3
Legislative Update p. 4-5
National Convention in June p. 5
Know Your Government p. 6
Local study recommendations p. 6
Speakers list p. 6
Calendar p. 7

Next Unit Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Candle Club

Program: Diverse Judiciary presented at her home chapter by LWVK President Ernestine Krehbiel

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Please use this form for new members. Send dues to League Treasurer Carole Neal at 8621 21st St. N., Suite 100, Wichita, KS 67206.

Name Address

City State ZIP Phone E-mail

Yes, I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters. I enclose \$60 for a one-year membership for July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010, which includes membership in the local, state and national organizations. Standard distribution is by e-mail. (Dues are \$75 if a paper copy of LWV Wichita-Metro VOTER is desired). Student and additional members in family pay \$30 per year and receive the voter by e-mail.

I am unable to join the League at this time, but enclose a contribution of. I would like my contribution to go to the General Fund Education and Scholarship Fund

Please send more information.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to all people of voting age who subscribe to the purpose and policies of the League.