

THE VOTER

League of Women Voters Wichita-Metro, P. O. Box 2411, Wichita, KS 67202
Lwvwichita.org E-mail lwvwichitametro@att.net Phone number 316-573-5583



AUGUST 2015 NEWSLETTER



95th Anniversary Celebration Activities

Wednesday, August 12, 9:00 am

Sedgwick County Court House, Commission Chambers

Wednesday, August 12, 1:30 – 2:30 pm

Wichita Public Library Downtown

Sunday, August 16, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Wichita Sedgwick County Historical Museum

Tuesday, August 18, 9:00 am

Wichita City Council meeting

Wednesday, August 26, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Tea at University Congregational Church

Wednesday, August 26, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

WSU Hughes Metroplex

National Women's Equality Day Celebration

Board Meeting

Saturday, August 15th

St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 9:00 am

Membership Group Meeting

Money in Politics

Saturday, August 29th @ 10:00

Unit Meetings at Piccadilly

Tuesday, September 8th at 5:30 pm

Voter Registration

Naturalization Ceremony

Friday, September 11th at 11:00 am

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

**Sharon Ailsieger & Barbara Fuller,
Co-Presidents**

The League Calendar is done and on sale, thanks to **Sally Dewey & Carole Neal**. **Wendy Kabler** is our new VOTER editor and member of the Board. **Martha Pint** is the new Unit Chair, which was expanded to include Programs and Callers. She will be off-board. **Paul Babich & Megan Wright-Hagen** have the Hot Topics speakers/dates scheduled. **Mary Knecht, Ellen Estes and Jean Schordof** have the 95th Anniversary Celebration events well planned. **Ernestine Krehbiel** has been very involved with the grant from the Knight Foundation. Unfortunately, we did not get it, but we came close! My point is there is always something to do in League!! August will be full of events, which will need members to step up and help. Can you greet, serve tea, set up or clean up, bring cookies, fruit plate or sandwiches—or just plan to be at events?? Let Mary or myself know if you can be a part of these fun and important events. The Sedgwick County Budget has been presented and the League has some issues. I plan, as Co-President of League, to speak at the public hearings and monitor both City Council and County Commission meeting. MLD Training will be August 21 & 22 in Topeka and members are invited to attend and learn more about this program from the National League. Also, mark **OCTOBER 24** as **LEAGUE DAY in Topeka**. Again, all members are invited. **Unit Meetings** will begin **September 8 at 5:30 pm**. **Please note the time change!** The Board voted to move a few unit meetings to the evening in order to help those members who work and find it hard to attend over the lunch hour. Meetings will continue to be at Piccadilly's. October unit meeting will also be at 5:30 pm and November unit will be at 11:30 am. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

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Treasurer Report - Elaine Harvey

Please pay your dues for 2015-2016.

Our membership year is from July 1 to June 30. Your \$60 annual dues include your local membership, LWV Wichita-Metro Voter, LWV W-M web site, Facebook presence and local activities funding. Also, included is your LWVKS membership, which includes weekly legislative reports throughout the session and LWVUS membership.

Mail Checks to:

LWV Wichita-Metro
Elaine Harvey
4370 N. Eagle Lake Ct
Bel Aire, KS 67220

Voter Service- Betty Ladwig, Chair

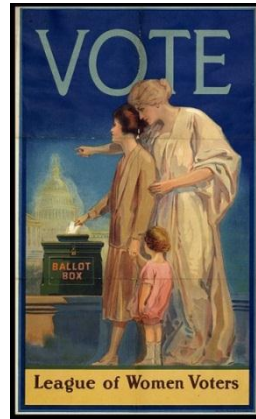
Whew!!! It's heating up outside and inside with political issues regarding budget at the County level and activities regarding it. August is here and with it, there are many activities pertaining to the 19th Amendment celebrations. Additionally, there is the lunch program "Filling the Gap Lunches for Kids" at Colvin and 14 other sites and just around the corner; we have National Voter Registration Day on 9/22. Yeeks!!! Oh and I have been called for Jury Duty in September. Therefore, I need your help. Any Leaguers interested in helping to plan or conduct voter registration day activities please contact me. I am calling a meeting for this Thursday (8/6) at 2:00 pm at St. Paul's Lutheran Church Library, come in the south door of the sanctuary. If you are interested in joining the Voter Service Team for the upcoming busy fall season let me know. We need your input on our participation in this important upcoming year.

In checking with the Election Commissioner's office this morning there are currently 8,204 voters in suspension in Sedgwick County, 7,509 of them are awaiting Citizenship Proof (residents who have registered w/o proof of

birth or citizenship.) We have to do something about this before the Presidential Election. We also need to work fervently on getting out the vote for all those already registered. There are things in the mill that we will learn about to help on the "suspension" situation and I will keep you posted.

Fund Raising - Sally Dewey, Chair

We have already sold or committed to 100 of the calendars and have only 400 to go. Thanks to all for all of the help and support!



***Celebrating 95 years
Woman Getting the
Vote & The League of
Women Voters***

**Get your LWV Wichita
Metro Calendar
Honoring the Women of
Wichita**

To pick up call: Carole Neal at 259-7575 Westside, Sally Dewey at 662-8788 Eastside, or Elaine Harvey at 744-2935 Downtown. Price \$20.00 payable to LWV Education Fund. If you would like more to sell, we will deliver.

If you would like us to mail you a calendar, send check and order information to: Carole Neal, 1314 N. Sheridan, Wichita, KS 67203. Please include additional \$3.00 for postage.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

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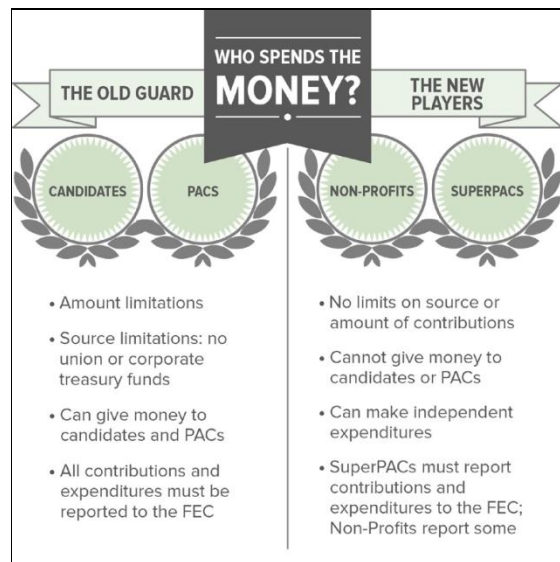
Membership - Ernestine Krehbiel, Chair

The Protecting Voters Interest Group, which met on May 30, 2015 at Auntie Mae's Café for the presentation of Dr. Beth Clarkson has formed a Facebook page for sharing of articles and ideas. This group will focus on concerns about a wide range of topics --from restrictive voting laws that discriminate or repress the vote, to voting machines that are not secure, do not allow an audit or a recount. Join the Facebook Election Integrity LWV group at:

www.facebook.com/groups/KansasElectionIntegrity

Leagues across the US

Studying **Money in Politics** and looking at Pros and Cons of various Amendments to the Constitution. **The Money in Politics Membership Group will have its first meeting on 8/29 at 10:00 am at La Galette French Bakery Restaurant (1017 W Douglas).**



The Supreme Court's 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* stuck down the longstanding federal prohibition on corporate campaign expenditures and triggered a vigorous debate over core democratic values. Supporters of the decision assert that it rests on vital principles of free speech and association

under the First Amendment, while opponents claim that it has opened up the door to widespread corruption and to inequalities of political access and influence. Whatever one's view on *Citizens United*, there is no doubt that independent spending has increased dramatically in recent years. In addition, so has the controversy over the money spent by individuals, corporations, labor unions,

The following link is from a PDF document for our study. *The New Soft Money: OUTSIDE SPENDING IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS* By Daniel P. Tokaji & Renata E. B. Strause
<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/new-soft-money-daniel-p-tokaji-renata-e-b-strause-e-book>

Citizen Education by Ernestine Krehbiel

League did not get the Grant--This Time! On July 22nd, we held our breath in anticipation of the Knight Foundation grant announcement. Our grant application was among the 45 finalists from over 1,000 entries.

Aside from Bill Warren, the Wichita Metro League had agreed partnerships with Jason Opat of IMG and Mindfire Institute of Bethany College. (Jason's company produced the current between-movie graphics at the Warren Theaters, including the exploding cigar and kicking chorus line.) Another partner was Baseline Creative (Jennifer Campbell) and a number of independent creative scriptwriters as well as Cynthia Berner and the Wichita Public Library.

The winners of full funding grants appear to be large already staffed organizations such as the Associated Press. Some include the University of North Carolina's News Lab (\$150,000 will set up searchable archive of campaign speech transcripts to help hold candidates accountable). Another, for \$525,000, The Washington DC Center for Responsive Politics

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and Guide Star intend to unearth comprehensive data on the sources of so-called “dark money.” The LA Times, the Center for Investigative Reporting and Stanford hope to track campaign dollars in California. Smaller awards went to the Rhode Island Secretary of State, the DC Board of Elections, New York’s WNYC public radio station and others. Our competition was very powerful but we intend to try again now that we have some experience in the big leagues. We have a good idea. In the meantime, we will continue to educate citizens in all the ways we can.

Other Goings On – Paul Babich

Twenty-two rate increases in your electric bill since 2009! That’s correct—22!

The Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) is now conducting public hearings on Westar’s proposal for a 23rd rate increase in six years. **The KCC has approved 22 rate increases and 2 rate decreases of Westar between 2009 and 2014. Westar’s proposal includes raising the residential monthly service charge from its current \$12 per month to \$15 and then increases of \$3 per year until it reaches \$27 in five years. That is over a 100% increase!**

Wichitans had a chance to present questions and comments to Westar and the KCC in person on the evening of July 23 at the WSU Metroplex. League members Paul Babich and Joan Barrier were two of the 150-200 people who attended the hearing. At 6:00, the KCC Chairwoman called the official hearing to order and announced the agenda. The Commissioners left the stage for the hour or so reserved for off the record Westar and CURB presentations and questions from the audience. When the KCC Commissioners returned they listened and took notes on the comments of the 53 people in the Metroplex and the handful of the TV participants who had signed up to speak on the record. The KCC heard a broad mix of folks ranging from

college professors and church ministers to workers on minimum wage and retirees with fixed income to environmentalists and solar energy suppliers. It was good for the Commissioners and for Westar to hear from such a diverse group of speakers. None of the speakers spoke in favor of Westar’s proposal.

The good news is that both the KCC staff and CURB suggested that the KCC allow the service charge to rise to \$14 and remain at that level for the next few years. Westar is also requesting increases to pay for new environmental requirements, a 10% shareholder profit and two confusing optional rate structures for residential customers, the “stability rate” which has a \$50 monthly rate but lower volume rates while the “demand rate” is based on the highest hourly usage for the month and a reduced volume rate. Westar is also proposing an increase in the rate schedule for customers using their own solar and wind power generators and increases in rates to pay for updating the Burlington nuclear power plant.

The KCC Commissioners took notes and accepted written comments for study. They will continue to accept comments from the public via mail (1500 Arrowhead Road in Topeka 66604), email (public.affairs@kcc.ks.gov) and telephone (800-662-0027 or 785-271-3100) until August 11, 2015. They will announce their decision on October 28. CURB and the KCC staff agreed that there most certainly will be a rate increase. The only question is how much of an increase.

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(Continuing until she moves)

Off Board: Martha Pint – Unit Chair, Programs and Callers
Nominating Committee – Ellen Estes/Sally Morse

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate. **Join Us!!!!**

Name (Please Print) _____

Names of additional member in household _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Business Phone _____ Email Address _____

Annual Dues \$ 60.00
Add'l Household Membership \$ 30.00
Student Membership \$ 30.00
Hardcopy monthly newsletter \$ 15.00
(Newsletter is emailed monthly with no charge)

Areas of Interest:
Voter Education: _____
Studies: _____
Board Position: _____
Other: _____

Donation _____

Contacts:

Barbara Fuller Co-President
Sharon Ailsieger Co-President
Ernestine Krehbiel Membership Chair

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