



*The League of Women Voter
of Topeka-Shawnee County*
VOTER

President - Jan Waide

1618 SW 28th St.
785-233-7008 (h)

Membership - Nancy Whiffen

215 N Broadmoor
785-235-2104 (h)

July 2006

8 LWVT-SC Board Meeting - Members welcome.

Noon - O'Dooley's, 1930 Westport Dr.

August 2006

1 Tuesday Topics and *Primary Election!*

New City Manager Norton Bonaparte. See details below.

8 LWVT/SC Board Meeting - Members welcome.

Noon - O'Dooley's, 1930 Westport Dr.

12 Back to School Fair- *More information to come!*

15 LWV Membership Event *See details on page 3.*

September 2006

5 Tuesday Topics -

Carol Williams, Governmental Ethics Commission

12 Scott School Election-*See details on page 3.*

21 Voice Meeting, Mental Health

Tuesday Topics

August Tuesday Topics is at the Topeka & Shawnee County Pulic Library. Look for posting on billboard in the rotunda.

Cost of lunch is \$8.25/each for the first 25 arriving. Beverage available in the room. Checks payable to the Millennium Cafe.

If you need a ride to any League event, contact Betsy Rohleder.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, multi-issue organization which promotes political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and takes action on selected governmental issues.



PREZ SEZ!

An Update from Jan Waide, President,
Topeka/Shawnee County

GIVE THANKS

*What to Look for in
this Voter!*
**LWVK State Council
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Hopefully, it is never too late to thank people.

The garage sale was a success (\$473) in spite of really cold weather that day. That success was due to a great deal of effort on the part of many volunteers from our membership – nine on Friday for pricing and setting up and 14 on Saturday, sale day.

Special thanks go to some of the folks:

- Bob Whiffen and his shop vac for cleaning up the floor of my garage on the preceding Monday;
- Edith and Ken Bronson and Delores Field for the loan (and assembly) of clothes racks;
- Tables arrived from the Molers, the Shaughnessys, the Whiffens and my neighbor, Elaine DeCoursey;
- Chelsey Smith provided a cash box and Nancy Whiffen, some stick-on price tags;
- And, of course, to all of you who contributed the wonderful sale items.

A very special thank you to Marge Heeney for the name and phone number of Leonard Gonzales, home phone: 357-1475 or cell: 383-1619, who came and loaded up all the leftovers and took them to the Hispanic community. Remember if you have broken appliances or furniture that needs to be hauled away, he will do it for free.

A few future Prez Sez columns will be devoted to sharing information garnered at the LWVUS Convention so stayed tuned. And as always, stand up and speak out for good government!

Board Briefs

MAY

- Membership information in database and a Directory distributed at May Tuesday Topics.
- The Membership Event will be 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 15, at Peppertree Clubhouse with a silent and live auction.
- VOICE meeting on Financing State Mental Health was scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 21.
- A committee will confer about moving reserve funds to improve returns.
- The Board voted to offer \$25 memberships for students between the ages of 18 and 30 who are enrolled in post high school classes.
- Chelsey and Nancy Schaughnessy were appointed to the Nominating Committee

JUNE

- Plans were discussed for the Membership Event on August 15th.
- The Back to School Fair is Saturday, August 12th at the Expo Center. Leaguers hand out flyers, register voters, give away school supplies. A chair has yet to be appointed.
- Tuesday Topics meetings have been getting added exposure due to heightened media coverage. The Board voted to feed reporters attending these meetings with discretion of the person in charge of Tuesday Topics.

League of Women Voters T-SC

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Send address changes to:
Sybil Wiegman, Treasurer
2805 SW Tall Grass Dr
66614-6026
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Nominating Committee
Betsy Rohleder, Chair

LWVK State Council

Janis McMillan

At our State Council held in Lawrence at the end of April, there were 41 people in attendance – a terrific turnout. The Lawrence/Douglas County League did a great job as hosts. The speakers left us with new information and much to think about. The following Action Resolutions were passed:

- Encourage legislators to pass legislation limiting the use of taser guns by officials in public schools.
- Encourage legislators to institute an “abstinence PLUS” curriculum in public schools that maintains the current “opt out” policy.
- Strongly endorse the State Board of Education to institute a comprehensive sex education program that includes “abstinence PLUS,” which maintains the current “opt out” policy in our Kansas public schools.
- Enthusiastically commends the legislature for supporting the pre-K school readiness pilot program initiated by Governor Sebelius.
- Ask state legislators to use taxing power to encourage alternative energy development.
- Encourage lawmakers to enact legislation that changes Kansas No Child Left Behind standards to incorporate the individual “growth model” with an at-risk index.

The only Direction to the Board was to encourage the LWVUS board to develop national public service announcements and other national efforts for

“Civics 101” for education of the general public. LWVK will present this as a “Direction to the LWVUS Board” at National Convention.

Extending certain provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is working its way through Congress right now. The League supports these extensions. State Representative Delia Garcia, Wichita, and a member of the Wichita Metro League, introduced a resolution into the Kansas House (HCR 5037) memorializing the Congress of the United States to extend certain provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Resolution was formally acted on by the House near the end of the legislative session. Thanks to Carol Yoho, Topeka/Shawnee County League member, who represented all Kansas Leaguers by attending the House Session that morning (in one of our more heavy spring rains, I might add) to be there when Rep. Garcia acknowledged the League’s support.

Voter Service – Janice Norlin, Board member from Salina, has agreed to be Voter Service Chair. This year, we will not have DNET available for our use, but Carol Yoho, our new webmaster for the state League, will be working on the possibility of posting questions/answers on our website. At minimum, we will provide questions to every League, in the event you end up printing a Voter’s Guide.



Opportunities for you to be involved in LWV!

Mental Health Study Committee

This committee is currently meeting about our state study. Contact Gwen Elliott, 267-4037 if you are interested. Gwen attended State Council at Lawrence on April 20th, and gave a report on the Mental Health study there.

If you are interested in registering voters, contact Jan Waide, 273-7008.

Contact Gwen Elliott if you are interested in being a League Observer of City or County

Scott School Election

Scott School is located at 4th and California in East Topeka. The League will be holding the mock election on the following dates:

September 12 at 8:50 a.m.~Voter Registration
September 26 at 8:50 a.m.~Primary Election
October 3 at 8:50 a.m.~General Election

Members interested in volunteering should contact Bob Harder at (785)272-8726 or rharder6@cox.net.

***The Voter is in need of an editor!
Please contact Jan Waide for information on this position.***

LWVK Report on the 2006 Legislative session

Women's Health / Sex Education

SB 508 Abstinence Plus Education Act, with "opt out" provision for parents; LWV supported; passed Senate; died in committee.

SB 528 Proposal to collect and report detailed reasons for pregnancy termination after 22 weeks and report any fetal anomalies; League opposed; passed the legislature; vetoed by Gov.

HB 2792 Added additional reporting requirements for physicians performing abortions on minors, required judges to collect information on minors with disabilities, and targeted judges who give "judicial bypasses" to allow minors to have an abortion; League opposed; bill passed House; died in Senate committee.

HB 2829 Abortion clinic regulation bill; started as regulating all out-patient surgical clinics, changed to exclude all except abortion clinics; amended on the House floor to its original form; League supported final House bill; passed the House; died in Senate Committee.

Judicial Independence

SB 337 Establishes Commission on Judicial Performance, with responsibility of developing an evaluation form for judges; League supported; signed into law.

SCR 1606 Constitutional amendment requiring Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justices. League testified against; failed in Senate.

HCR 5001 Constitutional amendment to abolish the Supreme Court Nominating Commission (i.e., eliminate merit selection) and have Supreme Court Justices run for election on a non-partisan, state-wide basis; League opposed; bill did not have a hearing.

HCR 5033 Constitutional amendment giving the Governor the power to appoint Supreme Court justices, with the consent of the Senate; League opposed; died in House committee.

HCR 5039 Constitutional amendment to abolish the Supreme Court nominating commission, the Governor would appoint Supreme Court Justices for a period of 10 years, no Senate Confirmation, and with optional re-appointment; League opposed; died in committee.

HB 2770 Bill would change selection of Court of Appeals judges from merit to gubernatorial appointment with consent of the Senate; LWV testified against; died in House committee.

Guns

SB 418 Bill that allows concealed carry; League testified against; bill passed both chambers, vetoed by Governor; veto overridden and is now law.

HB 2577 Use of deadly force by an individual to protect persons and property, when justified; League testified against; passed the House; died in Senate committee.

Open Meetings / Records

SB 410 Bill that requires periodic training of all public officials on regulations for Open Meetings and Open Records; League testified in support; bill died in Senate committee.

HB 2719 Bill that requires recording of executive sessions (closed meetings) of all public bodies, if any member of that public body objects to the executive session; League testified in support; died in House committee.

Children's Issues

SB 62 Establishes the Grandparents as Foster Parents Program, when the grandparent is 50 years of age or older, has actual custody or legal guardianship and is at 130 percent of federal poverty level. League did not take a position; signed into law.

HB 2611 Provides new requirements for safety restraint systems for children riding in a passenger car; League supported; signed into law.

Education

HB 2615 An attempt to repeal the law enacted in 2004 that provides in-state tuition in Kansas to children of undocumented immigrants; League testified against repeal; died in Committee, many attempts made to amend in to bills on the House floor - all unsuccessful.

HB 2722 Provided a pilot program for post-secondary education savings accounts, with state matching contributions by low income participants; League supported; passed House and died in Senate committee.

Taxes

HCR 5043 Provides for a constitutional amendment that would require a 2/3 majority of both the House and the Senate to enact any new tax or increase any existing tax; League opposes; died in House committee.

Observer Reports

City Council

by Joe Sargent

March 14, 2006

- Norton Bonaparte, Jr. was sworn in as City Manager.
- The Friends of the Zoo (FOTZ) received the Council's blessing to proceed with a campaign to raise \$2.5 million for capital improvements to the zoo. A 1 year contract between the city and FOTZ was approved.

April 4, 2006

- Council approved measures to allow the College Hill project to proceed.
- The Council was informed that seven million additional dollars was needed to finance the Topeka Blvd. Bridge project. An amended budget for \$51 million passed on a 6 to 3 vote on April 11.
- Mr. Preisener was chosen to be the Deputy Mayor for 1 year when Mr. Alcalá's term expires.
- A code of ethics is under consideration by the Council.

April 18, 2006

- The Council considered the future of Cypress Ridge Golf Course and decided to contract with Billy Casper Golf to maintain the grounds. This contract will only run until the end of 2008.
- Councilman Blackburn proposed a charter ordinance removing the Mayor as a member of the governing body. On May 2nd the Council voted this proposal down, but later voted to send the issue to committee.

Shawnee County Commission

April 20, 2006~Jan Waide

- Major discussion centered on a resolution regarding purchasing procedures. Under consideration is a change to "Design Build" procedure rather than the traditional design, bid and build RPF's. Discussion ensued from local contractors and the commission plans to study it further before making a decision.

May 4, 2006~Jan Waide

- Taxes can now be paid online with a credit card with an additional 2.5% convenience fee charged to the user. This can be done through the website for the Treasurers office.

May 9, 2006~Mary Ann Breitbach

- The meeting began with a visit from Gov. Sebelius. She recognized three Shawnee Co. employees for the Shawnee Co. Women of Excellence Award.
- The first phase of the restructuring of the Shawnee County Health Agency passed 3-0.
- The Commission voted 2-1 to pass the resolution detaching land from Shawnee Co. Fire District No. 2

and adding it to the jurisdiction of the Mission Township Fire Department.

May 18, 2006~Jan Waide

- Judge Nancy Parrish appeared with a request to raise the pay jurors receive in Shawnee Co. when they serve on a jury.
- The Refuse Department reported their goal to obtain 100% coverage for trash removal from occupied dwellings was now 75% complete.

May 25, 2006~Jan Waide

- The need to use office space for the new district judge will unfortunately deprive juveniles coming to court of a private place to wait. They will have to wait in the public hall with adult criminals and others.

June 5, 2006~Mary Ann Breitbach

- County Appraiser Mark Hixon's request to attend the International Association of Assessing Officer's Annual Conference was approved.
- Authorized Election Commissioner, Elizabeth Ensley to solicit bids for shelves needed to hold machinery used to meet the Help America Vote Act.

June 8, 2006~Jan Waide

- The Commission is drafting a letter to City Manager, Norton Bonaparte, Jr. regarding combining IT Departments.

June 15, 2006~Jan Waide

- The Commission decided to grant a feasibility study to determine if the Courthouse was designed and constructed to support additional floors.
- AMR submitted a request for 122% increase in their ambulance rates. Correspondence will go to the City to determine if they would be interested in running the service out of the fire stations.

June 19, 2006~Mary Ann Breitbach

- July 13, 2006 meeting was canceled and the decision for appointing the new Auburn Township Trustee will be addressed at the July 10th meeting.

June 22, 2006~Jan Waide

- Township people testified the county should not transfer roads currently maintained by the county to the townships due to the fact the townships do not have the funds to service them.

Reports printed in this Voter are only excerpts from original reports. To obtain full reports, contact Chelsey Smith at (785)213-5456. Thank you to Joe Sargent, Mary Ann Breitbach and Jan Waide for being the eyes and ears of our League.

Invite prospective members for Aug. 15!

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

July-August 2006
 Jan Waide
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What does the League do?

◆ **We choose issues** - The League picks local, state and national issues that can be affected by government action.

◆ **We study issues** - Study committees gather information and lead discussions at meetings to inform all members.

◆ **We take positions** - League members develop a statement by consensus or concurrence that reflects our collective opinion.

◆ **We take action** - The League acts only on those issues for which it has a position. Action includes informing the community and presenting the position to the appropriate governing bodies.

◆ **We educate voters** - Our observers attend government boards and commissions and report through the *Voter*. Special events give the public important opportunities to meet with elected officials and others involved with public policy and political advocacy.

YES! I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters. I enclose:

\$48 for a 1-year Individual Membership

\$72 for a 1-year Household Membership

\$85 for a 1-year Sustaining Membership

Please send more information.

I am unable to join the League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$_____.

Name _____

Please send to:

Address _____

Sybil Wiegman, Treasurer

City, State, Zip _____

2805 SW Tall Grass Dr.

Phone (hm) _____ (wk) _____

785-478-1679

Email (for Action Alerts) _____

Topeka KS 66614-6026

Make checks payable to League of Women Voters of Topeka-Shawnee County