



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF TOPEKA/SHAWNEE COUNTY

VOTER

President: Jan Waide

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Membership: Nancy Whiffen

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JANUARY, 2007

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Tuesday Topics - Lunch 11:30 am, TSCPL
Rick Cagan, Executive Director, Kansas
Chapter, NAMI, "National Mental Health
Care: How Does Kansas Measure Up?"

9

LWVT/SC Board Meeting –All members
welcome.
Noon, O'Dooley's, 1930 Westport Dr.
(north of Petsmart on Westport Dr.)

18

V.O.I.C.E. meeting –Mental Health Study
5:30-8 pm, O'Dooley's, 1930 Westport Dr.
(north of Petsmart on Westport Dr.)

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



PreZ SeZ...

A History of Civil Liberties

PREZ SEZ Speaking for Those Who Have No Voice

As I write this, it is the holiday season when most hearts and minds are open to thoughts of those who are less fortunate than they. I am thinking that it would be wonderful if those unselfish and caring thoughts could prevail throughout the year rather than just during the holiday season. That is when I realized that the League of Women Voters is an organization of people who not only hold those thoughts throughout the year but also speak about and act upon the need for social caring in every season.

That is why we have national policies promoting social and economic justice as well as health and safety for all Americans. Our concern stretches beyond our borders by supporting the United Nations efforts to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people. In addition, we support U.S. trade policies that advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals in other countries. We are particularly sensitive to women and children's needs, nationally and internationally.

Our state policies address discrimination and poverty as well as the rights of juveniles in the juvenile justice system. They speak directly to the basic needs of low income families, i.e., education, employment, health care and housing. We have spoken to the need for a living wage for many years.

Locally, our policy positions speak to child care, economic development, housing, public schools and public health care. With our current study of the local mental health service delivery system we will be able to speak on behalf of the mentally ill. There will be a state position on mental health services even sooner giving us a platform from which to speak out.

I am proud to be a member of an organization that speaks out on behalf of people who cannot speak for themselves or who perceive themselves as not being heard. I hope you are, too! That is why I always urge you to **STAND UP AND SPEAK OUT** for good government.

Jan Waide



December 14, 2006

SCOTT SCHOOL ELECTION

BOARD BRIEFS

By Edith Bronson, secretary

Light on attendance and business, the December Board meeting was short.

Members learned that:

- There are prospective members and some who have not renewed;
- MaryAnn Bradford sent a note with a donation and payment for a VOTER;
- President Jan Waide is recruiting co-chairs for the National Immigration Study, a budget committee chair and Tuesday Topics registrars for March and April;
- Chelsea Smith has taken a position with the Kansas City, MO, Chamber
- Gwen said that the State Mental Health Committee consensus questions are on the State League website. The local consensus will be forwarded to the State League; a written position will be submitted to the State Convention for adoption by the membership.
- **The State Mental Health Voice Meeting will be the evening of Feb. 15 at O'Dooleys beginning at 5:30 p.m.**

We had another good year at Scott School/Scott City election of their mayor. The LWV was responsible for voter registration, candidate training and monitoring the primary and general elections. This school year was our 11th year to be responsible for the event. The LWV can take pride in this significant voter education project.

My thanks to the following persons for helping with this important project. Jan Waide, Sue Trast, Carol Yoho, Alta Morris, Georgia Sandlin, Dottie Harder, Winnie Crapson, June Windscheffel, Betsy Rohleder, Anita Epps, Larry Wilson, Pat Stinson and Diana Siegal.

Bob Harder, coordinator

GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK,

CHELSEY!

Chelsey Smith has only been a member of LWVT/SC about two years but when she leaves she will leave quite a hole! It is through her good efforts that we have had television coverage of our voter registration efforts and many of our Tuesday Topics programs. In addition, notices of our meetings have been listed in the Topeka Capital Journal. Chelsey has worked full-time at the Brown Foundation but constantly volunteered, with a smile on her face, when we needed someone to step up and take charge. Her latest successful effort was the Governmental Issues Dinner in November.

Therefore, it is with great sadness that we have to tell her "goodbye" and accept her resignation from the LWVT/SC Board. But we are also excited for her. Chelsey will be moving to Kansas City and joining the staff of the Kansas City, Mo. Chamber of Commerce as a governmental liaison in January, 2007. We wish her every good wish and know she will do well. They are lucky to get her!

Congratulations, Chelsey, and good luck! We will miss you!



Left:

Pat Stinson entertains League members with stories of the nation's First Ladies including Martha Washington, Dolly Madison, Eleanor Roosevelt and Pat Nixon.



THE MENTAL HEALTH CARE STUDY

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

Consent Agenda December 2006: Officers' and Committee Reports

PRESIDENT'S REPORT—Jan Waide

I recruited Anne Baker for the Budget committee. I tried to recruit Dottie Harder to no avail.

I participated in the Governmental Issues Dinner.

ACTION COMMITTEE—Pat Stinson

The following notices were sent to the LWV membership.

The Time for DC Voting Rights Is Now Important Rally Saturday, December 2nd

Things You Need To Know on Election Day One Final Push

I attended the State Board Training Session on November 11th. It was excellent and I returned with new ideas from other leagues and the excellent leader of the session.

VOTER REGISTRATION--Anita Epps

In order to be on record, there is no new information from the Voter Registration chair this month.

MEMBERSHIP—Nancy Whiffen

Nancy Kindling gave me the name of Kay Schram as an individual who might be interested in joining the LWV so I have mailed her an informative letter regarding the League, and Edith Bronson brought Lois Cox to Tuesday Topics as her guest on Dec. 5th. I will get a letter off to her and invite her to join the LWV.

1. Community Mental Health Centers have the primary responsibility for meeting The needs of all Kansans accessing the public mental health system. The Community Mental Health Centers are the single point of entry for publicly funded mental health services (inpatient and outpatient) and serve as a safety net For Kansas citizens. How is this system working, including strengths, barriers to the consumer, and gaps in service? What changes, if any, are needed?

2. What are some strategies to prevent or decrease problems among the mentally ill, such as homelessness, incarceration/criminalization, unmet physical health needs, and failure to access mental health treatment when it is needed?

3. The demand for acute psychiatric treatment provided by the state mental health hospitals has been increasing over the last four years. At times, the actual hospital census has exceeded budgeted census, placing a serious strain on hospital resources. This problem has been addressed by implementing system-wide census management, which focuses on diversion and discharge—a solution that one county attorney has called “treat ‘em and street ‘em.” How could this problem be addressed more effectively

4. One half of the total funding that supports Community Mental Health Centers and one-fourth of the total funding that supports State Mental Hospitals is derived from Medicaid. In view of budget limitations, how should the state allocate funding for mental health services, including issues related to Medicaid Reform?

Some recommends from professional organizations are:

A) Maximize Medicaid payments

B) Provide supplementary state funding to adequately support state mental health hospitals

C) Make dollars follow the person

D) Fund services demonstrating positive recovery and resilience

E) Implement full insurance parity for mental health care

Mental Health Cont'

5. The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health—Goals and Recommendations are attached. By Executive Order 04-10, the Governor of Kansas designated the Governor's Mental Health Services Planning Council to be the New Freedom Commission Report. Should the League support this document?

THE PRESIDENT'S NEW FREEDOM COMMISSION REPORT: ACHIEVING THE PROMISE—TRANSFORMING MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN AMERICA

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOAL 1

AMERICANS UNDERSTAND THAT MH IS ESSENTIAL TO OVERALL HEALTH

1.1 Advance and implement a national campaign to reduce the stigma of seeking care and

a national strategy for suicide prevention.

1.2 Address mental health with the same urgency as physical health.

GOAL 2

MENTAL HEALTH CARE IS CONSUMER AND FAMILY DRIVEN

2.1 Develop an individualized plan of care for every adult with serious mental illness and

child with serious emotional disturbance.

2.2 Involve consumers and families fully in orienting the mental health system towards

recovery.

2.3 Align relevant Federal programs to improve access and accountability for mental

health services.

2.4 Create a comprehensive State Mental Health Plan.

2.5 Protect and enhance the rights of people with mental illness.

GOAL 3

DISPARITIES IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ARE ELIMINATED

3.1 Improve access to quality care that is culturally competent.

3.2 Improve access to quality care in rural and geographically remote regions.

GOAL 4

EARLY MENTAL SCREENING, ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL TO SERVICES ARE COMMON PRACTICES

4.1 Promote the mental health of young children.

4.2 Improve and expand school mental health programs.

4.3 Screen for co-occurring mental and substance abuse disorders and link with integrated treatment.

4.4 Screen for mental disorders in primary health care, across the lifespan, and connect to treatment and supports.

GOAL 5

EXCELLENT MENTAL HEALTH CARE IS DELIVERED AND RESEARCH IS ACCELERATED

5.1 Accelerate research to promote recovery and resilience, and ultimately to cure and prevent mental illness.

5.2 Advance evidence-based practices using dissemination and demonstration projects and create a private/public partnership to guide their implementation.

5.3 Improve and expand the workforce providing evidence-based mental health services and supports.

5.4 Develop the knowledge base in four understudied areas: mental health disparities, long-term effects of medications, trauma, and acute care.

Mental Health Cont'

GOAL 6

TECHNOLOGY IS USED TO ACCESS MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND INFORMATION

6.1 Use health technology and telehealth to improve access and coordination of mental health care, especially for Americans in remote areas or in underserved populations.

6.2 Develop and implement integrated electronic health record and personal health information systems.



*Have
A
Happy,
Healthy,
Holiday
Season!
Be Safe!*

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VOTER, October 2006

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Topeka, KS 66614

3371 SW Osborn Rd.

Patry Dick, Editor



5 blank cards + envelopes for \$5

Contact Betsy Rohleder

YES!

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

___\$53 for 1-year Individual Membership ___\$75 for a 1-year Household Membership

___\$85 for a 1-year Sustaining Membership ___\$25 for a 1-year Student (ages 18- Membership

___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)_____

TOPEKA, KS 66614-6026