



# VOTER

August 15, 2009

## CALENDAR

**President:**

Gwen Elliott  
3469 SE Crestwater Dr.  
(66605)  
(785-267-4037)

**Membership:**

Nancy Shaughnessy  
1266 SW Collins (66606)  
785-232-5931

**VOTER Editor:**

Lois Cox  
910 SE 43rd Street (66609)  
785-267-5458

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### SEPTEMBER 2009

**1 Tuesday Topics - YWCA, 11:30** Speaker - Judy Moler, General Counsel for the Kansas Ethics Commission and Don Moler, Executive Director of the League of Municipalities.

**MENU:** Quiche with tossed salad, rolls, butter and cookie..

**8 LWVT/SC Board Meeting – Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library**, upstairs meeting room, all members welcome, 11:30-1:00

**8 Lowman Hill School Voter Registration**, 8:45 am

**15 Lowman Hill School Primary Election**, 8:45 am

**18 Naturalization Ceremony, Voter Registration**, Topeka High Auditorium, 2:00 pm

**22 Lowman Hill School General Election**, 8:45 am

**?? Finance Drive Committee** (date to be announced)

### OCTOBER 2009

**6 Tuesday Topics – Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, 11:30**

Dr. Brenda Dietrich, School Consolidation, 11:30 am

**MENU:** Build your own Mexican salad with toppings: chili, onions, lettuce, tomato, cheese, sour cream, chips and brownie

**13 LWVT/SC Board Meeting – Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library**, upstairs meeting room, all members welcome, 11:30-1:00

**16 VOTER DEADLINE** send articles to lois5510@hotmail.com or Lois Cox 910 SE 43rd street, 66609

**17 LWVK League Day, TSCPL**

**22 Voice Meeting**

**27 New Member/Publicity Event** Washburn LAW School, 7:00 pm

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

## Prez Sez



**Gwen Elliott**  
President LWVT/SC

Our early fall schedule is filling up with several promising events. In addition to our regular Tuesday Topics meetings, the Kansas League is hosting Zaida Arguedas, Deputy Director of the US League, on August 29<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 to 3:00 at McFarland's Restaurant. She will speak about the grant which the League has re-

tial, independent, diverse, and fair judiciary. All League members are invited. Lunch will be provided by the National League. Please call reservations to me at 267-4037 by August 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Lowman Hill student election process will be held on September 8, 15, and 22, under the direction of Dr. Harder. Several League members have volunteered to help with this educational event, which teaches elementary students about voting.

State League Day will be held at the public library on October 17<sup>th</sup> and will feature a national speaker on the topic of a fair judiciary. Please find more details inside this issue of the Voter. On October 27<sup>th</sup>, our League will co-sponsor a presentation by Dr. Paula Worters on her book, *Mistress of Herself, Speeches and Letters of Ernestine L. Rose, Early Women's Rights Leader*, at 7:00 p.m. at the Washburn Univer-

sity Law School. We are encouraging our members to bring guests and/or potential new members to this event.

Our voter registration corps registered new voters following the most recent naturalization ceremony on July 17<sup>th</sup>. It is gratifying to work with board members and other volunteers in our membership who keep our League functioning and serving the community so well.

Georgia Sandlin has agreed to chair the local study on fact finding regarding the costs of teaching and administration in the school districts of Shawnee County. Members who would like to join the study committee should call Georgia at 272-6076.

Please remember that Carol Yoho keeps our calendar of events updated on our web site, LWVTSC.org. Look for the latest details about upcoming events there. Enjoy the fall season and all that League has to

### SPECIAL LEAGUE MEETING

#### SPONSORED BY US LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

This is a fantastic opportunity, we are hosting Zaida Arguedas, Deputy Director of the US League of Voters. All members are invited to attend, and lunch will be provided free by the US League of Women Voters.

**August 29, 2009 @ McFarland's Restaurant**

**Reservations required: call Gwen to make the reservation**

## **Tuesday Topics: September 1**

On September 1 Tuesday Topics proudly presents our League member Judy Moler, General Counsel for the Kansas Ethics Commission and Don Moler, Executive Director of the League of Municipalities and expert on city/county governments and the Kansas Legislature. This strong team has brought insight on local government issues and the Kansas legislative process to our League in the past. This time Judy will add ethics to local and state government discussions. Don't miss their presentation from 12:00PM to 1:00PM . Bring your friends for lunch first at 11:30AM at the Topeka/Shawnee County Public Library meeting room.

## **Tuesday Topics: October 6**

Dr. Brenda Dietrich, Superintendent of the Auburn-Washburn School District since 2001 was named Kansas Superintendent of the year in 2007 and was one of four finalists for National Superintendent of the Year. In 2009 she presides over the Kansas Association of School Administrators. We have asked her to speak to the issue of school funding in relation the our local study of school financing and consolidation issues. Come with your questions. Lunch at the Topeka/Shawnee County Library is served at 11:30. Dr. Dietrich will speak from 12:00 to 1:00PM.

## **Board Briefs by Mary Kopp, secretary**

August 12, 2009 LWV Board meeting at the library– 8 board members were pressed.

On August 29, the Kansas League is hosting Zaida Arguedas, Deputy Director of the US League of Women Voters. All League members are invited to attend, and lunch at McFarland's Restaurant will be paid by the national League. Look for more info in the Voter.

October will be a busy League month – Oct. 17 will be League Day at the library. Details in the Voter. The annual membership event will be Oct. 27 at 7:00 PM at Washburn Law School. Nancy Shaunessy is organizing. Next committee meeting for the membership event will be Thursday August 27 at 4:00 at her house.

At the July board meeting, first steps were taken to organize a committee to study local school costs. Georgia Sandlin agreed to chair. At the August board meeting, it was suggested that we contact the members of the '05 School Consolidation study to ask for their recommendations.

Teresa Stambaugh is planning a fall finance drive. It will be a mailing.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE TOPEKA CITY COUNCIL BY JOE SARGENT

Budget Night approaches; August 18<sup>th</sup> will be the date when the council will need to decide on requests by the city administration and the Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority [TMTA] to increase taxes.

On June 9<sup>th</sup> the council voted six to four in favor of the Lawson Enterprise Resource Planning Software System. As a result of that vote, the city administration was able to resume installation of the system which was placed on hold in May, 2008 because of litigation. The cost of the system is approximately \$3.87 million which will be spent over a number of years. Mayor Bunten was distressed over the fact that he was able to vote on the measure but unable to veto it. This advice was given to him by the city legal department. Because of this, he later proposed that the city 2010 budget include funds for the council to hire its own lawyer and financial advisor. He felt that the council should not be totally dependent on advice from the city administration. Subsequently, Mayor Bunten decided in mid-June to issue a veto against the purchase of the Lawson software system in but shortly thereafter became ill. He remained off work for about a month during which he was hospitalized twice. The status of that veto is not know.

On that same day the council rejected by a six to four margin the merger of the city-county parks and recreation departments as proposed by

commissioner Vic Miller.

One of the biggest issues to come before the council during June and July was the financial distress of TMTA. At first its board proposed cutting services in order to balance their budget but the response by users of its services made it reconsider this proposal. Also there was considerable public testimony at the council meetings against reductions in its services.. In late June the TMTA board of directors decided to ask the council to raise the property tax by nearly two mills while promising not to cut services. On July 13<sup>th</sup> the TMTA board presented its 2010 budget at a council's budget meeting; it called for a 1.85 mill increase in the property tax. This same budget proposal was again reviewed at a regular council meeting on July 20<sup>th</sup> when the TMTA chief executive officer made the case for its passage by the council. This budget will receive final consideration by the council on budget night.

The TMTA announced on July 31<sup>st</sup> that they had received a \$2.5 million federal grant to replace seven aging buses and had already been granted another \$2 million from the federal stimulus fund to replace additional aging buses. A total of 15 buses will be retired out of their fleet of forty-two.

Since April council members have met with the city manager, Boneparte, regarding funding priorities for thr 2010 city budget. On July 7<sup>th</sup> the city manager presented his 2010 budget which would raise the city property tax by 1.85 mills. It contains money to continue the police helicopter program. The police chief has presented be-

fore the community and the council facts that support the continuance of the unit. Actually the helicopter unit is now operating with the old revamped Schweitzer helicopter. Meanwhile, the city fire chief has resigned and the city manager has faced a move by certain council members to fire him which failed because of a lack of support from a majority of council members. Also our city manager was a serious contender for a similar position in Grand Rapids ,Michigan but ultimately was not chosen for that position.

Sumner School was again in the headlines. In late July the owner, Southside Christian Palace community Church in Los Angeles, received notice that they had 60 days to correct code violations on this property.

The police department was a recipient of federal stimulus funds to add more police officers, most of whom will serve as community officers.

On August 18<sup>th</sup> the mayor may vote on the budget but will have no veto power. Boneparte will try to avoid a late nighter.

## NOTES ON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETINGS

BY GEORGIA SANDLIN

### June 11, 2009

This morning's meeting lasted only 12 minutes as decisions were made with few questions or comments. Two decisions were the result of the lower tax revenues the county is collecting. Bonds will be used to finance all or part of the improvements for the Health Agency and Parks and Recreation Department. Also, Commissioner Miller thanked the county employees for agreeing to accept only the step increase in pay for the next year.

### June 15, 2009

Commissioner Ensley was not in favor of trucks from Bettis Asphalt, Inc. traveling along SE 45<sup>th</sup> Street before when the issue was brought before the commission and he is not in favor of it now. The decision, somewhat of a compromise, was made to determine on a case-by-case basis whether the heavy trucks would use 45<sup>th</sup> St to drive to construction projects. The item was placed on the consent agenda and was removed at the request of Commissioner Buhler. The request was approved 2-1.

Bill Wagon reported to the commissioners that the state of Missouri is interested in being included in the proposed historical site "Bleeding Kansas". With Missouri's participation the inclusive area would be named "Freedom's Frontier." Hopefully, as the sites in this area are developed, they will

enhance the historical significance of Shawnee County as well as attract visitors.

KDHE asked that Shawnee County put restrictions on land that was the Topeka Landfill, north of SW 21st between Hoch and Hodges.. Legislation mandates that such land probably contains hazardous materials and should have restrictions on its use. Apparently, the Shawnee County Commission hadn't taken that action before, but will do so now.

### June 18, 2009

The meeting started with John Dicus of Capitol Federal Savings presenting a \$25,000 check to the commissioners for the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration at Lake Shawnee. It is apparent that this event would not be possible without this major contribution. Also on the agenda, a contract for \$32,000 with J & M Displays was approved for the event. Sponsors picked up the tab.

Authorization for a conditional use permit for off river sand extraction was back on the agenda, but not resolved. Commissioner Miller wants to see evidence of the correct title on the land since, previously, there was some question as to who owned the land. Barry Beagle was directed to bring proof of title to the next meeting and no action was taken today.

Stimulus funds are also allowing the Health Agency to

expand. The contract was approved for rehab of the facility at 2115 SW 10<sup>th</sup>. Anne Freeze reported there are still no confirmed cases of H1N1 virus in Shawnee County.

### June 22, 2009

It took three appearances before the county commission, but the conditional use permit was approved today for off river sand extraction. One citizen still had issue with the action because he claims it is close to an old landfill.

One other request generated questions. The commissioners approved a \$35,000 for the County Drug Court Program. Attendance in the program has fallen so most of the questions addressed its cost effectiveness. Participants are now charged \$200. Even though this diversion program used to be free Jared Harson, coordinator, and Chad Taylor, DA, reported that the fee could be paid in installments and was a small price to pay to be free of a felony charge.

### June 29, 2009

The agenda took over 2 ½ pages this morning with 19 items on the consent agenda. Most items were approved with no or few questions. Two items may impact citizens directly.

*Commission continued on page 6*

*Commission continued from page 5*

The first item was presented by Ken Keller from American Medical Response. The ambulance service will increase the rates for two types of care because different equipment and more personnel are needed to give proper care. One type would involve people who weigh more than 300 pounds. The other would be people requiring critical care. Only the price for patients with private insurance will increase, not those receiving Medicare or Medicaid.

Anne Freeze reported that Shawnee County now has one confirmed case of the H1N1 virus. The health agency is preparing for a possible county-wide vaccination program.

### **July 2, 2009**

It may be 90+ degrees but Tom Vlach of public works is thinking salt for the roads. Salt was in short supply last winter so he requested that the county solicit bids now.

The corrections department is taking advantage of stimulus funds from the 2009 Recovery Act to get started on a needed upgrade for the surveillance system. Dick Kline reported that this (approximately \$33,000) would just be the beginning because a full upgrade will cost \$800,000.

The commissioners were happy to waive the bidding process to contract with Jayhawk File Express for storage of microfilm cassettes. Marilyn Nichols, Register of Deeds, reported that 60% of the register of deeds in Kansas store docu-

ments in the salt mines in Hutchinson. Shawnee County prefers to have records close.

The county regulations regarding fireworks was reviewed and emphasized by Commissioner Miller. Only one exception was granted for the Faith Family Life Centre's Sunday night display.

### **July 6, 2009**

Most requests and resolutions were approved with few questions at this meeting. Fireworks popped up on the agenda once again. Permission was granted for a fireworks display after a ballgame on July 9th.

Randy Speaker came before the commission with a plan for foreclosed property in Shawnee County. The City of Topeka would like to use HUD money to improve some of those properties. However, the foreclosed properties are not eligible for the program if purchased at the property tax sale. County Counselor Eckert reported that currently properties are being bought so it is likely none will be available. No action is required at this time.

### **July 13, 2009**

The sheriff's department asked the commission for an upgrade on the 911 system. The current system is over 15 years old, parts are no longer being made, they have gotten used parts from other counties. How could the commissioners refuse?

However, when Larry Wilson, County Treasurer, requested an increase in staff and increased office space skepticism

rose. Questions were asked, data was requested. This decision was deferred.

Dick Kline, Corrections, brought an amendment before the commission to be approved. The amendment concerned the agreement with Prison Health Services asking for \$52,750 more. This item was deferred until the next commission meeting

### **July 16, 2009**

This meeting lasted only 12 minutes as business was conducted swiftly. Requests and contracts were approved with few questions with the exception of two items. A contract with Prison Health was pulled from the agenda so changes could be made. Resolutions related to a Brickyard Subdivision were denied. No explanation was given at the meeting. The next day the Capitol-Journal reported that the developer had not paid all his taxes.

### **July 20, 2009**

Shawnee county Treasurer Larry Wilson would like to expand office space and hire more people. He would like the White Lakes setting to be the main office while the Shawnee County Courthouse would be the annex. He contends the changes would help meet the demands of the public. The commissioners spent most of an hour questioning Mr. Wilson and still appeared skeptical that the need was real. *Legally, the treasurer may lease more space but the*

*Commission continued on page 7*

*Commission continued from page 6*

*Commissioners control the budget. The commissioners decided to address this question again after the budget is completed.*

### **July 23, 2009**

The commissioners approved a resolution authorizing the use of a Certificate of Participation to finance acquisition or improvements to the Health Agency, Rossville pool and the Lake Shawnee sports complex. According to this observer's research, counties have turned to this method to meet the financial needs of their communities. This resolution was brought before the commission by Bob Perry, Bond Counsel.

Work on the budget continues. The commission requested that the audit-finance department highlight new requests for memberships, dues and subscriptions.

Due to construction on the Maple Hill bridge traffic over the Willard Bridge has increased. Tom Vlach reported that truck traffic is shortening the life of the Willard Bridge. The weight limit has been reduced in the past few years. Since the sheriff's department is not equipped to enforce weight limits, the commissioners instructed the sheriff's department to contact the highway patrol and request that they monitor truck traffic.

### **July 27, 2009**

The meeting started with a farewell to Julie Viets who is retiring from her desk when one

enters the door leading to Shawnee County Commission meetings. Someone always gets teary at these ceremonies as the commissioners give out hugs and good wishes.

When requests include the words "no cost to the county" they are sure to get a positive 3-0 vote. That was the case with two agenda items this morning that usually get a close scrutiny. One request was the purchase of cell phones by Dina Pennington of Community Corrections. The other was out-of-state travel requested by Mark Hixon, the appraiser.

Chad Taylor's request for 10 Blackberries for the DA's office was denied by Commissioners Miller and Ensley. Commissioner Buhler was willing to allow 5 Blackberries but got no support for her motion.

### **August 3, 2009**

Today's agenda was 2+ pages long because a meeting was not held last Thursday. Over thirteen contracts and requests were approved with few questions. Two items that would require substantial changes in funding brought questions from the commissioners.

First, Steve Bolton of the refuse department requested software, through the technology department so the county could do their own billing for refuse pickup. Currently, the refuse bills from city residents are included on the city water bill. Even though the bottom-line cost to the county was not determined

the commissioners approved the request.

The second item concerned the purchase of emergency sirens. You may recall that this item has been cussed and discussed more than once. The county counselor's office was charged with negotiating an agreement to be brought before the commission. One vendor was at the meeting to protest, but to no avail because the commissioners thought the deal before them was a good one.

### **August 10, 2009**

Work on the 2010 budget continues. This observer has noted that some items to be considered have been placed on the commission agendas and discussed for weeks. At this meeting Marti Leisinger, audit finance, repeated that because of the decrease in property evaluations and state revenues the county has less money to work with. Recommended cuts amounted to more than \$6 million. Even with those cuts the property tax levy would increase by 3 mills. Final decisions have not been made. The commissioners would like to complete business on the budget in two more meetings.

**NOTE** These Shawnee County Commission notes are brief observations. Information including agendas and documents pertaining to agenda items can be found at the web site: [www.-co.-shawnee.-ks.-us](http://www.-co.-shawnee.-ks.-us). The county commission meetings are also televised on public access television.

## Elected Officials

### > Topeka City Council

#### > **Council Office**

- > 215 SE 7th, 66603
- > 785.368.3710
- > Fax: 785.368.3958

#### > **City Manager**

- > **Norton Bonaparte, Jr.**
- > 215 SE 7th, Suite 352 66603
- > 785.368.3725
- > FAX: 785.368.3725

#### > **Mayor Bill Bunten**

- > 215 SE 7th, 66603
- > 785.368.3895
- > Fax: 785.368.3850

#### > **Councilwoman Karen Hiller**

- > 1018 SW Lane, 66604
- > 785.232.2917

#### > **Councilman John Alcalá**

- > 520 NE Lake, 66616
- > 785.233.7110

#### > **Councilwoman Sylvia Ortiz**

- > 837 SE Gilmore, 66607
- > 785.357.0717

#### > **Councilman Larry Wolgast**

- > 3400 SW Birchwood Dr., 66614
- > 785.272.6896

#### > **Councilwoman Deborah Swank**

- > 1508 SW 15th St., 66604
- > 785.233.1037

#### > **Councilman Bob Archer**

- > 3522 SW Westport Ct., 66614
- > 785.217-7036

#### **Councilman Jeff Preisner**

- > 5513 SW 18th St. 66604
- > 785.271.1959

#### > **Councilman Richard Harmon**

- > 935 SW Grand Ct., 66606
- > 785.271.6962

#### > **Councilman Jack Woelfel**

- > 2316 SE Sagis Ct., 66605
- > 785.215.3323
- >

### > Shawnee County Commission

#### > **Courthouse**

- > 200 SE 7, 66603
- > 785.233.8200, ext. 4040
- > Fax: 785.291.4914

#### > **Commissioner Vic Miller**

- > 3309 SE Tomahawk Ct., 66609
- > 785.232.3452
- > commission@snco.us
- >

#### > **Commissioner Michelle "Shelly" Buhler**

- > 503 Maple Ct, Rossville, KS 66533
- > 785.584.6617

#### > **Commissioner Theodore "Ted" Ensley**

- > 2500 SW Rother Rd., 66614
- > 785.478.2030

### > State Elected Officials

#### > **Governor Mark Parkinson**

- > Statehouse, 66612
- > 785.296.3232

#### > **Lt. Governor Troy Findley**

- > Statehouse, 66612
- > 785.296.2213

#### > **Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh**

- > Memorial Building
- > 120 SW 10th Ave 66612
- > 785.296.4564
- >

#### > **Attorney General Steve Six**

- > Memorial Hall, 2nd Floor
- > 120 SW 10 St, 66612
- > 785.296.2215

#### > **State Treasurer Dennis McKinney**

- > 900 SW Jackson, 66612
- > 785.296.3171

#### > **Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger**

- > 420 SW 9, 66612
- > 785.296.3071
- >

### > Shawnee County Legislative Delegation

- > Statehouse Address
- > Statehouse, 66612
- (Officials continued on page 9)

*(Officials continued from page 8)*

> **Senator Laura Kelly**

- > (18th District)
- > 234 SW Greenwood Ave. 66606
- > 785.357.5304
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7365

> **Senator Anthony Hensley**

- > (19th District)
- > 2226 SE Virginia 66605
- > 785.232.1944
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296-3245

> **Senator Vicki Schmidt**

- > (20th District)
- > 5906 SW 43rd Ct., 66610
- > 785.267.4686
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7374

> **Representative Rocky Fund**

- > (50th District)
- > 13161 S Road, Hoyt 66440
- > 785.986.6775
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7689

> **Representative Ann Mah**

- > (53rd District)
- > 3351 SE Meadowview Dr. 66605
- > 785.266.9434
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7668

> **Representative Joe Patton**

- > (54th District)
- > 3546 SW Summerwood Ct., 66614
- > 785.267.0116
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7699

> **Representative Annie Kuther**

- > (55th District)
- > 1346 SW Wayne, 66604
- > 785.232.0717
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7669

> **Representative Annie Tietze**

- > (56th District)
- > 329 SW Yorkshire Rd., 66606
- > 785.272.5296
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7699

> **Representative Sean Gatewood**

- 57th District)
- > 1408 NW Central Ave., 66608
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296-7657

> **Representative Mike Burgess**

- > (51st District)
- > 2610 SW Gainsboro 66614
- > 785.271.0707
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7632

> **Representative Lana Gordon**

- > (52nd District)
- > 5820 SW 27 St, 66614
- > 785.273.1203
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7652

> **Representative Harold Lane**

- > (58th District)
- > 1308 S Kansas 66612
- > 785.232-3610
- > Statehouse phone: 785.296.7657

> **Federal Elected Officials**

> **Senator Sam Brownback**

- > 303 Hart Senate Office Building
- > Washington, D.C. 20510-1601
- > 202.224.6521

- > FAX: 202.228.1265
- > Topeka Office:
- > 612 S Kansas Avenue
- > Topeka, KS, 66603
- > 785.233.2503
- > FAX: 785.233.2616
- >

> **Senator Pat Roberts**

- > 109 Hart Senate Office Building
- > Washington, DC 20510-1605
- > 202.224.4774
- > FAX: 202.224.3514
- > Topeka Office:
- > 444 SE Quincy, Room 392
- > Topeka, KS 66683
- > 785.295.2745
- > FAX: 785.235.3665
- >

> **Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins**

- > 130 Cannon House Office Building
- > Washington, D.C. 20515
- > 202.225.6601
- > FAX: 202.225.7986
- > Topeka Office:
- > 3550 SW 5th St.
- > Topeka, KS, 66606

**Witty Quote**

If you don't read the newspaper. you are uninformed; if you do read the newspaper, you are misinformed.

MARK TWAIN

### Sympathy

Our sympathy is extended to Carol Rousey, wife of Dr. Clyde Rousey, who died on August 6, 2009, following heart surgery in Charlotte, NC. The Rouseys were long-term active members of our League before moving to Charlotte in 2006. Dr. Rousey held a Ph.D. from Northwestern University, was employed at the Menninger Foundation, and later worked in the private practice of psychology, audiology, and speech pathology with Carol. Condolences may be sent to their address at 7424 Harriswoods Place, Charlotte, NC 28270

### Kansas Biennial Fall League Day

Kansas biennial fall League Day is always an important time to meet with other Leaguers around the state about current priority League issues in Topeka. This year, however, offers a special opportunity because we will be launching a two-year project promoting judicial diversity funded by the LWVUS Education Fund. Rebecca Love Kourlis, Executive Director, Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System

will be our keynote speaker. Previously serving as Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court for eleven years, she is the author of more than 200 opinions and dissents during her tenure. She also spearheaded significant reforms in the court system relating to juries, family law and attorney regulation.

For several years the League of Women Voters' Safeguarding U.S. Democracy program has aimed to preserve and defend a fair and impartial judiciary at the state and local level across the country. The program has had activities in 35 states and held more than 50 events each year. In the next two years we Kansans will be beneficiaries of the program to address the need to improve diversity in our state courts. The project is named Safeguarding U.S. Democracy: The Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary. On August 29 Zaida Arguedas and David Ward, LWVUS Staff, will meet with Local League Leaders to plan the event on October 17 at the Topeka Public Library, 1515 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. All members are encouraged not only to attend but to invite friends to accompany you. We want to take advantage of this outstanding opportunity to promote League in our communities.

### Tentative Schedule

9:30 – Registration and Continental Breakfast – no charge

10:00 – Rebecca Kourlis, Keynote Speaker

12:00 - Lunch – no charge (vegetarian available by request)

1:00 - Panel discussions with members of Kansas Judiciary and Kansas Law Schools

Call Diane Kuhn at 913-631-9499 or email at [diane-kuhn@kc.rr.com](mailto:diane-kuhn@kc.rr.com) to make reservations by October 12.

### SAYINGS

1. Good judgment comes from experience; experience comes from bad judgment. –Barry LePatner
2. The beautiful thing about learning is nobody can take it away from you –B.B King
3. You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you do not try –Beverly Sills

## League Fund Drive

The League of Women Voters Topeka-Shawnee County will launch a fundraising drive in the fall of 2009. The last fund drive was in 2007. Recently the League has had several opportunities to support local public candidate forums as well as other projects. These forums give visibility to the League and its mission to influence public policy through education and advocacy. The Board acknowledges these are difficult economic times but hopes that contributions made during the fund drive will allow continued support of these initiatives. Teresa Stambaugh has agreed to be chair of the campaign. Additional members are needed to make this effort a success. This will be a letter campaign and therefore the time commitment would not be excessive. Meetings will take place in September October and November. Persons who are familiar with individual community leaders would be extremely helpful. If interested contact Teresa at 862-6621 or [jtstambaugh@cox.net](mailto:jtstambaugh@cox.net). You may also let any Board member know you are interested. Thank You!

## LOCAL STUDY 2009

At the Annual Meeting in April the membership voted to undertake a fact-finding on the total costs of individual school districts. This information is to be prepared and illustrated to inform the public. If you are interested in participating in this endeavor contact Georgia Sandlot at 272-6076 or [gsandlin@cox.net](mailto:gsandlin@cox.net).

## CRITERIA FOR SELECTING A STUDY ITEM FOR LOCAL PROGRAM OR A SPECIAL REPORT

1. **TIMING** Is this the time for it? Is it a long or short term project?
  2. **POLITICAL CLIMATE** Is the government giving priority to this issue? Should it be given a higher priority?
  3. **COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE** How aware is the community of the issue? How aware can the League make the community? What is the community attitude toward the issue?
  4. **LEAGUE MEMBERS** How aware are members of the issue? Do they care? Does the LWV have member capability to carry out action?
  5. **LEAGUE CIRCUMSTANCES** Does our LWV have the people and time to work on this issue? Where does this study or project fit with our other goals and priorities? Can our LWV be effective?
  6. **ALLIES** Who else is doing something about this issue? Who could join with us? If the League doesn't take it on, who will?
  7. **CONTROVERSY** How controversial is the issue? Is the LWV willing and able to deal with controversy?
  8. **COST** Is there enough money in the budget? What other funding sources are available?
- PUBLIC RELATIONS** What will this study or project do to the LWV's prestige and effectiveness in the community? Is media coverage possible?

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
LOIS COX, VOTER EDITOR  
910 SE 43RD STREET  
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66609-1620**

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

\_\_\_\_\_ \$53 for a 1 year Individual Membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$75 for a 1 year Household Membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$85 for a 1 year Sustaining Membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 for a 1 year Student (age 18) Membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am unable to join the League at this time, but enclosed is a tax-deductible  
Contribution in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to league of Women Voters Topeka Shawnee County and

Send to Sybil Wiegand, Treasurer, 2805 SW Tall Grass DR., Topeka, KS 66614-6206.

(785) 478-1679