



VOTER

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Johnson County

How To Reach Us

PO. Box 13491
Overland Park, KS 66282
LWV telephone: 913-901-9107
Website: www.LWVjoco.org

President

Harriett Anderson
hjanderson@kc.rr.com

Editor

Ann Norbury
LWVnorbury@aol.com

March 2011

Volume 61
Number 8

Since 1920, the League of Women Voters has been a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Saturday, March 5 General Meeting **Atonement Lutheran Church - 9948 Metcalf**

8:30 a.m. - Socializing
9 - 11 a.m. - Program
11 a.m. - noon - Board Meeting

Health Care Reform or the "Affordable Care Act" **What's in it for you? How's it working so far?**

Kit Wagar

Outreach Specialist for the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Region 7, is charged with demystifying the landmark legislation approved last year by Congress.

Amanda Lowe

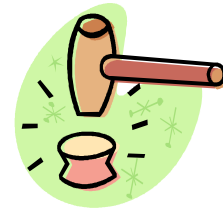
Executive Director of the Health Partnership Clinic, will give a first hand report on how it's working "in the field."

This is a big subject.

To help focus the presentation, please e-mail questions by February 28 to annarnott@everestkc.net.

We look forward to seeing you!

Plan to attend our April 2 meeting: Civil Discourse in an Uncivil Environment



President's Message

As I sit at my computer, I can see the sunshine and warm temperatures outside my window and I know spring is not far away. The League is celebrating their 91st birthday this month and continues to be active in educating the public on current issues as well as the importance of voter rights.

A reminder that League Day at the Capitol is March 24 at which time the Fair and Diverse Judiciary project for Kansas will come to a conclusion. It will be a closure and celebratory event for all the hard work for all the State Leagues on this Judiciary project. I hope a great many of our local League members will attend as this will also be an opportunity to meet with legislators and county commissioners at lunchtime. These individuals have been invited to lunch courtesy of LWVUS and paid for by the Judiciary project. This will also be a time to speak face-to-face with legislators concerning HB 2067 (Voter Photo ID) and proposed budgets cuts in the remainder of 2011 and year 2012.

Congratulations to Ann Arnott for an outstanding program this past month. The topic for the monthly meeting was "Politicians and Campaign Money: What's Fair Disclosure?" The speakers were interesting, insightful and to the point. I believe the questions from the audience showed that the public is constantly challenging the ethics of governmental bodies.

The candidate forum activities have begun for the spring elections. The League has been asked to assist in forums for the Shawnee Mission Board of Education both before and after the primary. Participation in this activity will give older and newer members the opportunity to see the League at work with our community leaders. The League has also been asked to participate in a forum with Johnson County Community College for the race of JCCC Board of Trustees. Let's remember that our election work—including debates, advocating on campaign finance reform, fighting unjust ID requirements and registering new voters—is important every single year.

Harriett Anderson

Congratulations to Newly Appointed Appeals Court Judge!

On March 4, **Karen Arnold-Burger**, League member and Presiding Judge for the Overland Park Municipal Court, will be sworn in as the newest member of the Kansas Court of Appeals. Karen was appointed by Governor Mark Parkinson from among three applicants selected by the Supreme Court Nominating Commission to be forwarded to the Governor.

Karen is a graduate of the University of Kansas with a B.S. in Personnel Administration, a B.S. in Psychology and a Juris Doctorate from the Law School. Last fall, Karen traveled to Colombia on behalf of LWVUS as part of our Global Democracy initiatives. Her appointment is consistent with the League's efforts to increase gender and racial diversity on the Kansas courts.

Prior to serving as judge on the Overland Park Municipal Court, Karen served as Assistant City Attorney for Overland Park, and Assistant U.S. Attorney in Kansas City, KS. Karen is also an Adjunct Faculty Member with the National Judicial College, the Institute for Faculty Excellence in Judicial Education and the American Bar Association.

Janis McMillen

International Relations Committee

The League's Great Decisions discussion group meets on the first and third Tuesdays in the double meeting room of the Central Resource Library from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The topics for the remaining seven meetings are National Security, Horn of Africa, Responding to the Financial Crisis, Germany, Sanctions and Nonproliferation, the Caucasus, and Global Governance. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Nan Wilson (ndwilson@primary.net).

Nan Wilson

Let's Talk Issues

Let's Talk Issues is a cable television program on the educational channel produced by Johnson County Community College and co-sponsored by JCCC, *The Kansas City Star* and the League of Women Voters of Johnson County. These programs are initially live broadcasts with re-broadcasts at selected times during the following weeks from JCCC website at <http://video.jccc.edu/>. If you have Time Warner cable channels, you will find the programs on Channel 17 at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 2 and April 6.

The topic for the March 2 program is "Kansas Legislature - The Session Begins." Panelists are: Sen. John Vratil, Rep. Sheryl Spaulding, and Rep. Marvin Kleeb.

Harriett Anderson

Board Briefs February 5 board meeting

- Ann Arnott reported that program topics for March and April will be Health Care and Civil Discourse.
- Send annual reports by April 2 to Harriet Duff. E-mail is preferred. hfduff@gmail.com.
- Carisa De Anda reported that she is researching a way to set up a "fan page" on Facebook. This would allow the League to post event announcements and information but would not allow comments.
- Susan Horst introduced a revised Membership Application form which includes prorating dues after January 31 to correlate with the Johnson County League's fiscal year ending June 30.
- Budget Committee Chair Nancy Martin called for each committee to submit estimated expenditures for 2011 - 2012 budget.
- The Board passed a motion to add a line item for a minimum of \$5,000 to next year's budget for "Get Out the Vote" promotions. President Harriett Anderson called for new ideas for Get Out the Vote promotions/events prior to the 2012 election.
- The Board voted to give Atonement Lutheran Church \$500 annually for the use of their facilities.
- The Board passed a motion to subsidize the Making Democracy Work luncheon by \$5 per person.

Polly Swafford

What does the League do?

- We **educate citizens** about issues, legislation and candidates.
- We **encourage individual participation** in the political process.
- We **inform** through in-depth, objective study.
- We **monitor** local, state and national government bodies and activities.
- We **register voters**.
- We **sponsor candidate debates** and **public issue forums**.

Membership

Please welcome new member Jill Quigley and our new National member, Mildred "Milli" Hogins.

Nancy Gatz and Susan Horst

Kansas League Day at the Capital -- March 24, 2011

Location: Dillon House, 404 SW Ninth St., Topeka, Kansas

Fee: \$20 includes continental breakfast and lunch

Note: Legislature is not in session during this event

Agenda

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 8:30 a.m. | Registration and & continental breakfast |
| 9:00 a.m. | Opening Remarks |
| 9:05 a.m. | Political Redistricting in Kansas KS Legislative Research Department Staff |
| 9:45 a.m. | Break |
| 10:00 a.m. | Legislative Update by Paul Johnson |
| 11:00 a.m. | Lunch Break |
| 12:15 p.m. | Panel Presentation: State Taxation: Who Pays? |
| 1:00 p.m. | Registration for Afternoon Session (<i>public invited</i>) |
| 1:30 p.m. | Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary: Project Wrap-up and Celebration
Zaida Arguedas, Deputy Director, LWV US and of the Democracy Agenda |
| 2:20 p.m. | Guest Speaker: Kansas Supreme Court Chief Justice (invited) |
| 3:30 p.m. | Adjournment |

Registration due by March 20. Send checks to LWVK, P.O. Box 2366, Topeka, KS 66603

Member Spotlight: Donna Lauffer

Donna Lauffer's love of literature and meeting interesting people started early. Growing up in Hannibal, Missouri, was "great fun," she says. The Mark Twain attractions drew international visitors to the area, and Hannibal's school children often enjoyed "cave parties."

She attended Central Missouri State University at Warrensburg where she met her future husband, Russell, who was stationed at nearby Whiteman Air Force Base. She worked with the librarian for the School of Education and experienced "the fun in library work and working with authors."



After completing her junior year of undergraduate studies, Donna and Russell married and moved to Long Beach, California, a more cosmopolitan community. She enrolled in University of California-Long Beach to complete her Bachelor's Degree and then obtained her Master's Degree in Library Science from UCLA. She worked for the Long Beach library, meeting many fascinating people and then served an internship at the University Research Library. That research job convinced Lauffer that she preferred to work with the general public in day to day living situations.

After her internship, Donna and her family moved to Kansas City when their son Nick was five months old and daughter Wendy was four. She joined the staff of Johnson County Library in 1979 and says, "It was a wonderful opportunity. Johnson County was such a growing community that we stayed. I enrolled at Kansas University, earning a second Master's Degree in Public Administration."

When the family moved to Overland Park, KS in 1986, Lauffer wanted to learn how the city worked. She joined the Johnson County League of Women Voters in 1987 and soon became an Observer of the Overland Park City Council, which met three times each month.

"The League of Women Voters had always been well respected and studied major issues, she says. "That was right down my alley. Although I had never been involved in politics, I volunteered to help with Candidate Forums. It was great fun, offering a wonderful opportunity to know the candidates, be active and informed."

Lauffer served as President of JCLWV in 1994-95 when the League was studying the community college. Then she joined the Board of LWV of Kansas, 1998 -2001, serving as Board President at the time the state was dealing with SRS privatization study.

Janis McMillen approached Donna to interview for a position on the Board of the LWV-US. Following the interview, the Board offered her a position. She recalls, "What a wonderful experience that was!" I met many knowledgeable people on the national board. Each member was assigned five states, and I visited Utah, Indiana, Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota. I worked on the National Council in Washington, D.C. and 2008 Convention held in Portland, Oregon.

"Mary Wilson was President of the LWVUS and invited board members to her ranch/home 68 miles southeast of Albuquerque. Our board did strategic planning under a pinion tree by a spring."

Donna finds the League an important organization because "when the League says they will do something, they actually take action in a quiet, civil manner, and that is what self governance is all about." In the middle of her two year term on the LWVUS board in June 2007, Donna was appointed Johnson County Librarian. She had served as Associate Director for Branch Services and Outreach, 2002 -2007, supervising 12 locations, system-wide youth and outreach services, plus planning and construction of several libraries.

In 2005, the Johnson County Library was one of six recipients of the National Award for Museum and Library service, the nation's highest honor for extraordinary public service provided by a library or a museum. Under Lauffer's supervision in 2009, the Johnson County Resource Library hosted the first "virtual" National Council for Leagues across the country. In 2010, the Library hosted a national budget discussion, one of 18 town meeting sites in the nation and was honored as Federal Depository Library of the Year. The Kettering Foundation asked Lauffer to be a consultant for "teaching public politics."

Lauffer manages also to be an active member of the Overland Park Rotary Club, Overland Park Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee, the American Library Association, the Kansas Library Association, the State Library of Kansas Board, and Kansas City Consensus Board. She served as United Way Chairperson for Johnson County government in 2010 and served on the United Way board for several years in the 1990s.

Donna Lauffer has successfully melded her work at the Johnson County Library and her League of Women Voters experience. She explains, "The League works to come to consensus about current issues with members participating with civility. In most towns the library serves as a neutral, non-political institution that provides a balanced collection. Its mission is to provide the learning environment, help people get information, and be informed voters. We can partner with organizations, and that has evolved into a good fit. My job is great fun. Imagine getting paid for what you love to do!"

Polly Swafford

Spring Elections

Spring Primary Election - March 1

Voters in the following areas will have a primary election.

- Fairway Ward 3
- Overland Park Ward 6
- Roeland Park Ward 1
- Roeland Park Ward 3
- Shawnee Mission School District - Position 7 Member At-Large

Spring General Election- April 5

Johnson County voters in the following districts will elect candidates for office:

- **City Officials:** Election of Mayor and/or Council Members in the cities of [Bonner Springs](#), [De Soto](#), [Edgerton](#), [Fairway](#), [Gardner](#), [Lake Quivira](#), [Lenexa](#), [Merriam](#), [Mission Hills](#), [Mission Woods](#), [Olathe](#), [Overland Park](#), [Prairie Village](#), [Roeland Park](#), [Spring Hill](#), and [Westwood Hills](#).
- **School Districts:** [Blue Valley](#), [De Soto](#), [Eudora](#), [Gardner Edgerton](#), [Olathe](#), [Shawnee Mission](#), [Spring Hill](#), and [Wellsville](#)
- **Johnson County Community College Trustees**
- **Water District #1 of Johnson County**
- **Merriam Drainage District Board of Directors**
- **Monticello Drainage District Board of Directors**

Your Sample Ballot

Go to www.jocoelection.org, click Voter Lookup, then enter your name and birthdate. You will find a list of the districts in which you live. Scroll to the end and click on Sample Ballot to view the options on your ballot.

Be an Informed Voter

We are having a candidate forum for the JCCC Board of Trustees on March 10. This forum will be televised with the League as sponsor and timekeeper only. Questions will be collected from various organizations and presented to a moderator. The college has asked Fred Logan, local political observer and a former JCCC trustee, to serve as moderator.

The nine candidates will be questioned in sets of three (5:30, 6:30 and 7:30 p.m.). Questions will be randomly selected from a question pool (students will pull the questions) with a 90-second answer with no follow-up statement or remarks. They will have a 90 second opening statement, but no closing statement. League members may also submit questions for the candidates. Please contact Harriett Anderson by March 1.

Harriett Anderson

School Board Candidate Forums

Olathe School Board candidates

March 2, 2011, 7 p.m..

Olathe Public Library – Indian Creek Branch, 12990 S. Blackbob Rd. – Olathe, KS 66062

Shawnee Mission School Board candidates

March 9, 2011, 7 p.m.

Central Resource Library, 9875 W. 87th St. – Overland Park, KS 66212

Blue Valley School Board candidates

March 10, 2011, 7 p.m..

Blue Valley Library, 9000 W.. 151st St. – Overland Park, KS 66221

Did You Know?

The LWVUS and nearly all state and local Leagues are 501(c)4 organizations, which means that contributions to them are not tax deductible. An individual cannot deduct League dues on his/her income taxes as a charitable contribution because the League is established as a lobbying organization.

However, the League also maintains an education fund—the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF). It is a 501(c)3 organization, which means that contributions to it are tax-deductible for the donor. It is through this side of the League that voter information and citizen education activities are carried out at the national level, many through grants from foundations. As a service to Leagues, the State and Local Grants Program of the LWVEF banks funds raised by local and state Leagues that are earmarked for local/state educational activities, thus freeing Leagues of the legal and fiscal red tape that operation of such a fund entails. The key criteria for ensuring that such a project is “educational” are:

- No lobbying will be associated with the event/publication, although advocacy is acceptable (Lobbying is defined as an attempt to influence specific legislation, transmits a point of view on a specific piece of legislation to elected officials or their staffs, as well as a call to action urging the public to contact their legislators about a specific piece of legislation. Lobbying activities must be funded through general operating funds.)
- The event/publication will be offered to the general public.
- Questions for candidates will be neutral/nonpartisan.
- All candidates will be treated equally.

Many of the educational activities conducted by state and local Leagues are eligible to be funded with tax deductible monies.

In the last two years, thanks to the generosity of our membership, our Education Fund donations have financed our Essay Contest Scholarship Award (\$1,000 per year.) This year, we used Education Fund monies to pay half of our Per Member Payment to the national League (over \$1,900). In addition, we awarded \$500 to a local high school for its High School Voter Registration Project and paid for advertising our Candidate Forums (\$400+).

After the essay scholarship award is presented in May, our Education Fund balance will be under \$300.

Please consider a **tax-deductible donation** to the Education Fund to continue our efforts. Your donation is credited to the Johnson County League fund even though it is held at the national level. Make your check payable to **JoCo LWV Education Fund**. *This is an opportunity to help the LWV of Johnson County continue our service to the community through our forums and other special programs.* Checks can be given to Treasurer Candy Birch or mailed to League of Women Voters of Johnson County, P.O. Box 13491, Shawnee Mission, KS 66282-3491.

We accept corporate donations as well, so let us know if you have a contact.

Candy Birch, Treasurer LWV Jo Co 2010-2011

League Webmaster Seeks Assistance

In 2004, Mark Adamson set up our League website (www.lwvjoco.org), and he continues to maintain it with updated information. The website is a valuable asset for our League.

Mark would like to work with someone who is interested in the site and willing to do the primary job of maintaining it. He will offer background information and assist whenever necessary.

What computer skills are required? The site is written in HTML 4 language. If necessary, a short course at New Horizons or JCCC would bring a person "up to speed." If you are interested, please contact Harriett Anderson (hjanderson@kc.rr.com or 422-7704).

League Needs Equipment Manager

Thanks to Bob Jefferis, who has faithfully brought the PA equipment to our monthly League meetings and set up the speakers and microphones. Everything fits on a two-wheeled cart for easy transport. Bob has announced that he is retiring from this duty. If you would be willing to assume this job, please contact Bob Jefferis (631-4441, jeffbob@everestkc.net) or Harriett Anderson (hjanderson@kc.rr.com, 422-7704).

Naturalization Ceremonies

Naturalization Ceremonies are held at the Federal Courthouse in KCK at 5th and State usually on the last Friday of every month. The ceremony begins at 1:30 and lasts about 45 minutes. We then register the new citizens to vote. This takes about an hour. If you would like to attend and participate in this moving event, please contact Virginia Johnson (1-770-757-2136 or johnson.virginia@yahoo.com). Please mark your calendar for the upcoming Naturalization Ceremonies.

February 25 Magistrate Judge James O. O'Hara
March Court off-site (*LWV not involved*)
April 29 Judge Carlos Murguia
May Court off-site (*LWV not involved*)

Virginia Johnson

Observer Corps

It's spring and time for local elections. This is where our Observer Corps shines. Your local County, City, School Board, Water Board, Parks Board, etc. create the community you call home. Reports provided by our Observers help keep us all up to date on issues in our area. If there is a board or government group that interests you, think about adding your name to the list of Observers. Contact me at nancyfj@everestkc.net or 913-631-4441.

Nancy Jefferis, Observer Corps Chair

OBSERVER CORPS REPORTS

Johnson County Charter Commission

- The newly appointed Charter Commission held their organizational meeting Monday, February 21 at the County Administration Building in Olathe.
- The Home Rule Charter requires the Charter Commission to elect its own officers. The election of a Treasurer is optional. Frank Taylor was elected Chairman. Jean Wise was elected Vice Chairperson. Clay Barker was chosen by acclimation to be Secretary for the Commission. Melanie Bacon, also chosen by acclimation, will be Treasurer. County Staff will assist both the Secretary and Treasurer with their duties so they can fully participate in the discussions to come before the Commission.
- There was discussion about whether or not to hire an attorney or use only the County Attorneys office for legal issues, as well as pro and con discussion of county provided e-mail accounts as opposed to using each individual's personal e-mail address, assuming the "public" may want to provide suggestions. There will be a County provided website.

Myrna Stringer

Johnson County WaterOne Board February 8 meeting (www.waterone.org)

- Selling water to Belton, MO? WaterOne and Belton staff met in January to discuss the possible sale of 2.5-4.0 million gallons/day. WaterOne will have excess capacity at the Nall Avenue plant now being constructed. Belton expressed strong interest in a 20-30 year contract and will brief its City Council in February. It is Cass County's largest city with 40,000 population.
- Water main break quickly stanchd. On Thursday, 1/27, an AT&T utility crew accidentally punched a large hole into a 30" water main at 135th and US 69. About 65 phone calls around 4:30 p.m. helped identify which main. About 8.5 million gallons were lost in two hours before a shut-off valve was installed. Samples were taken over the next 2 days to assure clean water.

Ellen Miller

Public Comments

A member of the public commented on *The Kansas City Star* article (January 19) regarding an October audit of the JoCo Parks Department. The audit found that county employees were living in houses the county owns within county parks. The employees were not paying rent to live in these houses. (see below)

Items of Business

- Commissioner Ed Peterson was appointed to serve as representative from the Board of County Commissioners to the Johnson County Education Research Triangle Authority.
- The County Auditor presented his Audit plan for 2011, which was accepted by the Commissioners. He plans to conduct audits (in part) in the following areas: Fees for service, Emergency Management Transition, Wastewater Management, Management of IT (hardware) Resources, Child Care Licensing Inspections, Corrections Release Programs and the Transition following consolidation of the Treasurer and Finance Departments. The auditor also noted the importance of verifying that all department managers have had adequate training in auditing.
- The County Auditor updated the Board on 4th quarter audit results, including the Parks and Recreation Department. Ongoing are fulfilling recommendations in the areas of management practices, financial management, personnel with adequate training, compliance with good management practices, etc. Commissioners expressed concerns regarding the housing of Parks Department staff in county-owned houses within the various parks. The commissioners agreed that only two of the nine employees currently living in these houses would be allowed to continue living there – the stable manager for the horse farm and the employee who lives across from Mildale Farms for security purposes.

Another key area of audit compliance update regards the Mental Health Center, with specific reference to an outside pharmacy consultant who is working with the county regarding practices and policies for prescription drug medications at the various Johnson County Mental Health Center locations.

- County Manager's Report: The Federal Legislative Priorities proposal will be finalized by February 24, just prior to the National Association of Counties meeting. Commissioners were invited to propose federal government priorities. Recent projections regarding the Deffenbaugh Solid Waste Disposal site indicate that, for a variety of factors, landfill waste has declined over the last few years. Thus, Deffenbaugh has formally requested that the city of Shawnee extend the 2027 closure date to 2043.
- A brief report was provided on the Governor's proposed budget, as it relates to County Government functions. Highlights include: 1) No current plan to usurp motor vehicle taxes or liquor -by-the-drink taxes; 2) Community mental health funding was cut \$15 million for the uninsured, not eligible for Medicaid; 3) Community corrections took a reduction somewhere between \$2 to \$4 million; 4) Adult Corrections residential centers are fully funded; and 5) Juvenile Justice prevention programs were reduced approximately \$3 million.

Janis McMillen

- Agenda: Proclaimed February 2011 as Black History Month; Certificate of Recognition presented to the Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site for the Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Kansas admission to the Union.
- Items of Business: Approval of appointment of George Schlagel as the 6th District representative to the Park and Recreation Commission through January 31, 2014. Discussion of alternatives to incarceration, diversion rate from nursing homes and carbon monoxide in child care facilities.
- Legislative Update: Main reduction of funds by Governor Brownbeck's budget were for mental health, correction and Juvenile Justice Prevention.
- Public Comments: A man spoke in opposition to the Sustainability Program update and disagreed with many of the goals.
- Business: Presentation of the Sustainability Program Update: Saving Green by Going Green; the Board approved..
- Business: Presentation of the START report (Strategic Transit Action Recommendation Taskforce). The START committee, set up by former County Commissioner Chair Annabeth Surbaugh, presented a report on immediate needs, future needs and long term goals for the county's transportation requirements. Chairman Eilert was against the findings, so the report was tabled by consent of the other members of the Board. However, several of the Board members thanked the committee for their outstanding work and stated that this probably would be revisited in the future.

Virginia Johnson

- Two agenda items dealt with bids regarding Johnson County Wastewater's request for proposals (RFPs) for engineering design and construction to install new gravity sewers and to install new low pressure sewers in the county. The Commissioners approved the engineering firms recommended by the Wastewater staff.

The broader discussion revolved around the RFP process itself, which is based on a 10-year old policy. Proposals submitted to the Wastewater staff are evaluated and scored on pre-determined qualities. When one or more firms have scores distinctly higher than the other applicants, the top-scoring applicants move to the next evaluation step, followed by a recommendation to the BOCC. The lower ranking firms are told they will not be considered further, which happens with about 20-25 percent of RFPs. The BOCC proposed and agreed that the policy should be reviewed with an eye to broadening the applicant base qualified for final consideration.

- Public hearing: To authorize construction of a Communications and Data Acquisitions system for Johnson County Wastewater (monitoring of unmanned facilities and notification of appropriate staff in event of an emergency, e.g., within or around a sewer line). No member of the public spoke to the issue; the project was approved and a contract was awarded.
- County Manager's report: a) an update on a proposed road construction design (known as a "Diverging Diamond plan") to handle/manage the anticipated traffic (primarily truck) increase flowing from I-35 to the planned intermodal facility in Gardner-Edgerton; and, b) an update on the 5-County Regional Transportation Planning Study (Douglas, Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami and Wyandotte counties) in conjunction with KDOT, which addresses future "multi-modal" transportation needs. A second phase will consider solutions and strategies.
- Legislative update on proposed legislation that will impact Johnson County:
 - a) HB 2067 will require all voters to present a photo ID each time they vote. (Note: LWV opposes this legislation). Proponents of the bill, including Johnson County Election Commissioner Brian Newby, testified in January. It was noted that Mr. Newby is appointed by the Secretary of State, and his testimony stated that he was testifying as an individual and not as a spokesperson for the BOCC.
 - b) Proposed budget cuts that will affect Johnson County would result in cuts to mental health (\$15 million), corrections (\$2 million for adult and \$3.2 million for juvenile justice prevention) and public health (\$92,000). It was also noted that proposed legislation in Congress would do away with funding for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); these grants affect a wide variety of the county's Human Services programs.

Janis McMillen

Lenexa City Council January 18 meeting

- Lenexa Fire Station Five was awarded the LEED Silver Award by the US Green Building Council. The LEED green building certification program encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through a suite of rating systems that recognize projects that implement strategies for better environmental and health performance.
- The police department presented the new crime mapping tool they are using and which is available to the general public, Crime Reports.com.
- The Technology Business Continuity Three Phase Plan addresses the potential for data loss issues in the event of power loss, natural disasters, fire, etc. The plan will use already available resources and stay modular for future changes.

Sheri Potter

Olathe School Board February 3 meeting

The Board:

- Was updated on the fire at Green Springs Elementary School, which occurred the morning of the board meeting.
- Approved the sale of Mill Creek Center (the original Olathe High School) to The Net Giver.
- Heard that the administration is proposing four Strategic Directions for the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan: 1) Improve Student Achievement; 2) Recruit, Retain, and Develop Quality Staff; 3) Engage and Involve all Stakeholders; 4) Be Responsible and Accountable for Resources.
- Learned about the K-State Innovation Campus/District 233 Partnership, which provides Olathe students with various expanded learning opportunities.
- Was briefed on the following State Finance Formula Components: High Enrollment, Transportation, Virtual Enrollment, and FHSU Math.
- Was advised that lunch fees must increase next year to meet minimum fees in the new federal law or the district would lose federal aid.
- Was updated on fees proposals for next year. One consequence of the current convenience fee on credit card charges is that more people are paying by check, which increases the number of NSF checks that must be collected and processed by school officials. It was recommended that the convenience fee be dropped for next year.

Connie Richards

Johnson County Library February 16 meeting

- Magaly Vallazza, manager of the Oak Park Branch, updated the Board on Latino Services. She noted that reading to children is not a part of Latino culture, so the library tries to promote children's reading in a variety of Latino programs.
- Overall circulation was down 12 percent in January, although there was wide variation among libraries with some having double digit percentage increases. Loans to the Olathe Public Library were up 31.7 percent.
- The Board approved an agreement with Overland Park Community Gardens, Inc. for a Community Garden at Oak Park Library. The project still needs the approval of the Overland Park City Council.
- The Board approved a Capital Improvements Request for 2012-2016 which included Capital Replacements Funds (i.e., maintenance of current facilities and assets), an upgrade to the Central Resource Library, the building of the Monticello Library, and a Corinth Library replacement. The Request now goes to the Board of County Commissioners.

Connie Richards

Johnson County Parks and Rec Board February 16 meeting

Members of the Johnson Co. Board of Parks and Recreation are: George J. Schlagel, Chair, Nancy Wallenstein, Vice-Chair, William Fiohrs, Secretary, Steven L. Baru, Treasurer, John P. Miller, Ass't. Treasurer and Mike Brown. Jim Allen is the ex officio member from the Board of County Commissioners. Also attending were the Director of Parks and Recreation, Michael Meadors, Legal Counsel Bill Tuley and other agency staff and department heads.

- Awards were given for long-time service, including one to Michael Meadors for 25 years, as well as several awards for exemplary work.
- Numerous items on the consent agenda, which had previously been considered by standing committees, were approved as submitted. The Board discussed several upcoming meetings, trying to schedule them at the most convenient date for participants.
- Also discussed were methods of resolving issues brought up by the audit of 2010; New Century Fieldhouse updates; participation in Kansas City Corporate Challenge; fall activity catalogs and the authority of the Director to accommodate ADA requirements.
- There were two requests for executive sessions concerning property acquisitions.

Ann Smith

Recent U.S. Senate Votes

Secret Holds Elimination - Vote **Agreed to** (92-4, 4 Not Voting) The Senate spent much of the week debating procedural rules. One of the rule changes the chamber passed was this one that ends the practice of "secret holds," where a senator anonymously blocks legislation or a nomination. The rule change requires a senator to notify his or her party leader within 2 days of placing a hold.

Sen. Pat Roberts voted **YES** **Sen. Jerry Moran** voted **YES**

Health Care Repeal - Vote **Rejected** (47-51, 2 Not Voting) During the debate over the Federal Aviation Administration bill, the Senate rejected this amendment that would have repealed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The text was similar to the bill the House passed on January 19.

Sen. Pat Roberts voted **YES** **Sen. Jerry Moran** voted **YES**

FISA Sunsets Extension Act of 2011 - Vote **Passed** (86-12, 2 Not Voting) The Senate passed this bill extending some expiring provisions of the Patriot Act for 90 days. The extension allows both chambers more time to work on long-term bills. The House cleared the measure for the president two days later.

Sen. Pat Roberts voted **YES**.....**Sen. Jerry Moran** voted **YES**

FAA Air Transportation Modernization and Safety Improvement Act - Vote **Passed** (87-8, 5 Not Voting) This \$34.6 billion bill reauthorizes the Federal Aviation Administration for two years and sets aviation policies. The House is working on its own version of the bill that would cover four years.

Sen. Pat Roberts voted **YES**.....**Sen. Jerry Moran** voted **YES**

Recent U.S. House Votes

[Non-Security Discretionary Spending Limit](#) - Vote **Passed** (256-165, 13 Not Voting) The House approved this resolution directing the chair of the Budget Committee to reduce non-security spending to 2008 levels for the remainder of the 2011 fiscal year. The Budget Committee sets spending levels but does not appropriate funds. The continuing resolution currently funding government operations expires on March 4, 2011.

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **YES**

[Presidential Campaign Fund Termination](#) - Vote **Passed** (239-160, 35 Not Voting) The House voted to end a program put in place in 1976 that provides taxpayer funds to presidential candidates and the major parties for their nominating conventions. The bill's future in the Senate is unclear.

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **YES**

[Patriot Act Extensions](#) - Vote **Failed** (277-148, 9 Not Voting) Under a vote that required a two-thirds majority, the House failed to pass this bill that would extend through Dec. 8, 2011, three provisions of the anti-terrorism law known as the Patriot Act. The bill is likely to be voted on this week under regular voting procedures.

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **YES**

[United Nations Tax Equalization Refund Act](#) - Vote **Failed** (259-169, 6 Not Voting) Under a vote that required a two-thirds majority, the House failed to pass this bill that would establish as United States policy that the United Nations should return \$179 million overpaid into the U.N. Tax Equalization Fund as of Dec. 31, 2009, and that the U.S. should press the U.N. to change its fund assessment procedures to reduce discrepancies. The future of the bill is unclear.

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **YES**

[Continuing Resolution, FY2011](#) - Vote **Passed** (235-189, 9 Not Voting) The House passed this long-term CR that would fund government operations through September 30, 2011, the end of the current fiscal year. The bill includes \$61.5 billion in spending cuts. The current funding expires on March 4, 2011. The bill now goes to the Senate.

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **YES**

[FISA Sunsets Extension Act of 2011](#) - Vote **Passed** (279-143, 11 Not Voting) The House gave final approval to this bill extending some expiring provisions of the Patriot Act for 90 days. The original House bill would have extended the provisions to December 8, 2011, but the Senate approved the short-term bill on February 15. Both chambers are working on long-term bills. The president is expected to sign the bill into law.

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **YES**

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF JOHNSON COUNTY
9531 MEADOW LANE
LEAWOOD KS 66206**

Upcoming Events

Friday February 25	Naturalization Ceremony: Register new voters; 1:30 p.m.; Federal Courthouse, 5 th and State, Kansas City, KS
Tuesday March 1	International Relations Committee, Great Decisions: Topic: National Security; 7 p.m.; Central Resource Library, 9875 W. 87 th Street, Overland Park, KS.
Wednesday March 2	Let's Talk Issues: Topic: Kansas Legislature - The Session Begins; Panelists are: Sen. John Vratil, Rep. Sheryl Spaulding and Rep. Marvin Kleeb
Saturday March 5	General Meeting: "Health Care: Where Do We Stand?" 8:30 a.m. social time, 9 a.m. program, board meeting, 11 a.m.; Atonement Lutheran Church, 9948 Metcalf, Overland Park, KS
Tuesday March 15	International Relations Committee, Great Decisions: Topic: Horn of Africa; 7 p.m. Central Resource Library, 9875 W. 87 th Street, Overland Park, KS.
Thursday March 24	Kansas League Day at the Capitol: 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; Dillon House, 404 SW Ninth St., Topeka, KS
Saturday April 2	General Meeting: "Civil Discourse in an Uncivil Environment" 8:30 a.m. social time, 9 a.m. program, board meeting, 11 a.m.; Atonement Lutheran Church, 9948 Metcalf, Overland Park, KS
Friday April 29	Naturalization Ceremony: Register new voters; 1:30 p.m.; Federal Courthouse, 5 th and State, Kansas City, KS
Saturday April 30	LWVK State Convention: Emporia, KS
Saturday May 7	Annual Meeting and Making Democracy Work (Details to be announced)

The deadline for the April VOTER is March 15.