



Calendar

Sept 9	Meeting 7 pm ST Mark's Church	Speaker – Bob Driewer, Newman CEO. Local Program of Economic and Quality of Life Issues for our area. Health availability of Service – Hospitals – Health Center.
Sept 16	Board Meeting 7 pm	2531 Lincoln St, Everyone is welcome. I moved the meeting from the 30 th as we need discussion on Judicial Diversity Project
Sept 22	Emporia HS 11 am – 1pm	The High School is voting for the Fall King and Queen of Sports. Marty Hager is heading this committee. They will be using the voting machines and are asking for volunteers. Please call her at 340-0787 or e-mail food4thought56@yahoo.com
Sept 23	Meeting 6pm Lyon Co Health Dept	Speaker – Liz Conrade, Executive Director of Lyon County Health Dept. Local Program of Economic and Quality of Life Issues for out area. Health availability of Service – Hospitals – Health Center. Sandwiches and drinks will be served. Please RSVP to 342-8753 or e-mail djsolis@cableone.net
Oct 16	Reception Monroe School 1515 SE Monroe St	
Oct 17	League Day Topeka Public Library 1515 SW 10 th Ave	Launching a 2yr project promoting judicial diversity funded by LWVUS Education Fund.. Rebecca Love Kourlis- Keynote Speaker. Panel discussion with members of Kansas Judiciary & KS Law Schools.

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

**Information on the Kansas League of Women Voters can be found at <http://lwvk.org>
The National League of Women Voters is at www.lwv.org**

President's Paragraph:

It has been a short summer and I hope we are all ready for fall and Christmas just around the corner. We have two meetings scheduled for September involved our local study. Speakers will be Bob Driewer, CEO of Newman's Hospital and Liz Conrade, Executive Director on the Lyon County Health Department.

Our local study this year is

Economic and Quality of Life Issues for our area

- A. Health availability of Service
 - a. Hospitals
 - b. Health Center
- B. MAPP
- C. Recreation and exercise
- D. Transportation
- E. Schools

Five members and I went to The Saturday Launch Lunch on Aug 29 for the Judiciary Project, it was very informative, exciting and energy-filled. The big public kick off is planned for Oct 17th and a reception the night before. We have cancelled our meeting on October 14th – therefore urging everyone to try to plan to attend League Day on October 17th and the reception the evening before.

—by *Diana Solis*

State Convention 2009

The WINDS OF CHANGE was the theme of the 2009 LWVK State Convention in Great Bend.

I was pleased to be one of the 5 delegates from Emporia. In highlighting a couple of things

from the Convention, I am pleased that the recommended study for 2009-2011 will be

Advocacy for Current Positions. After discussion this program was adopted by the Convention.

This program will allow us to take a look at each of the positions of the State League. We will review programs under SRS, Mental Health Care in Kansas, Medical Indigence and Environmental Quality just to name a few.

This should provide for some very interesting study meetings.

Another special at the Convention was the election of the new Board of Directors for the State League.

The new President is Ernestine Krehbiel of Wichita. Congratulations to Eleanor Browning from the Emporia League for being elected a Director. Thanks to Kay Calvert for serving on the State Board this past 2 years. It is most beneficial to our League to have representation on the State Board.

Thanks, Eleanor, for doing such a great job on our display about the Senior Care Center Voting project for the Convention!!!

--by *Ann Havenhill*

Report on the May 1-2 LWV 68th State Convention, Great Bend, KS

“Winds of Change”

Ann Havenhill and I were early enough Friday evening to sit in on a little of the state board meeting. We watched some of the movie about the beginning of the League, “Ironclad Angels.” It was very interesting and sometimes shocking to see the struggles that women had to go through just for the right for a woman to vote. I had heard of the struggles, but to see the women, for example, at an early parade in our nation’s capitol, being harassed and literally pushed or even having things thrown at them by the crowd, as well as being called “unkind” names. We didn’t see the whole movie, but I hope we can all have the chance to see all of it sometime soon.

The business meeting, beginning at 9:00 Saturday morning, was interesting: introductions, appointments and announcements, roll call and the credentials report (yes, we had a quorum!), adoption of rules and the order of business. Diane Kuhn, our state president, also gave a report, as well as the treasurer, Leonore Rowe, and Betty Wyckoff, had an endowment fund report.

Our luncheon speaker was Dr. Scott Brantley, a Great Bend chiropractor and an environmentalist, who spoke about how he started his wind energy business, West Wind Energy LLC. He had purchased a wind turbine off e-bay for \$15,000, but it actually cost him over \$65,000 to make it operational. He stated that “No one else should have to go through the nightmare of an e-bay purchase as I did.” He is quite concerned about the lack of sales, installation, or maintenance for small to mid-size wind turbines in Kansas. He also told us that the price of electricity will double or triple in the near future. Maybe I need to look into purchasing a wind turbine?

After a great lunch, we had another business session, a legislative report, a budget report, which we adopted, and also approved the proposed changes to endowment fund articles, adopted action resolutions, and recognized convention committees. I must say I heard very interesting discussion and learned quite a bit. This, I didn’t know, is the 90th anniversary of the year that women getting to vote. The actual date is August 26th.

I had a great time and appreciate the opportunity to attend.

--by Eleanor Browning

HOT TOPICS

About fifteen Leaguers met for the annual Hot Topics luncheon at Kay Calvert's in May for the last meeting of the year. Daren Hartenbauer talked about the plans for the building the North Central Area Aging Agency has an option to buy. Right now the Kitchen in the building is being used as a preparation site for the Friendship meals program. If the purchase goes through the plan is to offer the rest of the building to non-profit agencies for their use. Each agency would be responsible for whatever remodeling they wanted to do and their own furnishings. Rent would be a share of the utility bill.

As a result of the luncheon \$150 was sent to the LWVK Endowment Fund.

--by Kay Calvert

HOMEcoming ELECTION to be held at Emporia High School:

Leaguers have been asked to run the election for Homecoming Queen and King at Emporia High School again this year. The election will be held on Tuesday, September 22nd, at EHS. The County Clerk will be providing the electronic voting machines for the election. This is a wonderful experience for the youth of our community to learn about the voting process and a great League project. Marty Hager is in charge of setting up this “mobile precinct” and will need poll workers. The hours are from 11am to 1pm. Please say YES when she calls you to work, or better yet contact her and volunteer. If you can just work 1 hour, that is okay. Marty Hager, 340-0787 or food4thought56@yahoo.com

--by Ann Havenhill

Senior Care Centers Election Project News:

The Emporia League has been asked by the Lawrence League to provide the details of our Senior Care Center Election Project . Tammy Vopat and I have written a summary of the project and once it has been approved by the Board of Directors it will be made available to other Leagues in Kansas and to County Election Officers/County Clerks who might request information on the project.

--by Ann Havenhill

League Day October 17th

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 10th 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 dianekuhn@kc.rr.com to make reservations by October 12.

At-Risk Americans: The Uninsured And Underinsured

By Janis McMillen

Data from multiple sources agree that in 2007, 47 million Americans (15.6 percent of the total U.S. population) lacked any kind of health insurance coverage. When these numbers are adjusted for age (excluding those 65 years and older), the uninsured percentage of the population rises to 17.9 percent. Moreover, it is estimated that 25 million adults under age 65 were underinsured during 2007, despite having insurance all year. In total, 42 percent of *all* adults (86.7 million) were either uninsured or underinsured during 2007.

Putting a face on persons who were uninsured or underinsured during 2007 and 2008¹

- **Age:** One of three people under age 65 were uninsured for some or all of 2007 and 2008; of the total uninsured population, 60.1 million were adults (between 19 and 64 years of age)
- **Duration:** Among the underinsured/uninsured, 74.5 percent were uninsured for nine or more months and one-quarter were uninsured the entire 24 months
- **Employment status:** 80 percent of individuals who were uninsured were in working families and only 16 percent were not in the labor force (due to disabilities, chronic illness, or serving as family caregivers)
- **Income:** Nearly 60 percent were in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (FPL: \$21,200/year for a family of four); 52 percent with incomes between 100 to 200 percent of FPL went without health insurance in 2007/2008
- **Racial and Ethnic origin:** 55 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, 40.3 percent of African Americans and 34 percent of other racial or ethnic minorities had no health insurance in 2007/2008, compared to 25.8 percent of whites. While racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to be uninsured, whites accounted for 49.8 percent of the uninsured
- **Age breakdown:** The likelihood of being uninsured declines with age; 49.5 percent of those 19 – 24 years old, 36.3 percent of those 25 – 44 years old, 32.5 percent of those 45 – 54 years old and 21.2 percent of those 55 – 64 years old were uninsured over this two-year time period. The 55- to 64-year-old age group consumes more health care on average than younger adults.

For all ethnic and racial groups, lower-income families and individuals were more likely to be uninsured than lower-income whites. This disparity continues even as incomes rise in all groups.

There is a marked increase in the number of adults having difficulty paying medical bills – the most visible consequence of the weakening in insurance coverage. In 2007, 41 percent of adults (72 million people) reported problems paying medical bills, faced bill collectors or were in debt for medical care, up from 34 percent or 58 million in 2005. The majority had insurance at the time these bills were incurred² – well in advance of the economic downturn.

¹ All statistics above and below are from <http://www.familiesusa.org/resources/publications/reports/americans-at-risk-findings.html>

²The statistics in this paragraph are from <http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Content/Publications/Testimonies/2009/Feb/Testimony-Insurance-Design-Matters-Underinsured-Trends-Health-and-Financial-Risks.aspx>

Janis McMillen (LWVUS Board member and LWVKS) is chair of the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force.

Produced by the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force, 2009

Quick Facts On Health Care Costs

- Total health spending in the U.S. reached \$2.1 trillion in 2007 – or \$7,026 per capita.
- By 2016, total health spending is projected to rise to \$4.2 trillion.
- Between 2005 – 2006, total health spending increased 6.7 percent, more than double the rate of the 2.9 percent increase in overall economic growth.
- Total health spending remained relatively constant at about 16 percent of gross domestic product from 2003 – 2006, but is projected to increase to 19.5 percent by 2017.

- Spending for home health care increased at a faster pace from 2005 – 2006 (9.9 percent) than any other category of health spending; however, its impact is limited because it accounts overall for only 2.5 percent of total health spending.
- Yearly prescription drug spending growth accelerated in 2006 to 8.5 percent from a low of 5.8 percent in 2005, in part because of full implementation of Medicare Part D.
- Between 2006 and 2007, premiums for health coverage offered by employers increased 6.1 percent, the fourth straight year of declines in the rate of premium growth, from a peak of 13.9 percent in 2003. Even so, this was more than twice the rate of growth in the Consumer Price Index.
- Of every dollar spent on health services in the U.S. in 2006, 46 cents came directly from government sources.
- Costs for program administration and the net cost of private health insurance were about 7 percent of total health spending in the U.S. in 2006 and grew 8.8 percent, a marked increase over the 3.6 percent rise in 2005.

This list (without the original endnotes) is from “A Reporter's Toolkit: Health Care Costs” (an Alliance for Health Reform Toolkit produced with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) and is reproduced here courtesy of the Alliance for Health Care. The entire toolkit can be found at http://www.allhealth.org/Publications/Cost_of_health_care/health_care_costs_toolkit.asp#keyfacts.

Resource provided by the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force, 2009.

by Janis McMillen