



*The League of Women Voters  
Kansas City/Jackson/Clay/Platte Counties*

[www.lwvkc.org](http://www.lwvkc.org) – email. [lwvkjcp@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvkjcp@yahoo.com) 816-464-1800

January – February 2014 **CORRECTED VERSION 1/6/14**

**FIRST REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEW YEAR  
JANUARY 18, 2014**

9:30 Coffee 10:00 Meeting Starts

Community Christian Church, 4601 Main, KCMO

WE WILL AGREE ON OUR AREAS OF EMPHASIS AND WHAT WE WILL DO OPERATIONALLY IN 2014.  
BE THERE AND SHARE YOUR VIEWS AND IDEAS.

**President's Message**

The LWVKC/J/C/P had a productive 2013. We learned more about efforts to suppress voting not only across the Nation but in Missouri. We registered new voters, developed a partnership with Operation Breakthrough to help needy mothers address through democratic processes the issues they face, learned about the quality and quantity of our areas water supply, launched our part of the effort to revise the League's national-level agriculture policy position, and played a key role in the defeat at the polls of a proposed Jackson County sales tax to finance translational medical research at three local institutions. We joined with the local chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and the National Archives to sponsor a seminar, held at the KCMO National Archives, on the status of the Equal Rights Amendment in connection with Women's Equality Day. We were updated by a Federal Government health official on implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. We joined other Missouri Leagues on State Legislative Day to rally in support of equal pay for women. Many of our members also rallied at the Capitol on expansion of Medicaid. Those who went to Jeff City met with their elected officials, if they were available. Additionally, we provided the moderator and other support for a forum of elected officials in south Platte County, who were convened to address economic development and related issues. At our December holiday lunch and meeting, held at the historic Bingham-Waggoner Mansion in Independence, we heard about upcoming legislative issues from State Representative Judy Morgan.

Looking forward, 2014 is an election year which will bring many opportunities for League action, including but by no means limited to candidate forums. At our regular meeting on January 18, we will plan our program for the coming year, taking into account the election, and National and State League recommendations for priorities and established policies. On February 15, we and the AAUW will co-sponsor a meeting on voter suppression, which will include AAUW membership on both sides of the State line, as well as our own membership. On March 15, we will have a presentation by experts from

the U.S. Department of Agriculture on issues related to financing (crop insurance, subsidies) and farm consolidation as part of our study of agriculture issues. The consensus development session on the questions being posed by LWV National will be addressed, along with lunch, following the USDA presentation.

Many Members of our League participated in LWV activities during 2013. This ranged from participation in meetings where information and ideas were shared, arranging speakers for meetings, assisting with refreshments, handling communications (e.g., taking calls on our League's regular phone number), registering voters, meeting with mothers at Operation Breakthrough to learn from their experiences, going to Jeff City on Legislative Day to active engage our elected officials. There are many things that League Members can do to participate. Our League's Board values each member and encourages you to participate in as much as you can this coming year. If you want to do more and are not sure what to do, telephone me or other members of the Board.

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**Issues identified by our members for local League consideration:** At our November 2013 regular meeting, participants were asked to write down the issues they believe our League should pay attention to during 2014. The following is the list of those issues:

- Fracking to recover oil and gas from shale formations and possible damage to the environment
- Statewide early voting – legislation change
- Education and its financing
- Constitutional amendment to allow tax credits for “donations” to private schools – “No”
- Medicaid expansion in Missouri
- Payday loan issue in Missouri
- Minimum wage increase in Missouri
- Food stamp cuts
- Federal budget including sequestration
- Citizen redistricting to avoid political gerrymandering
- Access to abortion in Missouri
- Gun violence, particularly in the greater KC area
- Voter suppression
- Antibiotics in animals produced for human consumption

**The foregoing list is not definitive. It reflects what our meeting participants had on their minds in November 2013. The list needs to be amended and discussed. At our January League regular meeting (Jan. 18) we will plan our work efforts for 2014. This is your opportunity to speak up about the issues you believe are important and to make your view count!!**

**Citizens United V FEC – trumping individuals once again** Submitted by Mary Lindsay

Then LWV President Mary G. Wilson wisely wrote on 1/21/10: “The Supreme Court has made a tragic mistake. Their decision announced today in Citizens United v FEC is constitutionally irresponsible and will surely bring about an anti-democratic revolution in how we finance elections in this country. Today, basic pillars of American democracy have been undermined – that elections should not be corrupted by vast corporate wealth and that the voters should be at the center of our democratic system.”

The Citizens United ruling is based on two precedents: Political money is equivalent to free speech; a corporation is a person with 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment free speech protection. The U.S. Constitution is silent on both issues, but an activist U.S. Supreme Court has interpreted both into the Constitution.

The only remedy is to amend the U.S. Constitution to establish that only human beings are persons with constitutional rights and that political money is not free speech and, therefore, can be regulated in the political process.

Learn more at: [www.http://MoveToAmend.org](http://MoveToAmend.org).

### **Jackson County Voters Win on Nov. 5** submitted by Linda Smith

On Nov. 5, over 76,000 Jackson County citizens voted on the single issue on the ballot – a proposed half-cent, 20-year sales tax to fund “translational” medical research at two private hospitals (Children’s Mercy and St. Luke’s Health System) and the University of Missouri-KC. Of those voting, roughly 12,000 supported the proposed tax while about 64,000 voted against it. With 85% of the voters casting their ballots against the proposal, the voters’ decision was unambiguous. The voter turnout was unusually large for a single-issue election, reflecting efforts by the League and others to educate Jackson County voters about this issue. This was in the face of a \$2 million campaign to sell the proposal to the public through extensive TV advertising, multiple mailings, appearances by advocates on local TV and radio talk shows, yard signs, newspaper columns, presentations to various associations (same ones where the League spoke), large highway posters and more. The opposition to the proposed tax spent less than \$400,000. Your League spent about \$40 out of Members’ pockets to copy flyers.

Our League stated its position in opposition to the proposal in a letter to the Editor of the “Kansas City Star” the morning after the Jackson County Legislature approved its going on the Nov. 5 ballot. Coming out early with our position was key to our strategy for opposing this tax. Multiple League Members contributed ideas and words for the development of a League statement/flyer. Your League and its Members had at least nine letters to the Editor published in four newspapers. Our President, Linda Vogel Smith, was interviewed by five reporters. She spoke before meetings of the KCMO Citizens’ Association, which subsequently voted to oppose the measure, and of the KCMO Mayor’s Health Commission, which voted to take no action. Linda and Members Peg Prendergast, Cheryl Barnes, Jane McClain spoke, collectively, at ten venues (neighborhood associations and other forums). Additionally, League Members participated in several of these meetings, raising important questions to stimulate discussion. League Members distributed and planted “vote NO” yard signs, and worked to educate neighbors and friends.

Let’s be clear. The League is not opposed to medical research; indeed, we believe it is important. We opposed the proposed sales tax increase because of its regressive nature – it would have been levied on goods and services required to fulfill day-to-day needs of individuals and families every day of the year, impacting those with lower incomes disproportionately. Moreover, there are other ways to fund such research, some of which are already being accessed by researchers at all three institutions -- Children’s Mercy Hospital, St. Luke’s Hospital, and the University of Missouri KC. Additionally, Jackson County has

other pressing needs, particularly infrastructure needs for services that are needed by most of the people most of the time.

The majority of the voters prevailed on Nov. 5. They were educated about the issue and mobilized to vote. This was grass-roots, non-partisan decision-making at its best.

**Initiatives Concerning Education** submitted by Delores Blaser **CORRECTED**

Below are three education related initiative petition summaries approved by the Missouri Secretary of State approved for circulation for signatures. Two of these are for a proposed Missouri State constitution amendment to provide for income tax credits for donations to educational institutions, including private institutions. The third is related to teacher performance evaluation. Our League is concerned, at this juncture, with the proposed income tax credit proposal.

For the complete text of each of these “google”: MO 2014 Initiative Petitions. Read before you sign a petition. Notice the dates of circulation approval for the two summaries for the income tax credits. **The petition dated September is the one LWVKC/J/C/P is studying for possible action.**

**Constitutional Amendment to Article X, Relating to a State  
Income Tax Credit, version 2014-022**

Submitted by: Mr. Herman Kriegshauser

Herman Kriegshauser  
19 Jennycliffe Lane  
Chesterfield, MO 63005  
314-223-4555

Official ballot title certified by Secretary of State on March 20, 2013.

**OFFICIAL BALLOT TITLE AS CERTIFIED BY  
SECRETARY OF STATE**

Shall the Missouri Constitution be amended to create an individual and corporate state income tax credit of 60% of the amount donated to Missouri not-for-profit elementary and secondary schools or school districts and Missouri not-for-profit foundations providing scholarships for Missouri secondary school graduates to attend Missouri not-for-profit higher education colleges and universities (this credit cannot exceed the donor’s state income tax liability for the year)?

Annual state government revenue may decrease by an estimated \$236 million to \$938 million. Annual state operating costs may increase by at least \$200,000. Reduced state revenue could result in decreased state funding for local governments and public education entities. Public education entities could have an unknown increase in donation revenue.

## Constitutional Amendment to Article IX, Relating to an Education Tax Credit 2014-045

Submitted by Barbara Swanson

Barbara Swanson  
201 Dover St  
Jefferson City, MO 65109

Official ballot title certified by Secretary of State on **September 18, 2013.**

OFFICIAL BALLOT TITLE AS CERTIFIED BY  
SECRETARY OF STATE

Shall the Missouri Constitution be amended to:

- create a tax credit for donations made to nonprofit corporations that provide funds to improve programs in public school districts, provide scholarships for students to attend qualified private or parochial elementary or secondary schools, or support special education services for children;
- limit the tax credit to \$50,000 annually per individual or business entity, and cap the entire credit at \$90 million annually; and
- repeal any constitutional provisions that prohibit taxpayer funds from being used to aid private or parochial elementary or secondary schools that qualify for the funding in this measure?

Any decrease in state revenue will depend on the redemption of tax credits issued related to this proposal, initially limited to \$90 million per year. Increased annual state operating expenses are expected to be initially about \$120,000. Each individual school district will experience an unknown annual change in revenue.

# Constitutional Amendment to Article IX, Relating to Teacher Performance Evaluation Systems 2014-024

Submitted by: Mr. Marc Ellinger

Marc Ellinger  
308 E High St.  
Suite 301  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Official ballot title certified by Secretary of State on **April 24, 2013**.

## **OFFICIAL BALLOT TITLE AS CERTIFIED BY SECRETARY OF STATE**

Shall the Missouri Constitution be amended to:

- require teachers to be evaluated by a standards based performance evaluation system for which each local school district must receive state approval to continue receiving state and local funding;
- require teachers to be dismissed, retained, demoted, promoted and paid primarily using quantifiable student performance data as part of the evaluation system;
- require teachers to enter into contracts of three years or fewer with public school districts; and
- prohibit teachers from organizing or collectively bargaining regarding the design and implementation of the teacher evaluation system?

Decisions by school districts regarding provisions allowed or required by this proposal and their implementation will influence the potential costs or savings impacting each district. Significant potential costs may be incurred by the state and/or the districts if new/additional evaluation instruments must be developed to satisfy the proposal's performance evaluation requirements.

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## **Table Talk Event on Gun Violence – Jan 13**

**Gun Violence and practical measures that can and/or could be taken to address it in the Kansas City area will be the topic for Table Talk on Jan. 13 at Joan Mills' apartment.** Alice Kitchen, a League Member, local activists and Member of the KCMO Health Commission, will lead the discussion, including sharing information on her efforts and that of others to address this problem. This is a step toward our defining what our League might do during 2014 to help bring about social and institutional change to stop this violence. **Place:** Joan's apartment: 310 West 49<sup>th</sup>, Apartment 208 (49<sup>TH</sup> and Wornall near the Plaza), KCMO. **RSVP to Joan:** 816 353-4106; email: [jmills1637@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jmills1637@sbcglobal.net). **Time:** 6:00 p.m., Jan. 13. **Soup and great discussion will be your reward for being there.**

**Empowering Women/Men across Kansas City** Submitted by Sherry Templeton and Margie Richcreek

Our League members and Operation Breakthrough parents have a meeting scheduled with the Election Board Directors in January.

**Nominating Committee**

Our League's Nominating Committee is accepting suggestions for nominees for Vice President, Treasurer, and Directors to be elected for a two-year term at our annual meeting on May 17, 2014. If you are interested, please let us know. If you would like to nominate another member, please ask their permission and then let us know.

Caroline Arnold, Delores Blaser, Carolyn Weeks, Sherry Templeton, or Margie Richcreek, Chair.

**Membership** Submitted by Donna Hoch and Dixie Brown

We welcome new members Peg Maher and Vickie Riddle and appreciate our renewing members Lysle Weeks, Nancy Wakefield, Kathryn Dixon and Annie De Simone. I have just learned that Dorothy Rosenwald died. She had been a member of League for over 50 years. She was 95.

Our membership has grown by 9% so far this year and we hope it may be up to 16% if all those who still owe dues renew. We lost 5 members. Madelyn Wrobley and Dorothy Rosenwald died. One member moved out of state, our student member graduated and 2 others chose not to renew their membership. In 1971 the League of Women Voters opened our membership to men. We are proud to have 12 men who are members and are represented on our Board by Charles Steele. We have added 17 new members to our local group.

The membership team is currently communicating via email with a number of prospective members; however we would love to add more names. The League has an important role to play on issues of local, state and national interest. We're shaping the Future Now. Come and be a part of it.

**Agriculture Study** Submitted by Pauline Testerman

We have finally gotten some articles on our agriculture study posted on the U. S. League of Women Voter's web site. If you have a chance, please take a look at them. I am going to summarize one of the articles, about the U. S. Department of Agriculture and its mission.

More than half of our country's private land is used for agriculture. The choices farmers make in managing those lands affect the quality of our waters, the ability to feed our people, and the future of the land itself. Those choices are to a large extent influenced by the actions of the federal government through the departments and agencies that provide support to farmers and consumers, create

regulations to ensure safe, nutritious food and protect the environment, and enable competitive markets.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, and its agencies, develop, implement, and administer policy and programs related to farming, agriculture, nutrition, food safety, land management, natural resources, forestry, and rural development. The program content and budget of the USDA is determined by the Farm Bill, which is generally reauthorized by Congress every five years.

The USDA was established on May 15, 1862. The USDA currently has 7 mission areas:

**Farm and Foreign Agriculture Services:** (agencies for this mission include) Farm Service Agency; Foreign Agriculture Service; and Risk Management Agency.

**Food Nutrition and Consumer Services:** (agencies for this mission include) Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion; Food and Nutrition Service.

**Food Safety:** (agencies for this mission include) Food Safety Inspection Service.

**Marketing and Regulatory Programs:** (agencies for this mission include) Agricultural Marketing Service; Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyard Administration.

**Natural Resources and Environment:** (agencies for this mission include) Forest Service; Natural Resources Conservation Service.

**Research, Education, and Economics:** (agencies for this mission include) Agricultural Research Services; Economic Research Service; National Agriculture Library; National Agricultural Statistics Service.

### **Rural Development.**

USDA programs are determined in large part by the Farm Bill. A number of programs supported by the Farm Bill, such as farm subsidies, food distribution, nutrition programs, and conservation programs, have been hotly debated. USDA spending was \$156 billion for 2013 before the sequester and other cuts were made. Of funds proposed for 2014, 72 percent are for nutrition assistance, 15 percent for farm and commodity programs, 6 percent for conservation and forestry, and 6 percent for all other spending combined. These shares are fairly typical of USDA budgets in the past.

### **Current issues with the Farm Bill:**

The relationship of Farm Bill commodity programs to structural changes in the agricultural sector (rapid growth of large scale agriculture).

Cost benefits and equity implications of farmer support programs, price supports, direct payments, subsidized crop insurance, and limits to conservation practices.

The extent to which the Farm Bill allocations to research, extension and marketing assistance, and commodity programs, are promoting a sustainable domestic and world food system.

Recent growth in the number of recipients in the nutrition assistance program and



congressional debates about tightening eligibility requirements and reducing allocations.

This summarizes some of the information we received on the broad topic of the USDA and its regulation of agriculture. Today, December 11, the FDA had an important announcement, that it would advise that antibiotics no longer be given to livestock except as authorized by a veterinarian. This has been a big issue in agriculture and two biggest manufacturers of livestock feed said they would comply with this ruling. The Congress is still working on the 2014 Farm Bill, so agriculture is in the news all the time.

## League Calendar 2014

Board Meetings - First Monday @ NKC Library 7:00pm

Jan 6 and Feb 3

Membership Meeting - 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday @ Community Christian Church 9:30-11:30  
4601 Main

Jan 13 TABLE TALK – Joan Mills (see pg 6 of the newsletter)

Jan. 18 – Program Planning – Linda Smith

Feb. 15 – Voter Suppression – Susan B Anthony’s birthday

March 15 – Agriculture Study – Part II - LUNCH - Agriculture Consensus - Pauline Testerman

April 19 – Water Consensus Meeting to update position – Pauli Kendrick & Cheryl Barnes

May 17 – Annual Meeting - TBA

### OFFICERS and BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:	Linda Vogel Smith	816-741-6110	<a href="mailto:lindaavogel@me.com">lindaavogel@me.com</a>
Vice President:	Joan Mills	816-353-4106	<a href="mailto:jomills1637@sbcglobal.net">jomills1637@sbcglobal.net</a>
Secretary:	Anitra Steele	816-836-4031	<a href="mailto:anitrasteele@yahoo.com">anitrasteele@yahoo.com</a>
Treasurer:	Elaine Lenz	816-942-5644	<a href="mailto:wlenz@kc.rr.com">wlenz@kc.rr.com</a>
	Cheryl Barnes, Communications		Margie Richcreek, Nominating Committee Chair
	Dixie Brown Membership co-chair		Donna Ryan, Newsletter
	Donna Hoch Membership co-chair		Sue Scholl, Voter Registration
	Pauli Kendrick, Water Use Study Chair		Charles Steele, Candidate and Issue Forums
	Diane Krizek, Website		Pauline Testerman, Agriculture Study Chair
	Peg Prendergast, Special Projects		Carolyn Weeks, Member Development

You will be pleased to notice our web site is being updated.

Check it out at: <http://www.lwvkc.org>