



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

The Lexington Voter

April 2013

The League of Women Voters of Lexington

PLEASE NOTE CHANGES

LWV Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 27

Faith Lutheran Church

To accommodate busy schedules and many events on this date, the League meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. with continental breakfast. There will be no speaker. We should be able to conclude business by 10:00 a.m.

Agenda

- Election of Officers/Board
- Approval of Budget
- Dues Increase (by \$10 single and \$15 family)
- Board/Committee Reports
- Two State Studies
- Program Plan for Next Year

We hope the changes to our usual plan will facilitate participation by members who otherwise could not have joined us.

Cost will be \$5.

Please make reservations by April 18th. Call 859-494-3203.

Dear LWV Members,

I am so pleased to be able to help with the naturalization ceremonies and I understand that you all have participated in the past and might want to be involved in the future.

*The next ceremony is scheduled for **Friday, April 19th.** If anyone is available on that date, please let me know. Also....if anyone would like to have their name removed from this list, please let me know. Also.....if you know anyone who would like to be added to this list, please let me know as well.*

Thank you all so much for your service in the past and, hopefully, your service in the future. I look forward to meeting new friends and continuing this critically important LWV project.

You can reach me by phone with any questions or concerns.....859-554-5666 or (cell) 859-319-4929.

Roz Heise

March Naturalization Ceremony

Fifty-one applicants from 29 countries became U.S. citizens at the naturalization ceremony on March 8, 2013 at the District Court House.

Nancy Chesser, Roz Heise and Lynne Flynn represented the LWV at the ceremony and helped the new citizens register to vote, in collaboration with representatives from the Kentucky Secretary of State's office. We collected 12 voter registration cards at the event and handed out many more mail-in voter registration cards.

The next ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, **April 19.** Volunteers interested in helping with voter registration after the ceremony may contact **Roz Heise** at heise42@insightbb.com.

There are a total of seven naturalization ceremonies scheduled in Lexington this year, all on Friday mornings. (Two of the ceremonies have already taken place --one in January and one in March.)

Legislative Summary

The last two days of the Kentucky legislative session brought nothing new related to the bills supported by the LWV.

HB31, public financing of judicial campaigns, died in Senate committee.

HB48, abolishment of the death penalty, was never taken up for discussion in the House Judiciary Committee. Sponsors will introduce again next session.

HB70, the felons' voting rights bill, passed the House but died in Senate committee. Rep. Jessie Crenshaw will prefile this bill next session.

However, the last bill approved in the session was SB1, pushed by Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes. A compromise measure, it allows military voters to receive ballots electronically but they still have to return those ballots via traditional mail.

As state LWV legislative liaisons **Terry Naydan** and **Nita Smith** have pointed out, some bills moved farther along in the process this year than they ever have before. It simply requires more than one session to build enough public support to gain the attention of our legislators.

Legislation in Other States Attacks Voting Rights

Regardless of the length of their respective legislative sessions, members of each state legislature have focused some of their energy on voting rights and elections. In many cases the legislation is more restrictive, making voting more difficult with more barriers in place.

For example, in Virginia the legislature passed and the governor signed two anti-voter bills: one makes it more difficult for organizations like the LWV to register voters and the other not only creates more onerous photo identification criteria to vote, but also risks removing eligible voters from the voting rolls and makes absentee voting more difficult.

Missouri, North Carolina, Alaska and Montana have proposed new photo ID legislation. Many bills are still pending and legislatures are still in session.

It is clear the assault on voting rights is and will continue to be unrelenting.

2013-14 Program Events

Lexington LWV members will have several opportunities for active learning beginning in the fall of this year. Watch for information on the following events:

- General membership meeting in September to consider questions posed in the state civics education study
- Dinner and discussion about the city's progress with plans for downtown development in October or November
- Dinner and discussion regarding legislative issues in March of 2014

These will be great opportunities to recruit new members. Plan to attend and bring a friend!

Status of Two State LWV Studies

A summary of the Juvenile Court Drug Study will be presented at the LWV KY State Convention in April. This completed study will be prepared for action by the League. If a positive consensus is reached, an action proposal will be presented and we will be ready to lobby our legislators for funding the state-wide program. At present, only three counties have generated their own funding to continue this court program that has been so important to our youth. Local consensus has been largely positive.

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In the fall of 2013, Kentucky local League members will be asked to answer consensus questions about the role of schools in preparing citizens and what students should learn about civics. The questions have been formed based on current national and state League positions. League members must decide how those positions apply to schools in Kentucky.

Leagues will receive written background information about the questions. They are asked to seek answers to the questions about civics education in their local communities from educators, elected officials and others. Each League is asked to bring their reports to the LWVKY annual meeting in Louisville in April, 2014, and participate in a roundtable discussion of the findings.

Second Voting Rights Case Heard



The U.S. Supreme Court took up its second voting rights case of the month on Monday, March 18, when it heard arguments from both sides in the case of *Arizona v. ITC, Inc.* In this case, the League of Women Voters of the U.S. submitted an amicus brief and the League of Women Voters of Arizona was a named plaintiff.

A 2004 Arizona law that requires citizens to offer proof of citizenship before they can register is being contested. It runs contradictory to Congress's 1993 "Motor Voter" law that requires states to offer voter registration forms to of-age motorists renewing their driver's licenses or applying to social services. They can swear under oath that they are citizens.

The 1993 law was crafted in large part by Washington's then-Rep. Al Swift, a Democrat, and Kansas' GOP Rep. Pat Roberts. Washington's then-Secretary of State Ralph Munro was an original advocate of the "motor voter" concept.

"The National Voter Registration Act was intended to and has succeeded in bringing more citizens into the democratic process since its passage in 1993," said LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara.

"After 20 years, the Supreme Court should not let Arizona's law trump the Constitution and overturn the NVRA with its proven record protecting the integrity of our election system and increasing access to voter registration in federal elections across the country."

"States should not be allowed to play politics with the voter registration process, the key entry point for political participation in our democracy," she continued. "This case could send us down a slippery slope toward more and more state restrictions on the voter registration process and the right to vote."

"Once again, supposed 'states rights' are being used as an excuse to try and prevent people from registering to vote," MacNamara concluded. "We hope the Supreme Court sees this for what it really is – an attempt to keep some U.S. citizens from exercising their right to vote."

Want a copy of the Lexington LWV bylaws? Call the League at 859-494-3203 or send a request to lexingtonlww@gmail.com. The bylaws will be sent electronically unless you specify a paper copy.

Kentucky LWV State Convention

Friday, April 12, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. at KT's Restaurant, 2300 Lexington Ave., Louisville

- Reception and dinner
- Panel discussion with four state legislators

Saturday, April 12-13, 2013 beginning at 8:00 a.m. Lang House, 115 S. Ewing, Louisville

- Registration and continental breakfast
- Reports, workshops, voting sessions
- Lunch included in registration cost

Registration cost is \$25. Members can register by calling 502-895-5218 or 502-442-2715. Deadline is April 4.



LWV National Convention

June 14-17, National Conference Center in Washington, D.C. (near Dulles Airport).

Members interested in attending should call the Lexington LWV at **859-494-3203**.

The VOTER is now in electronic format. If you also receive a paper copy and want only the electronic copy, please contact Judy Johnson at judylex@insightbb.com. The paper copies will remain black and white due to printing costs.



Return Service Requested

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Lexington KY 40522*



Calendar

LWV of Lexington Website: www.lwvlexington.com

Phone: 859-494-3203

Email: lexingtonlwv@gmail.com

Facebook: League of Women Voters of Lexington, KY

[NOTE: Board meetings are open to all MEMBERS; programs are open to the public]

Fri./Sat.	April 12-13		LWVKY Convention in Louisville (See information on page 3)
Sat.	April 27	8:30 a.m.	LWV Annual Meeting at Faith Lutheran Church, 1000 Tates Creek Road
Fri.-Mon.	June 14-17		LWVUS Convention at National Conference Center in Washington, D.C.

[Vol. 12-13- Issue 5] The Lexington VOTER is published nine times a year (Summer, September, October, November, December, Winter, March, April, and May) by the League of Women Voters of Lexington.