



SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- **Annual LWV of Kentucky Council Meeting, April 8-9**
- **Call on the Voting Rights Act! See p. 2 for details**

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Call to State Council in Hopkinsville

By **IVONNE ROVIRA**

Be sure to take part in helping to decide the League of Women Voters of Kentucky's direction for the next two years by attending the State Council in Hopkinsville. April 8-9.

Each League can send their president and two

delegates to vote. However, all League members are invited to come and weigh in.

The League is hoping to brainstorm ways to boost voter turnout. Some ideas on the table are early voting, Saturday voting, mail-in voting and other

strategies that have proved successful in other states.

More Council details and a registration form enclosed.

See more
on Council
on p. 7!

LWV of Kentucky Updates Debate Policy

By **CINDY HEINE**

At its February meeting, after a lengthy and intense discussion, the League of Women Voters of Kentucky's Board updated the state Candidate Forum/Debate Policy.

The key change was in requirements for participation in League debates or forums. In general elections, candidates would have to be on the ballot and be the candidate of choice for 5 percent or more voters in a nonpartisan poll. The previous policy, used in the 2015 candidate debates, used a 10 percent threshold.

In primary elections, the candidates would only



have to be eligible to be on the ballot.

The League received numerous inquiries about the policy last fall during the debates for governor and lieutenant governor. Many good arguments were made for including more candidates. The Board decided that we

should be more inclusive, but that in general elections, the purpose of the debates is to provide voters with information about candidates who have a realistic chance of being elected. Opening it to all candidates on the ballot limits the amount of time to ask important questions of leading candidates.

Presidents' Message



Co-presidents, from top to bottom: Terry Naydan and Nita Smith

By TERRY NAYDAN and NITA SMITH

Twenty one hardy Leaguers went to the Capitol on Feb. 18 to observe the Legislature at work.

We met in the cafeteria, discussed bills of interest and then some went to visit their representative or senator. Others went to committee meetings, where bills are discussed, and it is decided whether a bill should go on to the House or Senate floor for a vote of the entire chamber, or whether a it dies for this session.

After lunch, members went to observe the House or Senate from

the gallery. It was a very busy but enjoyable day.

We hope those who have never visited the legislature will join us next year. We guarantee a very informative experience.

State Council will be held in beautiful Hopkinsville this year on April 8-9 to make decisions for the League for the next two years. (See insert for agenda and registration information). We will be electing new directors. If you are interested in joining the state board, please inform Reva Hart, our nominating committee chair.

Council is also a time

for local leagues to share their triumphs and experiences with other Leagues, always a highlight of our meetings.

CALLING ALL WHITE ELEPHANTS! Please bring White Elephants, handmade gifts, baked goods or baskets for the Silent Auction! If you have items to donate, contact Nita Smith 859-948-4541 or NitaVotes@aol.com to make arrangements to get it to council. Funds raised are used for LWV candidate debate/forums, sending delegates to LWV US Convention and more!

We hope to see many of you in Hopkinsville at Council this year.

Restoring the Voting Rights Act



Two years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a key part of the Voting Rights Act (VRA), leading to a full-frontal attack on the voting rights of American citizens. De-

spite public outcry since the Supreme Court's decision, Congress has ignored widespread voter discrimination and the will of the American people. Every day that Congress fails to repair the VRA, Americans are in danger of increased barriers at the polls. Tell Congress to Stand with the American People and Restore the VRA!

Contact Information

All telephone numbers begin with area code (202)

Mitch McConnell	224-2541
Rand Paul	224-4343
Ed Whitfield	225-3115
Brett Guthrie	225-3501
John Yarmuth	225-5401
Thomas Massie	225-3465
Hal Rogers	225-4601
Andy Barr	225-4706

Ky Supreme Court Rules Judicial Candidates Can Identify by Party

By **CECILE SCHUBERT**

In a move that upends the historically nonpartisan nature of judicial races, the Kentucky Supreme Court ruled in February that candidates for judge can identify themselves by party. Candidates can even say that they're the only Republican or Democrat in the race, if that is true.

Some restrictions on what judges can say remain, however. They cannot represent themselves as their party's official nominee, nor can they identify themselves as "the conservative Republican" candidate.

The Judicial Campaign Conduct Committee reports that 16 candidates have filed for judicial elections this year with opposition in five races, three with primaries.

Jefferson Circuit Family Court, District 30, Ninth Division, has three candidates, Gina Kay Calvert, Lauren Adams Ogden and Bill Tingley; 41st Circuit Judge Family Court (Clay, Leslie and Owsley counties) has three candidates, Clint J. Harris, Monica Rice-Smith, and Kenneth Stepp; and 43rd District Judge (Barren and Metcalfe counties), has six candidates, Karen Michelle Davis, Temple Dickinson, James I. Howard, Brian K. Pack, J. Gabriel Pendleton and Kathryn M. Thomas. If Governor Matt Bevin fills a vacancy in this district, that may reduce the number of candidates before the election.

The only regularly scheduled election for a Supreme Court Justice is in the 5th District, be-

tween Glenn Acree and Larry Van Meter of Lexington.

The other race with two candidates is a special election in the Letcher County circuit (47th) for circuit judge, James "Jimmy" Craft and Darrell Hall, to fill the unexpired term of Sam Wright,



who was elected to the Supreme Court from the 7th District in November. Running unopposed are Deanna Wise Henschel, Circuit Judge Family Court, Second Division 3rd District in Paducah and John T. Alexander, Circuit Judge, 43rd District, Division I of Glasgow.

LWVKY Proposes National Study on Lobbying

By **GEORGE SCHUHMAN**

Like the explosion of money in politics, the explosion of lobbying threatens elections through fund-raising events and bundled donations; however, lobbying goes even further, influencing government legislation, regulation and executive branch decisions year round.

The League of Women Voters of Kentucky's Board recently thought a national study should address the need for a clear position addressing Fair Lobbying Practices. The specific issue is not addressed among the national positions addressing Representative Democracy and would complement the Statement of Position on the Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation, last addressed in 1984.

The proposed study would examine

Redistricting Commission

By **STEVE SENFT**

In just four years, the 2020 census will be underway. Can we have an independent commission created in Kentucky by 2021 to do the redistricting instead of the contentious process of the last redistricting?

A June 2015 editorial in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* commented on the Supreme Court ruling that allows states to create independent commissions to do redistricting. That cleared a potential hurdle!

In 2009, the League of Women Voters of the United States published a report *Developing an Action Agenda for Redistricting in 2011*. These comprehensive suggestions remain relevant for creating a non-partisan redistricting process. This report is available at www.lwv.org.

In 2014, the League of Women Voters of Kentucky created a committee to work toward a nonpartisan process for redistricting Kentucky. At the upcoming April Council Meeting, a study and discussion session on redistricting will be on the agenda. In addition to sharing background information on this issue, we will plan our next steps, including cooperating with other organizations on this worthy goal.

the extent to which paid lobbying eclipses the general public — who cannot afford to "pay to play" and gain access to public officials.

Additional areas to be addressed include:

- ◆ shadow lobbying (by unregistered paid lobbyists)
- ◆ grassroots lobbying (unpaid lobbyists are currently unregulated)
- ◆ revolving-door practices (in which ex-elected officials or government employees become lobbyists)

We hope this study will be adopted at this year's Council in Washington, D.C., and encourage our local leagues to concur with the proposal on the national website <http://lwv.org/member-resources/program-planning> when it becomes available.

Summary of Bills LWV Supports or Opposes

By **TERRY NAYDAN**
and **NITA SMITH**

Following is a summary of bills that the Kentucky LWV is following in the 2016 General Assembly, as of March 11. We have indicated League support or opposition.



Domestic Violence

SB150: support (J.Racque Adams et al)-would collect felony arrestee DNA to increase safety of victims and accountability of perpetrators and increase identification of serial rapists. Passed Judiciary Committee Feb 18

SB175: support (W. Westerfield et al) would create a Crime Victim's Bill of Rights through a constitutional amendment. Protections for crime victims would include the right to be notified of court hearings, the punishment and the release date for the perpetrator. Passed Senate 34-1 on March 1. Assigned

to House Elections, Constitutional Amendments, and Intergovernmental Affairs Comm.

SB241 (W. Schroder) would extend the statute of limitations on filing a sexual-assault civil suit. Introduced in Senate on Feb. 29. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee March 2.

HB 41: support (J. Jenkins et al) would allow a tenant with a domestic-violence order to terminate a lease without penalty. Passed House 90-3. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.

HB109: support (J. Jenkins et al) Victims of sex crimes, particularly children, are often victimized repeatedly. This bill would allow prosecution of perpetrators for a "continuing course of conduct "of sex crimes. Passed House on Jan.1 5 91-0. Received in Senate Jan. 19 and to Senate Judiciary Committee on Jan. 21.

SB63: support (D. Harper Angel) would eliminate backlog of unprocessed Rape kits. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee on Feb. 11.

HB110: support (J.Jenkins et al) would prevent the distribution of sexually explicit images without the consent of the person depicted, combating so-called "revenge porn." Passed House Judiciary Committee. Passed the full House 92-0. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Com-

mittee on Feb.18.

HB 59: support (T.Burch et al) would make it easier for those at risk of violence to shield their home addresses from those who could harm them. Passed the full House 94-0. Sent to Senate Veteran, Military Affairs, and Public Protection.

HB 229: support (S.Overly) is aimed at improving investigation and prosecution of human trafficking by giving the Attorney General jurisdiction over such crimes. Passed the full House 92-0. Received in Senate. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee Jan. 29.

Environment

SB 190: support (R.Thomas) requires retail electric suppliers to use increasing amounts of renewable energy; requires retail electric suppliers to take energy-efficiency measures and implement energy-efficiency programs that increase energy savings over a period of time; provides for alternative compliance plans for public utilities that fail to meet renewable energy or efficiency requirements; defines renewable energy; specifies reporting requirements to the Public Service Commission regarding progress in diversifying energy sources and energy savings; requires the PSC to develop tariff guidelines for purchase of renewable power. Introduced in Senate on Feb. 17.

Assigned to Natural Resources and Energy Committee on Feb.19.

HB339: support (M. Marzian) would require electric utilities to adopt renewable energy portfolios and energy efficiencies portfolios. Introduced in House Feb. 4. Sent to Tourism Development & Energy Committee Feb. 8

SB 89: oppose (D. Carroll) would end the current moratorium on nuclear power plant construction in Kentucky, and would open the door to new nuclear power plants provided that they have a storage plan, rather than the waste disposal plan that the current law requires. Passed in Senate 28-6-1. Received in House March 2. Assigned to Tourism, Development and Energy Committee.

HB 103: oppose (G. Watkins) allows construction of a nuclear power facility on or within 50 miles of a site previously used for the manufacture of nuclear products. Assigned to House Tourism Development and Energy Committee.

HB152: support (J.Wayne), the so-called the "stream-saver bill," would amend surface-coal mining laws to require on-bench disposal of excess spoil, where feasible, and to require valley fills to be constructed above rather than in waters of the Commonwealth. Assigned to House Natural Resources and Environment Committee Jan. 5.

Education

SB 192: support (J. Carpenter et al) would require all public high school students to pass a civics test in order to receive a regular diploma; direct the Kentucky Department of Education to prepare or approve the test with 100 questions drawn from the test

administered by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to persons seeking to become naturalized citizens, and to disseminate the test to all public school districts; allow students the opportunity to retake the test as often as needed in order to pass; set the passing score at 60% of the total questions answered correctly; make these requirements subject to accommodation for special needs students. In Senate to Education Committee. Reported favorably out of Committee. Second reading in full Senate.; to rules.

SB 1: oppose ((M. Wilson et al) would change the way state academic



standards are reviewed and the way schools and students are assessed. The bill would also change how the state intervenes with underperforming schools. Passed Senate 25-12. Received in House on Feb.17. Assigned to House Education Committee Feb. 22.

Finance & Elections

HB 147: oppose (G. Stumbo) would raise campaign contributions limits and amend contribution reporting laws; allows a state party building fund with no limits on how much can be contributed. Passed House 71-22. Received in Senate assigned to Senate State & Local Government Committee Feb.11.

HB 70: support (D.Owens) Constitutional amendment allowing restoration of voting rights for felons who have paid their debt to society.

Passed House 82-9. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee.

HB 278: support (G.Stumbo) would increase the state's minimum wage to \$10.10 over the next two and a half years, Reported favorably by House Labor & Industry Committee. Recommitted to Appropriations & Revenue; reported favorably with committee substitute increasing the minimum wage to \$8.10. Need House to vote on Committee Substitute this week.

HB290: support (R.Meeks et al) – would allow no excuse in-person absentee voting before an election. Reported favorably out of Elections, Constitutional Amendments and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. On Orders of the Day on March 9.

Felony Records

HB 40: support (D.Owens et al) would allow courts to seal the felony records of up to 94,000 Kentuckians. Would allow many with Class D felonies and those never formally accused or convicted of a

Class D felony to have their records expunged, Amended to allow discretionary expungement of a second subsequent felony after a first felony. Passed the House 80-11. Received in Senate. Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee Jan. 21.

Protection of Rights

SB180: oppose (Robinson et al) would create a new section of KRS Chapter 446 to define "protected activities," "protected activity provider" and "protected rights" in such a way that business owners legally discriminate as along as they cited religious objections. Reported favorably out of Committee.; to Rules.

Funds for Nature Plates Swept in Budget

By **JOAN LINDOP**

Governor Bevin stated in his January budget address that special purposed funds would no longer be swept into the General Fund, and yet it appears the Nature plate funds (\$10 million) are being swept by this budget. Kentucky Natural Lands Trust has driven many projects to improve our Commonwealth. Some of us pay an extra \$10 a year for our Nature plate with the understanding that we are supporting land conservation.

The Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation

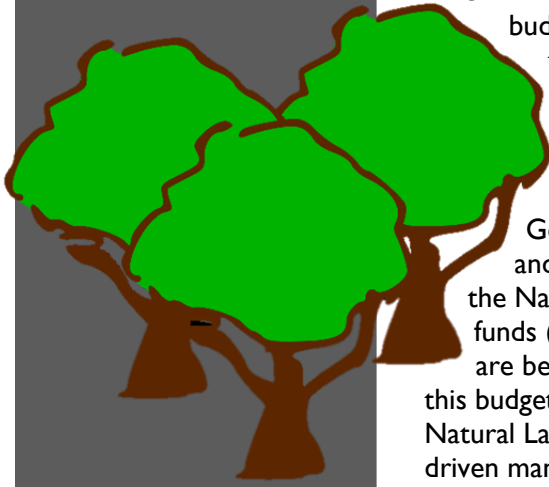
Fund was established in 1994. According to *The Courier Journal*, "Since its creation, the fund has awarded \$64 million to conserve and manage more than 86,000 acres in 125 sites in 67 counties."

Hugh Archer, executive director of the Kentucky Natural Lands Trust and a member of the land conservation fund board, states "The only work we'll be doing for the near future is stewardship over projects we've already approved." And yet \$4 million is awarded to the Wildcat Coal Lodge at the University of Kentucky.

We may applaud Governor Bevin's efforts

to restore Kentucky's Pension System, but the choices made in this budget are murky. Governor Bevin, if our airports need to be updated to impress CEOs, how much more critical are our polluted air numbers? The business leaders I know will not choose to locate where running or biking are likely to cause an asthma attack, where streams are not fishable or swimmable.

We suggest citizens watch carefully as the Legislature considers this budget. We will particularly watch state Representative Donahue's subcommittee on Natural Resources.



Bonnie Lynch, 1st Vice-President of the Kentucky League of Women Voters and local president of the Hopkinsville-Christian County LWV (center) with friends from the Paducah Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority at the Patty Griffin "Use Your Voice" Concert in Paducah, Feb. 19.

Photo by Sheila Smith-Anderson



2016-17 Education Fund Budget

	15-16 Budget	16-17 Budget
Income	\$700	\$1,100
Fund-raising letter	600	1,000
Member contributions	100	100
Expenses	\$700	\$765
Secretary of State	15	15
Office Rent	200	200
Program Study	305	300
Sponsorships		
Telephone		250
<i>The Voter</i>		
Website	180	
Net Difference	\$0	\$335

League of Women Voters of Ky Nominating Committee Report

Directors, nominated to serve 2-year terms (2016-18)

Donna Blue	Lexington
Tamara Fagley	Lexington
Cindy Heine	Lexington
Joan Lindop	Louisville
Harriette Seiler	Louisville
George Schuhmann	Louisville
Meryl Ward	Middlesboro

Officers currently serving 2-year terms (2015-17)

Co-Presidents	Terry Naydan	Lexington
	Nita Smith	Lexington
1st VP	Wanda "Bonnie" Lynch	Hopkinsville
2nd VP	Steve Senft	Lexington
Secretary	Fran Wagner	Louisville
Treasurer	Richard Heine	Lexington

Nominating Committee (2015-17)

Reva Hart, Chair	Elizabethtown
Pat Murrell	Louisville
Cecile Schubert	Berea

LWV of Kentucky Proposed Budgets

2016-17 General Fund Budget

	15-16 Budget	16-17 Budget
Income	\$4,840	\$4,800
Fund-raising auction	250	400
Fund-raising letter	650	150
Member contributions	140	150
PMP	3,000	3,000
State Convention	800	1,100
Expenses	\$4,840	\$4,800
Advocacy	150	
Fund Raising	220	250
Gen'l admin.	50	50
Internet fees	70	
<i>Kentucky Voter</i>	300	400
LWV brochures	100	100
MAL PMPS		
Membership	150	
National Council	1,800	2,000
Office rent	200	200
Postage	50	50
Publicity		100
Presidential travel		
State Council/Convention	700	1,000
Supplies	100	100
Telephone	550	250
Voter Svc./Cand. Forum	100	100
Website	100	100
With 1 Voice	200	100
Net Difference	\$0	\$0



LWV of Kentucky

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LWV of Kentucky Board Members

Co-Presidents:

Terry Naydan
Nita Smith

First Vice President:

Bonnie Lynch

Second Vice President:

Steve Senft

Secretary: Fran Wagner

Treasurer: Richard Heine

Directors:

Tammy Fagley
Cindy Heine
Joan Lindop
Beverly Moore
Harriette Seiler
Marijane Snellen
Meryl Ward

Nominating Committee:

Reva Hart, Chair
Pat Murrell
Cecile Schubert

The Voter Editor: Ivonne Rovira



Calendar

Monday, April 18: Last day to register to vote in the primary.

Friday-Sat., April 8-9, LWVKY Council, Hopkinsville

Tuesday, May 17, 6a.m.-6p.m. local time, Primary Election Day

June 16-June 19: LWVUS Council, Washington, D.C.