

Members Can Meet, Greet Judge Candidates

By PAT MURRELL

The League of Women Voters of Louisville recognizes the importance of the judicial branch of government.

To acquaint the public with the judicial races and the significance of each type of court, the League is hosting an evening for folks to meet and greet the judicial candidates on **Monday, April 21**.

The program runs from **5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**, and includes time for refreshments and individual conversation from **5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.**



The public is invited and refreshments will be served.

At **6 p.m.**, attorney, former judge and League member Dee Pregliasco will deliver a brief overview of each type of court. Then each candidate will be

introduced. The judicial candidates will answer a question selected in a random drawing of questions prepared by League members. Topics might include evaluating judges, campaign costs and the importance of courts.

The League hopes the forum boosts interest in the primary races and all judicial races.

Forum Explores Vacant Properties

By EMMA SMITH

The 2008 economic meltdown compounded a problem already at crisis level: vacant properties.

The League of Women Voters of Louisville will explore the issue on **Monday, May 19**, at Lang House. Dinner will be served at **5:30 p.m.**, while the program begins at the **6 p.m.** Donations will be accepted for the dinner, and, as with all of our Dinner and Democracy programs, the public is invited.

While many of these vacant properties are in the West End, the program, titled *The Ramifications of Vacant and Abandoned*

Property for All Taxpayers, will explain why everyone needs to be concerned about Louisville's 6,400 vacant properties.

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Louisville has 6,400 vacant or abandoned properties.
Photo by Emma Smith

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- *Meet and Greet Judicial Candidates*, April 21
- *Dinner and Democracy: The Ramifications of Vacant and Abandoned Property for All Taxpayers*, May 19

League Busy on CFR, Environment, Membership Growth

By PAT MURRELL

We've been busy! We've begun program planning for next year (see recommendation on p. 4). We've registered hundreds of voters in schools and naturalization ceremonies. We've started hosting informal "brown-bag" discussions. We regularly have observers at the School Board and at Metro Council. The Ethics in Government program was excellent.

We continue to get new members (see below). And, we've taken consensus on a very important subject: agriculture and food supply. This will be incorporated in reports from Leagues nationwide for a national action position. To summarize briefly: We believe that the agricultural sector's long-term economic health depends on conserving the land and water — the overriding principle we think applies to the entire consensus and the basis for all government



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actions. We believe that policies should emphasize small farms, enforce anti-trust laws relative to agriculture, and promote alternative marketing systems, such as farmers' markets.

We believe in funding to enforce existing clean-air and clean-water regulations for animal and seafood operations, in collecting and disclosing data on

the health of animals, and in treating animals humanely.

In regards to research and development, we believe in requiring research to determine the safety and efficacy of food affected by any new technologies and in studying the long-term effects of new crops for at least one

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LWV Deplores *McCutcheon* Decision

By STEPHANIE DRAHAN

In *McCutcheon v. FEC*, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down aggregate campaign contribution limits. The League of Women Voters of the United States had joined an *amicus* brief. The League supports limits on the total contributions from an individual donor to candidates and political committees in order to prevent corruption and the appearance of corruption.

"This is yet another irresponsible decision on money in politics by the Roberts Court," said Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the League of Women Voters of the U.S. "The Court has used the *McCutcheon* decision to continue dismantling the wall of protection against corruption — case by case, brick by brick."

"The importance of this decision cannot be overstated," MacNamara said. "While *McCutcheon* dealt with a technical and arcane matter of campaign finance law, in the end it is all



about more money and more influence. In this decision, as in previous decisions, the Chief Justice ignores the corruption he is turning loose in America's election system."

"In this decision, the Court opens another loophole by allowing our political parties to be further corrupted by big-money contributions from special interests," MacNamara said.

Welcome, Members!

The League of Women Voters of Louisville would like to extend a warm greeting to its new members.

New Members

Jeanine Ashley
Rose Mary Brown
Judith Cumbler
Ron Schneider
Catherine Talbott Thompkins

Returning Member

Cathy Hinko

May Forum to Focus on Louisville's Vacant Properties

Vacant and abandoned properties hurt everyone in Metro Louisville.

How dire is the issue? For example, a house that once cost \$80,000 could become valued by Property Valuation Administrator's office at \$44,000 because of the neighborhood. Imagine such a loss! This is someone's life savings! With rampant vacant properties in a neighborhood, the remaining homeowners lose their biggest investment: their home value!

As for the rest of the community, obviously, taxes on \$44,000 provide the city with less than half what it garnered on \$80,000. The city loses much-needed tax revenue from devalued homes.

Vacant homes mean the quality of life suffers for families and children surrounded by this blight. The depressing surroundings can lead to negative behavior, especially in young people.

What can be done? Come to the May Dinner & Democracy and find out!

Forum Explains Home Ownership Options

Much has changed about every aspect of home ownership in the last five years! New rules on lending affect the ability to purchase and to maintain and improve a home. New kinds of products have sprung up for selling a home.

The Metropolitan Housing Coalition and other groups, including the League, are sponsor-

ing "A Forum on the Three Stages of Home Ownership" on **Thursday, April 17, at noon.** The forum will be at the Urban League, 1535 W. Broadway.

Panelists include Christie McCravy, director for the Center for Housing and Financial Empowerment at Louisville Urban League League; John Young, an attorney at the Legal Aid Society; Jan Gable, a mortgage loan officer with Commonwealth Bank and Trust; and Stephanie Horne, owner of Agency Title.

These panelists will explain how the new lending rules affect the ability to buy a home; will provide a guide to foreclosure, property-tax liens and funds to help with home repairs or improvements; and will warn about new businesses that prey on unsuspecting homeowners, and about selling in a difficult real-estate market.



LWV of Louisville Studies, Recommends Actions, Adds Members

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human generation.

We support food labeling that includes nutrition facts, allergen labeling and statement of any ingredients using new technology. If meat, fish, eggs or

dairy products derive from animals that have consumed feed developed through any new technology, that includes a mandatory statement detailing stating which technologies were involved.

But we don't have to wait for national action; we can individually act: read labels, buy from farmers' markets and talk with farmers to learn about their issues, for example.

LWV of Louisville Makes Recommendations for National

We believe that democracy is truly facing a crisis and can be seriously called a plutocracy because of the ever-increasing money spent on campaigns. The unlimited campaign money spent by a wealthy few individuals and corporations must be addressed more actively than the League has in the past. We should look at the source of funds and find a way to demand full disclosure of groups formed just to contribute money, and continue to follow IRS monitoring of groups that blatantly lobby yet claim tax-exempt status. Secret funding of local and state elections and initiatives is also of concern.

Also relevant to the discussion of campaign finance, is the cost of television advertising. Since broadcast companies use the public airways without cost, and must be licensed by FCC,

regulations requiring media to donate advertising time for candidates should be explored. Giving each candidate equal time in news programming is not suffi-

We should look more closely at the entire history of Supreme Court action in this area, from *Buckley v Valeo* (1976) through the *McCutcheon v FEC* case when it is decided. The confidential memorandum submitted by Lewis Powell to the national chamber of commerce in 1971, two months before he was nominated to the Supreme Court, should be studied. It is called "a corporate blueprint to dominate democracy," and is relevant to the succeeding Supreme Court cases.

The League of Women Voters of Louisville, after much study and thought, is making the following recommendations to the League of Women Voters of the United States.

cient. Previous laws regarding financing of elections should be studied as to why they did not work, including LBJ's 1967 proposal for a public financing plan.

Historic Civil Rights March

Members of the League of Women Voters of Louisville numbered among thousands that commemorated the a civil rights march 50 years ago that featured the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and baseball legend Jackie Robinson.

The march in Frankfort took place on March 5. This latest march also sought to bring attention to HB 70, the bill that would restore voting rights to most felons. Photo by Patty Stocker



LWV Salutes Its Fabulous Holy Cross Interns

By **MARY JO RODGERS**

The League of Women Voters of Louisville has had the privilege of hosting two interns from Holy Cross High School. These young ladies have been such a boon to the League! From helping with paperwork to serving as a focus group to registering voters, our interns have really made a difference!

Both young ladies, Rachel Roarx and Bella Howard, are juniors. They served as interns at Lang House from Jan. 14 to Feb. 18.

Both girls were very complimentary of the League.

"I believe in the power of education in society. I strive to create a stronger civic awareness among women" Rachel said. "My time at the League has taught me how essential it is for women to understand the political issues at hand in their communities. It is important for us to work together to change injustic-

es and restore democracy to our society."

Rachel serves as a leader of the Louisville Girls Leadership Women in Politics Group 2014, and harbors "a passion for political science," she said.

Rachel is also passionate about all athletics, but especially soccer.

Bella, too, is quite an athlete, participating in softball cheer leading and soccer. And Bella is as altruistic and practical in her career choice as she has been in working with the League.

"My favorite subjects at school are math and science, and I want to pursue a career in pharmacy because I want to help others and make a positive difference in many people's lives, but also to be able to support my future family," Bella said.

The League of Women Voters of Louisville just wants to say a big thank you to Bella and Rachel!



Bella Howard and Rachel Roarx, juniors at Holy Cross High School, served as interns at the Lang House for six weeks.



Allison Cole, a junior at the University of Louisville, jokes around in the Oval Office in Washington, D.C. Allison will be interning with the LWV through the summer and perhaps beyond. Photo, courtesy of Allison Cole

LWV Gains New U of L Intern

By **IVONNE ROVIRA**

The League of Women Voters of Louisville will be gaining a new intern: Allison Cole, a junior at the University of Louisville who is majoring in women and gender studies. Allison is also an officer with the Feminist Alliance at the University of Louisville.

Allison's internship requires that she complete 100 hours working for the League, and she estimates that she will be working through the summer and possibly into the fall.

Allison isn't quite ready to settle on the direction in which she'll go after graduation.

"I'm interested in so many things — government, politics reproductive choice," she said.



The Louisville Voter

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year as the League of
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The Voter Editor Ivonne Rovira

Calendar

Tuesday, April 17, noon: A
*Forum on The Three Stages of
Home Ownership.* **Louisville
Urban League, 1535 W.
Broadway.**

Monday, April 21, 5:30 p.m.:
Dinner and Democracy: *Meet
an Greet with the Judicial Can-
didates.* Donations accepted for
the dinner. Dinner begins at
5:30 p.m.; program begins at 6
p.m. **Lang House.**

Monday, April 21: Last day to
register to vote in the primary
election.

Thursday, April 24, 6 p.m.: Voter
Service Committee. **Lang House.**

Monday, May 5, 6 p.m.: LWV
Board meeting. **Lang House.**

Wednesday, May 7, 6:30 p.m.:
Campaign Finance Reform
Committee. **Lang House.**

Monday, May 17, 5:30 p.m.:
Dinner and Democracy: *The
Ramifications of Vacant and
Abandoned Property for All
Taxpayers.* Donations accepted
for the dinner. Dinner begins at
5:30 p.m.; program begins at 6
p.m. **Lang House.**

Tuesday, May 20: Primary
Election Day

Monday, June 2: League of
Women Voters of Louisville An-
nual Meeting.