

Meet and Greet State Legislators Jan. 18

By **MARY JO RODGERS**

Ever wanted to ask a question or discuss an issue with your state senator or state representative? Well, here's your chance!

The League of Women Voters of Louisville will host an evening with Jefferson County state legislators **Monday, Jan. 18.**

The evening begins at **5:30 p.m.** at Lang House. Wine, cheese and hors d'oeuvres will be served from **5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.** As with all of our general-membership events, the public is invited.



Bring a friend on Jan. 18

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LWV Hosts Forum on Money in Local Politics

By **PAT MURRELL**

We've heard so much about money in politics at the national and state level, but what about on the *local* level?

Find out on **Monday, Feb. 15, at Lang House** when a panel of activists will discuss money spent on local races for non-partisan bodies such as school board and district court judges, and partisan races for Metro Council and state legislature. How much money was spent on these races in 2012 and 2014?

The dinner will be served at **5:30 p.m.**, while the program begins



at **6 p.m.** and ends at **7:30 p.m.** Donations will be accepted for the dinner.

Some of the questions we'll pose:

- ◆ Can an ordinary citizen hope to raise enough money to

run for office successfully?

- ◆ Does the person who raises the most money win?

- ◆ Who contributes to the candidates?

- ◆ How much money can an individual contribute to each candidate?

- ◆ How much money can a PAC contribute to each candidate? Be sure to look at related articles on pages 2 and 3.

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www.facebook.com/lwvlouisville

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Meet and greet with state legislators, Jan. 18
- Dinner and Democracy *Money in Local Politics*, Feb. 15

Local Donation Reports Available Online

By PAT MURRELL

It's amazing what you can learn by Googling! I have been researching the local campaigns at the Kentucky Registry of Election Finance (KREF). A summary of the interesting things I've found is on page 3, the facing page. I think you'll find it worth your while to take a look.

Searchable databases for federal offices have been available for decades now. A particularly user-friendly one is at www.opensecrets.org. While the KREF isn't quite as accessible, with a bit of help, anyone can use its searchable database and find not only state officials but local elected officials and candidates, as well.

Want to know who contributed to Glen Stuckel's campaign for Metro Council, or Stephanie Horne's campaign for school board, or Eric Haner's campaign for district court judge? (Note that for School Board, Metro Council, and the state senate, half are elected at each election, so to see figures for current board, you will need to search



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *Louisville*



Search Methods:

Candidate Searches

[By Name](#)

[By Election Date](#)

Contributor Searches

[To All Recipients](#)

[To Candidate\(s\)](#)

[To Organization\(s\)](#)

Other Searches

[Organization](#)

[Office](#)

Annual Report Summaries

[For Political Offices](#)

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- ◆ When the list comes up, click on the name of the candidate; the record of contributions received by the candidate will come up, including names and amounts.

You can also go to Online Search database and search by name. (See below.)



Search Methods:

Candidate Searches

[By Name](#)

[By Election Date](#)

Contributor Searches

[To All Recipients](#)

[To Candidate\(s\)](#)

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under 11/06/2012 and 11/04/2014.)

Here's how:

Go to the Kentucky Registry of Election Finance at <http://www.kref.state.ky.us/krefsearch/>

- ◆ Scroll down on the left until you get to **Search by Office**.
- ◆ Enter the election date: 11/06/2012 or 11/04/2014.
- ◆ Then select the office. For Metro Council, it is **Legislative Council - Even (2012)** and **Legislative Council - Odd (2014)**. For District Court Judge, scroll down to Jefferson County races which are 30th and 31st districts. Family Court Judges are not listed.

Likewise, you can search by donor to see to whom a certain donor is giving. (See the arc above.)

Welcome, Members!

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

New Members

Suzi Schuhmann
Debbie Wesslund

Money Spent in Campaigns of Current Office Holders

JC BOARD OF EDUCATION

Total Spent: \$ 289,608

(non-partisan, no primary)

2012 Election: 3 offices; 19 candidates, 0 unopposed; \$164,528 total spent, range 0 - \$120,959

Top spender won one race, in 2 races the top spender did not win.

2014 Election: 4 offices; 13 candidates, 1 unopposed; \$125,080 total spent, range 0 – \$44,410

Top spender won in two races, lost in one.

DISTRICT COURT JUDGE

Total Spent: \$1,197,200

(non-partisan, primary so only 2 candidates per office in general election)

2014 General Election: 18 offices; 28 candidates, 7 unopposed; \$1,197,200 total spent, range 0- \$245,430

Top spender won 8 times, lost 3 times.

METRO COUNCIL

Total Spent: \$ 804,381

(partisan, primary winners plus independents)

2012 Election: 13 offices; 24 candidates, 4 unopposed; \$409,843 total spent; range 0 - \$89,652

Top spender won 6 times, lost 3 times

2014 Election: 13 offices; 20 candidates, 7 unopposed; \$394,538 total; range 0 - \$57,118

Top spender won 5 times, lost once.

STATE SENATE

Total Spent: \$ 590,004

(partisan, primary winners plus independents)

2014 Election: 2 offices, 3 candidates, 1 unopposed; \$144,865 total spent, range \$2,411 – \$95,778

Both top spenders won.

2012 Election: 4 offices, 6 candidates, 2 unopposed; \$445,139 total spent, range \$4,194 - \$241,437

One top spender won, one lost.

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Total Spent: \$1,372,391

(partisan, primary winners plus independents)

2014 Election: 18 offices, 33 candidates, 5 unopposed; \$1,372,391 spent, range 0 - \$104,258

Top spender won 11 times, lost twice.

Louisville League Gains 20 Members in 2015

By **BARB KELTY**

With the end of 2015, the League of Women Voters of Louisville can count 20 new members in our ranks! They are Lori Burks, Joan Byer, Karen Cassidy, Virginia Copenhefer, Ann Hardman, Edith Jesernig, Bill and Sylvia Lieshoff, Dana Lindley, Steven Lippmann, Rachel Matheison, Jo McKim, Rachel Roarx, Dale and Gail Dale Tucker, Brenda Tuckson, Suzanne Ward, Lisa Willner and most recently Suzi Schuhmann and Debbie Wesslund.

The League hosted a welcome luncheon at Lang House on Nov. 7 to honor these new members; new members Lori Burks, Ann Hardman, Dana Lindley, Rachel Matheis and Suzanne Ward attended. Long-time members Jeanine Ashley, Pat Murrell, Jane Reiss, George Schuhmann, Harriette Seiler, Carla Taylor and Barb Kelty were there to greet them.

We got acquainted and shared background stories over



As in the past few years, the League of Women Voters of Louisville honored new members at a luncheon near year's end. Pictured are a few of those attending. From left to right, President Pat Murrell, George Schuhmann (somewhat obscured), Rachel Matheis, Carla Taylor, Harriette Seiler and Barb Kelty. Photo by Jane Reiss

lunch. It quickly became obvious that our new members are a very talented group!

In a new trend, more couples are joining; we gained two couples joining simultaneously. We also garnered new male members. Diversity of viewpoint, as we've been saying in the other direction, brings strength. So may the trend continue in 2016!

Be sure to greet our new members when you see them. Please help our newest members feel as at home at Lang House as we do!

Lastly, don't forget to *invite a friend along* for the Jan. 18 general-membership event where you will have the chance to meet and greet our state legislators.

Nominations Sought for LWV Citizens Award

The Citizens Award honors those who, in their volunteer life, personify the mission of the League of Women Voters, which is to promote informed and active participation in the democratic process.

Any League member or other citizen of this area may make nominations.

Considered in the criteria are the following: the award is bestowed only for an exceptional contribution, one that impacts our geographic area, and that, at the time of the award, the honoree is neither

an elected official nor a candidate for elective office.

The honoree need not be a member of the League, and the award may be given posthumously.

An Award Committee consisting of League past presidents will select the honoree.

The award will be made at a League annual meeting.

A call for nominations is being issued early this year. April 1 is the deadline for receiving nominations, which should be submitted to President Pat Murrell at the League office.

The nomination should be in the following format:

1. Name of Nominee. Contact info: address, telephone, email address.
2. Name of Nominator. Contact info: address, telephone, email address, relation to nominee.
3. Reasons for nominating this person; and a description of activities and contributions.
4. Brief biographical information pertinent to the award.
5. Supporting information as needed.

LWV Observes Pension Oversight Committee

By MARY JO RODGERS

Introduction: *At state convention this spring, the League of Women Voters of Kentucky (LWVKY) adopted this program item:*

It is recommended that the LWVKY create a committee to review legislative oversight of the management of state employee pension plans with a focus on transparency and management of these funds.

Rationale: State pension plans appear to be in serious trouble and in need of action by the state legislature. While the LWVKY cannot do a definitive study of all aspects of these pension plans, we can and should address the issue of legislative oversight related to transparency and management of the funds. The pension plans have boards and the legislature has an oversight committee. We need to know what they are doing and how they are monitoring decision-making by the plan administrators.

Transparency is needed because it appears the KRS has hired money managers without bids and without revealing to the public what they are paying these management firms. In addition, these managers have invested in hedge funds, a controversial move.

Mary Jo Rodgers has been attending meetings of the legislature's Public Pension Oversight committee and this is her report.

Thirty-four billion dollars!! This is the reported amount of unfunded liabilities in the Commonwealth of Kentucky's pension funds. At least two newspa-

per articles a week appear regarding the state pension plans' shortfalls, and the online chatter is effusive.

Two legislative groups have been tasked with oversight and planning how to make up the tremendous deficits. The 25-member Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System Funding Work Group, appointed by the governor, published recommendations Dec. 1.

The Kentucky Public Pension



Oversight Board meets monthly to receive updates on investment results, audits and governance from all the pension funds managed by Kentucky Employees' Retirement System (KERS) and the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System (KTRS).

Alarmed at the effect this deficit could have on Kentuckians and state-funded program areas, the League of Women Voters of Louisville sponsored two public informational programs in 2014 and currently has observers at monthly legislative meetings.

The Commonwealth, as the employer, and the teachers/state workers, as the employees, both contribute to the pension funds.

For 13 years, the Commonwealth (employer) did not make the full payment (ARC) to the pension funds, as recommended by the actuaries. The missing state contributions, the economic turn-down, and increased expenses combined to produce the gaping shortfall in the pension funds. As a result, some of the pension funds are selling their investments in order to make the payments to the current pension recipients.

Forty-five thousand retired teachers or their beneficiaries receive pension monies from KTRS each month. About 94,000 retirees or their beneficiaries receive retirement benefits from KERS, hazardous and non-hazardous, CERS, hazardous and non-hazardous, and SPRS. This pension-fund uncertainty can adversely affect teacher recruitment and retention and spending for goods and services at hometown businesses. Additionally, the lowering of Kentucky's Bond

Rating (Moody's AA2 stable) emphasizes the scope and importance of this issue.

The 2016 General Assembly will discuss, edit, and pass a budget for Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018, which will address funding for the pension issue.

If you would like to be a part of this discussion, contact your local legislator and express your views. For more on this issue, the following web sites have information on this subject: www.lrc.ky.gov/committee, www.governor.ky.gov/ktrs-funding and www.ket.org/legislative/archives.

Louisville League Reaches Consensus

By **GEORGE SCHUHMAN**

In light of strong public support for reform in response to the enormous tide of money in politics, the League of Women Voters of the United States' Convention in 2014 authorized a study on the processes for amending the U.S. Constitution and a review and update of the League's position on Campaign Finance Reform (last updated in 1982).

The local League completed the consensus process for the constitutional amendment study in early October with consensus reached on the following issues:

Part I. Considerations that should be applied to proposed Amendments:

1. the public policy objective addresses matters of such acute and abiding importance that the fundamental charter of our nation must be changed;
2. the amendment as written would be effective in achieving its policy objective;
3. the amendment would either make our political system more democratic or protect individual rights;
4. the policy objective can also be achieved by a legislative or political approach that is less difficult than a constitutional amendment; and
5. the public policy objective is more suited to a constitutional and general approach than to a statutory and detailed approach.

Part II. Conditions that should be in place for a Constitutional Convention initiated by the states:

1. the Convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret;
2. State delegates must be elected rather than appointed;
3. Voting at the Convention must be by delegate, not by state;

Part III. Balancing considerations that the League should consider supporting an amendment even if:

1. there are significant problems with the actual amendment as proposed; and
2. it is being put forward by a procedural process the League would otherwise oppose.

The Campaign Finance Reform Committee was responsible for planning and coordinating the consensus process. Our local results will be compiled at the national level with those from other state and local leagues for consideration by the National League to propose a Constitutional Amendment poli-

cy position for the adoption at the 2016 Convention next June. Our local response to the money-in-politics issues are being compiled and will be presented in the next issue of *The Louisville Voter*.



CFR Committee Update

First, a Money in Politics consensus process update: A total of 26 League members attended consensus meetings held at Lang House on Nov. 19 and 21 and on Dec. 16. Some spirited and thoughtful discussions occurred. The results will be compiled and sent to the League of Women Voters of the United States after being approved by the Louisville board.

Thanks to Beverly Moore, Rachael Mathis and Pat Murrell who served as discussion leaders and to George Schuhmann, our resource person, and Gary

Drehmel, who served as the recorder

Don't miss our Dinner and Democracy program on Feb. 16 (see p. 1), which focuses on the money that flows in local politics. That program will showcase campaign funding of candidates for the Louisville school board, Metro Council and judicial seats. And we, of course, will be working to support Kentucky bills urging public funding of campaigns and other worthwhile related measures during this year's General Assembly.

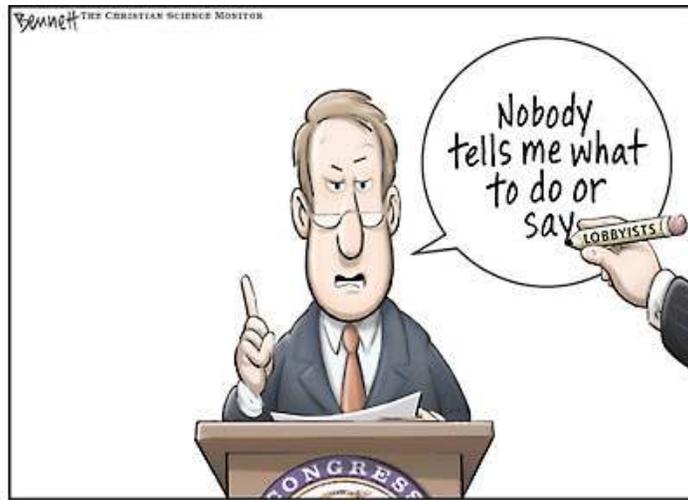
CFR Committee Suggests Nat'l Lobbying Study Proposal

By **GEORGE SCHUHMAN**

The Campaign Finance Reform Committee of League of Women Voters of Louisville, at its December meeting, favorably considered a proposal by the national League for a study on lobbying.

The recent Money in Politics update of the national position on campaign-finance reform takes a broad look at the escalating amounts of money being spent to influence elections — and an issue being addressed in the current presidential campaign. However, the League's update does not address the parallel growth of lobbying's influence on governmental legislation, regulation and executive branch decisions.

The essence of the proposal for a new study regarding lobbying reads as follows: "The proposed study would examine the extent to which paid lobbying



eclipses the unpaid input of the general public in seeking support of public officials. The aim of the study will be to develop principles for fair lobbying practices that include balancing input on behalf of the public and private interests and that enhance rather than diminish the influence of the multitude of citizens

of our country who cannot afford the 'pay to play' aspect of lobbying."

The Louisville Board will take up this proposal at its Jan. 4 meeting. Let President Pat Murrell or the Board members know what you think about submitting such a proposal to the U.S. Board for its consideration.

League to Host More of Its Popular Book Discussions

By **IVONNE ROVIRA**

The League of Women Voters of Louisville's brown-bag book discussions have proven to be quite a crowd-pleaser, so quite a few more are scheduled. All the scheduled book discussions will be at **Lang House**.

Next up will be a discussion of *Goddesses in Everywoman* by J.S. Bolen. Jill Harmer will lead the discussion on **Wednesday, Jan. 13, at 12:30 p.m.**

On **Wednesday, Feb. 24, at 12:30 p.m.**, Pat Walker will lead the discussion of *Cornbread Mafia* by James Higdon.

March's brown-bag discussion, led by Sarah Lynn

Cunningham, will be on *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, while April's discussion, led by Fran Wagner, will be on *A More Perfect Constitution: 23 Proposals to Revitalize Our Constitution*

and *Make America a Fairer Country* by Larry Sabato. The precise date, time and location have not been set yet for the March and April discussions.

All four of the books that will be discussed are available at the Louisville Free Public Library.

Have a book you've really liked? Why not lead a brown-bag book discussion of it? Contact the League office at 895-5218.





The Louisville Voter

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*The League of Women
Voters is one of the oldest
Leagues in the country,
created in 1920, the same
year as the League of
Women Voters of the
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Calendar

Monday, Jan. 4, 6 p.m.: LWV Board meeting. **Lang House.**

Tuesday, Jan. 12, 5:30 p.m.: Adjunct Study Committee meeting. **Lang House.**

Wednesday, Jan. 13, 12:30 p.m.: Book discussion of J.S. Bolen's *Goddesses in Everywoman*. Discussion Leader: Jill Harmer. **Lang House.**

Monday, Jan. 18, 5:30 p.m.: Meet and Greet with State Legislators. Wine, cheese and hors d'oeuvres served from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Please invite a friend to come along! **Lang House.**

Monday, Feb. 1, 6 p.m.: LWV Board meeting. **Lang House.**

Monday, Feb. 15, 5:30 p.m.: Dinner and Democracy: a panel of activists will discuss money spent on local races for non-partisan bodies such as school board and district court judges, and partisan races for Metro Council and state legislature. Donations accepted for the dinner. Dinner served at 5:30 p.m.; program begins at 6 p.m. **Lang House.**

Wednesday, Feb. 24, 12:30 p.m.: Book discussion of James Higdon's *Cornbread Mafia*. Discussion Leader: Pat Walker. **Lang House.**

Monday, March 7, 6 p.m.: LWV Board meeting. **Lang House.**