

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

League Update	2
Voter 411	2
Charter Schools	3
Proposed Medi-	3
New Office Man-	4
Book Discussions	3
Book Discussions	5
Amazon Rewards for LWV	5
Money in Politics	6
Racism Forum	7
LWV Board	8
Calendar	8

Meet Candidates on Oct. 17 at Lang House

By **MARY JO RODGERS**

Don't miss the opportunity to meet the general-election candidates on **Monday, Oct. 17**, at an event sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Louisville and the American Association of University Women.

No reservations are required to listen to can-

didates for U.S. Congress, the Kentucky House and Senate, the Metro Council, the Jefferson County Board of Education and judicial races.

Light fare will be served at **5:30 p.m.**, while the program begins at **6 p.m.** and ends at **7:30 p.m.** As with all of our Dinner and De-

mocracy programs, the public is invited.

For the November Dinner and Democracy on charter schools, please see **p. 3**.



Grimes Hosts Meet and Greet at Lang House

By **MARY JO RODGERS**

With Oct. 11 being the last day for voter registration for the general election, Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes will be in Louisville to remind the public of the importance of registration and the ease of using the new on-line system.

Secretary Grimes will hold a breakfast Meet and Greet on **Tuesday, Oct. 11 at 8 a.m.** at **Lang House**. She wants to publicize the last day to register and to thank the League of Women Voters for their efforts in helping citizens, young and old, to register.

The breakfast is open to the public; League members and

their families are encouraged to attend.



Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes speaks in front of Lang House during a previous visit to Lang House in September 2015. Photo by Susan Baker

Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/lwvlouisville

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Breakfast Meet and Greet with Secretary of State Allison Lundergan Grimes, Oct. 11
- Dinner and Democracy: Meet the General Election Candidates, Oct. 17
- Election Day, Nov. 8
- Dinner and Democracy: *Charter Schools: Lessons for Kentucky*, Nov. 19

Your League Needs You!

By **DEE PREGLIASCO**

Leap Year, Election Year! Always an exciting and stressful time as people of all walks of life root for and work for the candidates of their choice for the many offices on the ballot this November.

And with elections, comes the League in action! The League of Women Voters of Kentucky is sponsoring a forum for the U.S. Senate candidates. Watch for the details.

Locally, we have a Congressional race, legislative races, Metro Council seats at stake, along with school board races and two judicial races. Your mailbox or email, or your voicemail is probably full of ads, pleas and requests for money. At the League, a non-partisan or-



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Louisville

ganization, open to all citizens, we hope that you and your friends and family have educated yourselves, with our help, on the important issues for each office. Our responsibility as citizens is to our heritage, our present circumstances, and the future of our country for our children and our own legacy.

Our forum on racism, held in August, highlighted a long-standing problem for our community and our nation — one that's an issue in the current Presidential race.

We are certainly proud of the League's role and success in fighting North Carolina's op-

pressive voting restrictions. Take time to read the U.S. Appeals court opinion striking down those attempts. Regardless, we have to be vigilant about our voting rights, one of our most cherished rights. 2020 will mark 100 years of voting for women, and we will have a big celebration.

Our October Dinner and Democracy meeting will feature a meet and greet with the candidates, including a few words from those who attend. Bring guests to meet those who are trying to represent us. This is our version of the historical "town hall" meetings of those early New England towns.

Welcome, Members!

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

New Members

Sylvia Burns
Dorothy Chambers
Linda Cowan
Phyllis Florman
Susan Foley
Donna Klein
Judy Miller
Karen Newton
Kathy Pellegrino
Bridgette Pregliasco
Martha Jean Schecter
Maria Schrenger
Linda Valentine
Donna Zapata

VOTE411: Election Guide

By **IVONNE ROVIRA**

Next month, voters across the country will be faced with important decisions. While there's a lot of information provided on presidential candidates, there's not nearly as much about the other races. What are the positions of Jim Gray and Rand Paul on the issues important to you? How do you decide who to support for Metro Council? What about judicial races?

What about when there are issues on the ballot? Where can you find unbiased information on those matters?

Well, the League of Women Voters has the answer for you: VOTE411.

Since 2006, VOTE411 has provided nonpartisan information on candidates. Whether it's a federal, state or local election, you can find out where candidates stand on all of the important issues. In addition, by going to vote411.org, you can find information on election dates, registration deadlines, absentee ballots, and even how to find out your polling place!

Remember: When you or a friend needs the 411 on any candidate or issue, you can go to vote411.org!

LWV Committee Investigates Charter Schools for Study

By **IVONNE ROVIRA**

In light of a study it is conducting, the League of Women Voters of Louisville will be discussing charter schools and what the experience of other states



Weston

can teach Kentucky. All but eight states have experimented with charter schools, not always successfully. Titled

Charter Schools: Lessons for Kentucky, the forum will take place on **Monday, Nov. 21**, at Lang House. Dinner will be served at **5:30 p.m.**, while the program begins at **6 p.m.** Donations will be accepted for the dinner, and, as with all of our Dinner and Democracy programs, the public is invited.

“Before the state legislature considers charter schools, we believe that much research is

needed on charter schools in other states,” said Pat Murrell, a member of the committee studying charter schools.

“We need to ask, Do charter schools have any advantage over traditional public schools?”

Among those speaking will be Susan Perkins Weston, an education consultant from Danville, Ky. Weston focuses on student achievement, testing policies, teaching quality, and education funding, including projects for the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, the Council for Better Education, the Kentucky Association of School Councils, the Partnership



for Successful Schools, and the Campaign for Educational Equity.

While some charter schools have met with success and boosted test scores, in some states they have been plagued with scandals, such as a pay-to-play scheme in Florida, schools collapsing before the end of the year in Michigan, gouging in Pennsylvania and indictments for embezzlement and other corruption in Ohio and Texas.

Public Can Comment on Proposed Medicaid Changes

By **HARRIETTE SEILER**

On Aug. 24, Governor Bevin submitted an application for Medicaid waiver #1115, asking CMS, the federal agency overseeing Medicaid services, to approve an overhaul/redesign of our state’s Medicaid program. That program was expanded in 2013 under the previous administration.

Kentuckians who have questions or concerns about the impact of the proposed overhaul, which imposes monthly premiums and may include cuts in

services, should convey their opinions to CMS, which is taking comments until Oct. 8.

Kentucky Voices for Health (kyvoicesforhealth.org), a non-profit advocacy group, is sponsoring public forums around the state to better inform the public. Any comments will be submitted to CMS. Follow this link for a flyer with the schedule: <https://www.kyvoicesforhealth.org/res/uploads/media//Medicaid-Waiver-Forum-9.22.16.pdf>

League members are asked to publicize the forums, and, if



possible, attend an event in their region.

One may submit comments online by going to <http://bit.ly/2chgml2>. Or go to Medicaid.org and click on “View Section 1115 Demonstration List” to find Kentucky.

LWV's New Office Manager Begins at Lang House

By IVONNE ROVIRA

The League of Women Voters of Louisville has hired a new office manager for Lang House.

After years working for the League, Jan Phillips retired from the post. Her successor is Sylvia Cobos Lieshoff. Both she and her husband Bill are League members.

Sylvia will have a variable schedule, although she will be working mostly afternoons. She will have Fridays off.

Sylvia will be working part time for the League now that she's retired from the National Center for Family Learning, where she designed and conducted training/professional development sessions for the Toyota Family Literacy Program (TFLP) serving Hispanic and other immigrant families, and the Family and Child Education (FACE) programs serving Native American schools.

Sylvia has a B.A. from Arizona State University in Education, and a M.Ed. and Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in Educational Human Resource Development.

We welcome her and look forward to her contributions to League operations.

Lastly, we want to wish Jan Phillips a long and enjoyable retirement after her many years of service.



New office manager Sylvia Cobos Lieshoff, left, consults with her predecessor, Jan Phillips, as they prepare to turn over day-to-day duties to Sylvia. Photo by Mary Jo Rodgers

Tips on Debate-Watching from National LWV

The League of Women Voters of the United States has compiled some tips for watching debates, be it for presidential candidates, Congressional candidates, or state or local offices.

The League advises members to watch debates in a group, as in a debate-watching party. Discussing a debate afterward is a great way to clarify your thoughts about what was said in the debate, and how the candidates performed. Be sure to visit the candidates' websites and read recent news coverage beforehand. And don't forget VOTE411 (see p. 2).

During the debate, consider the debate format: Does every candidate get a chance to speak and respond? Are the questions clear and equally tough on all

candidates? Do the questions cover issues important to you? Is the moderator in control of the debate? Conversely, does the moderator need to say less and let the candidates say more?

Do candidates talk mostly about their own policies, or just attack their opponent? Do they answer questions — or evade them? Do they speak in specifics or generalities? Are their proposals realistic? Are their answers consistent with their previous positions? If not, why not?

After the debate, compare your impressions with others who watched. Ask yourself: Did you learn anything new? Identify the issues on which you agree with a candidate and those on which you disagree, and decide how that may affect your vote.

League Hosts Book Discussions

By PAT MURRELL

Three more brown-bag book discussion are scheduled. All discussion take place at **12:30 p.m. at Lang House.**

The first will be **Wednesday, Oct. 26.** Mary Jo Rodgers will lead the discussion of *Five Dollars and a Pork Chop Sandwich: Vote Buying and the Corruption of Democracy* by Dr. Mary Frances Berry. She is professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania and past chair of the US Commission on Civil Rights.

Sarah Lynn Cunningham will lead the discussion on *The Woman Behind the New Deal: The Life and Legacy of Frances*



Perkins by Kirstin Downey on **Wednesday, Nov. 9.**

Then on **Wednesday, Dec. 14,** Susan Rostov will lead a discussion of *Listen Liberal: What Ever Happened to the Party of the People?* by Thomas Frank.

Books we'll be discussing in 2017 include *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen and *White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America* by Nancy Isenberg.

Note that, even if your library doesn't carry one of the books discussed at one of the brown-bag book discussions, you can still get it through inter-library loans.

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

Benefit the League Through Amazon Purchases

By IVONNE ROVIRA

Do you buy items online at Amazon? Well, purchases you're already making can put money in the League of Women Voters of Louisville's coffers — at absolutely no cost to you!

The Amazon Smile program donates 0.5 percent of your eligible purchases (no third-party purchases) to the League when you shop at Amazon. You can use your existing Amazon account at Amazon Smile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings will be the same.

Just go to this URL: **smile.amazon.com.** On your first visit, you'll be asked to select a charitable organization to receive donations. Please select the League of Women Voters of Louisville. You only have to designate us once; Amazon Smile will remember your choice.

From then on, instead of going to www.amazon.com, just head to smile.amazon.com instead, and the League will benefit. That's all there is to it! Tens of millions of products — not just books — are eligible. Please do it today.



LWVUS Adopted New Position Last April

By **GEORGE SCHUHMAN**

This year's League of Women Voters of the United States' Convention in Washington, D.C., included a vote to ratify the brand new League Position on Money in Politics. This updates our position adopted in 1982 and now enables Leagues at national, state and local levels to take action addressing the pervasive influence of money in our election processes.

The League is not alone in being concerned: both Presidential candidates have addressed the issue, and more than 80 percent of Americans believe there's too much money in politics. The 2010 Supreme Court's decision *Citizens United* opened the floodgates for unlimited spending from unidentified individual donors.

If spending money to support candidates is free speech, billionaires get to speak much more effectively than the rest of us. Add to that the fact that the watchdog agency over election spending, the Federal Election Commission, has partisan tie votes on any significant enforcement complaint. What remains is no brake on unlimited spending by shadowy parties.

The new position, adopted in April, has four parts: (1) national goals that should be advanced by methods of financing political campaigns, (2) broadening the definition of "political corruption" beyond bribery to include forms of undue influence that distort the results of the political process, (3) League support for public financing of elections, enhanced enforcement, abolish-



ing Super PACs and restrictions on lobbyists, and (4) spending limits on persons and entities attempting to influence the outcomes of elections.

The full position, adopted in April by the national League's Board and retained by the national Convention in June, is printed below in its entirety. An Action Planning Guide, available for planning and implementing such actions. It can be downloaded at http://forum.lwv.org/sites/default/files/action_plan_full_mip_2016_convention_.pdf.

LWVUS Position on Money in Politics

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should:

- ◆ Enhance political equality for all citizens;
- ◆ Ensure maximum participation by citizens in the political process;
- ◆ Protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns;

- ◆ Provide voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices;
- ◆ Ensure transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections;
- ◆ Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office;
- ◆ Ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and
- ◆ Combat corruption and undue influence in government.

The League believes that political corruption includes the following:

- ◆ A candidate or officeholder agrees to vote or work in favor of a donor's interests in exchange for a campaign contribution;
- ◆ An officeholder or staff gives greater access to donors;

(Cont'd on p. 7)

(Cont'd from p. 4)

(Cont'd from p. 6)

- ◆ An officeholder votes or



Schuhmann

works to support policies that reflect the preferences of individuals or organizations in order to attract contributions from them;

- ◆ A candidate or office holder seeks political contributions implying that there will be retribution unless a donation is given; and
- ◆ The results of the political process consistently favor the interests of significant campaign contributors.

In order to achieve the goals for campaign finance regulation, the League supports:

- ◆ Public financing of elections, either voluntary or mandatory, in which candidates must abide by reasonable spending limits;
- ◆ Enhanced enforcement of campaign finance laws that includes changes to ensure that regulatory agencies are properly funded, staffed, and structured to avoid partisan deadlock in the decision-making process;
- ◆ Abolishing Super PACs and abolishing spending coordinated or directed by candidates (other than a candidate's own campaign committee); and
- ◆ Restrictions on direct donations and bundling by lobbyists, which

may include monetary limits as well as other regulations. Until full public financing of elections is enacted, limits on election spending are needed in order to meet the League's goals for protecting democratic processes. Among the different entities that spend money to influence elections, the League supports the following comparative limits:

- ◆ Higher spending limits for political parties, genuinely non-partisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote organizations and activities, and candidates spending money raised from contributors;
- ◆ Mid-level spending limits for individual citizens (including wealthy individuals), Political Action Committees (with funds contributed by individuals associated with the sponsoring organization, such as employees, stockholders, members

and volunteers), and candidates spending their own money;

- ◆ Lower spending limits for trade associations, labor unions and non-profit organizations from their general treasury funds;
- ◆ Severely restricted spending by for-profit organizations spending from their corporate treasury funds; and
- ◆ No limits on spending by bona fide newspapers, television, and other media, including the Internet, except to address partisan abuse or use of the media to evade campaign finance regulations.

The League of Women Voters of Louisville's September Dinner and Democracy featured six speakers discussing racism on the local and national stage. At left, Christopher 2X speaks about alliances. Below, the crowd numbered nearly 100, one of the largest crowds in recent history. Photos by Bill Wolfe





The Louisville Voter

The League of Women Voters
of Louisville

115 S. Ewing Ave.
Louisville, KY 40206-2594

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone: (502) 895-5218

Fax: (502) 368-8075

E-mail: info@lwvlouisville.org

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Calendar

Wednesday, Oct. 5, 12:30 p.m.: Book discussion of Dr. Mary Frances Berry's *Five Dollars and a Pork Chop Sandwich: Vote Buying and the Corruption of Democracy*. Discussion Leader: Mary Jo Rodgers. **Lang House.**

Tuesday, Oct. 11: Last day to register to vote or change address for the General Election.

Tuesday, Oct. 11, 8 a.m.: Breakfast Meet and Greet with Secretary of State Allison Lundergan Grimes. **Lang House.**

Monday, Oct. 17, 5:30 p.m.: Dinner and Democracy: *Meeting the Candidates*. Light fare served at 5:30 p.m.; program begins at 6 p.m. **Lang House.**

Saturday, Oct. 22, 9 a.m.: Interactive workshop: *Beloved: Working Toward Racial Reconciliation*. Led by Rev. Alonzo Johnson, coordinator, Self-Development of People, Presbyterian Church, USA. Lunch from noon to 1 p.m. Registration required. Cost: \$5. **Fourth Presbyterian Church, 3016 Preston Hwy.**

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

Tuesday, Nov. 8: Election Day.

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 12:30 p.m.: Book discussion of Kirstin Downey's *The Woman Behind the New Deal: The Life and Legacy of Frances Perkins*. Discussion Leader: Sarah Lynn Cunningham. **Lang House.**

Monday, Nov. 21, 5:30 p.m.: Dinner and Democracy: *Charter Schools: Lessons for Kentucky*. Speakers: Susan Perkins Weston, an education consultant from Danville, Ky. Donations accepted for the dinner. Dinner served at 5:30 p.m.; program begins at 6 p.m. **Lang House.**

Saturday, Dec. 3, 11:30 a.m.: New Member Luncheon, a great opportunity for longtime members to meet the new members to the League and for them to learn more about the organization. **Lang House.**

Wednesday, Dec. 14, 12:30 p.m.: Book discussion of Thomas Frank's *Listen Liberal: What Ever Happened to the Party of the People?* Discussion Leader: Susan Rostov. **Lang House.**