

Forum Examines State's Pension Crisis

By **IVONNE ROVIRA**

Governor Matt Bevin has embraced some controversial solutions to the pension crisis, but what do experts think about his proposals?

Find out at the next Dinner and Democracy program, *Pension Funds Solutions?* on **Monday, Oct. 16**, at **Lang House**.

Speaking will be state Senator Jimmy Higdon, who serves on the Kentucky Public Pension Oversight Board; retired Circuit Judge Fred Cowan, a former Kentucky attorney general; Chris Tobe, who served as a trustee and on the investment committee for the \$13 billion Kentucky Retirement Systems from

2008 to 2012 and author of the book *Kentucky Fried Pensions*; and Ellen Suetholz, of the Kentucky Public Pension Coalition and a lawyer with the firm of Kircher, Suetholz and Associates. Kentucky State Budget Director John Chilton has been invited, but is not yet confirmed.

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, and, as with all of our Dinner and Democracy programs, the public is invited.



Jimmy Higdon



Fred Cowan



Chris Tobe



Ellen Suetholz

Add 2 More Dinner & Democracies to Your Calendar!

By **BECKY HARMON and IVONNE ROVIRA**

The League of Women Voters boasts two more Dinner Democracy programs in the coming months.

The program on **Monday, Nov. 20**, will explain in depth how the new rating system for public schools in Kentucky will work. Confirmed to speak are Mary Gwen Wheeler, chair of the Kentucky Board of Education, and Susan Weston, an education consultant from Danville,



Dr. Marty Pollio

state is expected to move from a system where schools and districts competed to one where they instead collaborate. The League normally does not schedule a D&D for December, but we could not pass up an opportunity to hear from the acting superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools, Marty Pollio. He will be discussing JCPS and taking questions on **Wednesday, Dec. 13**.

Under the new accountability system, the

state is expected to move from a system where schools and districts competed to one where they instead collaborate.

The League normally does not schedule a D&D for December, but we could not pass up an opportunity to hear from the acting superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools, Marty Pollio. He will be discussing JCPS and taking questions on **Wednesday, Dec. 13**.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Dinner and Democracy: *Pension Funds Solutions?* Oct. 16
- Dinner and Democracy on the state's new rating system, Nov. 20
- Dinner and Democracy, and evening with acting JCPS Superintendent Marty Pollio, Dec. 13

League Plans Ambitious Agenda

By DEE PREGLIASCO

The League of Women Voters is still enjoying the wonderful response to the Women's Equality Day event. Thanks to all and especially to Marsha Weinstein, the genius behind the event! We have already committed to the August 2018 date at the Frazier Museum so put on your idea caps for another great ride and



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Louisville

especially think about our 100th anniversary in 2020.

Our fall program is full with pension and student assignment issues for our Dinner and Democracy meetings in October and November, our new members' brunch on Dec. 9 and a special D&D on Dec. 13 with Dr. Marty Pollio, the interim JCPS superintendent.

Plans are also underway for our annual meeting with our Jefferson County legislators in January and for D&D programs dealing with racial justice and health-care issues in the spring.

We continue to register voters at the naturalization ceremonies, the California Neighborhood Center and, recently, to celebrate National Voter Registration Day, when we viewed the new voting machines that will be installed for the May 2018 primaries.

As you can see, there are a multitude of opportunities for your engagement. We need you! Call the office and join one of our committees.

Lastly, the holiday season will be upon us soon. Please think about the League during this time and make a tax-deductible contribution to our Education Fund.

Welcome, Members!

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

New Members

Melissa Amos-Jones
Donna Benjamin
Josephine Buckner
Susan G. Glazer
Bill Hollander
Kathy Karr
Geraldine Kelly
Gwendolyn Kelly
Angela Leet
Tammy Pennington
Felicia Ray
Tamara Rogers
Cathy Smock
Elizabeth A. Smythe
Lisa Thompson

Remember Carpooling?

By BARB KELTY

Maybe you do carpool, if so, congratulations! And thank you! You are keeping our air a little healthier to breathe.

In keeping with the League of Women Voters' position in support of clean air, perhaps we ought to do more to promote carpooling by putting out the word and facilitating connections between League members and friends

who are interested in riding together to meetings. Riding together is safer, more fun and makes for cleaner air for us all. And these days not everyone drives, so you could really be helping someone from your neighborhood to attend a meeting that they might otherwise miss because of the number of bus transfers or inclement weather.

We need a point person for this effort, someone who would compile info on participants and then share the info among those who'd like to participate. If you could do that bookkeeping or would like to sign up to drive or ride or both, please call or email the League office at 895-5218.



LWV Registers Voters, Sees New Machines

By **ANDREA CALDWELL**
and **HARRIETTE SEILER**

Sept. 26, National Voter Registration Day, saw the League of Women Voters of Louisville try something new to turn underserved citizens into voters.

Every year around that date, the League of Women Voters of the United States asks leagues nationwide to register voters and make a difference. This year the League held a Voter Registration Drive at California Community Center in West Louisville.

Although we did not see the turnout we'd hoped for, we are still excited when we are able to help at least one person register to vote and make a difference in our communities.

We would like to thank Matt Daley, special assistant

to Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes and Metro Councilman Bill Hollander (District 9) for joining us.

In addition, our work in West Louisville would not have been possible without Barb Kely, Leslie Marcellino, Barbara Berman, Gail Tucker, Janet Dakan, Jeanine Ashley and Andrea Caldwell, who were kind enough to volunteer. Thank you to each and every one of you for making a difference in our communities!

We are also thankful for League members Kathy Kremer and Judy Lippman for stopping by the California Community Center to support our voter registration efforts. Meanwhile, League members Harriette Seiler and Carla Taylor also participated in a celebration

of National Voter Registration Day at the Jefferson County Election Center, at its new location at the Edison Building, 701 W. Ormsby. Red, white and blue cakes added to the festive atmosphere where the elections staff unveiled new state-of-the-art digitized voting machines.



Top right, League members Janet Dakan and Jeanine Asheley register voters at the California Community Center in West Louisville.

Bottom left, members Gail Tucker and Andrea Caldwell also registered voters at the California Community Center on National Voter Registration Day on Sept. 26.

Bottom right, member Harriette Seiler poses, flanked by Jefferson County Election Center Co-Managers, Rochelle Brown and Buffy Glasscock, admire the patriotic cake.

Photos by Andrea Caldwell

LWVUS's Lobbying Study Makes Progress

By GEORGE SCHUHMAN

What is it about lobbying that leads to the public's general skepticism regarding lobbyists and what they do? My personal experience with elected officials leads me to believe that they do not share that skepticism. And my experience with the Money in Politics study by the League of Women Voters of the United States led me to an awareness of the complexity of campaign-finance law. Indeed, the subject of election law is now offered in many law schools.

What was once simple has become complex. Laws passed to remedy bad situations are amended to address things more broadly. And regulations are added to provide further detail for applying the more general language in the law.

The result is a dense, legal thicket that the general public cannot see clearly into. But those with expertise or the ability to marshal sufficient resources can work through the depths to find ways to give an advantage to a client who is willing to invest a few million to harvest hundreds of millions of dollars.

There we have a concern. Wealth can hire advantage.

How pervasive, how effective and how real this may be is the goal of our study of lobbying. We are starting small — on the local level—and have gotten help from a Ph.D. working in marketing studies, a new member of the League with strong background in conducting surveys and analyzing the results, and from a professional from among the ranks of lobbyists. Now we are using our training and techniques to interview officials in Louisville Metro Government.



Stay tuned for the results, they may not be consistent with the usual cartoons depicting lobbyists—like the cartoon above.

However, I still suspect that there is something more insidious afoot that is *worse*.

2 Education-Focused D&Ds

(from p. 1)

Both of the D&Ds will be at **Lang House**; in both cases, 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, and, as with all of our Dinner and Democracy programs, the public is invited.

The focus of the November Dinner and Democracy will be how the state's new school rating system will affect equity and equality in our schools.

2017 marked the fifth and final year the state used its old Unbridled Learning for All Assessment and Accountability System. Its replacement, the new accountability system, was created as a result of the Congressional re-authorization of the



Elementary and Secondary Education Act in December 2016. The new law, known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), gives states more flexibility and provides state and local control over the accountability process.

Call on #LetPeople Vote Campaign

By **HARRIETTE SEILER and ANDREA CALDWELL**

We attended a live-streamed presentation by the National ACLU on Oct. 1 on the launching of their #LetPeopleVote initiative. (See more at <https://youtu.be/sVRMxE3PK-U>)

The League has often collaborated with the ACLU on civil rights and legal actions. We agree that our democracy needs a renewed push to protect and expand voting rights. The #LetPeopleVote program outlined state-specific calls to action. Kentucky needs to restore the vote to large numbers of former felons who have paid their



By **PAT MURRELL**

Two more brown-bag book discussions are scheduled. All discussions take place at **12:30 p.m. at Lang House** on the third Wednesday of the month. You don't have to be a member of the League of Women Voters to attend — just have an inquiring mind!

Fran Wagner will lead the discussion on Oct. 18 on the book *White Working Class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America* by Joan Williams, while Mary Jo Rodgers will lead the discussion on *Thank You for Being Late* by Thomas Friedman on Nov. 15.

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

debt to society. Only four states continue near-total disenfranchisement of persons who should be eligible to get their vote back; sadly, Kentucky is one of those states.

On Feb. 7, the state League's detailed study on this issue was released to the media and published on the League of Women Voters of Kentucky's website. The report was covered by the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, and summarized in the Spring 2017 issue of *The Kentucky Voter*, which is also available on the state League's website. League members are encouraged to look at the startling data again, particularly the impact on African-Americans.

Moreover, while the passage of HB 40 has made it possible for certain persons to apply to have a comparatively "minor" felony vacated and the record expunged, Kentucky has

imposed a \$500 filing fee just to start the process. Many who have difficulty finding employment because of a minor mistake in their past would have trouble paying that fee, creating a Catch-22 situation: They cannot come up with the \$500 to expunge their records until they find work, and they cannot find well-paying work until they get their records expunged.

Some have filed, but the "wheels of justice grind exceedingly slow." As a result, comparatively few have had their expungement approved and have yet to regain the vote.

So, even with the passage of HB 40, the League's work is not yet done. Please call your legislators and Governor Matt Bevin to tell them you believe in second chances, that the restoration of the vote is the fair and right thing to do.



The Louisville Voter

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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of the oldest Leagues in the
country, created in 1920,
the same year as the
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of the United States!*

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Calendar

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 10 a.m.:
Education Committee meeting.

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 10:30 a.m.:
Money in Politics Committee meet-
ing. **Lang House.**

Monday, Oct. 16, 5:30 p.m.: Din-
ner and Democracy: *Pension
Funds Solutions?* Speakers: state
Senator Jimmy Higdon, retired Cir-
cuit Judge Fred Cowan; author and
CPA Chris Tobe and attorney Ellen
Suetholz of the Kentucky Public
Pension Coalition. Donations ac-
cepted for the dinner. Dinner
served at 5:30 p.m.; program be-
gins at 6 p.m. **Lang House.**

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 12:30 p.m.:
Book discussion of *White Working
Class: Overcoming Class Clueless-
ness in America* by Joan Williams.
Discussion Leader: Fran Wagner.
Lang House.

Thursday, Oct. 19, 1 p.m.: Mem-
bership Committee meeting. **Lang
House.**

Thursday, Oct. 26, 3 p.m.: Racial
Justice Committee meeting. **Lang
House.**

Monday, Nov. 6, 5:30 p.m.: LWV
Board meeting. **Lang House.**

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 1 p.m.: Mon-
ey in Politics Committee meeting.
Lang House.

Friday, Nov. 10, 8:30 a.m.: *Racial
Justice in Zoning — One Century
After Buchanan*, a symposium on

the impact of that landmark case.
Speakers: law professor Tony Ar-
nold; history professor Cate Fosl
and law professor Cedric Merlin
Powell. **University of Louisville's
Brandeis School of Law.**

Wednesday, Nov. 15, 12:30 p.m.:
Book discussion of *Thank You for
Being Late* by Thomas Friedman .
Discussion Leader: Mary Jo Rodg-
ers. **Lang House.**

Thursday, Nov. 16, 1 p.m.: Mem-
bership Committee meeting. **Lang
House.**

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 10 a.m.:
Education Committee meeting.

Monday, Nov. 20, 5:30 p.m.: Din-
ner and Democracy. Donations
accepted for the dinner. Dinner
served at 5:30 p.m.; program be-
gins at 6 p.m. **Lang House.**

Tuesday, Nov. 28, 5:30 a.m.: Fol-
low-up meeting from Women's
Equality Day program. **Lang House.**

Monday, Dec. 4, 5:30 p.m.: LWV
Board meeting. **Lang House.**

Saturday, Dec. 9, 10:30 a.m.: New
Member Brunch. **Lang House.**

Wednesday, Dec. 13, 5:30 p.m.:
Dinner and Democracy. Speaker:
interim JCPS Superintendent Dr.
Marty Pollio, Donations accepted
for the dinner. Dinner served at
5:30 p.m.; program begins at 6 p.m.
Lang House.

