



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEBRASKA

NEBRASKA VOTER

Volume 96, Issue 1

Fall 2018

THE PRESIDENT'S CALENDAR (MAY - AUGUST 2018)

- May 23 Transformation Journey Webinar with LWVUS (ongoing process of preparing the organization for leadership into our next century).
- June 1 Read testimony at legislative hearing for the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission. (Please see our website at lww-ne.org.)
- June 28-
July 1 Attended the LWVUS National Convention in Chicago as a state delegate. (Look for reports from Joanna Lindberg, Caroline Sedlacek and me in this edition of the Voter.)
- July 3 Attended press conference for presentation of Insure the Good Life petition signatures (Medicaid expansion) to the Secretary of State. Kathy Campbell, former state senator, and Adam Morfeld, current state senator, shared their passion for insuring health insurance for ALL Nebraskans.
- July 23 Began planning for third annual Women's Summit with Meg Mikolajczyk of Planned Parenthood, Karen Bell-Dancy of the YWCA, and Kathie Uhrmacher of the Womens Foundation of Lincoln.
- July 23 Attended Dine and Discuss in Omaha with Kate High who presented her research findings on Money in Politics for the 2016 legislative races. It was very well attended and received by Omaha League members.
- July 24 Attended the LWV-GO Finance Committee by telephone.
- July 28 LWVNE Board of Directors meeting.
- August 1 Attended Nebraska Table for Civic Engagement workshop on strategies to pass the Insure the Good Life ballot item in the November election.
- August 6 Attended the Seward League business meeting, where Joanna Lindberg and I shared experiences from LWVUS National Convention.

BACK FROM CONVENTION, ENERGIZED!

Sherry Miller, Delegate for LWVNE

As the other two delegates for LWVNE (Caroline Sedlacek and Joanna Lindberg) have reported, it was a very full three and a half days in Chicago the end of June. Around 1,000 attendees with almost 900 voting delegates filled the plenary sessions, workshops, and caucuses in the beautiful Chicago Hilton Hotel. We took care of business, debating and approving bylaws and budget, adding resolutions to our positions, electing officers and board of directors, and meeting the new Executive Officer, Virginia Kase, who has experienced firsthand voter discrimination at the polls.

Outside of plenary sessions, we attended workshops and caucuses of interest to us. MaryLee Moulton, Linda Duckworth and Ann Chalson, all representing the Omaha League, divided to conquer topics ranging from Gun Safety to Telling the League Story to Raise Money to Immigration Sharing, among others. I chose to become more informed on the status of the ERA, which needs only one more state to ratify before convincing Congress to accept the process, although the original deadline has expired. Other workshops I attended included one on Civility and how the League can be a leader in bringing our society out of its current state of divisiveness; direct election of the president by popular vote (LWVUS has a position on abolishing the Electoral College); and the LWVUS Observer Corps to the United Nations. The last was fascinating, learning how League as an NGO is welcome to the UN to monitor such Sustainable Development Goals as SDG 5 to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women; SDG 16 to require of all candidates for office (male and female) a pledge to avoid all harassment, assaults of all kinds and verbal bullying before and after being elected; and SDG 13, Climate Action.

LWVGO's own Dr. Deborah Turner, acting as Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Committee of LWVUS, led a thought-provoking discussion panel. This was paired with a workshop for all attendees to help Leagues move out of their comfort zones to change the face and makeup of our organization.

I agree with Joanna and Caroline that Rosie Rios and Elaine Weiss were highlights of the event, the first speaking from her experience as Secretary of the Treasury in the Obama Administration and the second sharing from her book The Woman's Hour, a detailed history of the final vote FOR the 19th Amendment in August, 1920.

It was energizing to meet and mingle with so many dedicated activists, to learn about all the many wonderful changes being made by Leagues across the nation, to put faces to staff members of LWVUS, to exchange contacts for future opportunities to interact with other leaders, to realize that business does need to be done, and to appreciate that our LWVUS president Chris Carson and her crew are indeed guiding all of us capably in a Transformation Journey to be ready to meet the challenges of the next 100 years!

REPORT OF 2018 LWVUS CONVENTION

Caroline Sedlacek, State Delegate

Our Mission Statement: Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Our Vision Statement: We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.

Our Value Statement: The League believes in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy. (Adopted by the LWVUS Board of Directors)

One of the highlights of attending a convention is spending some time with other delegates from one's home state, networking with others met previously, and becoming acquainted with Leaguers from across the country. We were fortunate to meet our new LWVUS Board of Directors liaison, Melissa Currence who lives in Cincinnati, OH. The new CEO (previous title used was executive director) is Virginia Kase who was to begin her position with LWVUS on July 25th. She comes from her position of Chief Operating Officer of CASA and CASA in Action, which advocate for Latino and immigrant people in Maryland. An interview with her is in *Glamour Magazine* <https://www.glamour.com/story/virginia-kase-ceo-league-women-voters>

This year, my first year at the LWVUS Convention, I served as a parliamentary aide at one of the microphones during the business sessions. I attended the Resolutions Committee meeting to learn more about how resolutions are approved or not approved for presentation to the delegates. I had been on the LWVUS 2018 Convention Bylaws Committee so was especially interested in how the delegates would vote on our proposed amendments. Workshops I attended were of interest although several were more for newer members or members who have not had much training or experience, such as in applying diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) which is also being focused on in other organizations. A tool kit for DEI is on the LWVUS website.

My report is on the business actions during Convention.

Per Member Payment (PMP) to LWVUS remains \$32/yr for 2018-2020.

Program. The *Impact on Issues* remains the same for 2018-2020 with the addition of The Campaign for Making Democracy Work® focusing on Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Campaign Finance/Money in Politics, and Redistricting.

Resolutions. I attended the Resolutions Committee meeting at which those presenting resolutions were heard. The committee voted to approve or not approve bringing a resolution to the delegates. In order to meet the requirements for approval the resolution is based on a LWVUS position, is a current legislative priority, is time sensitive, and requires federal government action. One resolution was not approved because it applied only to a state issue. One was not approved because it was already addressed in our *Impact on Issues*. One was not approved because it did not meet the four weeks deadline for submitting the resolution. There is an option if the issue has arisen within four weeks of Convention, and one resolution regarding gun control which had not met the deadline was approved.

Those that were approved and brought to the delegates who also adopted them were:

1. Make gun control, guns safety, and gun ownership limitations a priority in our lobbying efforts.
2. Support an emphasis on the ERA every year until ERA is ratified and becomes a U.S. Constitutional Amendment. Support efforts to remove the time limits for ratification of ERA. (The deadline was June 30, 1982)
3. Urgently reaffirms its long-held position that the Electoral College should be abolished.
4. Support efforts to price carbon emissions and evaluate all proposed methods on effectiveness to abate emissions and whether the method can be successfully implemented.
5. Reaffirm our commitment to the constitutional right of privacy as an individual to make reproductive choices.
6. Support a set of climate assessment criteria that ensures that energy policies align with current climate science.

Bylaws. The following proposed amendment was adopted by a 2/3's vote using voting cards.

1. The national board may withdraw recognition from any state or local League, or ILO for recurrent failure to fulfill recognition requirements **follow League principles and policies.** Recognition may be withdrawn only **Upon full investigation and after the League involved has had an opportunity to be heard by a committee of the national board, the committee may establish conditions for continuation or the board may withdraw recognition.** Withdrawal of recognition shall require a three-fourths vote of the national board and shall become effective immediately.

Rationale: This amendment has two parts: 1. It sets expectations for League affiliates to consistently follow League principles and policies, not just adhere to requirements for recognition; and 2. It offers an alternative to withdrawal of

recognition to those affiliates that are not meeting that expectation, such as a mentorship program and/or corrective action plan.

2. A proposed bylaws amendment on Dissolution of leagues failed. *The rationale was in response to the number of local and state leagues that are organized as 501 (c) (3) entities. This amendment included a statement of following local, state and federal law.* The current bylaw remains that upon dissolution the funds of a state League go to LWVUS and local league funds go to the state league.

3. Adding **or the law** to the article on parliamentary authority passed - that *Robert's Rules* is the parliamentary authority not inconsistent with these bylaws **or the law**.

4. A proposed amendment that the board may amend the bylaws if such amendment is required **by law** failed. The bylaws as amended are on the LWVUS website.

I was appointed to the Convention Transcript Review Committee and will be doing that review in September.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NATIONAL CONVENTION

Chicago, IL June 28 – July 1, 2018

Report from Joanna Lindberg, Delegate

I was honored to attend the LWVUS convention! The keynote speakers were dynamic. The LWV Convention met from 7:30 am to 9:45 pm, with unbelievably long days, very similar to the tireless work of the Suffragists! I was proud to participate in the Immigrant Family Separation March joining 60,000 Chicagoans on Saturday. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion were the themes throughout the convention.

I was especially inspired by:

Rosie Rios, former Treasury Secretary under Obama and Elaine Weiss, author of *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*. And an interview with the new LWVUS CEO: Virginia Kase. A single parent with work experience in social justice. Her speech in the opening plenary was passionate, starting with the story of her first-time voting (where her Hispanic foster mom was challenged to show proof of residence but Virginia, with a fair complexion and perfect English, was not) and ending with a passionate call to not back down in pursuit of a more perfect democracy.

Caucus – *Building League Leadership for the Future*

Young members and Shur Fellow coaches explored how to create a culture that values inclusion-flexible leadership and open communication.

1. New members expressed some of their frustration with harsh judging, critical, "League way" comments. Some new members want guidance with specific tasks. Others do well with the advice, "Do what you want as long as it smells good!"
Its best if leaders can say I am not the authority.
When discussing differences within LWV meetings use YES AND YES BUT cancels the idea. If limited time assign it to a committee rather than taking the whole board meeting.
2. Guidance: know the difference between generations.
Tone to use when communicating between generations.
Best way to communicate is all ways...Facebook, social media, paper bulletins.
Be more lighthearted in meetings and social media communication.
Have young LWV members teach older members about technology to encourage the use of social media, which is the biggest form of communication in the young.

Chris Carson, LWVUS President Opening Address

100th anniversary fast approaching, we have much to do:

Countering fake news

Overwhelming threat to democracy

Many new members

Now have a unified database

Must bring diversity equity, inclusion in all our work, always be aware of unconscious bias

LWV's Suffragist Founder: Carrie Catt Chapman

We are committed to those felons who don't have right to vote

Puerto Rican's first time voting for president

What is your super power? Power of women coming together all types!

High School Outreach

Anchorage Alaska & story works Alaska, hired a youth coordinator FT, serves as a facilitator not a director to assure it is youth led:

7-15 students participate as leaders through the age 21

Video Alaska teen media.org Generation Z is 25.9% of Alaskans

Teaching students about rights & responsibilities in a democracy

Get an elected official to come, candidates forum

Mock election online in high school classes, involving 11,000 students

Discussions about truth & trust in journalism

Video: *"vote by mail, even can vote in your pjs"*

Belief statement: I run this country.....I'm not just a servant.

Free food, make it fun

Los Angeles

LA has a fulltime LWV director helping

Teach 4-5 students to register peers by educating in American government class

Take photo of registering & get T-shirt

Gather information for their database: age, contact email, phone, & on Election Day call them from office with volunteers.

Send text, did u vote, give hashtag with Facebook

Dearborn Heights Wisconsin

7 years of experience registering in the high schools annually, only in March

Highest concentration of Arabs in US

Volunteers love going to very diverse high schools! We try to reflect their community!

Collaborators: Work with Access a nonpartisan nonprofit & AKA sorority,

Milwaukee, WI

Experience of 3 yrs., resources available on their website

41 high schools, 4 coordinators, 3500 registrations a year!

Changed from paper to online registration so set up registration stations in the counseling off

Utilize the press to highlight the effort

90% sign a pledge card with phone, and they keep texting into college years

Diversity Equity & Inclusion: Diverse LWV members sharing their experience as a minority

Dr Alfreda Brown, Diversity officer, Kent State and LWV member; Keesha Gaskins-Nathan, Program Director for the Democratic Practice-US Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Diversity is the presence of difference

Why it's hard to go to meetings & be the only minority there, we are often the other

We are often interrupted--please listen

Or statements like "We really want to help your people" are not helpful

To increase diverse membership, reach out to minority communities

Attend community events in neighborhoods of color. It takes time to build trust

Rosie Rios, 43rd Treasurer of US: State of Women: Inspiring Future Leaders.

Rosie was the first woman and first Latina to serve as US treasurer.

If you look at monuments you will not see real faces of women, you only see people like men on stamps & statues-- women are invisible.

Gender images of brilliance are acquired early & have an impact on children's

interest. If children only see men being honored, more difficult to define themselves as brilliant.

If I can't see it, I can't be it. Women are invisible in children's textbooks, posters. Check out her project

<http://teachersrightinghistory.org>

Examples of the invisibility of women: Look at statues in Public places:

23 men statues in Central Park, the only women are Mother Goose & Alice in Wonderland.

Thanks to fundraising by Rios, 2 women statues of Suffragists will be installed in Central Park to celebrate 2020

San Francisco: will do Maya Angelou.

US & Saudi Arabia are the only countries without women on paper currency.

Challenge to all Leagues: What are you doing 8-26-2020, the day we won the vote! Celebrate it, it is the one time we can showcase what women have done the last 100 years!

Elaine Weiss: Author of *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*

72-year struggle to get the vote--Tennessee was the last state needed to ratify the Voting Rights Amendment.

The weeks leading up to the Tennessee vote were described as the "Suffrage Armageddon" per newspaper.

Every city had a pro & con suffragists newspaper.

The vote was clearly the emblem of equality.

Suffragettes was a demeaning term by the press. The correct term is Suffragists.

The author sources: Tennessee Historical Society & the Harvard Library Archives.

White supremacists opposed the bill because black women would be voting.

In desperation to get the bill passed, Carrie said more white women voting would help the white supremacists. Sadly, she did not stand up for her black sisters.

NATURAL RESOURCES DIRECTOR REPORT July 2018– Janece Mollhoff

Update on COSTCO/Lincoln Premium Poultry chicken processing plant: groups that I am working with are continuing work to limit the scope, density, and concentration of Chicken CAFO's that will be associated with the Lincoln Premium Poultry operation in Fremont. LPP has not yet contracted with enough growers for their increased operation, so they are going further outside their original area for CAFO contractors. There are several that were protested in Washington County, and now one is proposed in Lancaster County near Denton. This permit will be before the Lancaster County Planning Board on August 15th and will only go to the Lancaster County Commissioners if the decision is contested, which it surely will be, either by neighboring landowners or by the investors who want to build them. LWVLL Board sent a letter in opposition to the Lancaster County operations. The Governor announced a few weeks ago that the entire \$900,000 budget for 2019 upgrades to roads through NDOT will be in the Fremont area to help with the truck traffic. So, all Nebraskans are now paying for the infrastructure needs of this operation. The following is a draft letter if anyone wants to weigh in.

"I support clean drinking water for all Nebraskans and believe that measures should be in place to protect water from contamination and pollution. It is your duty to consider specifically nutrients such as nitrates and phosphorus, as well as human and veterinary pharmaceuticals and hormones, airborne ammonia and vector borne diseases. In other areas of the country where the founders of Lincoln Premium Poultry (LPP) have operated, the increase in these contaminants have polluted the Chesapeake Bay area. They say this will not happen in Nebraska, but we have no proof, so without protections in place, Lancaster County is at risk. Fifty years ago, we did not know the effects of overapplication of fertilizer and intensive irrigation, and now Nebraska has the 5th worst nitrate contamination in the U.S. We can't add any more risk to our waterways.

"We all care about water quality: the folks who will run this operation drink the same water as the rest of the county. But they also ignore the fact that high nitrate levels in water are directly correlated with highly concentrated feeding operations along with high levels of fertilizer application and irrigation. Hastings paid \$46 million for de-nitrification of their city water. Can cities and private household well owners in Lancaster County afford the same?

"Make no mistake, this is not conventional agriculture, it is an industrial plant that will have chickens trucked in by the semi-load, feed trucked in by the semi load, chickens and waste trucked out by the semi load, composting manure stored in open sheds that are covered, but not enclosed. What happens when they put all that manure on their fields then we get one of those 6 to 10-inch rains that we have seen several times in the past two years? You will see algal blooms and nitrate levels rise along with risk of fecal contamination.

"The Lancaster County Commissioners have the authority and the responsibility to limit the density, scale, and location of all new CAFO's including these industrial chicken production units. When the plant in Fremont was first proposed, they planned for 250,000 chickens/day; now their goal is 375,000/day. Initially, LPP said that all barns would require permits; now pullet barns will be exempt. In the beginning, they required 400 growing facilities; now they need 500. That is the only reason they are in Lancaster County; because they could not get that density in counties closer to Fremont. Initially, LPP estimated 4 barns per site; now they need 8-12 barns per site to meet production goals. This is an industrial operation, not farming, and this one CAFO will be the first of many if you do not put protections in place for dust, odor, diseases borne by dead chickens, and strict rules about transport and application of manure to fields not in direct proximity to the buildings.

"If you do not put protections in place, do not expect that the DEQ will be able to mitigate any problems that arise. DEQ had a 2% budget cut last year and another one this year with 500 new barns to inspect. They respond primarily to complaints and after the fact contamination. By then it is too late.

"County Commissioners must make zoning and permitting decisions that limit the scale, concentration, density, proximation to residential areas, and areas already high in nitrates. You can require controls on odor and storage dead birds and waste which will only be applied to fields once a year. You can help to avoid the slow but steady creep of nitrates into our water."

REPORT FROM LWVUS LOBBY CORPS VOLUNTEER SUE WORDEN

Sue Worden, who is a League member in the DC area, represents LWVNE with visits to our federal representatives on behalf of the League. Her most recent visits with staff for Senators Sasse and Fischer yielded the following results, when she presented four questions to ask the Supreme Court nominee Kavanaugh.

1. Is voting rights enforcement a vital component of our representative democracy or can limitations be justified under our Constitution?
2. What is the role of the federal courts in ensuring the U.S. conducts a full count of every person in the country every ten years?
3. Do procedural issues (e.g. legislative deadlines) take precedence over the spirit of legislative action to constitutional amendments, such as the Equal Rights Amendment?
4. What is the role of federal courts in protecting our system of checks and balances so that no one branch of government can dominate the others?

The staffers responses: Senator Fischer's Legislative Assistant indicated the questions were important ones but made no commitment for the senator to ask them. Senator Sasse's Chief Counsel assured Ms. Worden that the senator wants a detailed discussion on many issues and Sasse is very interested in the 4th question for the nominee in particular. She asked the Counsel to urge the senator to ask that question.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REQUEST

Do you want to be more involved in the League of Women Voters of Nebraska? Now is the time to prepare to make your voice heard in being active at the state level. The Nominating Committee is accepting suggestions for nominations for officer and director positions for 2019–2021. The term begins at the end of the Annual Meeting on April 27, 2019, and ends at the conclusion of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

If you are a current LWVNE officer or board member who wishes to continue serving, or a member who would like to be considered for one of these positions, please contact the **Nominating Committee Chair, Katie Wadas Thalken** at kwadas@gmail.com or (402) 305-6705. According to the bylaws "suggestions for nominations shall be sent to the chair of the Nominating Committee at least two months before the Annual Meeting" which will be by February 27, 2019. Any member may send suggestions to Katie. Local Leagues are requested to suggest nominees.

The committee will begin working this fall so please submit suggestions early.

The Nominating Committee members are:

- Paula Eurek
- Amy McGaha
- John Else
- Janece Molhoff

LWV-NE Positions

Officer Positions: president, secretary, treasurer, VP action, VP membership

On-board Directors: education, government, health care, natural resources, social policy, and voters service

Off-board Directors: energy, government, *Voter* editor

- Off-board members are appointed by the board of directors at the summer board meeting, considering suggestions from the Nominating Committee.

There is flexibility in on-board and off-board director status, depending on an individual's ability to attend the quarterly board meetings; on-board directors (plus officers and liaisons) are the voting board members.

Also, on the slate will be a Nominating Committee chair and two members from the League membership and who are not officers or on-board directors. Suggestions are requested for those as well.

Brief job descriptions of the president, secretary and treasurer are given in the bylaws which can be accessed on the LWVNE website (www.lwv-ne.org).

The action vice president leads LWVNE lobbying action. She or he registers as a LWVNE lobbyist, obtains the list of bills introduced in the Legislature, identifies bills of importance to League and presents them to the Board of Directors, contacts Nebraska Senators concerning issues, testifies at public hearings, provides copies of testimony to the Nebraska Senators, President of LWVNE, and the Board of Directors, and provides information about testimonies and lobbying to LWVNE membership via the *Voter*. The action vice president chairs the Legislative Day committee.

The membership vice president oversees statewide membership recruitment efforts, encourages member-at-large membership throughout the state, explores possible new local leagues, and maintains member-at-large data with LWVUS.

Each director reports to the board activities and concerns, advocates for League program and priorities, and informs members through the *Voter*. On- and off-board directors are expected to prepare and present testimony on bills pertinent to their issue area.

Send your suggestions in to Katie at kwadas@gmail.com now!

VOTE TO INSURE THE GOOD LIFE CAMPAIGN (MEDICAID EXPANSION)

On August 1, Sherry Miller represented LWVNE at a strategy workshop to be sure this vital ballot issue is passed in November. The number of signatures far outnumbered the minimum required to get it on the ballot. While a court challenge has been filed against ITGL, Nebraska Table for Civic Engagement and its member groups are forging ahead to educate and rally voters across the state. Advocates from OTOC, Heartland Workers Center, Center for Rural Affairs, Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, Nebraska Appleseed, ACLU, Brain Injury Alliance, and MAHA, among others, brainstormed and pledged to finally make Medicaid Expansion happen! LWVNE efforts will include educating the public via social media messages, posting the ballot language on VOTE411, distributing information at events, and engaging friends, neighbors, family and colleagues to support ITGL.

Many thanks to League members who got out there and collected signatures!!

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY - AUGUST 26

Women's Equality Day is celebrated in the U.S. on August 26th to commemorate the 1920 adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The Amendment prohibits the states and federal government from denying the right to vote to citizens of the U.S. on the basis of sex. It was first celebrated in 1973 and is proclaimed each year by the U.S. President, ever since Richard Nixon issued a proclamation. On August 2, 2016, President Obama's Proclamation read in part: "Today, as we celebrate the anniversary of this hard-won achievement and pay tribute to the trailblazers and suffragists who moved us closer to a more just and prosperous future, we resolve to protect this constitutional right and pledge to continue fighting for equality for women and girls." **Be proud to be a member of an organization dedicated to those ideals.**

IN MEMORIAM

LWVNE notes the passing of a long time member and friend of the League of Women Voters of Lincoln-Lancaster County, Howard Ottoson. Dr. Ottoson served in the capacities of professor of agricultural economics, dean of the College of Agriculture, and Executive Vice President at UN-L before retirement. In the 1990's Dr. Ottoson played an integral role in the committees which updated the League's longstanding position on Water, promoting wise use and care of water in the public interest; and a study on County Government structure. Both positions can be found on the LWVNE website at lww-ne.org under LWVNE Program on left side.

LWVNE is sad to note the passing of Anita Fussell, Lincoln League member who served as a coach for the Omaha League on the LWVUS Membership Leadership Development Team for Nebraska. Her career as the religion editor at the Lincoln Journal spanned 13 years from 1972 to 1985. In an interview in a March, 2017 article on Women's History Month, Anita said "she was an anomaly among women with her career choice." She will be missed as a caring, interested MLD coach.

EDUCATION REPORT by Director Mary Ann Sturek

The August 2018 issue of the National Education Association's TODAY for NEA-Retired Members outlined ten challenges facing education today.

1. **Where's the Money?** \$11,000 is the average spent per year per student nationwide. \$1,200 is the amount less received by the highest poverty districts. \$2,000 is the amount less received by districts servicing the largest numbers of students of color. Generally, this is due to public schools funding having been cut all over the country after excessive and reckless tax cuts. "Public education has been a pathway out of poverty for families, but that pathway is blocked when schools are unable to offer a decent education."
2. **Keeping School Safe** "A 2018 survey by the Pew Research Center conducted two months after this year's February school shooting in Parkland, Florida showed that 57% of U.S. teenagers are worried that a shooting could take place at their own school. One in four is *very worried* about the chance." Fortunately and perhaps ironically, this has resulted in a nationwide student movement to push for honest discussion and plausible solutions, such as gun policy proposals focusing on mental illness. Educators nationwide have rejected the idea of arming teachers and school staff as an answer and the idea that more weapons would save student lives.
3. **The Pressure Is On** "The causes and convergence of teacher and student stress has been a growing concern over the past decade . . . Teachers need adequate resources and support in their jobs in order to battle burnout and alleviate stress in the classroom. If we do not support teachers, we risk the collateral damage of students." Again, lack of properly funding education makes it impossible to implement programs such as more one-on-one time with counselors and psychologists. Discussions over policies regarding homework, class schedules, and later school start times may result in appropriate changes.

4. [A Better Way Forward on Discipline](#) According to Robin McNair, the Restorative Practices Program (RJP) coordinator for Prince George’s County in Maryland, “When you look beyond behavior, when you truly look at the person behind the behavior, you’ll often find a cry for help . . . Rather than casting out students after wrongdoing, RJP seeks to reintegrate them into the classroom or school community to make amends and learn how to handle problems more positively. . . Educators strive to create a tight-knit community, even a family, in their classrooms from day one so that students not only know each other, but genuinely care about each other.” More schools should consider this model. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/2MpafeR>.
5. [Where Are My Students?](#) “According to the U.S. Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), about 8 million students missed more than three weeks of school during the 2015-2016 school year, up from 6.8 million the previous year. (Florida had the lowest, 4.5%, D.C. had the highest, 31.5 %, and Nebraska was in the 10-15% range) . . . Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of a school year. This translates to roughly 18 days a year, or two days per month. Chronic absenteeism is usually a precursor to dropping out. And dropouts often wind up before the court.” It will take a group effort to address this, a combination of programs for parents (focus on nutrition, health, and the impact of social media and family dynamics on learning) and for the entire educational staff to recognize that students cannot be educated if they are not in school, that there is a relationship between absenteeism and inappropriate behavior which often results in detentions, suspensions, and even trouble with police, and that there is a need for strategies to encourage students to want to attend school and to stay in school.
6. [Getting in Front of ESSA \(Every Student Succeeds Act\)](#) Since Congress passed ESSA in 2016, schools nationwide have been designing their implementation plans. “The challenge for schools is that while the accountability system was expanded, the money to help support the additional schools identified for improvement was not . . . Expect to see more schools for improvement under the law’s expanded accountability system. . . The NEA provides teachers an Opportunity Checklist (a short, criteria-based tool to quickly assess what’s available at their school) and the Opportunity Audit, a tool rooted in the seven NEA Great Public Schools (GPS) criteria which addresses the research and evidence-based resources, policies, and practices that are proven to narrow opportunity and skills gaps.”
7. [Supporting Undocumented Students](#) The immigration status of students and even teachers is a serious issue. According to Hugo Arreola, a campus lab technician at Phoenix Union High School and a DACA recipient, “We have a lot of students on hold. Many are afraid to renew their DACA applications, student anxiety is up, and people are scared. The environment is very tense.” Arreola’s concerns are for both himself and his students. The article also highlighted a 29-year-old teacher of deaf-kindergartners in Austin, Texas who has lived in the United States since she was 2. “Educators can take steps in their communities to fight the uncertainty and fear undocumented students face.” *Go to sources* include the NEA’s toolkit, *Know Your Rights* and neaedjustice.org.
8. [Seeing Past Hype of New Technologies](#) Classroom technology must be scrutinized. What is the best technology to enhance the learning process of students should be the question. Teaching training in using any technology is another. Teachers must be involved in decision-making for purchasing technology. “Technology will continue to advance and more *game changers* are invariably lurking around the corner. Maybe they can revolutionize the classroom, but it’s the educator who is best suited to determine how and why new tech should be used in the classroom.”
9. [Pushing Back against Privatization](#) “Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos may be privatization’s most visible and stalwart proponent, but school privatization has been a threat to public education for more than 20 years and is financed and championed by a network of corporate interests. Their goal: to use their financial muscle and propaganda to undermine the mission of public schools and position the nation’s schools as commodities upon which to draw a sizeable profit. . . DeVos is a vocal advocate of cutting education spending and freeing up federal dollars to expand charter and voucher programs nationwide. . . Voucher schemes drain hundreds of millions of dollars away from public schools to pay the private school tuition of a select few.” Since their introduction in 1992, charter schools today teach about 5% of the nation’s students. Possible state legislation regarding vouchers or education savings accounts or tuition tax credits around the country has increased dramatically in the past few years and will only continue. One was introduced in the 2018 Nebraska Unicameral and failed to pass, but undoubtedly legislation will be introduced in the 2019 session on charter schools, vouchers, education tax credits and school finance. There is a lack of accountability of voucher monies, causing fraud, waste and abuse of voucher programs. Protecting quality public schools for all students is paramount more now than ever.
10. [Electing Better Lawmakers](#). Because the “reality is that too few elected officials at the local, state, and federal level have the in-depth knowledge of public education that only comes from working as an educator and it shows in their policies and their budgets,” public school educators have a responsibility to elect or re-elect pro-public education candidates who reject the notion to privatize education and who are willing to listen to educators and parents. Educators can also encourage other citizens to vote for pro-public education candidates. More educators in this election cycle are even running for public office.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEBRASKA

2017-2019

4600 Valley Road, Suite 306, Lincoln, NE 68510, 402-475-1411

lwv-ne@inebraska.com; <http://www.lwv-ne.org>

Sharon R. Nemeth, Office Administrator

President: Sherry Miller, 341 South 52nd Street, Lincoln, NE 68510, 402-488-2568 kitty66hawk@gmail.com

Vice Presidents:
[Action]* Darci Garcia, 15617 Rosewood Street, Apt #23, Omaha, NE 68139, 801-636-6476 darci_m_garcia@yahoo.com

[Membership] Linda Duckworth, 16318 Valley Street, Omaha, NE 68130-2078, 402-932-4174 (h); 402-850-9804 (c) lindabduckworth@gmail.com

Secretary: Mary Ann Sturek, 6379 South 95th Street, Omaha, NE 68127-4023, 402-592-8869 masturek@q.com

Treasurer: Kate High, 7135 York Lane, Lincoln NE 68505, 402-499-9283 kateonlenox@gmail.com

Directors (on Board):

[Education]* Mary Ann Sturek, 6379 South 95th Street, Omaha, NE 68127-4023, 402-592-8869 masturek@q.com

[Health Care] Phyllis Salyards, 1003 West 11 Street, Hastings, NE 68901-3830, 402-463-6395. hpsalyar@inebraska.com

[Mental Health] Vacant

[Natural Resources]* Janece Mollhoff, 2354 Euclid Street, Ashland, NE 68003, 402-871-8260 wjmollhoff@windstream.net

[Social Policy]* John Else, 835 Parkwood Ln, Omaha, NE 68132, 402-393-2050(h); 402-218-6910(c) ... elsejf@gmail.com

[Voters Service] Vacant

Directors (off-Board):

[Energy] Vacant

[Government] Jean Eileen Durgin-Clinchard, 638 North 25th Street, Lincoln, NE 68503, 402-435-3317 jeaneileen@gmail.com

[Voter Editor] Annette Conser, 12410 Rose Lane, Omaha, NE 68154, 402-493-4810 annetteconser@cox.net

Nominating Committee:

Elected Chair: Katie Wadas Thalken, 1318 North 53rd Street, Omaha, NE 68132, 402-305-6705 (h); 402-280-5677 (w) kwadas@gmail.com

Appointed to elected position: Paula Eurek, 8931 Whispering Wind Road, Lincoln, NE 68512, 402-420-7359 .. peurek@windstream.net

Elected Member: Amy McGaha, 1622 North 174th Street, Omaha, NE 68118, 417-592-0233 dramymcgaha@yahoo.com

Board appointee: John Else, 835 Parkwood Lane, Omaha, NE 68132, 402-393-2050 (h); 402-218-6910 (c) elsejf@gmail.com

Board appointee: Janece Mollhoff, 2354 Euclid Street, Ashland, NE 68003, 402-871-8260 wjmollhoff@windstream.net

Liaisons:

[Hastings] Phyllis Salyards, 1003 West 11th Street, Hastings, NE 68901-3830, 402-463-6395 hpsalyar@inebraska.com

[Lincoln] Mary Boschult, 950 South 49th Street, Lincoln, NE, 68510-3807, 402-483-0415 mary4now@aol.com

[Omaha] Ann Chalson, 2706 South 107th Street, Omaha NE 68124, 402-392-0318 aschalson@cox.net

[Seward] Ellen Beck**, 2325 Star Street, Seward, NE 68434, 402-646-9112 Ellen.Beck77@gmail.com

Local League Presidents:

[Hastings] Phyllis Salyards, 1003 West 11th Street, Hastings, NE 68901-3830, 402-463-6395 hpsalyar@inebraska.com

Judy Sandeen, 721 North Hastings Avenue, Hastings, NE 68901-4426, 402-462-2961 jsandeen@windstream.net

[Lincoln] Mary Boschult, 950 South 49th Street, Lincoln, NE 68510-3807, 402-483-0415 mary4now@aol.com

[Omaha] Ann Chalson, 2706 South 107th Street, Omaha NE 68124, 402-392-0318 aschalson@cox.net

[Seward] Ellen Beck**, 2325 Star Street, Seward, NE 68434, 402-646-9112 Ellen.Beck77@gmail.com

Education Fund Board:

Sherry Miller, Chair; Mary Ann Sturek, Secretary; Kate High, Treasurer, Ellen Beck, Linda Duckworth (contact info above)

LWVUS Liaison to Nebraska: Melissa Currence, 3648 Bellecrest Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45208, 513-535-3242 currencem@gmail.com; mcurrence@lwv.org

MLD State Coordinator: Joanna Lindberg, 1618 South 141st Avenue Circle, Omaha, NE 68144-1003, 402-330-1192 joannaclindberg@yahoo.com

Parliamentarian: Caroline Sedlacek***, 14839 Camden Court Omaha, NE 68116, 402-451-5770 (h), 402-493-4444 Ext 109 (w) csedlacek@cox.net

*Committee included; **Chair, Budget-Finance and Endowment Fund Committees; ***Chair, Bylaws Committee 08/01/18



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Of NEBRASKA**

NEBRASKA VOTER

Sherry Miller, President
Annette Conser, Editor
4600 Valley Road, Suite 306
Lincoln, NE 68510

402-475-1411
lwg-ne.org

Address Service Requested

TIME DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT DELAY

THANK YOU TO OFFICE “ARCHEOLOGISTS”

Sharon Nemeth, Office Administrator

LWVNE’s 100th Anniversary is approaching and there are two file cabinets in the League office that I have never had time to look through thoroughly, but I thought might contain items of historical note that could be shared as part of our celebration. It would not have been wise to have only one person judging what might be historically important, so I reached out to several individuals who have been long-term members and asked for assistance in reviewing the files.

Shirley Maly, Sherry Miller, Lois Poppe, and Pat Stephen agreed to spend a couple of 2-hour sessions digging through the office files with me. Although there was little that was significant enough to use as part of a 100-year celebration, there were many items that triggered memories of things LWVNE has done and we had good conversations of reminiscing. Much of the files’ content was so dated that we recycled it.

Reviewing files is tedious and I appreciate these members’ commitment in completing the task. Sherry Miller (kitty66hawk@gmail.com) is establishing an ad hoc committee to review League items at History Nebraska (formerly the Nebraska State Historical Society). Please contact her if you are interested in assisting in that project.

2018-2019 LWVNE CALENDAR

Following are meeting dates the LWVNE Board set for the year. Any member is welcome to attend the Board meetings and is especially encouraged to participate in the Annual Meeting.

October 13, 2018: Board meeting

January 12, 2019: Board meeting (snow date January 19, 2019)

February 2, 2019: Board meeting to set priority bills (snow date February 9, 2019)

March 16, 2019: Board meeting

April 27, 2019: Annual Meeting (in Omaha)