



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

LWV-LL Voter

November 2023

President:	Cynthia Peterson
Vice-President:	Kat Waters
VP for Action:	Jean McGuire
Secretary:	Terri Rittenburg
Treasurer:	Dorothy Ramsey
Voter Services:	Jane Witte, Kate Borchman
Lunch & Learn Chair:	Tari Hendrickson
Membership Chair:	Sandy Blankenship
Voter Editor:	Jim Johnson
Facebook Manager:	Kristen Anderson

Calendar of Events

Nov 2 (Thursday): Noon – 1:00 pm
Lunch & Learn
 David Cary
City of Lincoln 50-Year Plan

Nov 2 (Thursday): 5:30-7:00 pm
LWVLL Fall Meeting
 Walt Library, 6701 S 14th St
 Featured Speaker:
 Becki Gaston-Wise,
 Lancaster County
 Deputy Election Commissioner
*What you need to know about
 Voter ID and the 2024 Nebraska
 Elections*
See article on page 2.

Nov 6 (Monday): 6:00 pm
LWVLL Board Meeting
 Via Zoom:
 Meeting ID: 833 1976 3008
 Passcode: 411648
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83319763008?pwd=nYMC6E8qaJGzAf84TyXLr8RwIXDS1T.1>

Dec 7 (Thursday): Noon – 1:00 pm
Lunch & Learn
 Becky Seth
Citizen's Climate Lobby

November Lunch & Learn: City of Lincoln 50-Year Plan

Join the Lincoln/Lancaster County League of Women Voters for our November Lunch and Learn. Guest is Lincoln City Planning Director David Cary, speaking on the City of Lincoln's 50-Year Plan. The event is Thursday, November 2, from noon to 1:00 PM and is free and open to the public throughout Nebraska via Zoom. Membership is not required.

Because some members have had trouble connecting in the past, we are discontinuing the registration process that we've used in the past; you will log directly into Zoom with the following link, but you will be placed in a Waiting Room and we'll let you in. Zoom link is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87113124202>; the waiting room should be available a few minutes before noon on November 2.

League Members are also invited to join us that same evening, November 2 at 5:30 p.m., for an in-person fall meeting at Walt Library; see article at the top of the next page for more information.

Voter Services News

Voter Services was very busy in September with eight events, including four on National Voter Registration Day. We have at least thirty-five new voters because of these events. Fourteen different volunteers gave of their time to register voters including Jackie Egan, Barbara Allen, Carla Larson, Mimi Wickless, Nancy Comer, Jane Witte, Joyce Latrom, Chris McCoy, Kate Borchman, Wanet Larios, Connie Keith, Chris Harth, Jean McGuire, Cheryl Ferree.



Kate Borchman was appointed by the Board to be a director and co-chair of the Voter Services committee with Jane Witte until Jane moves out of her leadership role the first of next year. Jane will stay very involved with VS, but have more time to focus on other things. At this time, no more voter registration events are on the calendar until next year.

One other piece of good news is the Lancaster Co. Election Commission renewed its contract with LWVLL for voter registration services.

Help Wanted

We are forming a bylaws committee to review any changes for consideration at our 2024 annual meeting. Please contact Terri Rittenburg (tritt@uwyo.edu or 307-343-2540) if you're willing to serve.

What you need to know about Voter ID and the Nebraska 2024 elections

Presented by Becki Gaston-Wise
Lancaster County Deputy Election Commissioner

The featured speaker at the fall meeting of the
League of Women Voters of Lincoln/Lancaster Co.

Thursday, November 2, 2023
5:30 to 7PM
Walt Branch Public Library meeting room
6701 South 14th Street, Lincoln

- Please RSVP to Terri Rittenburg at secretary@lincolnleague.org or (402) 475-1411 before October 31
- Guests/public are welcome
- Meeting starts promptly at 5:30PM
- Snacks and finger foods will be provided
- Bring your own non-alcoholic beverage



Input Requested on Future Libraries Planning

Friends,

The Library Board is asking for input from the general public on what libraries should offer in the future. Libraries will look much different in this more technological world. Yet, sometimes simple things make a big difference too. If you are one who has said, “I wish my library offered this or that” now is your chance to be heard. Use this link to give feedback directly to a library branch:

<https://www.futurelibrarieslcl.org/getinvolved>

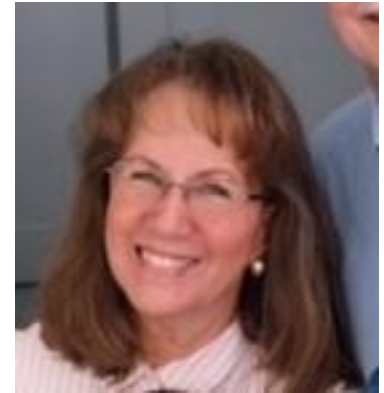
Or reach out to the Director of Libraries, Ryan Wieber, directly (email address below). He would appreciate your comments, particularly if they have to do with League. I think several of us have asked for Civic Engagement rooms where we can hold events for our members and also the public. Feel free to mention it again so he knows there is a need for more of the libraries to have Civic Engagement rooms.

“Your constituents can make individualized comments and suggestions in each branch survey. Plus, organizations can suggest partnerships to help the libraries provide comprehensive content about civics and civility. Make the organizational pitch directly to the Director Ryan Wieber rwieber@lincoln.ne.gov.”

Karen Dienstbier

LWVLL Member Spotlight: Carla Larson

Born to missionary parents in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Carla is wired with deep global awareness and compassion for diverse people groups. Her core values of seeking peace, justice, mercy and advocating for underdogs are reflected within a lifetime of serial volunteer service with multiple nonprofit organizations, partisan and nonpartisan political efforts, civic engagement, and community governance.



Carla's past volunteer involvement includes serving on Murdock, MN's city council, chairing Joan Growe's US Senate campaign (Benton County, MN), hunger and food insecurity task forces, elected delegate to partisan state convention (MN), public school classroom reading support to struggling students, several churches in Minnesota and Nebraska, local homeowners' association board of directors, Nebraska Appleseed phone bank and info-booths, Lincoln Literacy classroom teaching, Fresh Start, settling refugee families. She was employed as a nurse in the 1980s, and after adopting and raising 2 children with her husband Scott, her medical background later transferred well into a paralegal career specializing in plaintiff's personal injury litigation. She anticipates fully retiring in fall, 2023 and having more time to create 3-D greeting cards and paint watercolor miniatures.

In 2016 Carla began working with the Lancaster County Election Commission's ballot counting board, which led to joining LWV-LL, which led to chairing LWV-LL's 2022-2023 Nominations Committee and working with Voter Services to register new voters, observing Unicameral legislative sessions and writing scores of emails to legislators regarding various active issues, and assisting with the recent LB 753 petition drive.

Via LWV-LL's excellent Lunch & Learn program showcasing the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Carla caught the AVP fire and completed 36 hours of AVP's Basic and Advanced workshops in summer 2023, as a community participant. She is currently undergoing training to become an AVP workshop facilitator with incarcerated citizens who will be returning to our community.

Carla and Scott met at missionary boarding school in PNG at ages 7 and 8 and have been married 44 years. Together they are legal guardians of their disabled son, Tim. They share 4 grandchildren and an elderly sweet rescue dog, Gracie.

Upcoming Lunch & Learn Meetings

All meetings scheduled for Zoom, First Thursdays of the month, 12:00 Noon to 1:00 PM

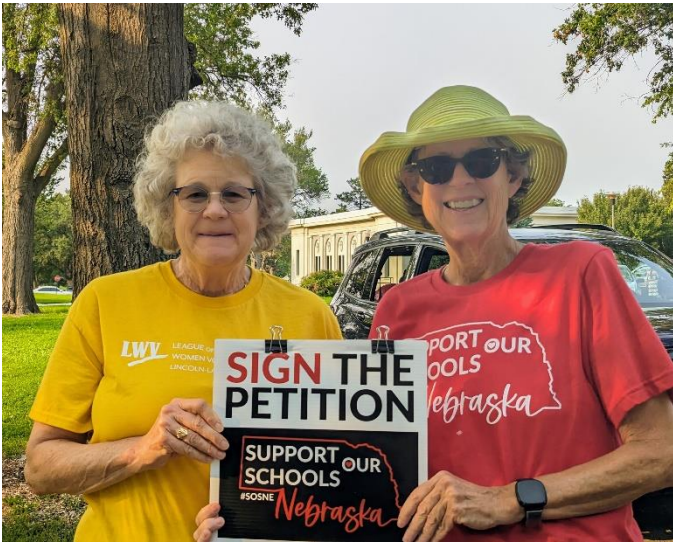
Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87113124202>

(Schedule subject to change)

2-Nov	City of Lincoln 50 Year Plan	David Cary
7-Dec	Citizen's Climate Lobby	Becky Seth
4-Jan	NE Soils -Farming-Climate	Dr David Meyer
1-Feb	Voter ID + Mail-In Ballots	Todd Wiltgen
7-Mar	TBD	
4-Apr	TBD	
2-May	TBD	

Repeal of LB753 will appear on 2024 ballot

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska and by extension the League of Women Voters of Lincoln/Lancaster Co. (LWVLL) was part of the Support Our Schools Nebraska (SOSNE) coalition that launched a referendum petition drive on June 6, 2023 to gather signatures to repeal LB753 – the Opportunity Scholarships Act and related tax credits. Most LWVLL members [like Kate Borchman and Jean McGuire pictured below] actively supported the petition in some way. The petition drive proved to be successful.



On Aug. 30, SOSNE coalition members presented the Nebraska Secretary of State with 117,145 signatures from 5% of registered voters in more than 60 counties, far surpassing the 38-county requirement. At the press conference, Cynthia Peterson, president of LWVLL said, “LB 753 does one thing only: it diverts public dollars to private and parochial schools through tax credits.”

“Because it is important for Nebraskans to be truly heard on this matter, League members all over the state invested their time and efforts into circulating the referendum petition and gathering signatures to get it on the ballot. The thousands of Nebraskans who have affixed their signatures to the petition agree that voters should have the final say on this matter.”

Voters will have the final say. On Oct. 10, 2023, the Secretary of State announced he certified the referendum petition for LB 753, and it will be on the Nebraska ballot in November 2024. Certification means election officials confirmed that petition circulators met all constitutional requirements. The voters will now decide if they want to repeal LB 753 and keep public dollars for public schools.

LWVLL members are ready to move forward alongside other coalition members to the voter education work necessary to combat the disinformation that is already circulating.



The board of the LWVLL recently voted to join a coalition led by Collective Impact Lincoln which is a partnership between Civic Nebraska and Nebraska Appleseed along with a number of other organizations in urging the Lincoln City Council to introduce an ordinance that bans source-of-income discrimination in Lincoln.

Source-of-income discrimination allows the denial of housing based on tenants' income source, such as housing vouchers. This unjustly impacts low-income families, recipients of public housing assistance, and others who rely on various forms of income. These include those who receive Social Security, disability benefits, veterans affairs housing vouchers, single parents depending on child support, and hourly workers without a guaranteed monthly salary.

Many states and local jurisdictions have already demonstrated the effectiveness of laws that outlaw source-of-income discrimination. Cities like St. Louis, Phoenix, Denver, Minneapolis, Columbus, and Memphis have implemented similar reforms without adverse effects on property values or community safety.

The board utilized the LWVUS's position under "Equality of Opportunity" as our basis for support. Our position states:

"The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide equality of opportunity for education, employment, and housing for all persons in the United States regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability. Responsibility in the nationwide effort to achieve equality of opportunity for access to housing resides with government at all levels and with the private sector — builders, lending institutions, realtors, labor unions, business and industry, news media, civic organizations, educational institutions, churches, and private citizens".

Our President, Cynthia Peterson, has acknowledged the LWVLL's support by signing the online petition on behalf of our League. If you, as individuals not representing the League, would also like to sign the petition and/or looking for further information on this important topic, please go to

<https://www.civicnebraska.org/speak-up-for-housing-rights/turned-away/>

If you are interested in joining one of the organizing committees (Executive, Signature Collection & Delivery, Media & Communications, Meeting with City Council Group) or if you would like to volunteer in some capacity please email me at jeanmcguire7777@gmail.com

Collective Impact is hoping to present this petition to the Lincoln City Council in the next few months and we will certainly let you know when so that we can have League members there.

Letter to the Editor of the Lincoln Journal Star (printed 10/25/2023):

Enhancing Access to the Ballot Box in Lancaster County

Access to the ballot box ensures that all eligible voters in Lancaster County can exercise their right to vote. Casting a ballot is a process that must be accessible and secure for all voters. Currently, Lancaster County has only one ballot drop box located in central Lincoln, serving a population of 200,244 registered voters. While our elections are fair, safe, and accurate, the presence of just one drop box in Lancaster County poses challenges for voters.

The League of Women Voters of Lincoln/Lancaster County strongly endorses the recent decision made by the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners to install an additional four secured ballot boxes for upcoming election cycles and beyond. This action holds the promise of increased voter participation by reducing the hurdles imposed by geographical constraints and personal circumstances. We would have welcomed an even more extensive distribution of ballot boxes throughout the city and county.

The County Board's 4 to 1 approval on October 10, 2023 means the installation of a secure, stand alone, concrete-anchored and locked ballot drop box at each of four public libraries in Lincoln's quadrants – Walt, Gere, Anderson, and Eiseley libraries.

Since our founding in 1920, the nonpartisan League of Women Voters has been a dedicated advocate for voter rights, registration, education, and active participation in free, secure, and fair elections. The League of Women Voters of Lincoln/Lancaster County firmly believes in the removal of voting barriers, not their creation. We commend the Lancaster County Board for their proactive action in this regard.

Signed,
Cynthia Peterson, President
Kate Borchman and Jane Witte, Co-Chairs — Voter Services
League of Women Voters of Lincoln/Lancaster County

October 19, 2023



As many of you know, spring is the time for legislative action. Last year we saw incredibly impactful laws passed by the Nebraska Legislature including:

- Restrictive abortion ban
- Restrictions on gender affirming medical care
- Taxpayer funds for organizations giving private school scholarships
- Removing training and registration requirements for concealed-carry firearms
- Economic stimulus and middle-income housing funds
- Funding for water quality projects

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska had a huge increase in people interested in getting involved with our state Legislature in 2023 and we hope to continue that momentum into spring 2024! We know everyone's time, interest and availability differ, but if you are interested in staying updated or getting involved, we've got something for you!

If you are looking for a way to stay updated and to get quick, timely and concrete actions you can take during the legislative session, consider signing up for the LWWNE Action Alerts.

These are simply emails when something pressing is happening in the Legislature with some ways to take action and more information about the topic. Usually this takes the form of emailing or contacting senators, testifying at hearings, or attending events at the State Capitol. There is absolutely no obligation. This would just put you on the list to get the emails so you can choose how and when you are involved.

If you are looking for something a bit more involved and focused, consider joining one of the LWWNE's six Action Teams.

These are topic specific groups that review and follow specific legislation throughout the session. Team members research policy, write position statements, testify at hearings and help mobilize people as legislation moves forward. We have six different policy areas: Education Policy, Government and Voter Services, Health Care, Mental and Behavioral Health, Natural Resources and Energy, and Social Policy.

Please fill out this form to sign up for either or both action options:

<https://forms.gle/Z67Q6yEppPMftVwh6>

Any way you choose to be involved with our state government is fantastic! Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns, or if you would just like to hear a bit more about the type of work we do and how you fit in.

Looking forward to working with you.

Rachel M. Gibson
Action Vice President
League of Women Voters of Nebraska
rachel@lwnnebraska.org

The Lincoln Lancaster *Voter*

League of Women Voters - Lincoln/Lancaster County

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Lincoln, NE 68505-0054

<http://www.LincolnLeague.org>



Time Dated Material
Please Do Not Delay