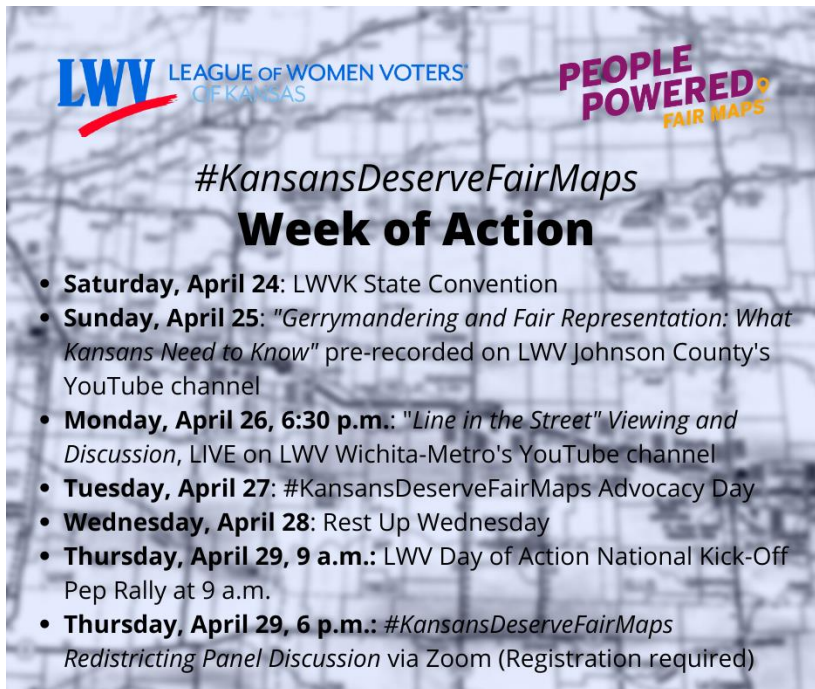


The VOTER: April 2021

People Powered Week of Action to Focus on Fair Maps



The graphic features a background of a map with a grid. In the top left corner is the LWV League of Women Voters of Kansas logo. In the top right corner is the 'PEOPLE POWERED FAIR MAPS' logo. The text '#KansansDeserveFairMaps' and 'Week of Action' is centered. Below this is a list of events for the week.

#KansansDeserveFairMaps
Week of Action

- **Saturday, April 24:** LWVK State Convention
- **Sunday, April 25:** "Gerrymandering and Fair Representation: What Kansans Need to Know" pre-recorded on LWV Johnson County's YouTube channel
- **Monday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.:** "Line in the Street" Viewing and Discussion, LIVE on LWV Wichita-Metro's YouTube channel
- **Tuesday, April 27:** #KansansDeserveFairMaps Advocacy Day
- **Wednesday, April 28:** Rest Up Wednesday
- **Thursday, April 29, 9 a.m.:** LWV Day of Action National Kick-Off Pep Rally at 9 a.m.
- **Thursday, April 29, 6 p.m.:** #KansansDeserveFairMaps Redistricting Panel Discussion via Zoom (Registration required)

LWV of Kansas has a week of action planned April 24-29. [Get all the details](#). Mark your calendar for these FREE virtual events leading up to the [national LWV Day of Action](#).

Our [April Member Meeting](#) is included, so we anticipate having Leaguers across the state join us to watch & discuss the documentary film [Line In The Street](#). This event will be livestreamed at 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 26, [on YouTube](#).

Did you know the redistricting process began with the 2020 Census?

What is redistricting? Redistricting is when we redraw districts so each has the same number of residents. Voters are divided into geographic voting districts based on where they live. Each district has to have an equal number of residents – One Person One Vote.

Over time, people move around and populations change so every ten years we count the number of people again and then we redraw the district lines to have an even number of people. But what are the rules for drawing the lines? (See 18:09 from [LWVUS Reclaiming our Districts: A Redistricting Introduction](#).)

- Each district must have the same number of people.
- The lines can't be drawn in a way that has a discriminatory impact on minority groups.

Each state has its own rules about what factors should be taken into account when drawing the lines. Common criteria include: protecting communities of interest, keeping districts compact and contiguous, minimizing splitting up cities and counties, and respecting natural

boundaries. Some states (not all) prohibit drawing districts in a way that favors a particular candidate or party (partisan gerrymandering).

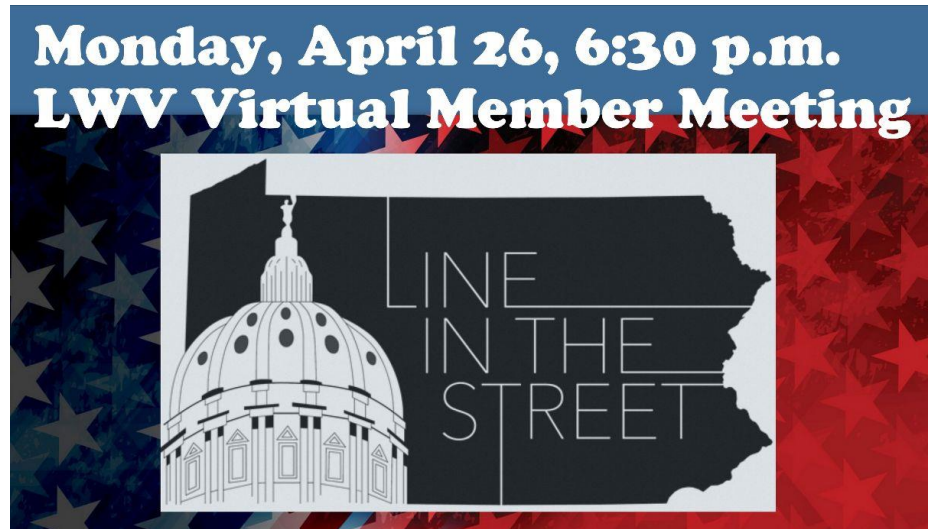
When lines are drawn that are discriminatory toward minority groups, favor certain parties, or split up communities of interests, this is known as gerrymandering. Gerrymandering essentially removes voting power from the people. [Watch a 2-minute demo of gerrymandering.](#)

In 2018, Pennsylvania went through redistricting reform and re-drew all 18 congressional districts.

For [our April 26th LWV Virtual Member Meeting](#), we will watch the documentary film [Line In The Street](#) about the Pennsylvania redistricting reform and then will have a panel including the film's director Robert

Millman and [Dr. Brian Amos](#), Assistant Professor of Political Science at WSU. This meeting is open to the public; everyone is welcome to attend. No registration is required.

The livestream will pop up at bit.ly/LWVyoutube. We will not livestream on our Facebook page so make sure you head over to YouTube. While the discussion will be recorded and available to watch later, the 30-minute documentary can be seen only during the livestream.



Are You Registered for Tuesday Topics?

Recent events have caused protesters throughout the country to call for "defunding the police." What type of changes are being sought, and is defunding the answer? What would it mean to change the funding structure of the police department, and would that result in better policing? How is the Wichita Police Department addressing community concerns?

Join us [April 27 for a candid conversation on police reform](#) including Dr. Michael Birzer, professor in WSU's School of Criminal Justice; Gwen Grant, president & CEO of the Urban League of Greater Kansas City; and Wanda Parker-Givens, deputy chief of the Wichita Police Department.

Advance registration is required. Call 261-8500 or [register online](#). Tuesday Topics virtual events are held online through Zoom from noon to 1 p.m. on the date noted. Everyone who

registers in advance will receive the link by email the day before and the day of the program. All Tuesday Topics events are free and open to the public.

Message from our Co-Presidents

It has now been one year since everything shut down due to the pandemic. We had no idea, at the time, how long it would be, or how isolated we would become. Yet, despite all of it, through the use of technology and the notable efforts of board members Kate Hamm and Bridgette West-Williams, we have remained connected, continuing the work of the League, and a force for education, voter reform, and the defense of democracy wherever and however it has been challenged. It has been an honor to watch our members adapt to new situations, pivot to new processes, and otherwise exhibit a resilience that surprised even themselves. In the 100th year of the League, I believe we did our foremothers proud.

That is not to say people aren't still struggling, and the need for relief and support is still necessary for equity in all areas. If anything, this time has served to highlight the fact that there are still communities where systemic racism and disenfranchisement contributes to a near constant threat. Be it to voter suppression, gun violence, climate injustice, food insecurity or educational and employment scarcity.

As we look to hopeful times ahead and the possibility of gathering again, the work goes on. We hope you'll join us.

— [Jennifer Byers Heminway](#) & [Martha Pint](#), Co-Presidents

LWV W-M to Sponsor Juneteenth Celebration

In concert with the League of Women Voters' commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), the Wichita Metro League has aligned itself with the local Juneteenth initiatives. Juneteenth, a celebration of freedom for African-Americans is the only American celebration connected to the re-uniting of the United States. From 1861 to 1865, the United States was two separate nations, embroiled in a horrific fight to determine if it would remain that way, with the southern "nation" maintaining enslavement of African-American people. Fortunately, the Northern "nation" prevailed and Lee surrendered in April of 1865. Federal troops were immediately dispatched to the south with the news. When they arrived in Galveston, Texas on June the nineteenth, African-Americans began to celebrate. The creative and jubilant freed Americans fused the date into Juneteenth.

Largely ignored by America as a whole, African-Americans have celebrated the re-uniting of the United States for over 150 years. Juneteenth celebrations cannot be separated from the reunion. America's failure to make the connection may be a contributing factor as to its continued divisiveness.

The League of Women Voters Wichita-Metro is proud to be a sponsor of [Juneteenth ICT](#) as we continue to promote liberty and justice for all, as well as a truly united United States. **Please**

join us on June 18, 6-9 p.m. and 19, 11 a.m. – 9 p.m. at McAdams Park, 1329 East 16th Street. All Americans must be intentional if we ever hope to be a united people.

Like [Juneteenth ICT on Facebook](#) and share the posts with everyone.

Interested in joining our DEI team? Reach out to co-chairs [Joan Warren](#) & [Sharon Cranford](#).



Donations Requested for a Silent Auction Event

We are still requesting donations for our Silent Auction Event. With the wonderful news that there should be sufficient vaccines for all adults by May - we are planning to host a fun in person gathering and silent auction fundraiser this summer. Watch our newsletter, Facebook page and website for details.

In the meantime, should you have something fabulous to donate for the auction, please email Jennifer Byers Heminway at cthdownunder@gmail.com or Leanne Chase at lrc4620@aol.com. So far we have received a Richard Crowson signed original, bowls from acclaimed potter, Jack Norris, a gorgeous quilt, a variety of gift baskets and some suffragist memorabilia to name but a few.

Protect Voting Rights & Stop Voter Suppression in 2021

Voting rights are under attack nationwide as states pass voter suppression laws. These laws lead to significant burdens for eligible voters trying to exercise their most fundamental constitutional right.

Dating back to the Jim Crow era, a patchwork of state felony disfranchisement laws, which vary in severity from state to state, prevent approximately 5.85 million Americans with felony and, in several states, misdemeanor convictions from voting. Confusion about and misapplication of these laws also de facto disenfranchise countless other Americans.

So what's going on in Kansas? What regulations are being considered in the 2021 session in Topeka? What are the voting rights of felons? How do they know when they can register? Is it the same across the state?

Plan now to [join us at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 18](#), for an online discussion with representatives from [ACLU of Kansas](#).

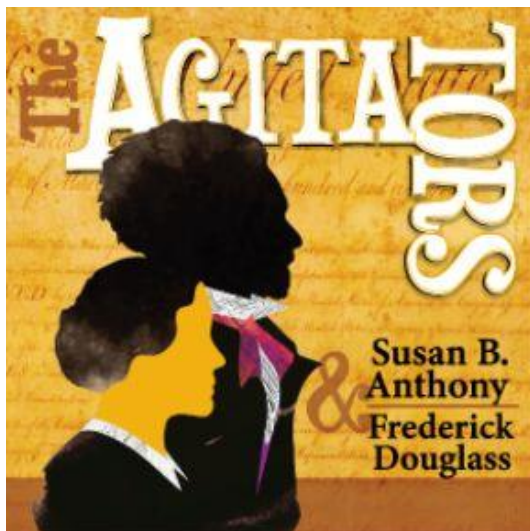
The livestream will pop up at bit.ly/LWVyoutube and on [our Facebook page](#).

This event is free of charge and open to the public. All are welcome. No registration is required.



- **April 26:** Unit Meeting (part of [Week of Action](#), April 24-29)
- **April 27:** [Tuesday Topics \(Police Reform\)](#)
- **May 6:** [Wichita Art Museum](#) (WAM) + Forum Theatre virtual event (The Agitators)
- **May 18:** [ACLU virtual event on Protecting Voter Rights](#)
- **May 24:** Annual Meeting (virtual event)
- **June 5:** Voter registration event @ [Leslie Coffee Co.](#) in Delano

- **June 18-20:** [Juneteenth ICT](#)
- **July 7:** [Senior Wednesday @ WAM](#): “One Woman – One Vote”
- **October 1:** [Wichita Riverfest](#) Sundown Parade & After Party @ WAM



Join us at 6 p.m. Thursday, May 6, for a virtual event exploring the 45-year friendship between Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass.

Selected scenes from Mat Smart's drama *The Agitators* will be staged & filmed by the [Forum Theatre](#) in the Wichita Art Museum galleries featuring the [African American Art in the 20th Century](#) exhibition.

Advance registration will be required [through WAM](#).

Voter Service Report for April

Spring has sprung, Covid vaccinations are happening, daffodils are blooming and Voter Service is gearing up for a very active year. Even though we will still be staying safe by masking and not taking chances, our calendar is starting to fill for 2021.

We started on April 8th at Evergreen, participating in an outdoor event supporting the IRC by having a voter registration table. In May we will be at La Familia for a Cinco De Mayo celebration. On June 5th we'll be in the Delano District with a voter registration event. We also have nine Naturalization Ceremonies scheduled April thru December.

We are excited about working on the 2021 elections for City Council Districts 1, 3, 6 and four of seven school board positions. Turnout for local elections has been ridiculously low previously. Local elections are non-partisan. Each district has approximately 35,000 registered voters and the average turnout has been around 10%. One of our objectives is to increase these numbers dramatically by hosting district candidate forums and voter registration events. The Sedgwick County Election office has agreed to provide demonstrations with actual voting machines. We are also planning to develop a video on the voting process. Anyone who wishes to participate is always welcome.

— Carole Neal and Barbara Bell, Voter Service Co-Chairs

wichitametro1wv@gmail.com

How to Make a Difference

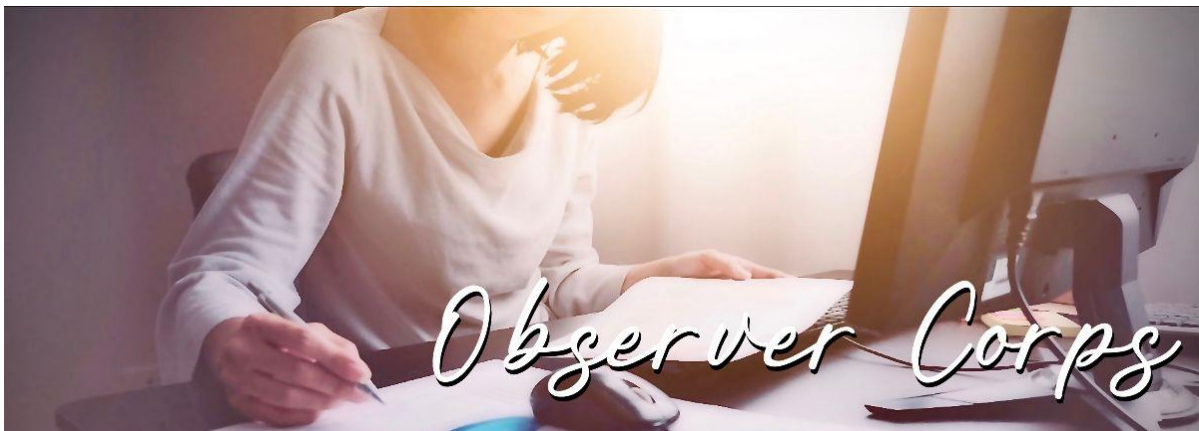
The LWV is always urging members to “take action” and “make your voice heard.” One way to do that is to be appointed to a City of Wichita or Sedgwick County Board.

I currently serve on the Sedgwick County District III Advisory Board (DAB for short) and on the Wichita Advisory Board for police department. They both meet monthly for about two hours. I just, simply, went online to the [website for the City](#) and [for the County](#) and then submitted my application.

You do not have to, necessarily, “work in the field” or know something special, to get appointed. There are numerous Boards and many of them are looking to fill vacancies—and just being in the LWV can be a plus (I think!!) We have other members who have been appointed and it is an excellent way to be a part of government.

If you have a question or concern which would pertain to any Boards of which I am a member, feel free to contact me. Plus, know that the meetings are open to the public—which is, another way, to make your voice heard.

— [Sharon Ailsieger, Program Co-Chair](#)



LWV Wichita-Metro Observer Corps Reports

Government transparency is a vital part of the League’s mission. The Observer Corps is one way that Leagues promote open government on a local level. Our Leaguers have [reports to share](#) that relate to LWV positions and priorities.

[Wichita City Council](#)

Margaret Kline prepared a report of the Wichita City Council meeting held March 16.

[Sedgwick County Commission](#)

Pat Reinhold prepared a report of the Sedgwick County Commission meeting held March 24.

[Wichita Board of Education](#)

Monique Centeno prepared a report of the Wichita BOE meeting held March 8.

[Metropolitan Area Planning Commission](#)

Leah Kasten reported on her experience of a recent MAPC meeting. Learn more about the [MAPC](#).

Treasurer's Report for April

Roberta (Bobbie) Loeffler joined our League just this week. Welcome!

Thanks to all who choose our LWV Wichita-Metro's "sustaining membership" level this year. Dues for sustaining members are \$75 a year. "Regular" dues are \$65 a year. Dues for a second member in a household are \$37.50 a year and student dues are \$10 a year. Your dues support the local, state and national work of the league. Our new dues year begins July 1.

This year we have had a record number of household memberships and student memberships. We currently have 204 members.

— Elaine Harvey, Treasurer

treasurer@lwvwichita.org

*For updates on what the **League of Women Voters of Kansas** is doing across the state, check out the [April edition of VOTER Notes](#).*

Contact Us

Phone: 316-573-5583

Email: [Co-president Martha Pint](#) and
[Co-president Jennifer Byers Heminway](#)

Follow LWV Online

Wichita-Metro: lwvwichita.org
fb.com/League.Of.Women.Voters.Wichita

If you are a LWV Wichita-Metro member, join our members-only [Facebook group](#) where we post updates on calls to action and information tailored to our members.

Everyone is welcome to
[subscribe to our e-newsletter](#).

State: lwvk.org
facebook.com/lwv.kansas

US: lwv.org
facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters

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an email sent every other
Thursday afternoon.