"My Voice, My Vote, My Right"

Senior citizens learn about election process during seminars at Warren Central

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Gertha Escue is still making up her mind on this election stuff.

It's kind of a new thing in her life.

The 67-year-old resident of the Franklin-Simpson Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Franklin is preparing to cast her first-ever ballot.

She and other senior citizens throughout south-central Kentucky learned about the election process during seminars Tuesday at the Residents Council at Warren Central High School.

Teresa Whitaker, district ombudsman, said the Residents Council is a once-a-year event where people in area nursing homes have a chance to get together and find out more about nursing homes and other topics.

This year's theme is "My Voice, My Vote, My Right," and about 120 people, including volunteers and aides, took part in Tuesday's program, Whitaker said. The Residents Council has been held for nearly 15 years.

Christine Pietrandrea, a regional ombudsman for western Kentucky, said it's great to see senior
Voting is a right and a responsibility, woman says

"I always vote in elections. I am glad I live in a country that I can worship my God and vote any way I want to."

Janis Prock
Attended seminars at Warren Central

Scottsville, said she is voting by absentee ballot this year.

"I always vote in elections," Prock said. "I am glad I live in a country that I can worship my God and vote any way I want to."

Erma Whitlow, 92, who also calls Cal Turner home, said voting is a right and a responsibility.

Whitaker said residents councils are regulated by Kentucky law. The 57 nursing home residents who participated in the program Tuesday became advocates for others.

"We help the residents to understand that they can still vote" even though they may have left their homes to live in other facilities, she said.

Sometimes, if they are at a facility in one Kentucky county and registered to vote in another county, there might be a need to transfer voter registration. Whitaker said packets on the election process were sent weeks ago to activity directors at nursing homes to help with the education process.

"We will lose our freedom if we don't (vote)," said Landon Long, 76, of Creekwood Place Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Russellville.

"We'll be like some of those foreign countries we are fighting now," Long said.

Earlene Dixon, 92, a resident at Colonial Manor Care and Rehabilitation Center in Bowling Green, has long participated in the voting process. A native of Sugar Grove in Butler County, she was in the Baltimore area during the 1940s, working in a plant that made warplanes.

She plans to cast her ballot for president. "If you don't, you don't have a say in things that happen," she said.