



Missouri Voter

Volume 76, Issue 3

The League of Women Voters of Missouri

May/June 2015

President's Message



Elaine Mitchell Blodgett
LWVMO President

One Hundred Years: Almost Here

We on the Missouri board are beginning the second half of a vision begun two years ago: to imagine the future of the League within the state and its communities and how all members would work toward the sustainability of the organization. The founders' vision was to encourage all citizens, men and women, to register, vote and to be knowledgeable on critical issues. The founders wanted League members to first study issues locally, statewide and nationally, then obtain consensus and act. We would participate in governmental decisions.

The founders were on the "cutting edge". Women were now allowed to vote "equally" with men. The founders experimented with gathering women together who had not been able to deal with governmental issues before, who now had the power of the ballot box and then involving them in action. Obviously some rules had to be laid down—"no running" to city hall or the state legislature with "your opinion" in the name of League—it had to be studied and accepted by the members. No spending money without approval. It was the new power of organized lobbying by citizens. The founders also encouraged joining political parties and becoming active so that League ideas would be brought up through the system.

Visioning is a wonderful idea, but it takes time. You must have the courage to try new ideas and put some old ones behind. It means attracting new people to join into our organization and discussions. And even if maybe they don't think 'like the old members', it also means respecting all members. It takes energy. It means fostering new leadership. It means looking at what is working, and what is not working. It means taking chances.

Let's run with their vision and put it into 21st century action.

2015 Upcoming Events

- June 19-20- LWVMO Board Mtg.
St. Louis, 1 p.m.
- August 21 - LWVMO Board Mtg. - St. Louis
- November 6—LWVMO Board Mtg. - Sedalia
- November 7 -
LWVMO Fall Conference
State Fair Community
College - Sedalia, MO

Websites of Interest

www.lwvmissouri.org
(state)

www.lwv.org (national)

www.covermissouri.org
MO Foundation for Health

www.sos.mo.gov
Secretary of State's Office

www.senate.mo.gov
www.house.mo.gov
Missouri Legislature

Information on local programs, articles and projects can be sent to Marilyn_mcleod@yahoo.com

Upcoming **Voter** Deadlines:

July 15, 2015 (July-August)

Sept. 1, 2015 (Sept.-Oct.)

Report on State Convention

The LWVMO held its 62nd biennial Convention at the Lake of the Ozarks on May 2-3, 2015. Delegates from the Kansas City, Moberly, Sedalia, Mexico, Columbia and St. Louis Leagues attended.

President Elaine Blodgett welcomed the delegates and challenged us to get our communities energized to participate in the political process. She shared her belief that the League of Women Voters is still needed across the country. We are the vanguard of getting people registered and our strongest value is getting good information to voters to make the issues understandable without bias. The League does have positions on many issues and we should be contacting our legislators about these. Our duty is to our community to get involved in our local areas.

Judge Rachel Bringer Shepherd, presiding judge, Tenth Judicial Circuit, was the luncheon speaker. She spoke about her own efforts to practice social justice in her courtroom

Representative David Wood, House District 58 (R), guest speaker at the dinner, shared the story behind the current School Transfer bill and talked about the challenges of public education in school districts not only in urban areas, but all across Missouri.

Two workshops were included in the Convention. The first was “Making Your Local League More Visible” presented by Linda Smith (KC League) and Peggy Placier (Columbia). The second workshop was on “Partnering with Diverse Groups” presented by Linda McDaniel and Kathleen Farrell (from St. Louis League). Both workshops included valuable information gained from their experience to help us in League work.

There was lively debate over the proposed program for 2016-2017. The members voted to study Campaign Finance and a local study on Gun Control in Municipalities. They voted to concur with the Columbia League’s position on medical marijuana and with a position on mental health.

Officers and board members were elected for a two year term. A \$5 increase in the PMP for state dues was approved, to begin in the 2017 membership year. It was noted that the state dues have not been increased for at least 10 years and costs have risen greatly over that time period.

A change in the bylaws to increase the allowable number of delegates to state convention was also approved.

A vote on the budget was postponed for 90 days in order to allow the budget committee to gather further information and make recommendations. It will need to be approved and then it will be published in a future issue of the *Missouri Voter*.

New Missouri Study: Gun Control by Municipalities. Suggested by Kansas City This study and consensus must be done by Missouri Leagues by February 1, 2017.



Mary Merritt Receives the Harriett Woods Award

Mary Merritt received the Harriett Woods Award for her Exemplary Community Service at the State Convention in May.

As Chairperson of the City Council appointed Citizens for a Clean Sedalia Committee, Mary led this important committee through major clean-up accomplishments, probably the most significant in the City's history.

Under her direction, the committee recommended significant policy changes and additions to the Sedalia City Council. Virtually all of them were accepted and implemented.

Money in Politics Consensus Study

National Convention is next year in June in Washington, D.C. We need to complete the study item on Money in Politics by the end of January 2016 in all of our Leagues. The topic lends itself not just to League, but to your community. Planning programs on the subject might give a chance for them to have input on the subject.

We will have a workshop or speaker on "Money and Politics" at our Fall Conference.

This is the latest schedule from LWVUS:

- Summer 2015—Education materials posted periodically at LWVUS website. Leagues are encouraged to use these materials for member and community meetings.
- Fall 2015—Study guide and consensus questions posted. Leagues hold consensus meetings.
- February 1, 2016— Consensus reports (electronic) from Leagues due to LWVUS.



IN MEMORIAM—JOAN MILLS

Joan Mills, 60 year League member, passed away on Friday, June 12. This came as a great surprise to people who knew her. She recently attended the LWV State Convention in May and worked to update the KC bylaws in May with a few other League members. Joan graduated with a B.S. in Physical Therapy from the University of Kansas in 1950, worked 21 years at Truman Medical Center and was widely known in her profession. Joan served on the Kansas City LWV board and also the state LWV board. She was a member of many organizations and her service to the League and other organizations will be dearly missed.

CALENDAR

2015

- August 21—LWVMO Board Mtg. -St. Louis
- September 16—Veto Session at State Legislature
- September 18—LWVMO Board Mtg. - Moberly
- November 6—LWVMO Board Mtg. - Sedalia
- **November 7—LWVMO Fall Conference** -Sedalia

2016

- January 6—Legislature Convenes
- **January 12—LWVMO Capitol Action Day**—Jefferson City
- January 23—LWVMO Board Mtg. (Snowdate: January 30)
- February 23—Candidate Filing Day -Jefferson City
- March 5—LWVMO Board Mtg. -Columbia
- April 29—LWVMO Board Mtg.
- **April 30—LWVMO Spring Conference**
- May 20—LWVMO Board Mtg.
- June 16-18—LWVUS National Convention -Washington, DC

Special Opportunity

Karen Nicholson, LWVUS secretary, will be in St. Louis on August 22 and would like to meet with local LWV leaders at the LWVMO office in St. Louis.

If you are interested, please contact the LWVMO office. If you would like home hospitality in case you arrive on Friday evening, we will try to accommodate. Just let the office know.

Donations recently received

LWVMO—3 contributions for a total of \$250

LWVMO Education Fund—2 contributions for a total of \$200

LWVMO Education Fund for Sedalia-Pettis County LWV— 6 contributions for a total of \$425.

LWVMO Education Fund—\$ 300—from state board members.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION in honor of Joan Mills.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION REPORT

May 2015

The Legislative Action Committee has been very busy following our legislative priority issues during the 2nd session of the Missouri 97th General Assembly and the 1st session of the 98th General Assembly and increasing our visibility at the State Capital. We have maintained some of our on-going priorities and allowed for expanding priorities if needed.

Some of our activities during the last two sessions included, but were not limited to:

- Conducted interviews with legislators.
- Distributed our Legislative Priority Cards to all members of the General Assembly and State Executive Offices.
- Welcomed candidates on the first day of filing, February 28, 2014.
- Published the Legislative Bulletin during the sessions and prior to Veto sessions.
- Members testified in opposition to bills requiring Photo ID for voting and written testimony was also submitted.
- Joined with the Medicaid Coalition in support of Medicaid Expansion, sent written testimony in support and members participated in Medicaid Action Rallies.
- Closely watched various tax bills aimed at reducing taxes, such as TABOR.
- Members joined with other organizations in Equal Rights-Equal Pay Day Rally for women.
- Attended the Veto Session and the Induction of Virginia Minor into the Hall of Famous Missourians.
- We were contacted directly by a State Senator to meet with him in response to a letter to the editor from the League on the subject of Campaign Finance.

Successfully defeated Amendment 7 (sales tax for transportation), Amendment 3 (Teacher Performance Evaluation), and Amendment 6 (Early Voting).

Many thanks to dedicated members who participated in the various activities. We come together, work together and advance our mission to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

—*Marty Ott*
LWVMO Legislative Action Chair

HEALTH CARE

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL! IN MISSOURI, NOT YET...

With apologies to William Shakespeare, I'm referring to one of our LWVMO Legislative Priorities, "Affordable, comprehensive health care for all Missouri citizens."

Again this session even though there were some legislators who tried to open the discussion about Medicaid Expansion in the "Show Me" state, once again thousands of Missourians will continue to go without much-needed health care that could have been provided through Medicaid Expansion.

Thanks to those of you who were able to join other Missourians at one or more of the rally days or lobby days at the Capitol.

And thanks to those who called or wrote their senator and/or representative to ask them to support Medicaid Expansion.

On to the Senate bills, listed by type and a very a short description of topic:
SB24-Passed and sent to Governor, vetoed by Governor, veto overridden by General Assembly;
SB239-Damages against health care provider;
SCR4-Mesothelioma Awareness Day Sept.26.

The following bills were delivered to the Governor, but as of this writing he had not acted on them;

SB145-Eating disorders;
SB210-Healthcare provider reimbursement;
SB354-Supplying amino acid-based formulas;
SB426-Confidential mental health records;
SCR2-Pica Awareness Month;
SCR12-Multiple Sclerosis Task Force;
SCR35-Jump Day for physical fitness.

Now the bills originating in the House:

HB10-Appropriations Bill Vetoed in Part by Senate-
Final Appropriations to Mental Health =\$1,836,521,148
Final Appropriation to Health = \$1,253,241,755

The following bills have been sent to governor, but so far he has not acted on them:

HB88-"Organ Donor Recognition Day";
HB400-"Epilepsy Awareness Month";
HB769-Retainer agreements between physician and patient;
HB861-"Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Day";
HB1116-"ROHHAD Awareness Day".

—*Barb Davis, Health Care*

Officers

President: Elaine Blodgett
Vice President: Mary Merritt
Secretary: Peg Prendergast
Treasurer: Debby Waite Howard

Directors

Kathleen Boswell:

Nancy Copenhaver: Tax Policy

Barb Davis: Voter Service, Oral History
Project, Health Care

Kathleen Farrell: Voter Service

Linda McDaniel: Elections

Marty Ott: Legislative Action

Marilyn McLeod: MO Voter

Janie Riley

Nominating Committee

Lael Von Holt, Chair
Lois Detrick
Sue Brockett

LWVUS Board Liaison:
Karen Nicholson

LWVUS MLD Coach: Donna Lauffer

Webmaster: Rachel Brekhus

Fall Conference- - 2015

Don't miss your opportunity to be part of the action at the **League of Women Voters of Missouri Fall Conference** at the State Fair Community College in Sedalia.

Mark your Calendar: Saturday, November 7, 2015

The League of Women Voters Fall Conference is open to all members and friends of the League. This is a great opportunity to meet and network with Leaguers from around the state.

There will be several interesting sessions, including one on the topic of Money in Politics.

Watch for details about the Fall Conference in the next issue of the *Missouri Voter*.

Local League Activities**Columbia-Boone County League**

We just finished our annual fundraising play and raised about \$4000! We have already booked next year's play, *Music Man*. We book the dress rehearsal for a local entertainment company and provide wine and appetizers with the play for \$25 or \$100 (they get 5 tickets) underwriter status. We had 24 underwriters this year (this number has continued to grow each year).

Our League is busy planning our Money in Politics consensus study activities. We are also planning to form a speakers group to go out to civic groups to talk about the League and Money in Politics. We are planning our fall activities and the Columbia Health Department has asked us to co-sponsor a forum on the health effects of GMO's.

Peggy Placier will be attending the LWVUS National Council in Washington DC, to represent and report back to the State Board. What she learns is bound to benefit LWVCBC and LWVMO, especially information on the national study, using the web and social media, outreach, and engaging new members.

—Carol Schreiber, co-president

Fact Checking

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allegations or emails? Go to ...**

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www.factcheck.org
www.flackcheck.org
www.snopes.com**



MISSOURI VOTER
League of Women Voters of Missouri
8706 Manchester Road, Suite 104
St. Louis MO 63144-2733

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100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY—2019

In 2019, the League of Women Voters of Missouri will celebrate its 100th year as guardians of democracy in the state of Missouri. The League began in October of 1919 with Edna Gelhorn as the first president.

We plan to celebrate this milestone in our history across the state and would like total participation from League members.

Please submit your ideas, your stories about your League experiences, your ability to serve on the committee, your willingness to help finance the celebration to the League office by phone, email, and snail mail (addresses below) – attention Debby Howard. Watch the *Missouri Voter* for updates and plans.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Missouri Voter, LWVMO, 8706 Manchester Road, Suite 104, St. Louis, MO 63144 All other correspondence to Elaine Blodgett at the same address.

Voice: 314-961-6869
Email: league@lwvmissouri.org