LWVUS recently gave a $784 grant to LWV of Missouri to support the For the People Act (HR1/S949). This pro-democracy legislation passed the U.S. House of Representatives in March. LWVMO is using the grant to encourage Senators Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley to request a hearing on this bill in the U.S. Senate.

This comprehensive election reform bill is designed to restore the Voting Rights Act, bolster election security, reform the redistricting process, and improve transparency in elections in all 50 states. It would give states the power and resources to modernize and secure their election systems so they would be more fair and accessible to all eligible Americans.

The bill also cracks down on efforts to remove voters from rolls. It states that a citizen’s failure to vote is not a reason to take away his or her voter registration. It also ensures the restoration of voting rights to people convicted of felonies upon the completion of their sentences.

Amber McReynolds, head of National Vote at Home, mentioned many of these reforms in her keynote address at the LWVMO state convention May 5. She supports HR1 as well as citizen-driven reforms at the state level.

After printing 800 postcards to go out from the eight local Leagues in Missouri, the office has run out. New LWVMO President Evelyn Maddox is holding in-state meetings with both Senators Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley. The Kansas City Star printed an op-ed written by Maddox on June 2. Our St. Louis co-presidents had a letter to the editor in the May 28 St. Louis Post-Dispatch. It said that requesting a hearing is the least our senators can do to “put power back in the hands of the American people.”

Thanks to Esther Clark and her husband Jim for many years of dedicated work updating our membership database. Several volunteers are taking up the task now that she retired.

Nancy Miller presents the Lenore Loeb Sterling Achievement Award to Catherine Stenger for her leadership on voter registration.
We want to share with you the full text of the speech given at the May 25 Protest for Reproductive Rights.

I am Nancy Miller, one of the co-presidents of the Metro League, celebrating 100 years of dedication to upholding the rights of all citizens and defending democracy. Today I am going to give you a brief history of the efforts to win rights for women. In 1775, Abigail Adams wrote to her husband as he worked on our Constitution, “I would desire you to remember the ladies and be more Generous and favorable to them than your ancestors.” We know that didn’t happen.

In 1848, the first women’s rights U.S. convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York, launching the women’s suffrage movement. Their declaration proclaimed women’s equality in politics, family, education, jobs, religion and morals. The most controversial resolution was for women “to secure their sacred right to vote.”

After the Civil War, on Oct. 15, 1872, Virginia Minor, President of the Women’s Suffrage Association of Missouri, tried to register to vote in the upcoming election in St. Louis, but was refused because she was female.

In 1919, with the vote for suffrage in sight, the American Woman’s Suffrage Association was disbanded, and the League of Women Voters was incorporated. One of the tasks on their to-do list was women’s health. It still is on the list.

In 1920, after countless incidents and challenges, women finally had the right to vote when the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. But voting was not the only issue affecting women’s lives. Women have always been restricted by laws giving power over them to others.

By 1965, illegal abortions made up one-sixth of all pregnancy-related deaths. In 1973, Roe v. Wade affirmed that access to safe and legal abortion is a constitutional right. Finally, the laws which had caused so much pain, suffering and death were overturned. But as we know, soon the challenges to this new right for women began. In 1983, the National Board of the LWV issued a statement: We affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

The League has pressed for the defeat of bills and challenged regulations that would weaken pro-choice laws in 1983 and 1985-90. In the 1990s, the League supported the Freedom of Choice Act. Together with 178 other groups, the League continued to oppose those who would return to the past and deny women the right to govern their own bodies. The fight continued into the 2000s: court battles, continuous U.S. lobbying, co-sponsoring the March for Women’s Lives in 2004 and opposing the new “conscience” regulations and “moral objections” that threatened the pro-choice rights.

In 2013, in Burwell v. Hobby Lobby, over the protests of hundreds of organizations, the U.S. Supreme Court granted employers the right to not provide contraceptive services in the health insurance they offered their employees.

And here we are today. Again, we are called on to fight the fight. Missouri’s HR147 is a statement by the Missouri legislature that women are second-class citizens who should not have control over their own bodies and their own lives. Yesterday, Governor Parson signed the bill into law.

As it moves to the Supreme Court, we must remember: The fight is not over, the battle is not over, and the war over the equal rights of women is surely not over. I urge you to get involved and play your part in the days ahead. Many organizations have taken on the mantle and it will take all of us working together to once again say to those who would deny our rights: This is my right—this is my body—you have no power over me. And none of these efforts will matter if you don’t vote. Register today—and then VOTE!

—Nancy Miller and Louise Wilkerson
LEAGUE JOINS CENSUS CAMPAIGN

Both LWVMO and LWV of Metro St. Louis have signed on as 2020 Census Partners with the Chicago Region of the U.S. Census Bureau. We will be involved in using Census Bureau tools to inform our community about the importance and benefits of participating in the 2020 Census. In addition, we are asked to volunteer to be Census takers who will reach out to hard-to-count households. These make up an estimated 9 percent of Missouri households and include many in the St. Louis area. Most households will receive their census invitation in the mail in March 2020.

If you are willing to volunteer for either task, please call the League office. Specify if you are interested in being part of the community education effort or visiting households.

LWVSTL CENTENNIAL SASHAY

Webster Groves Parade

July 4, 9 am to noon

Let’s join together to remember the suffragists who 100 years ago worked so hard to get the vote for women. Let’s celebrate the reality that we have today. Let’s show our energy to continue working for a more perfect democracy. The Webster Groves July 4 parade is an opportunity to show off our history, our service today and our envisioned League future. Go to our website (lwvstl.org) to sign up!

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Molly Schaller, a new presenter, spoke to 45 members of the Caroline Close Stuart Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on suffragist history. Mickey Croyle will be doing a Lunch and Learn for Webster University Office of Sustainability on June 12 at noon. “Missouri Transportation: Sustainability, Safety and Equity” will be held in the Webster University’s Emerson Library. Other scheduled presentation topics include youth voting and general voting information.
LED LIGHTING HAS MANY ADVANTAGES

Light-Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs use electricity 25–30% more efficiently than CRL (compact fluorescent) bulbs and 75% more than incandescent bulbs. Their lifespan is 25 times longer than incandescent lights. They do not radiate heat. They can be directed to where the light is needed, which decreases light pollution, for example in streetlights. LEDs can be recycled safely since they do not contain the toxic mercury present in CFLs, and they come on full strength unlike some CFLs which require a warm-up time. If the whole country were to convert to LEDs, the consumption of electricity for lighting would decrease as much as 50%, which would be a huge saving in costs and a significant decrease in the number of power plants needed.

The variety of LED bulbs available in stores is increasing almost monthly and the cost is decreasing. Keep in mind that these bulbs use less electricity and last longer than incandescent and CFLs. ENERGY STAR® certified bulbs should replicate the light output and distribution of similar incandescent bulbs. Lumens are used to measure light output of LED bulbs and there are charts comparing lumens to watts; for example, 1600 lumens is equivalent to a 100-watt bulb. The color temperature of LED lights is measured in degrees Kelvin, so 6000K is a cool white light comparable to morning light while 2200K is a warm white as in evening light.

Blue light is a powerful suppressor of melatonin secretion so exposure to blue light near bedtime may interfere with sleep. Bright white LEDs have the highest level of blue light. There are now tunable LED lights on the market so one can adjust the light to warm white light later in the day.

Some of these bulbs are controlled by Bluetooth with a smart phone or similar devices. Some newer smart phones and tablets have nighttime or “reader-mode” settings which decrease exposure to blue light.

Examples of LED lights carried by local hardware stores are attractive dimmable candelabra bulbs, closet or under-counter lights with rechargeable batteries and tunable bulbs.

For additional information, visit https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/save-electricity-and-fuel/lighting-choices-save-you-money/led-lighting

—Jitka Olander, Environmental Quality Committee

ENERGY TIP FOR THE MONTH

Replace your older light bulbs with the newer more energy-efficient LED. Batteries Plus Bulbs stores will accept and recycle fluorescent bulbs for a minor fee.

DEATH PENALTY UPDATE

New Hampshire's legislature voted to override its governor’s veto of its bill to abolish the death penalty. It took a two-thirds majority, which the state senate accomplished on May 29. This makes all the New England states death-penalty free. New Hampshire has not executed anyone since 1939 and does not even have a facility in which to do so.

—Sydell Shayer, Death Penalty Committee chair
NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE INTERSTATE COMPACT ACTION

After supporters of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact waited with bated breath, the governor of Nevada vetoed an NPVIC bill on May 24. The reason he gave was the negative impact on smaller states such as Nevada. He said the voters of Nevada would get the candidate who won the national popular vote and may not get the candidate they voted for. How true—that is exactly what we are supporting.

—Sydell Shayer, LWVMSTL NPV Chair

Committee members gave out information and buttons at the state convention: Sydell Shayer, Nancy Pawol, Kathy Kane, Angie Dunlap, Laurie Velasquez and Anna Mathieu.

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE REPORT

When the Missouri General Assembly 2019 session closed, neither the Senate nor House bills pertaining to work requirements for Medicaid eligibility had been presented for a vote in the respective chambers. There is, however, continued effort to reduce the number of people on the Medicaid rolls. Reporting on recent research from Georgetown University, nationwide more than 800,000 children lost coverage from government-funded programs last year. Although there may be several causes for this decline, findings suggest the most likely causes are reductions in funding and new paperwork requirements of the programs.¹

In Missouri, Medicaid rolls show a very noticeable decline beginning in 2018. Between January 2018 and March 2019, Missouri dropped 85,000 people, including 67,000 children from Medicaid. In April 2019 alone, more than 11,000 individuals were dropped from Medicaid, including 9,000 more children.² Governor Parson’s administration claims an improving economy is the reason for this decline in Medicaid recipients. However, in 2018 Missouri implemented a new renewal system that re-enrolls fewer Medicaid participants. The new system fails to effectively access the required recipient information to determine their eligibility based on their income. Eligible Medicaid recipients are thereby removed from Medicaid without notification. This procedure of removing people from Medicaid is considered a more realistic cause for the decline.² Missouri findings seem to be consistent with national findings of removal of funding and declining number of people who are receiving government funding for healthcare.

There is a campaign calling for Governor Parson to end this purging of the Medicaid roll and promptly re-enroll those who have been negligently dropped. Please contact the governor by phone: 573-751-3222, or e-mail: https://governor.mo.gov/contact-us. If helpful, please use any information above in your contact.

—Irma Ruebling, Health Care Committee Chair


² Personal communication. Adele McKiernan, MO Health Care for All, May 25. 2019
FASHION IS POLITICAL

This month’s Suffrage Snippet is condensed from the script for What Women Wore: League of Women Voters Centennial Fashion Show. It was written by member Nichole Burgdorf.

In 2011, fashion designer Daphne Guinness observed, “Fashion is not just about trends. It’s about political history…. You can see defining moments that were due either to revolutions or changes in politics.” At first glance, the two may seem incongruous, but with the help of the Volunteer Board of The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, we’ll quickly see how fashion IS political. In fact, the League was often ahead of its time, demonstrating progressive ideas long before many other organizations or groups even entertained them.

The first big project of the St. Louis League was a “Citizenship School” to help teach women what to do with the vote now that they had it. It met in three sessions a day for five days, with evening classes offered for employed women. Men could attend, if they chose. These classes were supported by the public schools and taught subjects such as citizenship, suffrage history, public speaking, parliamentary law and publicity.

Four hundred and fifty paid to attend these classes in 1919 alone. They likely wore tailored suits while learning, as it was a staple of every woman’s wardrobe. A skirt and blouse pairing was popular, but looser fitting dresses were also common and would continue to evolve into the 1920s. Think Coco Chanel, with her short, straight skirts or ones with soft pleats; tailored blouses were worn untucked, but belted at the hips and covered by collarless, boxy jackets.

During the Chicago convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association held Feb. 14-16 in 1920, the national League of Women Voters was officially founded. The women attending the convention may have dressed like Helen, who wore a red dress with a black coat from the recent St. Louis Repertory Theater production of The Play That Goes Wrong (pictured second from the right). By fall of that year the St. Louis chapter had developed a Colored Division and an integrated board, likely the only one in town. Not long after, when the board was meeting at a downtown hotel, they were told the African-American members would have to use the freight elevator. Edna Gellhorn, president of the League state and local chapter, responded, “Then we all will!” The Colored Division became a standing committee in 1922 and remained that way until the mid-1940s, when the membership was fully integrated. That same year the chapter ended their affiliation with Federated Clubs, which prohibited Negro membership.

Wearing day suits – and sometimes high-waisted, wide-legged trousers that ended at the ankle — the ladies of Missouri went out into the community, beginning a tradition we uphold to this day, but which was unheard of at the time: non-partisan adult citizen education through meetings, forums and informational services. They also supported women for jury service, amended state child labor laws, began production of a Voter’s Guide and developed study groups to understand current problems such as unemployment insurance and reciprocal trade agreements, which would prepare them well for the crises to come in the 1930s.

For a full text of the script, go to http://www.lwvstl.org/files/Fashion_Show_Script.pdf.
STATE CONVENTION HONORS LEAGUE’S 100 YEARS

LWV of Metro St. Louis hosted a very successful state convention honoring the League’s first 100 years. Guests enjoyed a Suffragist Tour of Bellefontaine Cemetery on May 2. Guide Mary Ellen Vander Linden gave a presentation dressed as Edna Gellhorn, LWVMO’s first president and president of the St. Louis League in 1925 and 1943-44. On May 3, delegates and guests enjoyed What Women Wore: A League of Women Voters Centennial Fashion Show.

Keynote speaker Amber McReynolds explained how she worked to get comprehensive election reform in Colorado. “It’s about who votes, not who wins,” she said. “We must design a process that puts voters first and make the voting process convenient for all voters regardless of their political persuasion.” Go to lwvmissouri.org to see the May-June Missouri Voter for more information on McReynolds and the changes she secured in Denver as director of elections and now promotes as executive director of National Vote at Home.

McReynolds was introduced by Eric Fey, Director of the St. Louis County Board of Elections. He applauded the Metro St. Louis League for moving to iPads. “With tablets, a voter is registered the next day. It’s much more efficient.”

Fey also shared information on the procurement process for new voting equipment. He said the county currently uses machines from 2005 with Windows XP software and they have to scavenge parts from other counties that use the same machines. Several League members have attended demonstrations by three potential vendors: ES&S, Dominion Voting Systems and Hart InterCivic.

St. Louis City Treasurer Tishaura Jones updated the convention on proposed election reforms “to ensure an effective government of, by and for the people.” She called Amendment 1 “a tremendous victory to clean up Missouri politics.” She shared some exciting opportunities to make positive lasting changes for voters in St. Louis City, including approval of alternative voting systems, such as top two or ranked choice.

Catherine Stenger won the Lenore Loeb Award for her voter registration leadership. Velma Bailey won the Harriett Woods Award for Exemplary Community Service for founding St. Louis Torchbearers 2, a youth development organization that trains youth to serve in leadership roles. Metro St. Louis nominated both state award winners.

Evelyn Maddox from Kansas City was elected as LWVMO president. Metro St. Louis member Cindy Wunderlich was elected as state treasurer, and Nancy Miller was added to the board. Louise Wilkerson will continue as secretary. Maddox appointed Linda McDaniel as historian and Debbie Howard as parliamentarian.

Special thanks to our volunteers who helped with hospitality and registration: Angie Dunlap, Barbara Harris, Joan Hubbard, Jitka Olander, Nancy Price, Jennifer Rushing, Anne Sappington, Judith Smart, Catherine Stenger and Steve Smith.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REFLECTIONS

The centennial of the Metro St. Louis League in November 2019 and women’s suffrage in August 2020 offer great opportunities for the League to get more visibility. We’ve already hosted a Centennial Tea, Suffragist Cemetery Tour and What Women Wore: A League of Women Voters Centennial Fashion Show. Intern Lexi White designed suffragist bookmarks and a coloring book to educate young people about the women who fought so hard for our right to vote. The St. Louis County library is starting to distribute the set of eight bookmarks. We have members marching with Girl Scouts in the Webster Groves parade on July 4, and are planning a banquet to celebrate our centennial on Nov. 13 in the Sheldon’s Ballroom.

All of that is on top of the League’s regular work and additional efforts to meet the requirements of Metro grants from LWVUS for registering new citizens and from the Roblee Foundation, and the state’s grants from LWVUS for Making Democracy Work and promoting the For the People Act.

I’m delighted that two interns will be in the office this summer to help us meet those challenges. Member Maggie Hannick started on May 31. Watch for more information on her and Webster University student Haley Sante in the next newsletter.

—Jean Dugan

Intern Maggie Hannick pictured with Jean Dugan, the flapper cutout and the new 55” television purchased for presentations in the office.

Cindy Wunderlich and Kathy Kane review a 2016 children’s book: One Vote, Two Votes: I Vote, You Vote.

Velma Bailey received the Harriett Woods Award for Exemplary Community Service for founding St. Louis Torchbearers 2 to train youth for leadership roles.

Judith Smart was one of 24 Metro delegates to the 64th LWVMO state convention.
Nancy Miller stressed the importance of voting at a rally against Missouri’s newly-passed ban on abortions after eight weeks of pregnancy. Below, League volunteers register voters at the May 25 protest organized by Pro-Choice Student Activists. The League formally adopted its position of support for reproductive rights in 1983.

LWVSTL IS ON INSTAGRAM!
If you like to use Instagram, check out @lwvstl for another way to stay connected to League happenings. See other social media posts at Facebook.com/lwvstl and follow us on Twitter using @LWVSTL.
VOLUNTEER CORNER

Thanks to all the volunteers who enable the League to make a difference. If you have time to help, please contact Barbara Harris, our volunteer coordinator. Her email address is volunteer@LWVStl.org


We have a new sign-in sheet on a clipboard by the front desk to track our volunteers’ hours. If you are a member of a League committee, we would like to keep track of the time you spend on League activities. Please let the office know so we can add your name to our volunteer list. We appreciate your commitment to the League. If we neglected to list your name, please let us know and we will thank you in the next newsletter.

WELCOME, NEW LEAGUE MEMBERS!

Alfrieda Anderson
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DUALLUDDITES@gmail.com

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Bonnie Riverdahl
St. Louis, MO 63126-3333

Anne Troy
Ballwin, MO 63011-3402
annectroy@gmail.com
UNIT MEETINGS

League units take the summer off and will meet again this fall.

Chesterfield/Creve Coeur: Contact Eve Golden, 314.469.9985 or j.golden@sbcglobal.net
North County: Contact Louise Wilkerson, 314.438.8005 or louisew@scglobal.net
St. Charles: Contact Jennifer Rushing or jrush1120@live.com
St. Louis City: Contact Kathleen Farrell, 314.773.2876 or kathleenfarrell@earthlink.net
South County: Contact Angie Dunlap, 636.368.6846 or aok2bfast@hotmail.com
University City/Clayton Unit: Contact Ellie Hayes, 314-387-7082, gizellie@outlook.com.
Webster/Kirkwood: Contact K Wentzien, 314.961.0894 (home), 314.805.6950 (cell) or suitsme.prodigy.net

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Unless noted with an asterisk, all meetings are held at the League office at 8706 Manchester Rd., Suite 104, Brentwood

Centennial: Thursday, June 27, 4 pm. Contact: Nancy Miller, 314-961-6869 or njsmill@yahoo.com
Early Voting: Contact Joan Hubbard, 314-753-0689 or joanhubbard@prodigy.net
Education: Contact Nancy Miller, 314-961-6869 or njsmill@yahoo.com.
Environmental Quality: Thursday, July 18, 4:30–5:30 pm. League office. Contact Mickey Croyle, 314-395-7876 or erwincroyle@charter.net
Health Care: Tuesday, June 18, 5:30-7 pm. Contact: Irma Ruebling, 314-961-4539 or ruebling@att.net
Metro Board: Wednesday, June 26, 4:30-6:30 pm. Contact Nancy Miller, 314-961-6869 or njsmill@yahoo.com
National Popular Vote: Tuesday, June 4, 1:30-3. *Meet at 709 Champeix Ln., Creve Coeur. Contact: Sydell Shayer, 314-434-5116 or slshayer@gmail.com.
Policing Committee: TBD. Contact: Mary Leopold, 314-991-5958

PHOTO REQUEST

Agnes Garino is gathering League photos for a centennial presentation. If you have any good photos from the past few decades or earlier, please forward them to league@lwvstl.org.

Pictured in this 1979 photo are Louella Sayman, Mayor Jim Conway, Mary Greensfelder, Deborah Patterson, Ida West, Debby Waite and Julie Hasl.
WILLING OBSERVERS WANTED

The League would like volunteers to observe St. Louis County Council and St. Louis City Board of Aldermen meetings. Interested?
Call the League office at 314-961-6869

2019 UPCOMING EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 12</td>
<td>Lunch ‘n’ Learn - Mickey Croyle will present <em>Missouri Transportation: Sustainability, Safety &amp; Equity</em>, Webster University’s Emerson Library - 1-2 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>League marchers participate in Webster Groves parade - 9 am-noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>Equality Day Brunch, Clayton Plaza Hotel, 7750 Carondelet - 10-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 16-18</td>
<td>Centennial of the League of Women Voters of Missouri</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Centennial of St. Louis League. Banquet at the Sheldon Concert Hall, 3648 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, 6-8:30 pm</td>
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