STAFF TRANSITIONS FOR LWV JOINT OFFICE

We’re pleased to welcome Chantal Hoffsten as the new Office Assistant for the LWV of Missouri and Metro St. Louis. Hoffsten is treasurer of the Hudson Elementary School Parent-Teacher Organization. A trustee for the Rock Hill Public Library Board, she demonstrated a variety of organization and bookkeeping skills as acting director for the library. She is a troop organizer and leader for the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri. She has a PhD in comparative literature and literary theory from the University of Pennsylvania.

The Joint Office committee received more than a dozen applications and interviewed candidates on Feb. 8. Julie Behrens retired after working in the office for almost 35 years. Her last day is Thursday, Feb. 28.

ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR APRIL 6

LWV of Metro St. Louis will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, April 6. The speaker will be State Senator Gina Walsh (D-13) who currently serves a Minority Leader for the Missouri Senate. Her topic is Strengthening Democracy in Missouri.

The meeting will be at the Brentwood Community Center, 2505 South Brentwood Blvd., from 1:30 to 3:30. Light refreshments will be served instead of lunch. Please plan to attend this free event.

TRIVIA RESCHEDULED FOR MARCH 16

The League's annual Trivia Night was pushed back a month due to snow. Trivia will include questions on women's history in honor of the League's Centennial in 2019. Doors will open at 6:30 with Emcee Dan Dillon starting the trivia at 7 pm. You can still sponsor a table of 10 for $250 or become a round sponsor for $150. Cost is $25 per seat which includes soda, water and snacks. You can bring your own food and/or alcoholic beverages.
WORKING HARD TO HELP KEEP OUR DEMOCRACY STRONG

Let us reflect on the mission of the League of Women Voters. We firmly believe that voter service and citizen education are at the core of our efforts to help citizens participate in our democracy. Citizen education through our Speakers Bureau, Voters Guides, op-eds, letters to the editor and so forth are the best defense against dark forces, unscrupulous officials and corruption. Further, our efforts to help citizens register to vote and encouraging them to turn out to vote by providing reminders and information on voting absentee go a long way toward preserving our democracy. We believe that the strength of our democracy is directly related to the number of citizens who vote.

But we don’t stop there. In February and March, we will be deciding on policies and positions to act through advocacy and lobbying. This is what we call “Program Planning.” Actions include lobbying for changes in laws; letter writing, e-mail and telephone campaigns to legislators or other policy makers; testifying at hearings; producing persuasive arguments; working with other organizations to campaign on ballot questions; litigating constitutional concerns and monitoring governmental bodies. This is very hard work, but we don’t mind it at all because these actions are essential ways to “Make Democracy Work,” the theme of LWVUS. It takes all hands on deck for our actions to be successful.

It must be noted that before League members agree to take positions on issues and policies, we do research so that the decisions are based on reliable and balanced information. We are thankful for our study groups and committees for doing this valuable and painstaking work.

Most recently, the issue of a merger between the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County has surfaced. A group called Better Together has proposed a merger plan and more than likely the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis and other organizations will present plans as well. The Metro St. Louis LWV has formed a study group to focus on this important issue. We are very appreciative for the many League members who have volunteered to serve on the study group.

At the LWV Metro St. Louis Annual Meeting on April 6, 2019, we will present program recommendations for 2019-2021 from suggestions generated by members through units and committees. Of course, we will also approve a budget, elect officers and directors and consider any suggested changes in our bylaws. We hope you plan to attend so you can have your say.

The League of Women Voters of Metro St. Louis has been working HARD for almost 100 years to help our democracy stay strong. With your support and involvement, we are still going strong. This is a great cause for celebration! So, please plan to join us on March 24 at our Centennial Tea as we kick off a year of celebratory activities. It promises to be a wonderful, uplifting experience, with Senator Jean Carnahan as guest speaker. See you there.
The League of Women Voters of Metro St. Louis League invites you to a

Centennial Tea

with Senator Jean Carnahan

to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the St. Louis League

Jean Anne Carpenter Carnahan is an American politician and writer. She was the First Lady of Missouri from 1993 to 2000 when her husband Mel Carnahan was Governor. She was the first woman to serve as a U.S. Senator for Missouri after a 2000 appointment. Her daughter Robin served as Missouri Secretary of State and her son Russ served in the U.S. Congress.

Special performance by CHARIS

When: Sunday, March 24 from 1-4 p.m
Where: The St. Louis Woman’s Club
4600 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis  63108
Cost: $30 each (open to the public)
      $15 for 100th Club members

Menu: Scones with cream and preserves; fresh fruit; cucumber, egg salad and tea sandwiches.

Pay online at www lwvstl.org or send a check to LWV of Metro St. Louis, 8706 Manchester Rd., Suite 104, St. Louis, 63144.

It was March 24, 1919, when Carrie Chapman Catt suggested to fellow suffragists in St. Louis:

“Let us then raise up a league of women voters. ...”
LWV METRO SUPPORTS MSD PROPOSITION S STORMWATER CAPITAL RATE

At the January 23, 2019 Meeting, the LWV Metro STL Board voted to support Proposition S Stormwater Capital Rate on the April 2 ballot using the numerous Natural Resource positions at the national, state and local levels regarding water, water quality, good sewer management, stormwater management, waste management and Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD). Voter approval of the new Proposition S with a simple majority of 51% is required for the rate to go into effect.

The League has been a strong supporter in the creation of the MSD Rate Commission as one of the 15 community groups serving on the commission since its founding in 2000. The League supported previous rate increases using our natural resource positions. The MSD Rate Commission reviewed the Proposition S Stormwater Capital Rate Measure; conducted numerous public meetings and studied documents from technical, financial, legal experts, interveners and MSD. The Rate Commission findings supported the MSD request and found that the proposed rate does impose a fair and reasonable burden on all classes of ratepayer.

If approved, the Stormwater Capital Rate would fund property buyouts, rainscaping (see picture), natural creek bank stabilization, installation of stormwater drainage systems and similar types of stormwater capital improvements. MSD has identified approximately 500 stormwater issues throughout its service area categorized as flooding and erosion. At a projected price tag of $562M, the proposed funding would address currently-identified localized flooding and erosion issues for approximately 30 years.

Current Stormwater Funding is a regulatory fund of 2% property tax and a districtwide 10% property tax for operation and maintenance approved under Proposition S in 2016. Proposition S was a significant step in improving stormwater services. It does not provide an ongoing funding source for addressing future capital improvements problems caused by increased heavy precipitation from climate change events. MSD receives frequent requests for services to correct flooding and erosion issues, but with no funding to address them.

The Stormwater Capital Rate would charge ratepayers per Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs) of impervious area (IA). 1 ERU = 2,600 ft$^2$ impervious area such as concrete, blacktop, and footprint of a home (surfaces that do not absorb rainwater) of a typical single-family residential parcel. An incentive program would be available to residential property owners implementing best management practices such as rain gardens or cisterns. This rate increase will improve water quality in the region and provide capital improvements to fund projects to correct localized flooding, regional flooding and erosion concerns at an average charge for a single-family home of $2.25 per month or $27.00 per year. Use of an impervious rate is widely acceptable as a fair and reasonable rate to fund stormwater issues since the runoff during storm events is the result of impervious areas. Further information is available on the MSD website: www.stlmsd.com.

—Mickey Croyle - Chair, Environmental Quality Committee; League representative, MSD Rate Commission

ENVIRONMENTAL TIP OF THE MONTH

Participate March 31 from 8:30 to 9:30 pm in Earth Hour. Started by World Wide Fund for Nature, it encourages people to turn off lights and all non-essential electric components for one hour and reminds people to do earth-friendly practices all year, such as organizing recycling events or installing energy-efficient appliances. Learn more at https://www.earthhour.org/what-is-earth-hour.
UPDATE ON NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE (NPV)

Both houses of the Colorado legislature just passed the National Popular Vote legislation. The governor is expected to sign the bill. Twelve states and the District of Columbia have signed the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. This totals 181 electoral votes. Only 89 more electoral votes are needed to reach the 270 required to elect a president. Colorado has nine electoral votes. Missouri has ten. Missouri has not signed the Compact. We’re working on it.

—Sydell Shayer, NPV Committee Chair

SUPPORT EARLY VOTING

Early voting provides flexibility for people working two jobs, enrolled in school and/or caring for family members. An extended voting period allows an opportunity for election officials to address problems that surface, such as malfunctioning equipment, problems among election workers, rejected voter registrations, and other issues.

MO House Joint Resolution No. 5 modifies voter eligibility and creates a provision for early voting from the 6th Tuesday before the election until the close of regular business hours on the Monday immediately before the election for both in-person and mail-in voting. For the 21 days immediately before the election, the hours for early voting shall also include 12 pm to 5 pm on Saturday and Sunday. On the Thursday immediately before election day, the hours for conducting early voting shall be 8 am to 7 pm. The Secretary of State is also directed to establish a process for conducting automatic registration of eligible voters.

Some research says early voting is more expensive to implement. However, there may be benefits:

★ Early voting alleviates stress on the system.
★ Early voting helps to prevent errors.
★ Early voting fulfils the mandate of guaranteeing every citizen an opportunity to vote.
★ Early voting emphasizes participation in the electoral process.

There are 37 states that allow some form of early voting. Missouri is one of only 13 states that do not allow their citizens this option. Missouri is surrounded by eight states and six of these states allow early voting: Nebraska, Oklahoma, Iowa, Illinois, Arkansas and Tennessee. The two states sharing a border with Missouri and not allowing for early voting are Kansas and Kentucky. Contact your state representative to vote yes on MO House Joint Resolution No. 5.

—Joan Hubbard, Early Voting Committee Chair
HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE REPORT

It is exciting to observe the higher level of discussion and debate concerning access to quality health care for all among the presidential candidates. While monitoring these debates, the Health Care Committee is continuing to work on the study of various states that have or have not expanded Medicare. In Missouri there are several bills submitted pertaining to expanding MO HealthNet and others affecting those individuals currently on Medicare. We are also following those bills.

MO Senate Bill 76 requires work or community engagement of participants of Medicaid. This bill has passed out of the Seniors, Families, and Children Committee as a Committee Substitute. The bill “...requires the Department of Social Services to apply for a waiver and any necessary state plan amendments to implement work and community engagement requirements for certain MO HealthNet participants by January 1, 2020.” Conditions that meet the work requirement include completion of at least 80 hours a month of any combination of specified work, education, job search, child care and volunteer services. Exemptions for the requirement include those who are under age 19 and over 64, medically frail, pregnant/caring for a dependent child under the age of six or a dependent adult.

Supporters of this bill state that those not working need this little “nudge” to get them working. Opponents to this bill have noted the numerous reasons people lose their jobs or cannot find work. We note that participating in education is a way of staying on Medicaid. The bill states that education includes “…vocational educational training, job skills training directly related to employment, education directly related to employment ....” The Health Care Committee is investigating how the state might be more positive toward those who are not receiving Medicaid by assisting them with the training that would better qualify them for obtaining and sustaining a job.

Please take the opportunity to write your state senator concerning HCS SB 76.

—Irma Ruebling, Chair, Health Care Committee

Suffrage Snippet

In 1917, suffragists became the first group ever to picket outside the White House, asking President Woodrow Wilson, “How long must women wait for their liberty?” These “silent sentinels” stayed on duty in all weather and in the face of threats, taunts and physical violence. Several were arrested for obstructing traffic. Alice Paul was imprisoned and forcibly fed after going on a hunger strike.
EDUCATION COMMITTEE MONITORING LEGISLATURE

The education committee concluded that, among the many education issues, the most important is to fully fund the Foundation Formula, at a minimum to the level in effect before the formula was reduced. This level was established as the least amount of spending necessary to provide students with a basic education. The committee believes there are many ways education outcomes can be improved, however, the lack of sufficient funding significantly undermines nearly all potential improvements.

Members think that the way to address this chronic underfunding is to educate the public about the current situation and its impact on the quality of our workforce. Keeping taxes low is said to be necessary for attracting new businesses to Missouri, which would provide more jobs and revenue. However, low taxes are not the only thing businesses seek. A skilled work force is certainly a big consideration, as well as the quality of life provided to employees. The committee will be working to educate the public about the urgency of fully funding the schools and the benefits Missourians will receive from doing so.

In addition, the committee is watching several bills currently in the legislature. These include two which members feel would be quite detrimental and do NOT want to pass: HB 361 and SB 51. HB 361 would mandate that all school board elections be held as part of the November general election. Supporters say this would save money and be more democratic due to higher voter turnout. Yet, there must be an election in April for municipal offices, so the cost savings would not be substantial. A possible problem with this bill is that a school board candidate could also run for a legislative position, allowing the disclosure of a partisan affiliation and potentially lead to partisan funding of school board candidates. In addition, a higher voter turnout may not result in well-informed voters due to information overload. Voters may not vote for candidates in the “lesser races.” The other bill the committee would like members to speak out against is SB 51, which would allow charter schools to open in any charter county or city of 30,000 or more, even if no school in the district is underperforming.

Three bills having to do with charter schools all provide a greater voice for resident voters in determining where charter schools may be located. For that reason, members support these bills: HB 424, HB 924 and HB 629. A final bill recommended for support is HB 130 which would return St. Louis Public Schools to the elected school board if classified as provisional or fully accredited. Presently the process for the return of governance from the transitional school board back to the elected school board is not clearly defined.

The Education Committee encourages LWV members to communicate as individual voters (not LWV members) with their legislators on both fully funding the Foundation Formula and these bills.

— Nancy Price, Education Committee
LWVUS GRANT FUNDS USED TO REGISTER NEW CITIZENS

The Metro St. Louis League has received another $2,000 grant from LWVUS to register new citizens in 2019. The League will have registrars at more than 40 naturalization ceremonies in 2019. Most are on Fridays at the Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse downtown.

The grant money will be used for cellular service for the ten iPads now being used to register voters, as well as to print brochures and other materials.

At the request of the St. Louis County Board of Election, League registrars are being trained to use iPads for both youth registration and naturalization ceremonies. The Roblee Foundation grant was used to purchase the iPads. The League sees several advantages to online registration:

★ Teaches voters to navigate the MO Secretary of State website
★ Has potential to register more voters with fewer volunteers
★ Reduces errors and ensure accuracy of voter records
★ Saves time, especially for election authorities.

In the final report on the 2018 grant, the St. Louis League said, “Pass-through grant programs like this one are very helpful, appreciated, and encouraging.”

Training of registrars for iPad voter registration is ongoing. Registration after naturalization ceremonies has already begun using both cards and iPads. Catherine Stenger says she is pleased that most new citizen are filling out “Commit to Vote” cards to receive election reminder notices from the League.

VOTERS GUIDE IS HUGE PROJECT

Work on the League of Women Voters of Metro St. Louis Voters Guide is under way! Vote411.org went live on Feb. 23 with an online guide for the March 5 St. Louis City primary. With 897 total candidates and 45 ballot issues in our coverage area for the April 2 election, there is still plenty of work to do. In-person absent voting started on Feb. 189

The Voters Guide is a vital part of the League's mission to educate and empower voters, and we need your help to make it happen. Volunteering times are flexible, and after you've trained in the office just once, there are opportunities to work on it from home.

If you're interested in volunteering or if you have any questions, please call the office at 314.961.6869 or Anne Sappington at 314.703.0640, or email Anne at aksappington@gmail.com. As we tell the
VOLUNTEER CORNER

Voters Guides, Speakers Bureau, Candidate Forums, Voter Registration, unit meetings and various committees—there is something for everyone to help with. Thanks to all those helping to make a difference. The office always has clerical tasks to offer for eager hands. If you have time to help, please contact Barbara Harris, our volunteer coordinator at volunteer@LWVstl.org.


When you attend a board meeting, please remember to sign the volunteer book in the office so we have a record of 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.

—Julie Behrens, Staff

Kathy Satkowski is training volunteers on how to use iPads for voter registration. Check the calendar for future trainings.

TRIBUTES & MEMORIALS

From Lois Bliss in honor and gratitude for Julie Behrens’ years of service to the League of Women Voters. She said the office will not be the same without her.
WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Leslie Becker
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PUT OUT VOTE TUESDAY SIGNS

Remind your neighbors to vote in local elections. If you live in St. Louis City, don’t forget to put out your yard sign a week before the March 5 election. If you live anywhere else, don’t forget to put out your yard sign on March 27, a week before the April 2 election. If you need a sign for your yard, come to the League office. They are $10 each.
**ED REFLECTIONS**

Is anyone else sick of winter? Driving back from a state board meeting in Columbia last month was an adventure that Louise and I will never forget. Then a snow scare led our co-presidents to change the date for the Trivia Night fundraiser. That was the same week the flu forced me to take my first sick day.

As an optimist, I hope we’ll be seeing signs of spring in coming weeks as the League starts bustling with activity. Events on my calendar include a state board meeting in Springfield on March 15, March 16 Trivia Night, March 24 Centennial Tea, and April 6 Annual Meeting. Plus, there are several more candidate forums and the **Voters’ Guide** to finalize for the April 2 election.

Julie Behrens has run the League office for almost 36 years. It will be a challenge finding files without her, but I’m confident Chantal Hoffsten will do a great job for the League.

—Jean Dugan, Executive Director

**UNIT MEETINGS**

*March unit topic - Legislative Advocacy*

**Chesterfield/Creve Coeur:** Thursday, Mar. 14, 9:30-11 am. Sydell Shayer’s home at 709 Champeix Ln., Creve Coeur. Contact: Eve Golden, 314.469.9985 or j.golden@sbcglobal.net

**North County:** Tuesday, Mar. 12, 5 to 7 pm. Florissant Valley Library (room 3), 195 New Florissant Rd. S., Florissant, MO. Contact: Louise Wilkerson, 314.438.8005 or louisew@sbcglobal.net

**St. Charles:** TBA. Contact: Jennifer Rushing or jrush1120@live.com

**St. Louis City:** Saturday, Mar. 9, 10:30 am. Trinity Church, Euclid and Washington. Contact: Kathleen Farrell, 314.773.2876 or kathleenfarrell@earthlink.net

**South County:** Wednesday, Mar. 13, 6:00 pm. South County Police Precinct, 323 Sappington Barracks Rd. Contact: Angie Dunlap, 636.368.6846 or aok2bfast@hotmail.com

**University City/Clayton Unit:** March 11, 5 pm. U. City Library conference room. Contact Nancy Miller, 314.961.6869 or njsmill@yahoo.com

**Webster/Kirkwood:** Wednesday, Mar. 13, 9:30 am. First Congregational Church of Webster Groves, 10 W. Lockwood Ave. Contact: K Wentzien, 314.961.0894 (home), 314.805.6950 (cell) or suitsme.prodigy.net

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

*All meetings below will be held at the League office at 8706 Manchester Rd., Suite 104, Brentwood*

**City-County Governance Study Group,** March 18, 5:30 pm. Contact Debby Howard, 314-434-3073, or Nadida Matin, nadidamatin@icloud.com.

**Centennial:** March 21, 4 pm. Contact Nancy Miller, 314.961.6869 or njsmill@yahoo.com

**Early Voting:** TBD. Contact Joan Hubbard, 314-753-0689 or joanhubbard@prodigy.net

**Education:** Saturday, March 23, 10 am. Contact Nancy Miller, njsmill@yahoo.com

**Environmental Quality:** Thursday, April 18, 4:30–5:30 pm. League Office. Note article p. 3. Contact: Mickey Croyle, 314.395.7876 or erwincroyle@charter.net

**Health Care:** Tuesday, March 19, 5:30 pm. Contact: Irma Ruebling, 314.961.4539 or ruebling@att.net

**Metro Board:** Wednesday, March 27, 4:30 pm. Contact Nancy Miller, 314.961.6869 or njsmill@yahoo.com

**NPV:** Thursday, March 14, 1:30. Contact Sydell Shayer, 314-434-5116 or slshayer@gmail.com.
## 2019 UPCOMING EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Trivia Night, 6:30 pm, First Congregational Church, Webster Groves</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 24</td>
<td>Centennial Tea at St. Louis Woman’s Club, 1 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>General Municipal Election, polls open from 6 am to 7 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Annual Meeting, 1:30 pm Brentwood Community Center, 2505 S Brentwood Blvd</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>Suffrage Tour of Bellefontaine Cemetery, 1 pm</td>
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<td>May 3-4</td>
<td>LWMVO State Convention, Drury Inn, Brentwood</td>
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<td>Oct. 16-18</td>
<td>Centennial of Missouri League of Women Voters</td>
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<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Centennial of St. Louis League</td>
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