MISSOURI LEAGUE GETS GRANT TO MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK

LWV of Missouri’s Education Fund just received a $25,000 pass-through grant from the national League to support its multi-pronged approach to Making Democracy Work in the coming year. We are stressing the “Respect Missouri Voters” message to legislators through postcards, letters to the editor, op-eds and visits to their offices in Jefferson City. Several proposals being discussed in the Missouri General Assembly are designed to negate the reforms in Amendment 1 (Clean Missouri). HJR46 would block Amendment 1’s redistricting reforms from ever being used. If we are unsuccessful in our fight to stop legislative action, LWV of Missouri plans to use many of the same successful strategies used in 2018 to educate voters about the need to have a fair and transparent legislative redistricting process after the next census.

Part of the grant will be used to train local League leaders to be more involved in advocacy. Rural legislators are more likely to listen to League members who aren’t from the urban centers.

The final prong of the plan is pro-active rather than defensive. The League plans to work with Show Me Integrity and other coalitions to gather signatures and educate voters on other initiated measures likely to be on the 2020 ballot that support the League position on election reforms. We are especially focused on educating voters about why Missouri should allow no-excuse early voting like 38 other states (see page 4).

Since former Governor Eric Greitens was forced out of office partly by campaign irregularities, there’s support for a measure to eliminate dark money in campaigns. Several options are being researched that would promote more democratic elections in St. Louis and statewide.

CHECK OUT NEW SUFFRAGIST COLORING BOOK AND BOOKMARKS

Former intern Lexi White designed a Suffragist Coloring Book and eight bookmarks sharing information on the battle for women’s suffrage. The bookmarks include information on Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Virginia Minor, Ida B. Wells, Carrie Chapman Catt, Alice Paul and Edna Gellhorn. The St. Louis League plans to distribute both items to libraries across the region and share with Girls Scout troops as we approach the 2020 centennial of the 19th Amendment. For more information, see the LWV Products link at lwvstl.org. The $5 online cost for each supports this centennial project and includes shipping.
On April 6, 2019, the Metro St. Louis League convened its annual meeting at the Brentwood Community Center. Thanks to our fantastic members who answered the call for help, we had a quorum and then some. A new format for the annual meeting was implemented and reactions to it appear to be very favorable. Instead of a formal luncheon at a cost of at least $25 per person, light refreshments were served (no charge) with the bulk of the time and attention focused on our guest speaker and the business agenda. State Senator Gina Walsh (D-13) served admirably as the guest speaker and everyone present found her presentation to be very informative and interesting. We greatly appreciate Eve Golden for taking charge of bringing and setting up the refreshments.

At the annual meeting, we voted on a slate of officers and directors for 2019-2021. We really appreciate Cathy Satkowski’s service on the board of directors and welcome new board members Sue Williams and Meredith Langlitz. We can’t say enough about the wonderful work of Joan Esserman (editor-In League Reporter) and other off-board committee chairs, Mickey Croyle (Environmental Quality) and K Wentzien (Investment Committee and Kirkwood/Webster Unit). Further, attendees voted to adopt program proposals for 2019-2021. The program proposals were considered by the state board for presentation at the state convention.

We are now in count-down mode for the LWV Missouri 64th state convention that will take place here in St. Louis on Friday, May 3 and Saturday, May 4 at the Drury Inn on Eager Road near Brentwood Boulevard. We are really looking forward to this opportunity to host the state convention in 2019, our centennial year! Due to our burgeoning membership (500 members) the Metro St. Louis League has been allotted 24 delegates to the convention.

A couple of informative and entertaining events have been planned in honor of the LWV Missouri Centennial and the Metro St. Louis Centennial. First is the May 2 Trolley Tour of the beautiful Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum containing suffragist historical artifacts. Second is a fashion/costume show and dessert reception on May 3 at the Drury Inn, highlighting fashions worn since the passage of the 19th Amendment.

One of most important matters to be considered at the convention will be the state board’s recommended and non-recommended program item/issues for the 2019 to 2021 biennium. Although the program adoption procedure is detailed in the bylaws, the process is still very confusing to many local league members. Consequently, a request has been made to provide workshops on procedures sometime within the next year or so.

Before we go, let us get very, very specific about something. That something is advocacy. Please do not get discouraged about pending legislation and the way things appear to be going at the local, state and national levels. Stay the course! Every phone call, email message, and face-to-face discussion to and with legislators does count! Contact your state legislators in defense of Amendment 1, passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), Medicaid expansion and common-sense gun laws, to name a few important issues!

--Louise T. Wilkerson and Nancy J. Miller, Co-Presidents
SENATOR WALSH GIVES LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Senator Gina Walsh (D-13) shared her strong support of no-excuse early voting at the April 6 annual meeting. She said just 12 states don’t offer voters that option. Senator Lauren Arthur’s (D-17) pending bill SB59 addresses the issue. Under current law, a person may vote absentee for candidates and ballot issues in any election in which he or she is eligible to vote if such voter expects to be prevented from going to the polls for specified reasons. This act permits a person to vote absentee without giving a reason. This bill was referred to the Senate Local Government & Elections Committee on Jan. 22.

Walsh said she respects what voters did in November on Clean Missouri and minimum wage as well as their vote against right to work in August. “People spoke very loudly on the petition measures that were on the ballot. There are 34 state senators and Walsh is one of just nine women. “We need women to step up … build that bench and take a seat at our table.”

SUFFRAGE SNIPPET: FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRACY ABROAD AND AT HOME

The newly-renovated Soldiers Memorial Military Museum at 1315 Chestnut St in downtown St. Louis has several exhibits on the women’s suffrage movement. As one poster says, suffragists decided to link their wartime service at home and overseas to the struggle for the vote. With dramatic demonstrations during the war, women reminded the federal government of the hypocrisy of being allowed to fight for democracy abroad while being denied the right to vote at home.

The museum is now operated by the Missouri Historical Society. Its exhibit “We Demand: Ground-breaking St. Louis Women” opens in April 2020 at the Missouri History Museum in Forest Park.

HONORING GOLD STAR VOLUNTEERS

At the April 6 annual meeting, the co-presidents named five more Gold Star volunteers. This year’s honorees receiving pins on an LWV patch were Nancy Price, Cathy Satkowski, Esther Clark, Joan Esserman and Julie Behrens.
LEAGUE SUPPORTS EARLY VOTING

In 2018 the St. Louis League of Women Voters continued the 2009-2010 framework for early voting initiated by the Kansas City League of Women Voters. We compared the processes and procedures with neighboring states and made note that Missouri is only one of 13 states without some form of early voting. Only Kansas and Kentucky share our border and do not allow early voting.

The League advocates for change because early voting provides flexibility for citizens 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 arise, such as malfunctioning equipment, problems among election workers, rejected voter registrations, etc. In response to the concern that early voting is more expensive to implement, we submit that early voting fulfils the mandate of guaranteeing every citizen an opportunity to vote and emphasizes the importance of participating in the electoral process. Therefore, in keeping with the League’s basic mandate to protect, extend and encourage the right to vote, the Missouri League is now advocating for a change in the state law.

During this legislative year, HJR5 was filed, which would modify voter eligibility and create a provision for early voting from the sixth 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. HB994 was filed which also entitles voting in advance of election, without having to state an excuse, but with the hours for early voting including from 11 am to 5 pm on Saturday and Sunday. The Secretary of State is also directed to establish a process for conducting automatic registration of eligible voters.

Despite a letter LWVMO President Kathleen Boswell sharing the League’s support for early voting, the House speaker didn’t assign the resolution to a committee for a hearing. LWV committee members are actively engaged in advocating in the media and to our community partners reasons to support of early voting legislation.

— Joan Hubbard, Chair, Early Voting Committee
THE GRASS IS GREENER—AND SAFER

Lawns are a pervasive cause of unnecessary use of fossil fuel for mowing and for use of toxins, fertilizers, herbicides and fungicides. Some studies have shown more pesticide and fertilizer pollution in rivers downstream from lawns than from agricultural areas. Lawn chemicals have been shown as a major cause of increase in dog cancers; see https://www.nytimes.com/1991/09/04/us/lawn-herbicide-called-cancer-risk-for-dogs.html. Converting lawns into food forests and native plant or pollinator gardens is recommended.

If you need a lawn for play area or picnic space, here is an alternative. First recognize that the monoculture of grass is itself a problem from nature’s point of view. Monocultures have no natural protections from disease and pests. For example: Clover is a low-growing flower that fixes nitrogen and thus fertilizes your grass. Dandelions have deep taproots which helps reverse compaction issues in your soil. Violets are beautiful and edible. These small flowers feed honeybees and other pollinators.

To enable switching from chemicals to a healthy lawn, the following practices are recommended:

1. Test your soil, determine what nutrients and minerals are deficient. Apply natural supplements such as bone meal, liquid seaweed, compost tea, worm castings and fish meal to enhance the fertility of your lawn. These natural fertilizers stay longer in the soil and help foster organic matter in the soil.

2. If you’ve been using herbicides, you can jump-start your natural lawn by planting white clover: scratch the surface of your lawn and seed clover in early spring or early fall. There are varieties that naturally grow only four inches tall (see https://www.outsidepride.com/seed/clover-seed/miniclover.html).

3. Grass roots cannot grow deeper than the blades grow tall. Raise your mower blades to four inches above the soil (or as high as your mower will go) so that the grass can shade weed seeds out. (This push mower can be adjusted that high: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0045VL10O/ref=cm_sw_su_dp)

4. Do not rake or collect the trimmings; use a mower that mulches so the organic matter can build up in the soil beneath the lawn.

5. Water quite deeply but, once grass is established, water ONLY when the grass is looking really stressed from being dry. This ensures that the grass grows deep roots and is drought-resistant once established.

6. Test annually to see if any fertilizer is needed. Use bone meal, liquid seaweed, compost tea, worm castings or fish meal that support microorganisms and provide micro-nutrients (see https://rodaleinstitute.org/blog/10-ways-organic-improves-soil-health/).

--Michelle Salois, Environmental Quality Committee

ENVIRONMENTAL TIP OF THE MONTH

Think very carefully before you reach for the bug spray or synthetic fertilizer. So many good, sustainable alternatives exist (https://pgms.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/SustainableGardening_red.pdf). Compost your waste; the less green garden waste and food scraps going into landfill the better and you get to use the compost in your sustainable garden. Use your compost to help feed your plants, and get worms and insects working for you (from Sustainability Gardening for Dummies).
HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE REPORT

Update on Medicaid work requirements in Missouri: HB183 and SB76 are companion bills moving through the General Assembly. HB183 has passed out of committee and is among House bills waiting for perfection. SB76 is on the informal calendar waiting for perfection.

Effectiveness of work requirements: A federal judge has denied court appeals concerning work requirements in Arkansas and Kentucky, citing that this requirement conflicts with the objective of Medicaid to provide access to health care.\(^1\) States are required to provide additional information to the court. The Commonwealth Fund recently published an analysis of the effect of work requirements on work and health. “A fundamental question is whether work requirements are designed to help beneficiaries improve their opportunities or are structured to sanction beneficiaries in a bid to lower Medicaid program caseloads. ... To address employment barriers in a meaningful way requires careful planning, design, implementation and funding. All these elements are currently lacking in mandatory Medicaid work requirement programs. ... funding might be better spent on initiatives to improve health, such as reducing opioid or tobacco usage, or on well-designed voluntary employment opportunities. Mandatory work requirements are more likely to reduce beneficiaries’ insurance coverage and access to health care than improve their earnings or health.”\(^2\)

Medicaid Expansion: The Affordable Care Act (ACA) including its component, Medicaid expansion, is with the Supreme Court for determination of its legality. The Congressional Budget Office reports that Americans without health insurance have increased to 28.9 million in 2018, a 1.4 million-person increase in the uninsured.\(^3\) Other recent polling indicates that 17% of Americans believe the ACA has been repealed and 14% are unsure if it still exists. Since the implementation of work requirements, more than 18,000 people have lost coverage.\(^3\)

Health care for all: Medicare for all is currently a much-discussed topic for lawmakers and the presidential candidates. The League has a long-time goal of accessibility to quality health care affordable for all. We are beginning to follow developments in this area and categorize various ideas and proposals.

—Irma Ruebling, Chair, Health Care Committee

---

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REFLECTIONS

I’m often reminded that the strength of the Metro St. Louis League is its members. Our many passionate and committed volunteers step up when needed for a variety of activities, including delivering Voters’ Guides, registering voters, serving on committees and helping with League events. I’d like to give a special thanks to Esther Clark for her dedication to the membership database and to Gloria Bilchik and Kathy Quinn, who regularly come into the office to help with whatever is needed.

My first state convention presents a few logistical challenges. Debby Howard helped me figure out how to use the two binding machines to make the workbooks. I’ve been busy getting new letterhead and folders printed, as well as the new Suffragist Coloring Book and bookmarks. I’m looking forward to hearing the speakers share what the League can do to promote election reforms. I’m also excited about Thursday’s suffragist tour of Bellefontaine Cemetery and Friday’s Centennial Fashion show.

The future looks bright for the League, with multiple grants ensuring that we can continue our important work of educating and empowering voters.

—Jean Dugan, Executive Director

UPDATE ON NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE INTERSTATE COMPACT

Leagues in the northwest are working together to get the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact passed by 2020 in the Oregon and Nevada legislatures. If it passes in the coming weeks, the number of electoral votes in the compact would reach 202, just 68 fewer than the 270 electoral college votes needed to win the election.

“I think if we pass 200, we’ll have a lot of momentum, and it’ll become a serious issue for other states before 2020,” Sylvia Bernstein, co-chairwoman of the Colorado National Popular Vote, said at a forum in Colorado Springs hosted by the Pikes Peak region chapter of the League of Women Voters. That is our goal also.

—Sydell Shayer  LWVMSTL NPV chair

STATE CONVENTION SPEAKER STRESSES VOTING PROCESS FLAWS THAT EXCLUDE VOTERS

Amber McReynolds, the keynote speaker for LWVMO’s 64th Annual Convention, has spent her entire professional career trying to improve the voting experience for all voters. She says, “It is imperative that we address the systematic flaws in the voting process that often exclude many voters. We must design a process that puts voters first and we must make the voting process one that is celebrated by all voters regardless of their political persuasion. Systematic reform will improve the voting experience, increase public trust in the election process and enhance trust in government and political systems broadly.”

Also on May 4, St. Louis City Treasurer Tishaura Jones will update convention delegates on defending Amendment 1 and new proposals to improve democracy in Missouri.
VOLUNTEER CORNER

Thanks to all who help the League 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. Her email address is volunteer@LWVs tl.org


If you are heading a League committee, please share a list of committee members. We also would like to keep track of the time volunteers spend on League activities. We have a new sign-in sheet on a clipboard by the front desk to track our volunteers’ hours. If we neglected to list your name, please let us know and we will thank you in the next newsletter.

CORRECTIONS TO MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Due to staff error, the following membership information was not correct in the most recent directory. Please contact the office if you have an update or correction. Membership directories and annual reports are available in the office.

Stefany Brot – 314-740-6919
Joan Esserman – ssrdda961@gmail.com
Margaret Gray – 7386A Kingsbury Blvd., 314-749-3500
Ellie Hayes – 7354 Dartmouth Ave. #2, St. Louis 63130
Pat Soraghan – 20 Taylor Woods, Drive, psoraghan@gmail.com
Chris Wunderlich – 314-740-3847
WELCOME, NEW LEAGUE MEMBERS

Aaliyah Bailey
St. Peters, MO  63376
Liyah.trice@gmail.cm

Don and Gail Crozier
O’Fallon, MO  63366
doncrozier@gmail.com

Linda Fiehler & Donald Jeffries
St. Louis, MO  63109
Lmathra7@gmail.com
wellness@mmwi-stl.org

Cynthia & Patrick Fox
St. Louis, MO  63108
cfox@foxfamilylawyers.com
patrickfox@charter.net

Emily Hartley
St. Louis, MO  63101
ehartley@moddcouncil.org

Carol Karlow
Valley Park, MO  63088
Carol_k@swbell.net

Christy Marshall
St. Louis, MO  63122

Melanie Redler
St. Louis, MO  63130

LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

We’ve been getting a great response to our recent letter asking members to renew their yearly League membership. We hope that you still find the work of the League important to our country’s democracy and our local community. It can only be accomplished with your support. If you haven’t yet renewed, please do so online at lwvstl.org or mail a check to the League office.

League of Women Voters
New Member
Orientation
May 20, 2019
6:30pm – 8:00pm
League Office
8706 Manchester Rd, Suite 104
St. Louis, MO 63144
314.961.6869

Recently joined? Or, interested in learning more about the LWVSTL?
Come to hear how you can be involved in educating voters. Join us for dinner and create your own
loaded baked potato!
To let us know you are coming, RSVP to League by email, phone, or FB.
MARCHERS NEEDED FOR JULY 4\textsuperscript{TH} PARADE

Let’s join together to remember the suffragists that 100 years ago worked so hard to get the vote for us today. 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\textsuperscript{th} parade is an opportunity to show off our history, our service today and our envisioned League future. It will take a commitment of many Leaguers to make it happen.

The parade day will start about 9 am. The time commitment is about three hours. It will likely be a hot two-mile walk, although there will be room for a few to ride. Please email Angie Dunlap at aok2bfast@hotmail.com to let her know if you are interested in participating on July 4. Together we can make it happen.

What Suffragists Wore

League members are invited to attend What Women Wore: The League of Women Voters Centennial Fashion Show at 7:30 pm on May 3 at the Brentwood Drury Inn. Fashions will be presented by the Volunteer Board of The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. The event is free for delegates to the state convention and Hundredth Anniversary Hundred Dollar Club members and $5 for other guests.

Nichole Burgdorf wrote the script, starting by describing what suffragists members may have worn at the 2019 Jubilee Convention of the National American Woman’s Suffrage Association. “She is dressed in the style of the New Woman, an archetype that burst into popular culture around 1890, as bolder, more active, more outgoing and outspoken than ever before. These women shed the layers and bulk of Victorian and Edwardian style along with constricting corsets in favor of a slimming corset—much like today’s Spanx—and single layer of petticoats. Necklines lowered from the chin to show a bit of collarbone, sleeves bared the arm to the elbow, and hems rose scandalously above the ankle. This freer, looser style allowed more freedom of movement, which women’s advocates like Carrie Chapman Catt needed as they traveled across the country speaking in favor of women’s suffrage.

While the colors of British suffragists were purple, white, and green, the National Woman’s Party replaced green with yellow to pay tribute to Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who used the sunflower in several campaigns. Burgdorf explains that white was the color of the closely-related temperance movement. It is also traditionally associated with innocence, purity and maidenhood, so it may have been intended to symbolize the purity and high-mindedness of suffragists’ goals.
UNIT MEETINGS

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

**Chesterfield/Creve Coeur:** No May meeting. Contact: Eve Golden, 314.469.9985 or j.golden@sbcglobal.net

**North County:** No May meeting. Contact: Louise Wilkerson, 314.438.8005 or louisew@sbcglobal.net

**St. Charles:** No May meeting. Contact: Jennifer Rushing or jrush1120@live.com

**St. Louis City:** No May meeting. Contact: Kathleen Farrell, 314.773.2876 or kathleenfarrell@earthlink.net

**South County:** No May meeting. Contact: Angie Dunlap, 636.368.6846 or aok2bfast@hotmail.com

**University City/Clayton Unit:** No May meeting. Contact Nancy Miller, 314.961.6869 or njsmill@yahoo.com

**Webster/Kirkwood:** No May meeting. 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

**Centennial:** Thursday, May 23, 4:30 pm. Contact Nancy Miller, 314.961.6869 or njsmill@gmail.com

**Early Voting:** No May meeting. Contact Joan Hubbard, 314-753-0689 or joanhubbard@prodigy.net

**Education:** Meets again in the fall. Contact Nancy Miller, 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, May 21, 5:30 pm. Contact: Irma Ruebling, 314.961.4539 or ruebling@att.net

**Metro Board:** Wednesday, May 22, 4:30 pm. Contact Nancy Miller, 314.961.6869 or njsmill@ymail.com, or Louise Wilkerson, 314-458-8346 or louisew@sbcglobal.net.

SAVE THE DATE
GIVE STL DAY IS MAY 1st, 2019.

giveSTLday.org
POWERED BY THE St. Louis Community Foundation
DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR LEGISLATORS ARE?

Find the link on our League website http://www.lwvstl.org/. On the left menu, click CONTACT ELECTED OFFICIALS, then Legislator Lookup. This will take you to the MO State Senate Legislator Lookup, where you enter your address. You will see your local legislators, statewide elected officials and U.S. Senators. Then you can click on a name to see address, phone and email.

### 2019 UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Suffragist Tour of Bellefontaine Cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>LWMVO State Convention in the Hawthorne Room at the Drury Inn, 8700 Eager Rd.,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Brentwood. What Woman Wore: LWV Centennial Fashion Show, 7:30 pm Friday free for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hundredth Club members, $5 for other guests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>New Member Orientation, 6 pm, League Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>League marchers participate in the Webster Groves parade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 16-18</td>
<td>Centennial of Missouri League of Women Voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Centennial of St. Louis League—Banquet at the Sheldon Concert Hall, 3648 Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blvd., St. Louis city</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>