

IN LEAGUE REPORTER

8706 Manchester Road, Suite 104 St. Louis, MO 63144 314-961-6869 <u>http://www.lwvstl.org/</u> <u>www.facebook.com/lwvstl</u> @LWVSTL **October 2019**

MEMBERS APPROVE GUN POLICY, LEARN ABOUT ELECTION REFORMS AT KICKOFF

At the September 19 Fall Kickoff, members adopted a gun policy to the 2019-20 program to make it a priority for advocacy: *Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semiautomatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.* On September 25, the Metro board discussed the next steps for implementing this policy.

Speaker Denise Lieberman of the Advancement Project said her group is dedicated to equal access to democracy for all. She said, "2020 is shaping up to be one of the most important elections of our lifetime."

Lieberman praised the League for being a plaintiff in two lawsuits against the Secretary of State. One addresses the state's failure to help voters who move registered at their new addresses. The other is to make sure the 220,000 Missourians without state-issued photo IDs can vote.

Stressing that three generations of suffragists fought for the women's right to vote, Lieberman said election reform is a "marathon, not a sprint." She outlined the reforms in an initiated petition measure supported by the League called VOTE2020 (See page 3). The Secretary of State's ballot summary is being challenged in court, but the initiative will include automatic voter registration and no-excuse early voting.

"We have fought long battles to expand access to the ballot box,"



Lieberman said. She encouraged League members to work to help voters who may be intimidated by current rules to navigate those hurdles.



PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

October is here! Hopefully some cooler weather will arrive with the Halloween decorations. In the League world, we are in signature-gathering mode for initiative petitions. The city unit has approved Prop D. They will join with the STL Approves coalition to gather signatures for this measure to have nonpartisan approval voting for St. Louis City elections. We started gathering signatures on Medicaid Expansion petitions at Kirkwood's Greentree Festival. Petitions are available in the League office for those wanting to gather signatures. Other petitions on election reform initiatives will be ready for signature gathering soon.

Several events to educate and empower votes took place in September. The Town Hall cosponsored with NAACP of St. Louis County, the National Council of Jewish Women and Show Me Integrity introduced over 200 attendees to a proposal for public financing of county campaigns. See this issue for more information on the Honest Elections Act.

Over 70 members and friends of the League participated in the Library Voter Registration Day on September 28. Many thanks to committee chair Catherine Stenger for her planning and preparation and to everyone who volunteered. The voter registration crew is working overtime to fulfill all of the requests for voter registration events. High school registrations have also geared up for fall under the leadership of Peggy Robb.

Our fall kickoff on September 19 welcomed several new members and guests. Eve Golden organized the venue and refreshments. Denise Lieberman informed, educated and energized to continue our efforts to defend voter rights for all citizens. Denise is a key part of the legal team representing the League in two cases against the Missouri Secretary of State.

Going forward, we also continue with our coalition partners to prepare for the 2020 election. The Voter Protection Coalition (VPC) is sponsoring showings of



the documentary *Rigged* all around the metro area. It presents stories of real-life, present-day voter suppression in Missouri and other states. The coalition is also working on ways to get voters to the polls next year.

We are in the final planning stages for our Centennial Banquet which takes place on Wednesday, November 13. The Sheldon ballroom and catering by Russo's make this an occasion you won't want to miss. Since this is our fall fundraiser, we hope that everyone will participate. The Theatre Party is being moved to late winter/early spring.

As you share the details of our celebration with friends, remind them of all the League continues to do to empower and educate voters. Enjoy the fall, the leaves should be beautiful.

-Nancy J. Miller and Louise T. Wilkerson

2019-20 LWVMSTL OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS		
Co-Presidents: Nancy J. Miller, Louise T. Wilkerson First Vice President: Angie Dunlap Second Vice President: Barbara Harris Secretary: Nancy Price Treasurer: Steve Smith	Directors: Eve Golden, Joan Hubbard, Meredith Lang- litz, Irma Ruebling, Jennifer Rushing, Anne Sapping- ton, Sydell Shayer, Catherine Stenger, Carol Straw- bridge, Sue Williams Editors: Joan Esserman, Jean Dugan Staff: Jean Dugan, Chantal Hoffsten	

VOTE 2020 PETITION OVERVIEW



AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

for citizens interacting with DMV and other state agencies



EARLY VOTING FRAMEWORK

that includes weekend + extended weekday voting, while giving local election authorities flexibility and discretion



ADVANCE VOTING BY MAIL

without an excuse or notarization requirement and citizens may request mail-in ballots for future elections



RISK LIMITING AUDITS

of election results to prevent tampering

getting their driver's license + high schoolers engaged in yearround registration

PRE-

REGISTRATION

AT AGE 16

for young citizens

drives



ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PROTECTIONS

to ensure overseas and active duty military voters get their votes counted



Agnes Garino poses with the suffragist cutout at the Greentree Festival in Kirkwood. Volunteers registered voters, encouraged signatures on Medicaid Expansion petitions, and handed out suffragist coloring books and information on the 2020 Census and other issues.

LEAGUE SUPPORTS ELECTION REFORM

VOTE2020 is a statewide Constitutional amendment that has been on hold due to a legal challenge. The Secretary of State's original ballot summary was deceptive, saying it would allow voters to vote at the wrong polling place using the wrong ballot. A new set of petitions got better language and therefore the campaign to gather signatures in Congressional Districts 1, 2,3, 5, 6 and 7 should start this fall.

NOV. 13 BANQUET CELEBRATES 100TH

Join us for our Centennial Banquet on Wednesday, Nov. 13, at the Sheldon Concert Hall. The League will honor past

presidents, including Judith Arnold, Brenda Banjak, Elaine Blodgett, Mary K. Brown, Kathleen Farrell, Agnes Garino, Deborah Waite Howard, Linda McDaniel, Carol Portman, Pat Rich, Sydell Shayer, K Wentzien and Ida West.

Go to lwvstl.org to become a sponsor or purchase an individual ticket for \$100. Please share contact information for anyone you think should get an invitation to this special event.



HONEST ELECTIONS ACT GIVES POWER BACK TO COUNTY VOTERS

Nancy Miller moderated a town hall on September 16 on ethics in St. Louis County government that 217 people attended. Seven county officials spoke in support of ethics reform. Guest speakers included Hal Goldsmith, Mark Mantovani, Rabbi Scott Shafrin, Eric Bronner, St. Louis treasurer Tishaura O. Jones and St. Louis County NAACP president John Bowman.



Moderator Nancy Miller

Attendees received a lot of information and asked excellent questions. They were asked to sign a petition calling on St. Louis County leaders to pass the Honest Elections Act. It would reduce the influence of special interests in the county and give power back to the voters of St. Louis County. It calls for a voucher system, with the county offering voters two \$25 Representation Vouchers to give qualified candidates for each county race in that cycle. Candidates could only accept vouchers if they raise a large number of small private donations, agree to not accept donations over \$250 from corporations or anyone doing business with the county, and participate in public debates.

The Show Me Integrity coalition is also asking for a resolution in support of state and federal reforms to allow for more campaign finance rules.

The Metro St. Louis League is supporting this effort. Other cosponsors included the NAACP (St. Louis County and Missouri branches), National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis, Kol Rinah Congregation, Central Reform Congregation and American Promise, a new group promoting an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to overturn the Supreme Court's ruling in the 2010 Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission case.

STATE PLANNING CONFERENCE STRESSES PRIORITIES

LWVMO held an informative planning workshop in Columbia on Making Democracy Work on Saturday, September 28th. Six Metro members gleaned great information on fundraising, using media, the advocacy process, tracking legislation, and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (see next page). Additionally, we were reminded of the statewide legislative priorities for 2019 and 2020:

> Election Reform Medicaid Expansion Climate Change Environmental Protection Education (Pre-K through college) Gun Safety Reproductive Rights Equal Rights Amendment National Popular Vote

The Metro St. Louis League will advocate for legislation in each of these areas as we continue to provide a robust voter services program, collaborate with others to affect a complete census count, host great centennial celebrations, and make our local League stronger and more diverse in our second century.

ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY SUPPORT EARLY VOTING

In keeping with the League's basic mandate to protect, extend and encourage the right to vote, we began the process last year to advocate for a change in state law through the legislative process. Several bills were proposed, but none were passed. We came to understand that to be effective in advocacy for this upcoming year, community and political partners are required.

We, in partnership with the Gamma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., went before the St. Louis Board of Aldermen and the St. Louis

County Council and asked that they each adopt a resolution in support of early voting and same-day registration for the citizens within their respective jurisdictions and direct the MO General Assembly to enact the appropriate legislation. We report that both agreed to be our political partners in this endeavor by adopting said resolutions. As a result, the Early Voting Committee will use these supportive resolutions as we continue our advocacy with our legislators.

— Joan Hubbard

EXPANDING THE LEAGUE'S DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

At the LWVMO Fall Planning Conference, Cecilia Belser-Patton from Jobs with Justice participated in a panel with Louise Wilkerson and state president Evelyn Maddox. They discussed intentional relationship building and welcoming all voices to the League, including persons of color, youth, men, LGBTQIA and low-income

women. Wilkerson shared the story of how Linda McDaniel and Kathleen Farrell invited her for coffee before asking her to join the board. Belser-Patton called that "propositioning."

"We can learn to move forward in ways that are inclusive...and engage people in ways that we haven't before," Belser-Patton said. She stressed the need to educate Missouri voters on the issues and then get them to vote based on their self-interest and shared values rather than political party.

The board of directors adopted the following DEI policy at the September 25 meeting:

The League of Women Voters of Metro St. Louis is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous

origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

5



Cecilia Belse-Patton listens to

LWVMO planning conference.

Louise Wilkerson during the



RECYCLING UPDATE

The new recycling landscape has caused recycling to be in a state of flux. This is the result of China severely tightening its standards for what waste it will accept. In addition, it has been compounded by recent trade battles impacting both the recycling facilities here in the U.S. and the haulers as well. As you are probably aware, recycling-processing costs already had been climbing.



Locally, waste processor Resource Management has stopped accepting curbside single stream waste. Contamination of recyclables has been the key issue. Check with your local

recycler or city hall to determine how to sort your recycling items. Some cities are converting to dual-stream recycling that requires sorting: one bin for paper and card-

board, with the

second bin for plastics and other container

items. Others have set up drop off points or locations to take your items to be recycled. In Wildwood, Waste Connections of Missouri won the most recent bid and has reverted to single-stream waste, but with stringently outlined rules.

Remember to recycle responsibly and keep items loose, empty and dry; always rinse food containers and drain to dry!

- The six items that you can recycle responsibly:
- 1. Plastic bottles and containers (NO plastic bags)
- 2. Food and beverage cartons
- 3. Glass bottles and jars
- 4. Metal food and beverage cans
- 5. Paper
- 6. Flattened cardboard (NO pizza boxes)



Next month we will have a report on the Missouri Recycling Association (MORA) Conference that was held September 23 and 24 in St Louis.

-Mickey Croyle, chair, Environmental Quality Committee

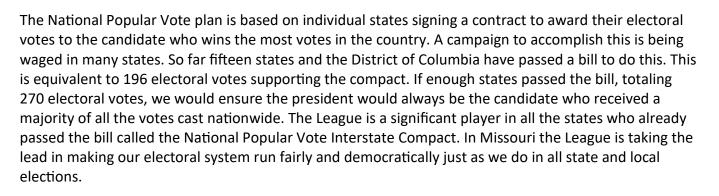
ENERGY TIP FOR THE MONTH

Do you have medical equipment that is not being used that you would like to recycle? St. Louis HELP will accept donations of manual wheel chairs, shower chairs, tub transfer benches, canes, crutches, walkers, seated walkers, grab bars, elevated toilet seats, portable commodes, lift chairs, seating cushions/back supports, folding ramps, diapers/bed pads and Invacare electric hospital beds. These items will be recycled to give to anyone in need. Call St₂ Louis HELP at 636-933-9393 for information.

NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE INTERSTATE COMPACT ACTION

Now that it is getting closer to the 2020 presidential election, there have been many articles and forums on the method of electing the president. The League is actively advocating for electing a president by a national popular vote, where every person's vote is counted equally with every other in the entire nation.

Presently, we have a state-based system in which each state gives its entire number of electoral votes to the candidate who wins the most votes in the state. This is described as "Winner Takes All." Using this method does not guarantee the same result as if each vote cast were awarded separately. Five times in our nation's history the person who received the most votes nationally did not become president. The League believes the present method is unfair and undemocratic.



What can you as a voter do? You can learn all there is to know about the National Popular Vote at https://youtu.be/gPSvvokA1aM. Then you can share your opinion with other voters and your legislators about improving our electoral system so we elect a president who receives the most votes nationwide. —*Sydell Shayer, chair, NPV Committee*

MOMENTS IN OUR HISTORY

For years, the state League did all its printing on an offset press, not so affectionately called "the monster" because it broke down often. It was so large it had its own room larger than the closet we now have. Mickey Hall, the state president in the early 80s, came into the office excited about an ad she clipped from the *Post-Dispatch*. Commerce Bank was offering a computer with the purchase of a certificate of deposit <u>only</u> requiring a \$65,000 investment. All we had to do was ask League members around the state to invest in a portion. Mickey would



keep the records and five years later they would receive back the investment plus **16% interest**. So using our "monster," we printed a letter to all the board members of the local Leagues explaining the great deal. A few weeks later we reached the goal of \$65,000. That day the state League was a proud owner of a new computer. Five years later there were a bunch of happy League members who received their investment plus 16% in the mail. I like to tell this story because it illustrates creativity, faith, trust, and support that League members have for the League.

As a postscript, after her presidency, Mickey came into the office for over 30 years to file and do other needed chores. She moved away about two years ago but has retained her membership in our League.

-Sydell Shayer



YOUNG FRIENDS OF THE LEAGUE LAUNCH EVENT



Looking for your place in the League? Come be a part of history in the making--we're launching Young Friends of the League with a strategy session at **7 pm on Tuesday**, **November 5 at the Mid-County Branch of the St. Louis County Library** in Clayton at 7821 Maryland Avenue. As we head toward a historic election year, the League's younger members have many opportunities to join in the mission of

making democracy work and we invite both members and prospective members alike to come and weigh in on how to shape advocacy, voter services, education initiatives, events and more. We'll wind down by 8 pm and all are welcome to join the group for a drink at a nearby bar afterwards.

Mary Baker	Mary Grayson Batts	Sandra Berthold
St. Charles, MO 63301	St. Louis, MO 63108	Lake St. Louis, MO 63367
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WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REFLECTIONS

I don't recall a single day this summer when the League office was quiet. Our interns answered phones and quickly handled any requests. Nancy and Louise both spent countless hours on centennial planning, advocacy, and other League work. Chantal has quickly moved to update our books and files to prepare for the Metro League to handle joint office finances, while working with Cindy Wunderlich to sort out LWVMO's books and budget. Catherine Stenger was busy training and organizing volunteers to register voters at naturalization ceremonies and 54 area libraries on September 28. Starting in August, Gretchen Moser and others started picking up iPads and supplies to register high school and college students across the area. After the Greentree Festival, I notarized signatures for Medicaid expansion petitions.



Barbara Harris shows up regularly to coordinate volunteers and help get things done. Angie Dunlap comes in often to work on membership and prepare for presentations in small towns across Missouri. Don Crozier, Gloria Bilchik, Sue Allen and other wonderful volunteers help make this League a growing, vibrant organization.

Do you have any extra time to contribute this fall? Help is needed to register voters, gather petition signatures, work a few hours in the office, finalize details for the Centennial Banquet and prepare for key elections in 2020.

—Jean Dugan

League members sign in at the Sept. 17 Fall Kickoff.

MEDICAID EXPANSION PETITION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Missouri Medicaid Expansion Initiative may appear on the November 2020 ballot in Missouri as an constitutional amendment. League volunteers started collecting signatures at the Greentree Festival.

Additional training sessions and events for signature collection are being arranged. Please watch for a schedule to be posted and sign up to join in these important events.

Expanding Medicaid is critical to achieving health for many who do not have any other avenue to gain access to health care. For many this is life-changing and lifesaving. In addition, providing these services will NOT be an extra cost for Missouri. When Medicaid is expanded, Missouri will be eligible for federal matching funds which will cover the expense of providing care,



offsetting the cost. Over 170,000 signatures of registered voters from across the state are required to place Medicaid Expansion on the ballot. Please join in the effort to make this happen!

-Irma Ruebling, Chair, Health Care Committee

VOLUNTEER CORNER

We appreciate the many volunteers who help the League meet our mission of educating and empowering voters, especially the many volunteers who have registered voters in the past month. Thanks this month to Sue & Bob Allen, Marie Andel, Alfrieda Anderson, Connie Anthony, Mary Archer, Liz Aurbach, Harold & Linda Baker, Nicki Batchelor, Cindy Bausola, Julie Behrens, Carole Bendet, Cynthia Biehle, Carole Billings, Annetta Booth, Sally & Michael Boyd, Karen Brawn, Lucy Brennan, Stefany Brot, Kathy Brown, Mary Brown, Nicole Burgdorf, Vicki Caligujr, Sharon Campione, Kaye Campbell, Christine Capstick, Pam Carmell, Camesha Carter, Marilyn Chambers, Jim & Esther Clark, Becky Clausen, Karen Cloyd, Susan Collins, Carrie Crompton, Mickey Croyle, Don & Gail Crozier, Alicia Davis, Jill Davis, Joanne Davis, Winifred Deavens, Gayle Derouin, Katie Dionne, Angie Dunlap, Christine Eason, Mary Eddington, Barb Ehnes, Chris Eschen, Joan Esserman, Kathleen Farrell, Linda Fiehler, Susan Fluegel, Cynthia and Patrick Fox, Cathy Frohlichstein, Gloria Garidel, Agnes Garino, Diane Garittson, Gloria & Paul Gmerek, Yvette Goods, Margaret Gray, Anne Handley-Fierce, Barbara Harris, Virginia Hartley, Theresa Hester, Nancy Hirsch, Cheryl Harmon, Debby Howard, Joan Hubbard, Lisa Humphreys, Nancy and Gene Hutchins, Lakita Jefferson, Donald Jeffries, Chris Jones, Pat Jones, Kathy Kane, Janet Kester, Danielle Kimbrel, Barbara Kinnard, Diane Koop, Kelly Kress, Meredith Langlitz, Becky Langrall, Ruth Lee, Mary Leopold, Marilyn Lipman, Dorothy Lockard, Emily Looby, Marilyn Marcus, Christy Marshall, Judy McCane, Linda McDaniel, Oluwadamini Melvin, Harry Meyer, Kay Meyer, Mary Ann Meyer, Cynthia Miller, Nancy Miller, Becky Minogue, Barbara Mitchell, Cindy Mitchell, Dianne Modrell, Gretchen Moser, Susan Murray, Rebecca Now, Jitka Olander, Eileen Pacino, Joyce Patton, Nancy Pawol, Lauren Pearson, Carol Portman, Nancy Price, Jitka Olander, Kathy Quinn, Kathe Quigley, Barbara Reese, Peggy Robb, Keith Robinson, Cheryl Roland, Ann Ross, Leah Rubin, Irma Ruebling, Jennifer Rushing, Anne Sappington, Joe Schartz, Yvonne Schlote, Jo Seltzer, Molly Shaller, Sydell Shayer, Becky Shimony, Judith Smart, Steve Smith, Neva Sprung, Laura Staley, Catherine Stenger, Katrina Stierholz, Carol Strawbridge, Maxine Stone, Claire Stolz, Beth Sturgeon, Elaine Sweeney, Billie Teneau, Anicia Thedford, Penney Thomas, Pam Todorovich, Ann Troy, Jennifer Urish, Sabrina Tyuse, Sharon Wells, Louise Wilkerson, Bernice Wilkins, Sue Williams, Stephanie Williams, Cindy Wunderlich, Macon Wurthmann, Iva Youkilis, Judi Yokum and Rafia Zafar.

Please contact Barbara Harris at volunteer@LWVstl.org if you have time to volunteer in the office. Look for the yellow sign-in sheet on a clipboard by the front desk that we use to track our volunteers' hours. Let us know if we missed your name and we will thank you in the next newsletter.



Voter Registration Chair Catherine Stenger held several trainings before the Sept. 28 Library Day. Pictured at left are Pat Jones, Janet Edwards, and Debbie Mason. At right are Sheila Hayes, Catherine, and Marian Miller.

UNIT MEETINGS

Topic: Making Democracy Work and Early Voting

Chesterfield/Creve Coeur: Thursday, October 10, 9:30. Sydell Shayer's home, 709 Champeix Ln., Creve Coeur. Contact: Eve Golden, 314.469.9985 or <u>i.golden@sbcglobal.net</u>

North County: Tuesday, October 8, 5 pm. Florissant Valley Library, Room 3, 195 New Florissant Rd. S., Florissant, MO. Contact: Louise Wilkerson, 314.438.8005 or <u>louisew@scglobal.net</u>

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

St. Louis City: Saturday, October 12, 10:30 am. Trinity Episcopal Church, Euclid and Washington. Contact: Kathleen Farrell, 314.773.2876 or <u>kathleenfarrell@earthlink.net</u>

South County: Wednesday, October 9, 6:30 pm. Concord Trinity United Methodist Church, 5275 Lindbergh Blvd. Contact Angie Dunlap, 636.368.6846 or <u>aok2bfast@hotmail.com</u>

University City/Clayton: Members are encouraged to attend a different unit. U City/Clayton is inactive for the time being. For more information, contact Nancy Miller at 314-440-0474.

Webster/Kirkwood: Wednesday, October 9, 9:30 am, First Congregational Church of Webster Groves, 10 West Lockwood. Contact K Wentzien, 314.961.0894 (home), 314.805.6950 (cell) or <u>suitsme.prodigy.net</u>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Unless noted, * all meetings will be held at the office at 8706 Manchester Rd., Suite 104, in Brentwood

Centennial: Friday, Oct. 18, 4 pm. Contact: Nancy Miller, 314-961-6869 or nismill@gmail.com

Early Voting: Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2 pm. Contact Joan Hubbard, 314-753-0689 or <u>joanhubbard@prodigy.net</u>

Education: Saturday, Oct. 19, 10 am. Contact Nancy Miller, 314-961-6869 or nismill@gmail.com

Environmental Quality: Thursday, October 24, 4:30–5:30 pm. League office. Contact: Mickey Croyle, 314-395-7876 or <u>erwincroyle@charter.net</u>

Health Care: Tuesday, Oct. 15, 5:30-7 pm. Contact: Irma Ruebling, 314-330-9063 or <u>ir-</u> <u>ma.ruebling@slu.edu</u>

National Popular Vote: Monday, Oct. 14, 1:30 pm. * Meet at 709 Champeix Ln., Creve Coeur. Contact: Sydell Shayer, 314-434-5116 or <u>slshayer@gmail.com</u>

Policing Committee: Friday, Oct. 4, 2 -3:30 pm. Contact: Mary Leopold, 314-991-5958 or <u>mary.muldoon.leopold@gmail.com</u>

City-County Governance Study Group: Monday, Oct. 21, 6 pm. Contact: Debby Howard, 314-434-3073 or <u>jackhowe@swbell.net</u>





IN LEAGUE REPORTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF METRO ST. LOUIS 8706 MANCHESTER ROAD, SUITE 104 ST. LOUIS MO 63144-2733

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Early St. Louis League

Can you identify any of these women or the gentleman? This photo from the League archives at the University of Missouri-St. Louis just says "LWV St. Louis Group." While the hats are impressive, aren't you glad League members today don't wear gloves?

Oct. 16-18Centennial of Missouri League of Women VotersOct. 23Board Meeting, 5 pmNov. 13Centennial of St. Louis League—Banquet at the Sheldon Concert Hall, 6 pmDec. 7Holiday Party, Location TBD

2019 UPCOMING EVENTS