



# Missouri Voter

Volume 77, Issue 1

The League of Women Voters of Missouri

January/February 2016

## President's Message



*Elaine Mitchell Blodgett  
LWVMO President*

Dear LWV Members,

*"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."* —author unknown

That statement applies to all of us in League. We volunteer every-day to see that citizens know how to vote, where to register, how to vote an absentee ballot and have public meetings about what issues will be voted and who the candidates are and what they intend to do if elected.

My guess is that most of our members volunteer at other organizations besides the League: the food pantry, community issues, library, reading programs, English as a Second Language, hospital greeters and on and on.

It's been 96 years since the League came into existence, with the advent of voting rights for women--why stop there? They formed the organization to help others get registered to vote and also decided that there were so many political issues affecting people and their everyday lives that the interest in legislative issues began.

We've been active ever since in our local communities, counties and state as volunteers. Thanks to you all for your generous contribution of time and talent. — Elaine

### CALENDAR 2016

- February 23—  
Candidate Filing  
Day  
-Jefferson City
- March 5—  
LWVMO Board  
Mtg. -Columbia
- April 29-30—  
LWVMO Board  
Meeting and  
Spring Conference
- May 20 (tentative)  
LWVMO Board  
Planning Meeting
- June 16-19  
LWVUS  
Convention—  
Washington, DC

**General information on elections can be found on the website of the Missouri Secretary of State here:**

<http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/>

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION CALENDAR—2016

**FEBRUARY 23, 2016-** First day for candidates to file for MO State Representative, State Senator in odd number districts, and State Executive Offices, except State Auditor.

*Laura Worstell (Mexico), Lael Von Holt (Columbia) and Mary Merritt (Sedalia) are organizing this traditional League event to welcome candidates, 8am to 12 noon at the Kirkpatrick Secretary of State Office. League members are encouraged to come and help welcome candidates filing on the first day, February 23, 2016. Contact Marty Ott (see below).*

**MARCH 15, 2016** Missouri Presidential Primary Election Day

**APRIL 12, 2016-** Women's Equality Pay Day at the Capitol- *Please mark your calendar to join state League members and other like-minded women's organizations to rally for equal pay, passage of ERA and voting rights for all American citizens.*

**MAY 13, 2016** – Legislature Adjourns



\*PLEASE WATCH FOR ACTION ALERTS DURING THIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENCOURAGING YOUR ATTENDANCE AT HEARINGS CRITICALLY PERTAINING TO LEAGUE'S POSITIONS!

—Marty Ott, Legislative Action Chair

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314.434.0330 (home)

314.570.7053 (cell)

## Contributions Recently Received

### FOR LWV MO:

- a contribution in memory of Milly Cohn from Betty Ann Gilbert.
- 15 contributions for \$1275.00 from the fund raising letter sent in December 2015.

### FOR LWVMO ED Fund:

- a contribution in memory of Eleanor Goodge from John Goodge designated for LWV Columbia-Boone County.
- a contribution from Virginia Van Hove designated for LWV Columbia-Boone County.
- 12 contributions for \$685.00 from the fund raising letter sent in December 2015.

***Contributions are always greatly appreciated. To be tax-deductible make your check payable to LWV MO Education Fund. For non tax-deductible make your check payable to LWV MO.***

Join us in St. Louis for *Celebrate the Vote!* - September 3, 2016



In 1916, over 3000 suffragists converged on St. Louis, MO in the sweltering heat during the Democratic convention poised to re nominate Woodrow Wilson as President. Their demand was a plank in the party platform in support of women's suffrage. Wearing white dresses and gold sashes that said "Votes for Women", they lined the street where the delegates would walk from their hotel to the convention center. The convention granted their demand, adopting a platform plank that urged states to do something about suffrage. It was the beginning of the final push for gaining the right to vote for women. Congress endorsed the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1919. It was ratified on August 18, 1920.

This demonstration was a culmination of St. Louis and Missouri suffragists' activities since the Civil War era when members of the Ladies Union Aid Society formed the Women Suffrage Association in 1867. St. Louis and Missouri continued to be a center for the American women's movement to secure the vote. When the American Women Suffrage Association met for its Jubilee Convention at what is the present Renaissance Hotel in St. Louis in March 1919, it proposed a new organization for after suffrage was granted – the League of Women Voters.

Of particular interest was the participation of African American women's organizations in the League of Women Voters and collaborations to work for racial equality and social service programs. The situation in St. Louis was unique. Historians have observed that the League was the best place for women to do "race work" (work for racial equality) before the growth of the NAACP and other African American organizations.

It is important to share the St. Louis connection to the American Suffrage Movement with our community and state, particularly with new generations of women who have inherited this important legacy and are poised to be important participants in our democracy.

***Our mission is to empower generations of women and all citizens to participate in their government by registering and casting their votes in 2016.***

(continued on page 4)

**Celebrate the Vote** (continued)Suffrage Number *The* June, 1916**Missouri Woman****Central Library, Kauffman and Poelker Parks**

We will be reenacting the 1916 parade with gold sashes for all and historic displays of women's suffrage participants and activities.

The St. Louis Public Library, Missouri History Museum, City of St. Louis, and other institutions and organizations join the League in organizing this event.

Speakers, music, displays, informational booths, and reenactments will be open to all on Saturday, September 3, 2016 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

***So, put it on your calendars and join us in St. Louis to Celebrate the Vote!***

**Local League News*****LWV of Columbia-Boone County***

The Columbia-Boone County group has again been very busy this fall and winter, and things do not show any sign of slowing down:

***Voter Registration:*** Thanks to our member Vicki Hobbs, we connected with students at MU who will sponsor a TurboVote site for voter registration. TurboVote makes it easier for students to register (whether for their college residence or home town), be informed and reminded of elections, and change their addresses online. As part of this effort, LWVCBC will have our own TurboVote site that could be accessible to other campuses in our area or local residents. All of this is done in coordination with the Clerk of Courts office. We will also be working with AAUW this spring on voter registration at colleges and high schools.

***Lunch and Learns:*** For January and February, we heard about the Missouri Clean Power Plan and Obamacare/ACA. Coming up are the Cradle to Career initiative and the Youth Empowerment Zone. Members from other local Leagues are always welcome to attend.

***Community Outreach:*** One of our recent Columbia Access TV program was on the topic of Race Matters, with a panel of three leaders from a local group working on education and advocacy on racial equity and justice in Columbia. We are also collaborating with the Minority Men's Network in a project with the *Columbia Daily Tribune* to encourage citizen dialogues on how to improve Columbia as an inclusive community.

***Legislative Town Hall:*** On Feb. 4 we held a well-attended and lively town hall with four state representatives, two Republican and two Democratic. The questions were thought-provoking; the answers pointed out areas of political division on two of our priority issues – Medicaid expansion and Voter ID. For the final half hour, the legislators each went to a corner of the room to discuss issues in more depth with their constituents and others. For some in the audience, this period was also a time to engage in discussions with each other.

—Peggy Placier, Columbia (More Local League News on p. 6)

## LWVMO Legislative Priorities—2016

The League of Women Voters supports:

- ◆ Voting laws that encourage and protect all citizens' fundamental right to vote.
- ◆ Comprehensive health care and mental health.
- ◆ Funding of safe transportation; roads, bridges, and public transportation.
- ◆ Legislative actions that promote ethical and responsible government
- ◆ Tax policies that provide financial stability and adequate funding for all state services.

## RACHEL FARR FITCH—HEALTH CARE AWARD

The Rachel Farr Fitch Health Care Award is given to an individual or group that has done outstanding work in the field of health care. The nominee does not have to be a member of the League of Women Voters. The service or activity does not have to be a League project, but it must be compatible with LWV ideals and not in conflict in any way with our program positions. Each local League may submit one nominee. Written nominations should follow the format set up and available from LWVMO office.

Criteria:

1. The number of people served or impacted.
2. The project was health care service that impacted the community or world.
3. The number of people involved in carrying out the activity.
4. The project should have taken place in the last two (2) years.
5. Special consideration will be given to other groups that were networked during the project.

Nomination information required includes description, time frame, and outcome of the project; number of people involved; and, resources and other groups used to carry out the project. The winner will be selected by a committee appointed by the LWVMO President.

Nomination forms are available from the LWVMO office ([league@lwvmissouri.org](mailto:league@lwvmissouri.org) or phone 314-961-6869). Nominations are due April 1, 2016, and nominees must be able to attend the presentation at the State Conference on April 30.

## VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES

Do you know anyone who may *not* be registered to vote? Here are upcoming deadlines for voter registration, for your information:

Presidential Primary—Election on March 15—Voter registration deadline is February 17

Local Elections—April 5—Voter registration deadline is March 9

Primary Election—August 2—Voter registration deadline is July 6

General Election—November 8—Voter registration deadline is October 12

## Local League News (continued from page 4)

### LWV of St. Louis

Fall seemed like a whirlwind here in St. Louis. We worked hard and played hard getting ready for 2016! After our annual October Theatre Party, we went into the election business.

To date we have conducted three union collective bargaining choices for St. Louis Community College adjunct instructors, Festus teachers and instructional staff, and Confluence Charter School's Grand Center Academy's teachers. In addition we conducted Tenant Advisory Board elections at 11 sites for the St. Louis Housing Authority, and we are conducting another union representation decision for St. Charles Community College adjunct instructors on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. We had great advice from the Columbia League and highly recommend running elections to raise funds and gain greater visibility for the League in your communities.

We gathered at Forest Park for our Holiday Luncheon and were inspired by Dr. Scott Spurgeon, superintendent of the Riverview Gardens School District. The district has made great progress in the last three years and is a model for urban education. We gathered over 150 books and distributed them to St. Louis County and St. Louis City needy children.

We have dived into the monster April 2016 local election *Voters Guide*. Only 1,057 candidates and about 100 ballot issues. We hold our breaths until the day after printing hoping for no errors.

Our third annual Trivia Party will be March 12<sup>th</sup>. If you're in the neighborhood, feel free to drop by. We would love to have you and of course your cash!

—Kathleen Farrell, St. Louis

### LWV of SW Missouri

Crystal Brigman Mahaney, Deputy Director at Missouri Health Care for All and fellow LWVSWMO member, will present health policy updates to both February unit meetings. Crystal will cover the legislative updates in the campaign to close the Coverage Gap by expanding Medicaid, other important health policy issues the organization is championing and important opportunities to take action.

An upcoming social gathering will give us the opportunity to hear from League members Ann Elwell and Kay Murnan as they share their stories and impressions from their recent trip to Cuba with the League of Women Voters of Florida's *Sisters Across the Straits* tour. Click here to listen to an 8-minute interview about their trip: <http://ksmu.org/post/two-local-league-women-voters-members-travel-cuba>

LWV member Francie Wolff will give a program, "*Their Cause is Marching On: How suffrage was won in the state of Missouri as revealed through song*" at 7:00pm on March 31 at Missouri River Regional Library in Jefferson City. Her program will include singing, costuming, and a slide show; she gave a short program on this same topic at our annual Holiday Party and her stories and songs were a big hit! She has written a songbook on suffrage songs and has performed her one-woman show to many community organizations. Click here for more details: <http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/events.cfm?curOrg=MRRL>.

—Leslie Carrier, Springfield



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Hello Again, League Members:

How swiftly time flies – here it is February already! Before you know it, it will be April 30 and time to bring your “piggy bank” money to Spring Conference. And, my goodness, don’t we hope for a lot of “fat little piggies.”

Originally we thought to bring all the banks to the meeting, but have since realized that that would not be a practical thing to do. So, each League should count their money, and bring only the half for LWVMO to Spring Conference.

My friend Mary says hers is gaining weight all the time. At the recent State Board meeting Peg from Kansas City reported that one of their members has a **BIGGG!** jar that she brings every time, and members are filling the jar.

Remember, supporting this project will help your own local League, and state League. We’re all interested in how you are doing, and what projects you have in mind for your half.

*Peggy*

Want to know what’s happening at the Legislature that is of interest to the LWV?

Read the *LWV Legislative Bulletin*. The “Bulletin” is published once or twice a month during the legislative session and is sent via email to LWV members. Watch for it in your email box.

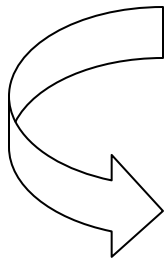
If you prefer to receive a copy by regular mail, please send \$10 to:

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8706 Manchester Rd., Suite 104  
St. Louis, MO 63144



**MISSOURI VOTER**  
League of Women Voters of Missouri  
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



***SAVE THE DATE!***  
***LWVMO SPRING CONFERENCE***  
***SATURDAY, APRIL 30—COLUMBIA***

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