



IN LEAGUE REPORTER – MARCH 2010
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ST. LOUIS
8706 Manchester Road, Ste. 104, St. Louis, MO 63144
314.961.6869 www.lwvstl.org

From the President:

I am very pleased to announce that the League of Women Voters of St. Louis and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Stltoday.com and the Suburban Journals have established collaborative relationship to have the April Voters Guide published as an insert in the newspaper the weekend before the election.

We are excited about this opportunity for the Guide to be in the hands of almost 300,000 Post Dispatch subscribers. We all see this as a win, win, for everyone, especially the voters. The Guide will cover the counties of: St. Louis, St Charles, Lincoln, Warren, Franklin and Jefferson. The Post-Dispatch will format and publish the Guide as well as put it on their website. We plan to have the Guide on their website two weeks before the election for absentee voters. The Post-Dispatch will provide the League with 10,000 copies for our own distribution to libraries and other places. The League will collect all the information from the candidates, preparing the questions as well as preparing the information on the ballot issues.

This is quite a project so you will not be surprised if I say – **All hands on deck.** Come join us in this grand opportunity to be part of a project that is what the League is all about. We continue the work of the League as we celebrate our 90th Anniversary. There are many jobs and skills needed to complete this voters guide. We need your help! “Many hands make for light work.” We need data entry, envelope stuffers, research on ballot issues, phone callers to contact non-responding candidates and more. Email the office, league@lwvstl.org or call the office, 314.961.6869 and let us know what you would like to do and the days you have available and we will get back in touch with you. AND some jobs can be done at home; you have seen the commercial, the business executive in her bathrobe closing the deal. You can do it too.

I would also like to note that the first week in February has been a busy week for the League. 1. Very well attended unit meetings to come to a consensus on early voting, 2. A very well attended, successful and fun Theatre Party (try to attend next year and you will see what you missed). 3. Agreement reached with the Post-Dispatch on the Voters Guide.

I thank you in advance for all you do.

Linda C. McDaniel

2009-2010 LWV ST. LOUIS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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| CALENDAR | | | | | | |
|---|--------|---------|-----------------------------|-------|---------------|--|
| Fri. | Mar. 4 | 10 am | Health Care Committee | Pg. 7 | Cape Albion | |
| Mar. | 9-13 | | Unit Meetings | Pg. 6 | | |
| Tues. | Mar. 9 | 5:30 pm | Environmental Quality Comm. | Pg. 7 | League Office | |
| SAVE THE DATE ----- MAY 8TH ST. LOUIS LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING | | | | | | |

THE LEAGUE SUPPORTS PROPOSITION A

The League is supporting Proposition A on the April 6th ballot in St. Louis County.

Shall the County of St. Louis impose a countywide sales tax of one-half of one percent for the purpose of providing a source of funds for public transportation purpose including the restoration, operation and expansion of MetroLink, MetroBus, disabled and senior transportation, in addition to an existing sales tax of one-quarter of one percent for the same purpose?

The proposition requires a simple majority for passage. The sales tax is expected to raise \$75 million a year. In addition, a previously passed sales tax in the City of St. Louis will go into effect and produce \$8 million.

The St. Louis League has had a position of support of mass transit since 1969. The issue was restudied and the position updated in 1972 and 1980. The League has had a history of supporting mass transit, particularly of adequate funding to meet the transit needs of the area.

The League position states in part “support for a viable public mass transit system in order to save energy, preserve the environment and provide the public with a transportation alternative to the automobile”. The environmental benefits of mass transit have always been a major reason for supporting a good transit system but they are increasingly more important as we face the challenges of global climate change. According to the American Public Transportation Association “If an individual switches a 20-mile roundtrip commute to public transportation, his or her annual CO2 emissions will decrease by 4,800 pounds per year, equal to a 10 percent reduction in a two-car household’s carbon footprint”.

Transit is also a social policy issue. Our position goes on to state “A transit system must make employment, education, health care, and recreation opportunities available to the transit dependent population”. After a sales tax proposal similar to Proposition A failed in November 2008, the result was a one-third cut in transit services in Missouri. Metro was able to restore some of the services with emergency help from the State of Missouri and the Federal government. However, these emergency funds will run out in May. The impact of reduced service is particularly severe for those who rely on public transportation for access to health care and employment in difficult economic conditions. If Proposition A passes, the first priority for Metro will be restoration of the services that were cut in 2009. In addition, the funds will allow Metro to make improvements to all areas of transit services.

Metro has been working to develop short range (5 year), mid range (10 year) and long range (30 year) plans. These plans are being developed including public input that has taken place over the last several months in public meetings throughout the area and on line. Information about this process is available at movingtransitforward.org.

For further information on Proposition A and how you can help contact The Greater St. Louis Transit Alliance at moremetrolink.com

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

"Strength in Numbers"

"We are all on the Membership Committee." This has been the mantra of the League over the last year or so, and it has paid off for St. Louis. Last January, we reported **369** total members to the National League. This January, we are proud to report a total of **380** members to National.

Here are some additional Membership numbers for St. Louis:

April 1, 2009 through January 31, 2010

16 individual members joined

6 household members joined

2 add-ons joined

Please continue spreading the word about the value of a League membership. Remember, one of the easiest ways to increase membership is to add your spouse, significant other, daughter, son, mother, and best friend (well, maybe not your best friend if he/she barks or meows).

Thanks to everyone for all of their recruitment efforts!!

Pat Jones, Membership

Happenings in the Missouri Legislature

Death Penalty Moratorium

House Bill 1683 introduced by Rep. Deekin would establish a study commission on the death penalty. The commission shall report its findings and recommendations regarding the death penalty, including remedies for any deficiencies found by the commission, to the governor, members of the legislature, and the Missouri Supreme Court by January 2, 2013. No executions shall take place between the effective date of the bill and January 1, 2013. This bill has not been assigned to a committee yet.

Senate Bill 930, creates a death penalty commission and a moratorium on the death penalty until January 1, 2014. This bill has been second read and referred to the Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee on February 11, 2010.

The League supports both these bills. If passed, we believe it will get us closer to abolishing the death penalty which is our ultimate goal. To receive current information on the status of these bills please call the League office to sign up for the bi-weekly legislative bulletin. In order for the League to be effective advocates, members must respond to calls for action which will indicate what you can do.

Taxes

SJR 29 and HJR 56 are two of the most horrendous pieces of tax legislature to come before the legislature. They are both proposed constitutional amendments, which if passed would require a vote of the people. They would eliminate the individual income and corporate income/franchise tax and all present sales tax and replace them with a new expanded sales tax.

The new statewide sales tax would include all purchases and services, including food, prescription drugs, medical care, child care and other services not presently taxed. Because the tax is intended to be tax neutral, it would raise the present sales tax to about 6.25 %. Estimates from other groups believe the sales tax estimate is faulty and that it would be as much as 11 %. The bill as it now stands has few exemptions, but each day more exemptions are being suggested. That would require an even higher sales tax. The League supports a balanced and progressive tax system to finance necessary governmental service which emphasizes equity and fair sharing of the tax burden. The League opposes taxing services. It believes corporations should assume a larger share of Missouri's tax burden. The League believes changes in tax law should be by statute, not a constitutional amendment. Therefore the League **strongly opposes this bill**.

What you can do

As of this writing, SJR 29 has been voted out of committee do pass. It is important that League members and friends write their Senators and tell them you strongly oppose this bill. It is a very regressive tax. It falls more heavily on those least able to pay, young families and low income individuals. It exempts corporations which the League believes should pay higher, not lower taxes. Senators who support this bill should be aware that many individuals oppose it. Senators who oppose this bill need to hear from their constituents so that they know that they have support to vote it down.

League members should write their letters and e-mails as individuals, not as members of the League. It is more effective that way. Only the president of the League or her designate may speak for the League. Please let the League office know any responses you receive. Please let me know that you have responded to this request for action.

Sydell Shayer, slshay@sbcglobal.net or 314.434.5116

EARLY VOTING CONSENSUS STUDY

The St. Louis Early Voting Study Committee completed the final presentation at all five Unit meetings in February. Many thanks to the members who attended on some cold February days to participate in the consensus process. This is an important issue and lively discussions prevailed. The results of our study will be sent to the Early Voting State Committee, which will finalize the statewide consensus and report to the LWVMO State Board Meeting in March. Please watch for the final decision, whether or not the LWVMO support alternative early voting procedures.

As Committee Chair, I wish to express my thanks to the contributing committee members, Anne Bader, Mickey Croyle, Janice Dahl, Susan Fluegel, Eve Golden, and Kathleen Kelley for their service and participation. We hope you found the study and process interesting.

Marty Ott, chair

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Here's a "heads up" for the super members who volunteer to be on the Speakers Bureau roster: requests are beginning to appear so I may be contacting you.

Marjorie Courtney, Coordinator

TRIBUTES AND MEMORIALS

In memory of Teresa Vietti from Marjorie Courtney to LWV Information Service.

In memory of Lucy Hale from Marjorie Jokerst and Linda McDaniel to LWV St. Louis.

In memory of Teresa Vietti from Linda McDaniel and Betty Ann Gilbert to LWV St. Louis.

In memory of Millie Wolff from Betty Ann Gilbert to LWV St. Louis.

ST. LOUIS LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING

Yes, a year has flown by. Don't forget to save the date – May 8th to attend the St. Louis League's Annual Meeting. We plan to have an excellent speaker and a good time should be had by all.

90th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Also, remember the League's 90th Anniversary Celebration luncheon to be held on Saturday, April 24th in St. Louis.



MARCH Unit Meetings

UNIVERSITY CITY/CLAYTON

Tuesday, March 9
9:15 a.m. coffee
9:30 a.m. meeting

HOME OF ELISE JOERGER

7136 Kingsbury
314.725.4829
Leader: Carol Portman
314.726.3269

North on Big Bend, 1st stoplight past Forest Park Parkway, turn left, 2nd block on left.

WEBSTER GROVES/KIRKWOOD

Wednesday, March 10
9:30 a.m. meeting

LEAGUE OFFICE

8706 Manchester Rd. Suite 104
314.961.6869
Leader: Mary Long
314.849.7045

On the south side of Manchester, 1 ½ blocks east of Brentwood Blvd, Manchester Office Bldg.

WEBSTER GROVES/KIRKWOOD

Thursday, March 11
7:00 p.m.

LEAGUE OFFICE

8706 Manchester Road, Suite 104
314.961.6869
Leader: Esther Clark
314.416.0366

CHESTERFIELD/CREVE COEUR

Thursday, February 11
9:30 a.m. meeting
Noon salad lunch

HOME OF SYDELL SHAYER

709 Champeix Lane
314.434.5116
Leader: Mary Brown
636.532.0833

From 270 take Ladue Road west 1.4 miles to Chasselle, Right on Chasselle, at 2nd circle, turn right on Champeix, 5th house on the right. White house with red sculpture

ST. LOUIS CITY UNIT

Saturday, March 13
10:30 a.m.

TRINITY CHURCH

Euclid and Washington
Contact: Betty Ann Gilbert
314.773.8719
or Kathleen Farrell
314.773.2876

Corner of Euclid and Washington, one block east of Kingshighway, one block south of Delmar

For ride or more information contact Betty Ann or Kathleen

COMMITTEES AT WORK

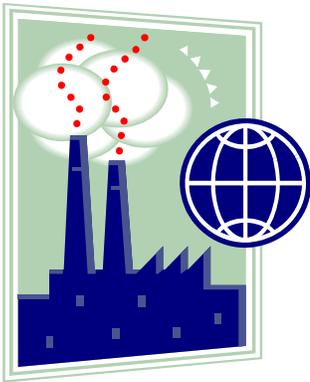


HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

The Health Care Committee will meet in March on Thursday March 4th at 10:00 am. We will meet at Cape Albeon in the Family Dining Room. Anyone needing directions can call Katharine at 636.861.7148.

Katharine Kilpatric, Chair

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE



The Environmental Quality Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 9^h at 5:30 pm at the League office, 8706 Manchester Rd. Suite 104, Brentwood, MO.

Nancy Bowser, Chair

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The International Relations Committee will **NOT** have a regular meeting in March. We are presenting at the units and we invite all to any unit to hear about and discuss the United Nations. Specifically, we studied the Millennium Development Goals which are aimed at moving third world countries out of dire poverty and the extenuating circumstances created by that poverty by the year 2015.

Judith Smart, Chair



VOLUNTEER CORNER

Thanks to those hardy souls who braved the cold weather and snow to come and help us since our last newsletter. Our worker bees this time were Brenda Banjak, Becky Clausen, Esther Clark, Jim Clark, Mickey Hall, Betty Ann Gilbert, Pat Jones and Cindy Mitchell.

Julie Behrens, Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REFLECTIONS

National program planning in January provided an opportunity to reflect on our focus. As is to be expected in the League, we are of more than one opinion. Some believe that taking on new studies and positions is spreading our efforts and energy too thin. “We should focus on our core mission -- _____.” What makes it so “League” if you will is that there are many different ways to fill in that blank. Depending on whom you ask, you might also hear, “Studies and positions are our core mission. That’s how we promote good government.”

In some cases, focusing on everything can lead to focus on nothing. How does the League avoid that trap? The “study > consensus > position” process focuses our efforts on those issues that are collectively identified as the League’s core mission. Action on the local, state or national level comes from priorities set within that framework and is focused by the passions and engagement of volunteers like you. We focus on what is important to those willing to “put their resources where their mouths are.” How do you focus the St. Louis League? the Missouri League? the League of the US?

Anna Mennerick

CANDIDATE FORUMS

| | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|--|
| March 4 | Hazelwood School Board | 7:00 p.m. | HSD Learning Center, Board Room 15955 New Halls Ferry Rd. |
| March 8 | Kirkwood School Board | 7:00 p.m. | Administration Bldg. 11289 Manchester Rd. |
| March 9 | Rockwood School Board | 7:00 p.m. | Crestview Middle School 16025 Clayton Rd. |
| March 15 | Ladue School Board | 7:00 p.m. | Ladue Horton Watkins H.S. 1201 S. Warson Rd. |
| March 18 | Webster Groves School Board & City Council | 6:30 p.m. | Steger School Rock Hill Rd. |
| March 23 | Wildwood City Council | 7:00 p.m. | Wildwood City Hall 183 Plaza Dr. |
| March 25 | Valley Park Mayor & Alderman | 7:00 p.m. | Valley Park Middle School Cafeteria |
| March 29 | Crestwood Board of Alderman | | |
| March 30 | Sunset Hills Mayor & Alderman | | |
| March 31 | University City, Mayor, Council & School Board | 7:00 p.m. | University City Library Delmar & Kingsland |

This is all the current information available. Some times and locations have not been determined. We may receive more requests. The League volunteers are moderators, timers, and card collectors. If you are willing to help with any of these positions, please call the League office at 314.961.6869.

Good Friends, Good Food and Provocative Political Theatre

Friends and members of the League gathered on Saturday afternoon to enjoy a fine luncheon buffet and take in playwright Christopher Durang's award winning *Why Torture is Wrong and the People Who Love Them* put on by HotCity Theatre. A good crowd gathered at the Kranzberg Arts Center in Grand Center to stroll through the gallery, enjoy the great food, and catch up with their friends—all to support the League. The play was a black comedy on America's War on Terror and there was enough irreverent treatment of various political skirmishes to keep us on our toes! The League's own Patti Walley was both co-hostess for the event and stage manager for the HotCity production. Now there's a talented Leaguer. Thanks to everyone who helped with the event: Patti Walley, Anna Mennerick and Julie Behrens in the office, Julian Long, Linda McDaniel, Becky Clausen, Mary Long, Pat Jones, Marty Rulo, Marty Ott, Betty Ann Gilbert, and Sydell Shayer and Janice Dahl for their sage advice. The proceeds will go to both the League of Women Voters and the League of Women Voters Information Service to support our work. Without the following generous sponsors this event would not have been a success:

Anonymous, Anne Bader, Lois Bliss, Mary K. Brown, May Ellen Brucker, Janice & Bill Dahl, Sue Dellbringge, Kay Dusenbery, Robert & Naomi Edmonds, Robert Elgin, Kathleen Farrell & Julian Long, Susan Fleugel, Agnes Garino, Eve & Jeff Golden, Andrea Jackson, Yvonne & Joseph Logan, Mary Long, Tom & Cindy Mitchell, Jeanne Morrel-Franklin, Thomas J. Newcomb, Jr., Mary Beth Reynolds, Sydell & Larry Shayer, Ruth Siteman, Judith Smart, Lolly Wehrli, K Wentzien, Ida West, and Patrick & Vicky Witte.
Kathleen Farrell, Vice-President

Sympathy goes to family and friends of three League members who died recently.

Teresa Vietti, MD was a retired internationally known specialist in children's cancer at Washington University School of Medicine and St. Louis Children's Hospital. She worked with the League's Health Care committee and made presentations at several Unit Meetings in November on the topic of Health Care reform and the Swine Flu.

Lucy Hale was a member of the City Unit and a former President of the City League. She produced and hosted the cable TV show "Impact on Issues" which was shown on the St. Louis Community Access channel. A former director of the Food Ministry at Trinity Episcopal Church, at the time of her death she was involved in the Peace Meal Project at St. John's Episcopal Church in the city's Tower Grove neighborhood.

Millie Wolff generously supported the League financially in addition to volunteering her time for League projects and contributing ideas to bring the League to the attention of the community. Millie worked with Betty Ann Gilbert on public relations projects. Her latest contribution appears on our email responses.

"If you want to be an informed citizen . . . join the League of Women Voters."



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