



*League of Women Voters Information Service*

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## FROM THE LEAGUE BOARD

If you should be asked to sign a petition for an issue to be placed before the voters in 2010, think before you sign. The wording of the petition often does not reflect or accurately state the true goal of the petition. Rather than sign a petition that you have not read in the entirety, go home and research the subject to be sure you want to add your signature to it. It is far better to prevent ballot issues you oppose from getting on the ballot than to campaign to defeat them.

The petitioners must obtain the signatures of a least five percent of the registered voters in two-thirds of the congressional districts. If it is a constitutional amendment, it requires eight percent. Not all petitions will be circulated in the St. Louis area.

The subjects range from eminent domain, taxes, stem cell research, anti-affirmative action, to repealing the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan.

The League has taken positions on some of the petitions; please contact the office for more information.

Sydell Shayer, LWV BOARD

**18 Initiative Petitions  
HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR  
CIRCULATION as of 12.12.09  
17 are CONSTITUTIONAL  
MEASURES 1 is a  
STATUTORY MEASURE  
(Early Voting)**

For more information on the petitions:  
[http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/  
2010petitions/10init\\_pet.asp#2010014](http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/2010petitions/10init_pet.asp#2010014)

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Agnes Garino, Editor

**Pizza and Politics Series**

LWV co-sponsors these community forums in collaboration with FOCUS St. Louis and Holden Public Policy Center. This series is being hosted by the Center at Webster University at the Sunnen Lounge Webster University, 175 Edgar Rd., Webster Groves, parking in Lot H or on-street on Garden

Wed, Jan. 20 Presentation at 6 pm: **The Honorable Judge Richard Teitelman, Missouri Supreme Court.**

**For more information:** contact Nancy Thompson 314.423.2312.

**Feb. 2 Special Election**

*Polls open from 6am to 7pm; Absentee Balloting Begins - Dec 22, 2009\**

*Registration Closes - Jan 6, 2010*

**State Rep. Dist. 57 - City of St. Louis** - To fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Representative Talibdin El-Amin. Candidates nominated by the political parties or by petition.

**CITY OF BEL-RIDGE - St. Louis Co. PROP P**  
SIMPLE MAJORITY "Shall the Village of Bel-Ridge, MO, be authorized to levy a property tax on all classes of real and personal property not to exceed fifty cents on the one hundred dollars of assessed valuation for General Municipal purposes? "YES NO"

(cont. from p. 1) - SHEPLEY  
For many years until her death, she hosted the kickoff to the League's annual fund-raising campaign. Her daughter Lady Dojean Smithers, while living in Switzerland, continued to support the League after her mother's death. Lady Smithers and her husband, Sir Peter Smithers, the model for Ian Fleming's James Bond, as well as her parents are buried inside the "fainting bench" at the cemetery.

Perhaps no one is more well-known for her connection to the early League in St. Louis, than Edna Gellhorn (1878-1970). Edna, "our St. Louis League mother", was a well-educated woman who attended Mary Institute and Bryn Mawr College. At the urging of her husband Dr. George Gellhorn, Edna took on a variety of important

causes including woman's suffrage, civil rights, slum clearance, clean water, and safe milk. Her daughter Martha, at one time married to Ernest Hemingway, was a world-renowned writer.

(For an account of Martha's life and her special relationship with her mother: Gellhorn A Twentieth Century Life, by Caroline Moorehead, 2003).

For information on tours of the cemetery (8-5 every day), go to [www.bellefontainecemetery.org](http://www.bellefontainecemetery.org) or call 314 381-0750. Celebrating it's 160th anniversary in 2009, the cemetery is located at 4947 W. Florissant Ave in St. Louis.

Ms. Shepley's stories and incredible knowledge of the famous and near famous buried at the cemetery demonstrate a visit to the cemetery in the Spring is a must. - Agnes Garino, Metro News Editor

**LWVIS - Theatre Party - MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

*Because of the celebration of the League's 90th year in April, the annual theatre party is scheduled for February in 2010. Make your reservations. Please consider being an important sponsor. A major portion of each year's IS budget is funded by the income from the party. Hope to see you there!*

League of Women Voters  
Presents



Information Service

## *Why Torture is People Who Love*

## *Wrong and the Them*

A play by **Christopher Durang** *Winner of the Lila Wallace Readers Digest Writers Award, the Sidney Kingsley Playwright Award and nominated for the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize.*

*Why Torture is Wrong and the People Who Love Them* is by playwright Christopher Durang. Political humor is turned upside down with this hilarious and provocative satire about America's "War on Terror." *Why Torture is Wrong, and the People Who Love Them* tells the story of a young woman suddenly in crisis: Is her new husband, whom she married when drunk, a terrorist? Or just crazy? Or both? Is her father's hobby of butterfly collecting really a cover for his involvement in a shadow government? Don't feel guilty about laughing hard at this new black comedy for an era of yellow, orange and red alerts.

Presented by:

### Saturday February 13

1:30-2:30 - Buffet Reception

3:00-5:30 - Performance

*Doors open at 2:30*

**Kranzberg Arts Center**  
Located in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of  
Eastern Missouri Building  
501 N. Grand Ave., St. Louis, MO

\$55 per person

*Sponsorships Available\**

\$500 - 6 tickets, reserved seating

\$300 - 4 tickets reserved seating

\$150 - 2 tickets, reserved seating

*\*sponsors will be acknowledged in the*

## A BENEFIT PERFORMANCE TO SUPPORT LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS INFORMATION SERVICE

*Proceeds support voter education, information and service in the Greater St. Louis Community.*

For Tickets call 314-961-6869

League of Women Voters Information Service is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, nonpartisan community service organization that provides information and services that enables an active, informed, electorate. Its work is made possible in part through donations from the community and the gifts of time and funds from the members of the League of Women Voters.

HotCity Theatre is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit professional theatre company produces contemporary, issue-oriented works of theatre that challenge and inspire St. Louis area audiences. HotCity also develops new theatrical works, encourages diversity, and through educational outreach nurtures a life-long passion for theatre. It is funded, in part, by the Fox Associates Foundation, Regional Arts Commission, and Missouri Arts Council.

# League of Women Voters Information Service Receives Major Gift From League Member

Janet Becker, 50+ year League member, has demonstrated her incredible financial support for the organization she founded, the Citizen's Information Resource Center, (CIRC), with a major gift.

The year was 1976, the bicentennial and presidential election year, when she persuaded funders to make contributions to this new 501c3 tax-deductible education "arm" of the League. CIRC provided voter hotlines, publications, a year-round telephone information service and citizen-participation workshops. Janet served as president of the LWV of Metropolitan St. Louis from 1975-77. Janet was quoted in an article in the Fall 1980 issue of the Metro News, while League had provided her many satisfying experiences, her "greatest pleasure is seeing the success of CIRC". CIRC was later renamed the League of Women Voters Information Service (IS).

The generous gift of bonds from Janet and her husband Dr. Bernard Becker, through their Horncrest Foundation, will provide valuable resources for the Information Service. The League has set up an investment committee that will investigate the best ways to invest the funds for current and future IS needs and programs. There are no restrictions placed on the usage of the funds by the Information Service.

Before serving as Metro's president, Janet was University City League President, which she joined in 1958. Two of Janet's passions have been human rights and housing. She has continued her involvement in the League over the years, including attending League unit meetings.

At one time she served as an assistant to then State Senator Harriett Woods. Dr. Becker is the retired chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at Washington University.

The Beckers' generosity is not only to be commended, but it is an example to many League members who personally know the value of the League in their lives and in the community. Thank you Janet and Bernie, from current and future Leaguers and St. Louis area residents who take advantage of the many election and education/information services of the LWVIS.

## Sharing the History of St. Louis and the Suffrage Movement

Getting to know those who made History. That's what local historian and author Carol Ferring Shepley has been doing for the last 5 + years. Ms. Shepley, who spoke at the League Holiday lunch at Cafe Demenil, highlighted "St. Louis and the Suffrage Movement" -- St. Louis the hotbed of the women's movement around the turn of the 20th century.

Ms. Shepley is author of Movers and Shakers, Scalawags and Suffragettes: Tales from Bellefontaine Cemetery. Her research that resulted in the book, which was commissioned by the Bellefontaine Cemetery board, focuses on the lives of 87 notable St. Louisans.

Her slide presentation fascinated some 70 League members and friends with her knowledge of suffragettes and others, who are buried at the north city cemetery. Expanding more than 300 acres with 14 miles of roads, the cemetery is the resting place of more than 86,000, including many prominent persons connected to St. Louis.

Founded in 1849 by some 15 leading citizens with: "no bias to anyone", it includes the non-sectarian Hotchkiss Chapel named for cemetery designer and landscape architect

Almerin Hotchkiss, two beautiful lakes (the Lake District), a pergola, and columbarian.

Ms. Shepley points to a number of successful women and men buried at Bellefontaine, who were early proponents of women's rights.

Known to many students of the suffrage movement, Virginia Minor (1824-1894) founded the Women's Suffrage Association of Missouri, holding in 1869 a meeting of the National Women's Suffrage Association in St. Louis. She and her husband filed suit contending that the 14th Amendment gives women the right to vote. She was defeated all the way to the US Supreme Court. Each year her group petitioned the Missouri Legislature for rights, by 1899 Missouri had some of the most liberal laws in the nation.

Personally known to many "old-time" Leaguers was Luella Sayman (1876-1974). Luella, whose husband made his fortune in The Sayman Soap Company, was an incredibly strong supporter of the League.

(cont. on p. 2)