



League of Women Voters Information Service

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### Foundations

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**Tax-deductible contributions and tributes can be sent to:**

***League of Women Voters/  
 Information Service  
 8706 Manchester Rd., Ste. 104  
 St. Louis, MO 63144  
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*Contributions in support of the League's information and education services are always appreciated.*

**website:** [www.lwvstl.org](http://www.lwvstl.org)  
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## **ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT - LWVIS**

It has been a busy and eventful year for the Information Service that is responsible for the Voter Service and education work of the League. This is where those tax-deductible dollars are used. This is a major part of our work to serve our community. It is not possible to talk about the work of the League without thanking all the many League members who do the work; without you none of this would happen.

My thoughts of the year make me catch my breath and say we did it, as the League always does.

We stretched ourselves and acted quickly to meet a grant deadline in the special program we had on "Sisters on the Planet" about climate change, a priority of our national organization.

We had an incredible surprise and gift this year when Janet and Bernard Becker gave the Information Service a donation of more than \$300,000. We are so very grateful for such a gift that will enable us to do even more for the community in education and voter service programs.

Janet has always been involved in all the League was doing. In 1976 she and others decided that the League needed a tax-deductible organization to receive money to assist in voter service activities so the Citizen's Information Resource Center (CIRC) was organized and later became the Information Service.

We did our usual Candidate Forums for special and April local elections. Many members stepped up and served as moderators, timers and collectors of questions for each of the 12 forums we had. We received thanks and appreciation from the candidates and the voters for this service.

SEE REPORT ON VOTERS GUIDE.

*Linda McDaniel, Co-President  
LWVSTL & LWVIS*

## **LEAGUE and ELECTIONS - VOTERS SERVICE - Some Impressive Statistics**

### **Candidate Forums**

The League co-sponsored and moderated 11 candidate forums for city government offices and school boards in St. Louis County leading up to the April 6, 2010 election. The League also moderated a forum for Democratic candidates running for the 73<sup>rd</sup> MO House District. Attendance at the forums varied, but most were well-attended. In fact, several of the forums had close to 100 people in attendance.

**Candidate Forum Volunteers included:** Debby Howard, Patti Walley, Marty Ott, Kathleen Farrell, Nancy Thompson, Karen Dahman, Esther Clark, Marjorie Courtney, Barbara Elbrecht, Doris Buzzell, Mary Beth Reynolds, Dixie Buford, Carol Portman, Nancy Miller, Linda McDaniel, Kathleen Kelly, Sydell Shayer, Norma Jean Downey, Judith Smart, Mary Long, Brenda Banjak, K Wentzien, Kay Dusenbery, Gail Hafer, Pat Jones, Lois Bliss, Denny Joerger, and Ida West.

*Pat Jones, Candidate Forum Volunteer Coordinator*

### **Speakers Bureau**

The League continues to respond to organizations' requests, including schools, religious and civic groups, for speakers on a variety of topics related to the League, voting and other topics. Speakers included: Arlene Nickels, K Wentzien, Norma Jean Downey, and others who volunteer to represent the League in the community.

*Marjorie Courtney, Coordinator*

### **Voter Information Phone Volunteers**

13 volunteers answered the phones at the office on a regular basis: Brenda Banjak, Nancy Bowser, Mary Brown, Doris Buzzell, Esther Clark, Becky Clausen, Marj Courtney, Sue Dellbringge, Susan Fluegel, Betty Ann Gilbert, Pat Jones, Cindy Mitchell, and Mary Beth Reynolds. They worked 243 hours and answered more than 3,000 telephone calls seeking information from the League.

*Julie Behrens, Staff*

### **2010 Election Calendar**

Filings closed for August Primary

**June 8** - Special Election for the City of Bella Villa Mayor runoff.

**July 7** - last day to register to vote for primary

**August 3** - Missouri primary election

**October 6** - Last day to register to vote for general election

**Nov. 2** - General Election - including US Senate, House Districts

### **EQUALITY DAY CELEBRATION -August 26<sup>th</sup>**

**The League and the YWCA Metro St. Louis** are co-sponsoring an event on the anniversary date of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. The celebration will take place at the YWCA Phyllis Wheatley Heritage Center. Anna Eleanor Roosevelt is the featured speaker, with additional presentations with a local emphasis also planned. Look for information in the next Metro News.

## 90 FANTASTIC YEARS: League of Women Voters

The 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the League of Women Voters was celebrated at a luncheon of the League of Women Voters of Missouri on April 24<sup>th</sup>. League members and friends from across the state attended.

The decision to establish the League was made in St. Louis in 1919 when the Suffragists were meeting at their Jubilee Convention at the Statler Hotel, now the Renaissance. Delegates realizing the amendment granting women the right to vote was about to pass asked what now.

The next year at a meeting in Chicago the League of Women Voters adopted by-laws. It was formerly organized with St. Louisan Edna Gellhorn as First Vice President. Leagues across the nation are celebrating what and who have done so much in the years since that meeting.

***The event's program, Women: Then, Now and Tomorrow was presented by Vivian Eveloff, Executive Director of the Sue Shear Institute and Jo Mannies, a political reporter for the on-line news media, the Beacon, and formerly with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*** Both spoke of the role of women in the political context and how they have often filled unexpected and before-the-times roles, such as two women who were elected to school boards in the late 1800s, long before women got the right to vote.

They discussed how women have persisted, working to gain their place in all aspects of society. The number of women serving in elected, appointed and business positions remains low. It is up to the women of today to mentor, support and encourage women to take that step where we have not been, but belong.

***The Missouri League recognized its 50-year members, many of whom were in attendance. St. Louis Leaguer Janet Becker, University City, was one of seven members, one from each local League recognized as outstanding member.***

A historic quilt with each block representing a famous woman in the suffrage movement and the continued fight for women's rights was won by St. Louisan Carolyn Nolan in the raffle drawing. Seventeen women were represented in the quilt beginning with Abigail Adams and including Phoebe Wilson Cousins, the first woman law graduate in the state of Missouri. The quilt was hand-made by League members and friends across the state. The celebration marked the end of 90 successful years and many more successes to come.

## A Film – Vehicle for Change

Some 100 Leaguers and community members had the opportunity to learn about and see excerpts from "Haiti Mamba Mirak" - Peanut Butter Miracle, a film in progress by award-winning filmmakers Lori Dowd and Frank Popper. The presentation was part of the League's Annual Meeting in April.

The filmmakers shared with the audience three clips that are part of their documentary film project telling the story of medical innovators, social entrepreneurs and the fight against malnutrition in Haiti—an attempt to change the approach from one of rescue to one of sustainable local development. The clips were compelling and Dowd and Popper's devotion to the project was obvious.

Part of this effort to eradicate malnutrition is the development of a peanut mixture that is relatively easy to make, package and move. In addition it's a ready-to-eat food from a native-Haitian product that doesn't require fertilizer and is easy to feed to children.

Dowd and Popper and their video revealed a number of facts about this incredibly poor country, the poorest on the continent, with no infrastructure and negative economic growth. Almost everything has to be imported. 80% of Haitians live in poverty and 25% die by 40. One of the most encouraging bits of information: 4-6 weeks of "medical" (peanut butter miracle) treatment can stop malnutrition.

We look forward to seeing the finished film. Thought-provoking and educational, it reveals the important struggles, realities, perseverance and basic survival of the passionate team that strives to help thousands of children with this "peanut butter miracle" supplement.



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## ***LWV Joins Media to Produce April Voters Guide***

### ***Job Well Done! Thanks to Dozens of Leaguers and NOW - August 3<sup>rd</sup> Voters Guide***

We did a really good job on the April Voters Guide. So says the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. We are on for the August Guide. The job will be a bit easier this time. There will be about 400 candidates and significantly fewer ballot initiatives, although we won't know for sure until final certification.

Mailings to candidates need to go out right after Memorial Day with candidate responses due approximately June 13<sup>th</sup>. Follow-up with those who don't respond by the deadline, ballot initiative research, candidate data entry, and proofreading will be done the middle of June. Guide distribution is scheduled for mid-July. Call the office now (961-6869) to be part of this project. Look for email alerts with specific dates, times, and tasks that can use your expertise and energy!

***Because of the incredible efforts of League members, the League successfully prepared a six-county April 6 Voters Guide in cooperation with the Post-Dispatch, stltoday.com and the Suburban Journals.***

We procured contact information for more than 950 candidates, prepared a candidate questionnaire that could be filled out either in hard copy or on-line and mailed letters with that questionnaire to all candidates. Two weeks later, League volunteers attempted to track down all those who had not returned those questions. More than 20 volunteers learned the Post-Dispatch data entry system and began the tedious task of entering all of the returned data manually. Others edited their submissions and tracked down all of those missing details about who had really served in what offices when. More than 10 volunteers researched almost 100 ballot initiatives. We learned a lot about school district bonds, street lights, water connections,

zoning, and even the medicinal use of marijuana! We debated "what does the proposition really call for" and "what do voters need to know" over and over in the office and over email.

The office was filled with volunteers seven days a week for three weeks. But we got it done and ahead of schedule! More than 300,000 Post-Dispatch subscribers saw the Guide and even more accessed it through STL.com. The League website was linked to STL.com and our logo, mission statement, and letter from Co-President Linda McDaniel were prominently featured on the Guide's back page. More than 20 volunteers also delivered 10,000 copies of the Guide to Schnucks, Starbucks, libraries and other community drop-offs in all six counties.

**It is impossible to list all of the volunteers who worked on the Guide here. We can't thank our volunteers enough. And certainly not our staff, Anna Mennerick and Julie Behrens, for their incredible dedication to the success of this project.**

We have received many compliments and thanks for the Guide. And this service to the voters is all due to you, the members of the League. We had more than 50 members volunteer to make this happen, some two hours, some much more for a total of more than 300 hours and a value of \$5,000 in volunteer work. I hope each of you is proud of your part in making this Voters Guide a work of belief in our democracy.

We'll be calling on all of you, previous and new volunteers, to make the August Voters Guide, another successful project for both the League, the media and most importantly the voters.

***Kathleen Farrell, Vice-President & Linda McDaniel, Co-President LWVSTL & LWVIS***