



# METRO NEWS

Summer 2015

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## LWVMSTL KICKOFF: FERGUSON and MORE

Enthusiastic, hard working, dedicated — just a few of the adjectives to describe the two speakers at the LWVMSTL fall kickoff meeting September 16. More than 70 Leaguers came to hear Ferguson Township Democratic Committee woman Patricia Bynes and Cara Spencer, 20<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderwomen City of St. Louis, discuss “Post-Ferguson: What Comes Next?” and more.

### Political Careers

The young Ms. Bynes, yes she shared she is 35, has become a national spokesperson on the issues in Ferguson. She thanked the League for helping to educate Ferguson voters. The League forum this spring for voters brought out 250 residents, some who were a part of a historic voter turnout in the election.

Her early political activism was as a volunteer making phone calls and knocking on doors during a presidential election. Later she was a consultant in local elections, becoming aware of the importance of those elections. Explaining that from her view issues affecting the community - affect women, she sees herself as the “eyes and ears” for her community.

Ms. Spencer, newly elected, admitted she had no interest in running for office, but realizing that a big swath of her community did not have a neighborhood association, she decided to take on the many issues important to her ward. Key was the shutting down of the Marquette Pool, which she worked to successfully reopen. The 20<sup>th</sup> ward in south St. Louis has had the lowest voter turnout rate of all wards in the city. In the last city election 900 voted in the ward, more than double the usual turnout number.

### Issues facing our Community

While they addressed a variety of topics, the issues facing young people were a major theme. Pointing to the need to get young people positively involved; more young people doing positive things is a key according to Ms. Bynes. Being incredibly blunt, she stressed the importance of getting past some of the profanity, the respectability issue,

and THEIR English. There’s the need to meet them where they are. Give these kids something to do.

For Ms. Spencer, there’s the need to hear out the young people. Missing in their community is the recognition importance of hearing what they want and need, and what can be done to empower them.

### Ferguson Commission Report and the Environment for our Youth

Responding to questions about the report, Ms. Bynes stressed that this is a “long-term fight.” One of the biggest issues according to Ms. Bynes is “police brutality”: there are criminals - both civilian and police and good people - both civilian and police. She stressed that there is a problem for both police who speak up about police, which can mean retaliation.

Likewise citizens who “snitch” may face retaliation. What she saw every day during the protests were “terrified” police and “terrified” citizens. Some of those on both sides now suffer PTSD. Policing is key.

Key issues identified by Ms Bynes:

- Education - young people are not educated, “a generation that is going to be missed.”
- Jobs -People need jobs! Without jobs people can turn to illegal means to support themselves/their families. Education and jobs go together.

For Ms. Spencer, it’s so important to bring teenagers into the conversation. What is it that is missing for you/your community? Important to hear what people want and need. What can be done to bring change? What they can do to fix it? One approach in the 20<sup>th</sup> ward is the Cherokee Arts Camp for the youth. KEY: Empower young people. There is a need, according to Ms. Spencer to strengthen community centers to provide a safe environment and resources, such as computers. We need to figure out ways to remove violence from their lives before asking them to do their homework.

Answering a Leaguer’s question regarding what those who can’t be on the front lines can do, Ms. Bynes urged using social media to encourage people, letters to the editor, encourage good media reporting and yes, visit businesses in the affected areas, such as Ferguson.

Key to the Ferguson Commission Report having an impact, according to the speakers are the resources needed to get things done. There has been frustration. For some there is “nothing new”. Need for implementation of the recommendations. Needed actions decades ago, need to connect the dots. There is a lot to do. Everyone needs to be on board. Now is the time to get to work.

**We want your ideas.  
How can we best  
Communicate with you,  
Our League members?**

Come share your ideas with  
the League Ad Hoc  
Publications/Communications  
Committee—  
Agnes Garino, Eve Golden,  
Gwen Moore and Nancy Miller

**Thurs. Oct. 15 • 11:30 – 12:30  
League office**

**8706 Manchester Rd. Ste. 104  
Brentwood, just east of Arby’s**

**Brown bag lunch  
Goodies and drinks provided**

**Other ways to share your ideas**  
League Communications Survey  
See the **In League Reporter**  
Respond to Survey Monkey on line  
Email to: [algarino@sbcglobal.net](mailto:algarino@sbcglobal.net)  
Mail to LWV office. Before: Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>

?s: Agnes: [algarino@sbcglobal.net](mailto:algarino@sbcglobal.net) or  
314 610-9259

**Nov. 3rd - ELECTION**

**St. Louis County**

FROM THE PRESIDENTS....

**Your Voice, Your Vote,  
Your Democracy**

It's going to be quite a year. We are surrounded with presidential candidates all vying for our attention. We are preparing for a Missouri legislative session that will test our ability to persuade our legislators to encourage not obstruct voting rights, expand access to medical care and improve the quality of education. And our local governments are at a turning point on so many issues: crime, municipal courts, education, and quality public life.

When asked what stands between the public and their public officials the answer is clear—we must have meaningful public participation in all levels of government. That means that all eligible citizens need to be registered, prepared, and persuaded to vote. This is the League's mission and we will be spending the next year doing everything we can to do just that in our community.

Join us to register voters, provide fair and nonpartisan voters guides for all elections, educate citizens about ballot measures and the problems that threaten our democracy: the influence money has on politics, threats to voting rights, and other issues on the federal, state and local level.

If you haven't yet, join us as a new member of the League of Women Voters of Metro St. Louis. Or support our work by attending fundraisers or making a donation of any amount. Give of your time and talent to register and educate voters.

There is much to be done. Join us to be part of the solution.

**Linda C. McDaniel    Kathleen Farrell  
Co-Presidents**

# St. Louis County - ELECTIONS

**TUES. Nov. 3, 2015**

all require simple majority

## MUNICIPALITIES

**Bel-Ridge - Prop. 1** - change from village to 4th class city

**Berkeley** - Charter Amendments:  
**Prop. A** - compensation of council members;

**Prop. B** - Council vacancies;  
**Prop. C** - Departments - creation, change and abolish;

**Prop. D** - appt. & removal of City Attorney;

**Prop. E** - submission of budget within 60 days for next year;

**Prop. F** - Emergency Appropriations procedure;

**Prop. G** - Requirements for recall petition;

**Prop. H** - Limitations on council recall;

**Prop. I** - Changes to Police and Fire Pension Plan including increasing taxes from 11 cents to 33 cents

**Edmundson - Prop. A** - \$75 business license fee @ rental car on auto rental agencies;

**Prop. C** - up to \$1 property tax @ \$100 AV on commercial property

**Florissant - Prop. S** - additional 1/4 of 1% sales tax for streets

**Richmond Hts. - Prop. U** - Use Tax on out-of-state purchases totaling more than \$2,000 per year.

**Prop. V** - discontinuing local sales tax on titling vehicles, etc.

**Velda Village Prop. 2** - change from village to 4th class city

## SCHOOL DISTRICTS

**Kirkwood R-7 - Prop. A** increase in operating tax levy ceiling by 78 cents@\$100 AV. Est. adjusted levy on residential real property to \$4.4754 @ \$100 AV

**Mehlville R- 9 - Prop. R** increase in operating tax levy ceiling by 49 cents@\$100 AV. Est. adjusted levy on residential real property to \$4.2275 @ \$100 AV

## Special Election

**State Representative Dist. 89 - West Co. to fill vacancy created by the resignation of John Diehl, Jr.**

**D:** Al Gerber

**R:** Dean Plocher

**There are no elections in the City of St. Louis in November.**



## LWVSTL MEMORIALS

### In memory of

**Wilton Downey** from Linda McDaniel, Marty Ott, Jeanne Morrel-Franklin & Julie Behrens.

**M. Peter Fischer** from Linda McDaniel.

**Don Phares** from Linda McDaniel.

### **SUPPORT the League's Important Voter Service Work**

*Tax-deductible Contributions*

Send to: *LWV of Metro St. Louis*  
8706 Manchester Rd., Ste. 104,  
St. Louis, MO 63144.

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# CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM: BRIEF HISTORY AND DEBATE LEAGUE STUDY

*In this early campaign season, we think it's appropriate to look back at the history of funding political campaigns.*

Efforts to change or reduce the influence of money on political campaigns have been discussed in the US since the 1800s. Politicians then spent their own money as well as that from their supporters to influence votes including outright bribery and the buying of votes. Political groups threatened corporations with legislation to encourage them to finance campaigns (referred to as the Pennsylvania idea). Theodore Roosevelt was the first US President to support the idea of campaign reform.

The Tillman Act of 1907 was the first that prevented corporations and banks from making direct financial contributions. The 1947 Taft Hartley Act banned contributions from unions. In 1971 the Congress passed the Federal Election Campaign Act requiring nearly full disclosure of campaign finance. The Watergate Scandal of 1974 resulted in additional amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act and the formation of the Federal Election Commission.

## Limitations on Contributions

In 1976, the landmark *Buckley v Valeo* decision, a unanimous Supreme Court ruled that First Amendment rights of candidates could not be curtailed by limits on their spending, but that limits on donations to candidates can be limited in order to prevent corruption or the appearance of corruption. The Court also stated that truly independent spending in elections could not be curtailed, but if any spending was coordinated with a candidate, then it counted as a contribution to the candidate which could be limited.

## McCain-Feingold bill

Limits on donations but no limits on spending have ruled campaign finance ever since. The next major change was the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, McCain-Feingold bill of 2002, which eliminated "soft money" donated to the party rather than a particular candidate. It also doubled the amount of direct donations, and regulated money used for advertising. The most controversial was not allowing corporations or unions to promote the election of a candidate. In 2010 the Supreme Court case *Citizen United v Federal Election Commission* ruled that it was unconstitutional.

Historically, money has always been part of the system. Money can influence policy, but it also has a vital role in the democratic decision process to enable candidates to inform and mobilize voters. Campaign spending is a constitutionally protected right vital to informing and mobilizing ordinary citizens. However, privately financed campaigns may induce politicians to favor wealthy special interests at the expense of ordinary citizens. There is significant evidence that contributions can affect policy behavior. Money can also distort policy if contributions use an electoral strategy to affect who is elected. Nearly all means of communicating ideas to today's mass society require the expenditure of money.

(cont. on p. 4)

Make your reservation for the League Theatre Party

**Join us for the League of Women Voters  
Annual Theatre Party**

**"Dog Fight"**

"An acclaimed musical adaption of the notable film,  
three young Marines set out on the eve of their deployment in 1963  
for one final night..."

Presented by 

At the Tower Grove Abbey  
2336 Tennessee Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63104  
<http://www.towergroveabbey.org/>

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24th, Matinee**  
1:00 *Hors d'oeuvres*  
2:00 *Performance*

The Theatre Party is the major fund raising event of the Metro St. Louis League. We encourage all members and friends of the League to support this entertaining and fun event.  
**RSVP by October 10th**

**Sponsorship Levels:**  
**Platinum:** \$1000.00 (10 tickets)  
**Gold:** \$500.00 (6 tickets)  
**Silver:** \$300.00 (4 tickets)  
**Bronze:** \$150.00 (2 tickets)  
**Single Ticket:** \$60.00

**Yes, I will be a sponsor of the Theatre Party on October 24th**  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsorship level: \_\_\_\_\_ # of tickets needed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address to send receipt to: \_\_\_\_\_

SEND CHECK & REGISTRATION TO: LWV METRO ST. LOUIS 8706 Manchester Rd Ste 104, 63144  
 FOR INFORMATION CALL THE LEAGUE OFFICE: 314.961.6869  
 Or pay online at [www.lwvstl.org](http://www.lwvstl.org)





League of Women Voters Information Service

8706 Manchester Rd., Ste 104

St. Louis, MO 63144-2733

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**Proponents in support of unlimited money in politics say:**

- Money allows the funding of modern communications such as TV and internet.
- Political communications inform the voter.
- Government should not regulate political speech.
- Just because candidates take contributions does not mean that as elected officials they will take orders from the contributor, especially if it is "independent" spending.
- The funds simply flow to representatives who believe in the position of the group that is making the donations.

**Opponents of big money in elections argue that:**

- There is a growing cynicism among the US population based on the ideas that democracy is now for sale.
- The large amounts of money spent on campaigns make Congress dependent on these dollars and responsive to their contributors and less likely to listen to "the people", whom the Founders meant for Congress to represent.
- Giving money to political candidates can lead to corruption or the appearance of corruption.
- Disclosure of spending and contributions diminishes the opportunity for corruption.

The League is currently updating our position on campaign finance through study and consensus to consider First Amendment political speech issues with focus on the extent to which political campaigns are protected speech under the First Amendment.

**For additional reference material, visit the LWVUS website: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), read the articles on Money in Politics in the *In League Reporter* and come to the October Unit Meetings. We will be taking Consensus (taking a position) at the January Unit Meetings. - Mickey Croyle, Committee Chairman**

**Housing Authority  
Election Volunteers Needed  
Thurs. Oct. 22. 8 am - 5 pm;  
contact the League office:  
314 961-6869**

**CELEBRATE the VOTE - Sept. 3  
Put it on your 2016 calendar.**

*To be held at Chestnut from Tucker at 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> streets from Market to Pine. Events at Soldier's Memorial and Kauffman and Poelker Parks in downtown St. Louis.*

*Re-creation of the 1916 Golden Lane - the "Walkless Talkless" Parade which lobbied the Democratic National Convention delegates to put women's suffrage on the platform for the 1916 presidential election.*

*Watch for updates throughout the year.*