



# METRO NEWS

Summer 2011

Vol. 33, No.3

## *St. Louis League Welcomes National League President to Missouri*

***Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS president, visited St. Louis on August 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. She met with the editorial board of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on various League positions and voter service, Diana Carlin -- the national chairman of Kids Vote about civic education and high school voter registration and possible collaboration with the League, and Dr. William Kincaid, the chair of the St. Louis Asthma Consortium about the importance of enforcing the Clean Air Act. She also met with LWV members.***



*LWV St. Louis Co-President Linda McDaniel (lt) and LWVUS & LWVEF president Elisabeth MacNamara at a meeting with League members in Clayton on August 31<sup>st</sup>. For more information on Elisabeth's visit see upcoming issues of the "Missouri Voter" and the St. Louis League "In League".*

### **National League President Meets with Local Leaguers**

What the League does for the community is not only unique, but it's an important community organization, to paraphrase Elisabeth MacNamara, 18th President of the LWVUS and the LWV Education Fund.

In St. Louis at the invitation of the Missouri Bar Association to discuss defending the merit selection process of judges with bar associations from around the country, Elisabeth had the opportunity to not only meet with a variety of community leaders, but with some 30 League members, including several members from around the state.

Leaguers heard her speak to the importance of meeting with these leaders to set forth the League's positions and stress the importance of working together on a variety of issues.

In her meeting with the Post-Dispatch editorial board, she had the opportunity to explain what the League does on the National level, including action on clean air. She also sat in on the meeting of our local League leaders who are negotiating for a continued collaboration in providing voters guides to the St. Louis area. She was impressed by their negotiating skills.

Through the end of 2011, the League will be promoting support of the **Clean Air Promise** -- an effort of grassroots organizations coming together as a community for clean air. "We need to keep talking about clean air ... this is a citizen effort." Clean air is a public health issue. The EPA must be allowed to do its job, she stressed.

The national League has begun planning its voter service activities for 2012. In addition to **Vote411.org** (see p. 4), the League will be developing tools to help Leaguers around the country better serve voters.

The issue of **voter suppression** has continued to be a major concern of the League: what states are doing to make it more difficult to vote. Key for the League is gathering the data to show that these new requirements suppress the vote.

Conversations are needed to explore important relationships in the community for the good of the community. League is an important participant in these conversations. Our actions on the national, state and local levels demonstrate that the League is relevant on all the levels we interact with, she pointed out.

Following her meeting with St. Louis area Leaguers, Elisabeth headed to Springfield to meet with Leaguers there, before heading home to Atlanta on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Summary of Voters' Guide Work Done by LWV St. Louis**

January 2010-April 2011

St. Louis City, and St Louis, Franklin, Lincoln, Warren,  
St. Charles, and Jefferson Counties

- **January 2010-April 2010**

April 2010 Local Elections for St. Louis  
City and 6 counties

900 + candidates  
100+ ballot propositions and initiatives  
420 volunteer hours  
100 staff hours

- **June 2010-August 2010 primary  
election and local ballot initiatives**

350+ candidates  
50+ ballot initiatives and propositions  
230 volunteer hours  
60 staff hours

- **September 2010-November 2010  
general statewide and local elections**

450 + candidates  
70+ ballot initiatives and propositions  
320 volunteer hours  
60 staff hours

- **January 2011-March 2011 St. Louis  
City election**

50+ candidates  
50 volunteer hours  
15 staff hours

- **February 2011-April 2011 local  
elections for St. Louis City and 6  
counties**

1,000+ candidates  
60+ ballot initiatives and propositions  
375 volunteer hours  
50 staff hours

**League was responsible (with Phil Sutin of  
the Post-Dispatch) for:**

- Developing candidate letters and questionnaires
- Printing and mailing candidate letters/questionnaires
- On-line response system
- Email system for candidate photograph transmission (except 4/10 election)
- Follow-up with candidates to get responses and answer all questions
- Entry of information into PD template
- Follow-up with candidates on missing/inaccurate information
- Research/write up of ballot initiatives/propositions
- Proofreading of all entries
- Working with Phil Sutin of the PD on all work
- Proofreading of data entered in PD template and of PD proofs
- Answering all questions from candidates
- Answering questions from sources for ballot initiative proposition/initiatives
- Submissions 1 by 1 of candidate photographs
- Entered all late candidate responses in the on-line Guide system
- Researched all claims of errors and submitted results to Phil Sutin

**The League:**

- met all agreed upon deadlines set by the Post-Dispatch.
- obtained good response rates from candidates.
- had low error rates on submitted material
- coordinated with Schnucks to have Guide distributed in 42 stores in keeping with Post's distribution date requirements.
- distributed printed Guide to over 150 locations including libraries, YMCAs, community centers, senior centers, coffee shops, non-profit agencies, union halls and local businesses(except for 3/11 St. Louis City guide—35 locations)
- mailed Guides to any citizen requesting
- distributed Guides at all candidate forums.

## FROM the Presidents...

What a summer it has been! It is clear that government at all levels needs to get back to working for what is good for the country and regain the public's trust. We need good information and principled thoughtful debate on issues, quality unbiased information on the ballot initiative petitions we are being asked to sign, and a Voters Guide that can help voters make choices in the 2012 election season.

We need to lead by example and help our community improve our political discussions and decision making processes. In other words, THE WORK OF OUR LEAGUE HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN IT IS NOW! Our community is counting on us. Let's all make a beginning of the year commitment to making that happen. Here's what is coming up....

Our **September 14<sup>th</sup> Kickoff** gets us started on the national education study Marty Ott is leading. Our members will learn about the federal government's role in education, sign up to work on different projects, and bring prospective members to join our work.

METRO NEWS (USPS-400-810) is published quarterly by the League of Women Voters Information Service, 8706 Manchester Rd., Ste. 104, St. Louis, MO 63144, 961-6869. Periodicals Postage paid at St. Louis, MO. Subscription is \$1.00 per year. The dues members pay and contributors include \$1 for the cost of a subscription to the Metro News. Postmaster: send address changes to Metro News, c/o League of Women Voters Information Service, 8706 Manchester Rd., Ste. 104, St. Louis, MO 63144. Agnes Garino, Editor

We will be doing consensus on the **education study** at our October and November unit meetings. The Education Committee under Marty's leadership has done a stellar job of researching the issues and preparing materials for our members. League unit leaders will distribute material in September to get us all up to speed for those consensus discussions.

The League's voice needs to be heard about this critical issue and reaching consensus is an important part of crafting a national program position that enables us to advocate on education policy.

Our **development committee** under Louise Reeve's leadership is working on a number of projects that will enable us to continue to do our voter service work and launch new programs.

We begin work on two additional **studies**—one on the national level about the privatization of government services and one on the local level about possible collaborations between St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

Finally, our **new program initiative** for this year is a public program on the question: "What does it mean to provide for the common good?" This is the question that all levels government need to grapple with in their discussions of budgets, public vs. private responsibility, and a fair and responsible tax structure. We already have a number of volunteers who are excited about working on this program.

We plan to accomplish a lot this year. We appreciate your support and will keep you posted!

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

## 2011-2012 KICKOFF DINNER

**Wednesday, September 14**  
**Orlando Gardens, 8352 Watson Rd**  
**5:30—8:00 pm**

5:30 Meet and Greet  
6:00 BUFFET DINNER \$25.00

### "What to do about Education"

GUEST SPEAKER,

Dr. Kathleen Brown, UMSL

Professor Brown teaches and studies educational policies and practices, especially those involving state and national reform agendas.

To register and pay online, go to [www.lwvstl.org](http://www.lwvstl.org) or send name, email, # attending, check to: LWVSTL, 8706 Manchester Rd., St. Louis, MO 63144. Information: 961-6869

### VOTER I.D. Requirement Efforts

Recent efforts to require voter identification to vote have been seen as producing significant barriers to the poor and the elderly.

BACKGROUND FACTS: Current information lists the number of Missouri voters without a current photo ID in St. Louis City County at 29,949 and St. Louis County at 51,708. The total number of Missouri voters without current photo IDs is almost 230,000.

### City Housing Authority Election

The League conducted a special election for the St. Louis Housing Authority on Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>.

We have worked with the Housing Authority for a number of years on these elections. It is a good opportunity to provide a valuable service and become more acquainted with the City's public housing.



League of Women Voters Information Service

8706 Manchester Rd., Ste 104

St. Louis, MO 63144-2733

400-810 USPS

PERIODICALS

POSTAGE PAID

at St. Louis, MO 63144-2733

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## ***League gets ready for 2012 with Vote 411***

The League of Women Voters of St. Louis Information Service is partnering with the League of Women Voters of Missouri Education Fund to make election related material available to Missouri voters.

Launched by the League of Women Voters U.S. Education Fund, **VOTE411.org** is an on-line "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides nonpartisan information to the public with both state and local-specific information on all parts of the election process including:

- Absentee ballot information
- Ballot measure information
- Early voting options
- Election dates
- Factual data on candidates
- ID requirements

An important component of **VOTE411.org** is the polling place locator, which enables users to type in their address and retrieve the poll location for the voting precinct in which that address is located. The League has found that this is among the most sought after information in the immediate days leading up to, and on, Election Day.

**VOTE411** 2012 will include state wide candidate and ballot measure information and selected local elections. The St. Louis League has renewed its agreement with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch to produce Voters Guides for St. Louis City, and Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln, St. Charles, St. Louis and Warren Counties. That candidate and ballot measure information will appear on **VOTE411** as well as in the Post-Dispatch.

**We are currently soliciting funds to purchase the \$5,000 software package needed for this project. 2012 will be a critical election year at all levels of government.**

The League will be there to provide the public with quality nonpartisan election information.

### **Nov. 8 State Representative - District 83**

This vacancy was created by the resignation of Representative Jake Zimmerman, the new St. Louis County Assessor. Candidates nominated by the political parties or by petition must file their declaration of candidacy with the Secretary of State by 5:00 p.m. on Sept. 28th for the special election to be held on Nov. 8th. The district include parts of Overland and Olivette, check county election website for boundaries.