



**IN LEAGUE REPORTER - September 2009**  
**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:**

Dear Members and Friends,  
 Can you believe it is August and time for school and League to get back to its regular routine? Welcome back from vacation and those "lazy crazy days of summer." I think it will be a good year for the League with interesting programs, and emphasis on membership and fund raising for the next 90 years. The League was founded in 1920 in Chicago after the last suffragist convention that was held in St. Louis where it was said, "let us raise up a league of women voters." Please note later in this newsletter the Kickoff Dinner, Wednesday, September 9th. I urge you to attend and bring a friend or two. It should be very interesting and timely for all that is in the news this month. The program is about some young people who are learning about debate and civic engagement. We all may have something to learn including elected officials and the many people attending town hall meetings.

The League is about participatory democracy and the issue of health care is before us with an intensity that we have not seen for a long time. It is time each of us speaks out to our Representatives and Senators about what we think is important to be include in legislation to serve the country. It is not too late. There is much legislative work to be done, and really only one bill has passed the House. Please email or call your Congressperson and let them know we need health care reform that will provide access to the 47 million or more who do not have health coverage. It needs to be affordable and provide quality care. The cost of health care needs to be reduced. Part of the cost comes from the many uninsured who use hospitals as the treatment of last or only resort. We all pay for that care one way or another. It can either be paid for directly, resulting in earlier and better care, or it can be hidden in the charges of hospitals and insurance. Medical and Insurance costs have continued to rise at a faster rate than inflation or wages. It is time to address this issue which has been waiting for action for more than 60 years. As individuals, write your Congressperson and letter to the editor today. It does not need to be long. We can all make a difference especially if you take just 15 minutes to call or email.

*Linda C. McDaniel*

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<b>CALENDAR</b>						
Mon.	Sept.	7	7:30 -3:00	Tailgate Sale		
Wed.	Sept.	9	5:30 PM	League Kickoff Dinner	Pg. 2	Regional Arts Commission
Wed.	Sept.	9	6:00 PM	Pizza and Politics Series	Pg. 3	Sunnen Lounge, Univ. Ctr.
Thurs.	Sept.	10	10:30 AM	Health Care Committee	Pg. 4	Cape Albeon
Fri.	Sept.	11	10:00 AM	International Relations	Pg. 5	St. Louis County Library
Tues.	Sept.	15	5:30 PM	Environmental Committee	Pg. 5	League Office
Wed.	Sept.	23	6:00 PM	Pizza and Politics Series	Pg. 3	Sunnen Lounge, Univ. Ctr.
Sat.	Sept.	26	9:00 AM	Women Walk Before They Run	Pg. 2	Tilles Park

## **St. Louis Urban Debate League Executive Director and High School Debaters**

Over 100 St. Louis Public School High School students debated public policy issues this year in the revived St. Louis Urban Debate League. During the 2008-09 school year, teachers and students from 11 schools joined the program that provides opportunities for students to participate in competitive debate. Students debate both sides of national policy issues and learn to do research, write arguments, and think on their feet as they engage in lively verbal struggles with their peers—all in the name of preparing future citizens for their participation in the political process.

The St. Louis program is part of the National Urban Debate League which has received much media attention, including a *60 Minutes* feature and a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* editorial. This program, launched in 1997, seeks to institutionalize debate programs in traditionally underserved urban high schools. Urban debate programs have proven to increase student literacy rates by 25%, achieve high school graduation rates to nearly 100%, and produce college matriculation rates of 71-91%.

The St. Louis League's first year was a banner one. The program recruited students and teachers for the program, held tournaments and took students to the national championship tournament where they won numerous awards.

Ravi Rao, Executive Director of the St. Louis program will bring two students with him and share the story of the program with the League at our September 9<sup>th</sup> Kickoff. Mr. Rao, a young lawyer, is a graduate of Ladue's Horton Watkins High School and Washington University. He is a former high school and college debater.

This will be an exciting program for the LWV. What could be better than hearing about a program in the St. Louis Public Schools that nurtures thoughtful participation in government and the well-reasoned discussion of public policy issues that makes students consider all sides of a question. Bring a friend who cares about these issues too. They will find like-minded people in the League and hopefully join our work.

*Kathleen Farrell*

## **EARLY VOTING CONSENSUS STUDY**

The League of Women Voters of Missouri will be doing a consensus study on Early Voting/No excuse Absentee Voting beginning this fall. The LWVSTL chair of the Early Voting Study is Martha Ott. The timeline for the study is as follows:

- Aug. 15 – Resource list to local Leagues
- Sept. 15 – Consensus questions to local Leagues
- Feb. 26 – Consensus reports due in State office
- March 12 – Position announced after the LWVMO board meeting

If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Martha at 314-434-0330 or e-mail [martyott06@yahoo.com](mailto:martyott06@yahoo.com)

*Marty Ott*



## HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

Are you aware that the United States is the only advanced country in the world that does not have universal health care? According to the World Health Organization the United States ranks 37th among all countries in health system performance.

In a letter to the House of Representatives, Mary Wilson, National President of the League of Women Voters, welcomed the introduction of America’s Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009. She stated that America is facing a “health care crisis caused by skyrocketing costs and an insurance system that leaves 47million of us without any coverage.” According to the New England Journal of Medicine, 70% of Americans surveyed believe that our health care system needs major changes. All Americans must have health care coverage. This coverage must include the choice of a quality affordable public insurance plan.

Ms. Wilson also stated that legislation must provide “effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and economical delivery of care” She said that, “offering everyone the choice of a government administered health insurance plan like Medicare that would compete with private health insurance plans, would be the key.”

This is the position of the League on health care.

I would like to note that Physicians for a National Health Program have received from Speaker Nancy Pelosi a commitment to bringing single-payer to a vote before the full House of Representatives when that chamber debates national health care reform in September.

The health care committee will be working diligently to keep you informed and be ready to report to the units in November. Our next meeting will be on September 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 AM at Cape Albeon.

*Katharine Kilpatric, Chair*



## ENVIROMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

The EQ committee will meet at Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm at the League Office. Everyone is welcome to attend.

*Nancy Bowser, Chair*



## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee will commence meeting in October. Look for time, place and meeting place in the October Issue of the *In League Reporter*.

*Marty Rulo, Chair*



## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE NEWS

The League of Women Voters has always had a keen interest in the United Nations. To quote from *Impact on Issues*: “At the UN Charter Conference in 1945, the League was one of 42 nongovernmental organizations invited by President Truman to serve as a consultant to the U.S. delegation. Since that time, the League has continued its presence at the United Nations through its UN Observer.” We on the International Relations Committee (IR) studied the League’s UN position not many years ago when it was updated in 2002.

This year we plan to examine closely the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDG). These eight goals, proposed in 2000 with a date for accomplishment of 2015, are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty & hunger.
2. Achieve universal primary education.
3. Promote gender equality and empower women.
4. Reduce infant mortality.
5. Improve maternal health.
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, & other diseases.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability.
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

Since these goals are so broad, each member of the IR has chosen one or two goals to examine in detail and report back to the committee as a whole.

We would welcome help from any Leaguer who has an interest in the UN. IR meets on the second Friday every month at the St. Louis County Library HQ on Lindbergh across from Plaza Frontenac. Our first meeting for the new year is September 11 at 10 a.m. You are invited.

*Judith Smart, Chair*

### **3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL “WOMEN WALK BEFORE THEY RUN”**

3rd annual “Women Walk Before They Run”  
Saturday, September 26, 2009  
9:00 a.m.  
Tilles Park, Ladue  
Fee: \$20 (\$25 after 9/18)

Join us for this moving celebration of women’s leadership! Follow a path of women candidate’s yard signs as you walk and talk with women elected officials about what it means to be a woman in public life. Proceeds celebrate the Institute’s 21st Century Leadership Academy, a week-long leadership development program for college students, focused on women’s leadership.  
For more information or to register, visit: [www.umsl.edu/~iwpl](http://www.umsl.edu/~iwpl)



## AN **THAT'S NOT CLAUSTROPHOBIC (or Scary)**

When most of us hear the abbreviation, MRI, we think of a cramped chamber where we are confined way too long in order to obtain a magnetic resonance imaging test. Fortunately, there is another MRI, the League's Membership Recruitment Initiative, and it is not scary at all. This MRI is a special project designed to reach out to potential new members. Every League in Missouri is asked to grow its membership by 5 percent. This is an achievable goal, but we need to think of every League member as part of the Membership Committee.

Here are two easy, non-scary ways you can help in recruiting new members:

Ask a friend or family member to attend the Annual Kick-Off on September 9. The speaker portion of the program begins at 7:00 pm, and **IT IS FREE**. This is a new option for those who cannot attend the dinner, but would like to hear the speakers.

Contact Mary Long or Pat Jones, new Membership Chairs, with recruitment ideas, i.e., community events for information booths, membership lists, etc.

Your committee chairs will be attending each Unit Meeting in October, and look forward to talking with you about upcoming membership activities. Also, please check the In League Reporter each month for membership news.

When you think of MRI, think "Adding New Members." It's the opposite of claustrophobic!

Mary Long  
Co-Chair, Membership  
314-849-7045, Home  
314-471-5358, Cell  
MaryLong@lwwstl.org

Pat Jones  
Co-Chair, Membership  
314-842-9383, Home  
314-807-8346, Cell  
PatJones@lwwstl.org

## **NO COST FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY**

Attention *Schnucks* Shoppers

*Schnucks* will donate up to 3% of your purchases to the League's Information Service. (LWVIS)

It's as easy as 1 2 3.

1. Pick up a *Schnucks* eScrip card at the customer service counter.
2. Activate the card by calling 800.931.6258. Say your charity is the LWVIS, Group # 500015391 or go to [www.escrip.com/schnucks.jsp](http://www.escrip.com/schnucks.jsp) and follow instructions.
3. Present your card to the cashier for scanning every time you shop at *Schnucks*

# THE LEAGUE'S 27<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL TAILGATE

The St. Louis League's Annual "League in the Loop" Tailgate Sale is fast approaching. The sale takes place **RAIN or SHINE** - on Monday, Labor Day, September 7, 2009.

**YOU CAN MAKE THIS THE BEST SALE WE EVER HAD**

**VOLUNTEER TIME TO HELP WITH THE SALE AND/OR**

**DONATE ITEMS THAT YOU NO LONGER WANT OR NEED**

**WE NEED LOTS OF ITEMS FOR THE LEAGUE BOOTH.** Sale will run from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Clean out your closets, basement, and garage and donate those unwanted items to the League. Want to be a vendor? See the ad in this month's In League Reporter. We also need workers for set up, selling all our treasures, and clean up after the sale. Bring your items to the League office, or contact Barbara Elbrecht (314.962.2821), or the Denny and Elise Joerger ( 314.725.4829).

If you want to work the day of the sale please contact Barbara 314.962.2821 to volunteer.

*Barbara Elbrecht, Chair*



## **Back to School, Back to Work, Back to Basics**

Do you have some extra time to share with the League? Below are a few of the opportunities available. We would also be happy to meet with you and tailor a project to your interests. Most projects can be done at the office many can be done in the comfort of your home or favorite WIFI coffee shop.

Have an hour? . . . update the current publications list to promote League resources and merchandise.

Have a morning? . . . use your passion for a policy issue or for organized files in general, let us introduce you to a drawer or shelf waiting for your special touch.

Have a day? . . . look over our own and other League web sites and make recommendations for improvements and additions.

Have time for a larger commitment . . . once a week, once a month, how about the voter service hotline, data entry, newsletter editor, web site manager, you name it. This organization is full of fascinating history and history making opportunities that can use the skills you have or the ones you would like to develop. Contact Anna Mennerick at 314.961.6869 or [AnnaMennerick@lwwstl.org](mailto:AnnaMennerick@lwwstl.org) to get started.

## HOUSING AUTHORITY ELECTION

August 1, 2009

Mere words cannot express my gratitude to the MANY volunteers who made the St. Louis Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners election so successful on August 1st. I am so grateful to all the folks who gave up a piece of their lives to provide a squeaky clean election for this public housing system. This effort is absolutely on-mission, and also a modest fundraiser. Much gratitude to Judith Smart X 3 (she did 3 shifts!), Becky Clausen, Linda McDaniel (X 2), Ida West (X 2), Rose Marie Smoot (X 2), Barbara Elbrecht (X 2), Karen O'Brien, Esther Clark, Marge Courtney, Sydell and Larry Shayer (X 2), Betty and Kenneth Maag, Marty Ott, Mary Long, Carol Portman, Marge Wilson, Nancy Thompson, Joan Botwinick, Debby Howard and Cara Jensen. It's pretty interesting to see what public housing looks like in the city of St. Louis today; it looks quite nice and the taxpayers should be proud of what they provide to the less fortunate.

And for all those poor folks who weren't fortunate enough to be selected for this project – there will be another opportunity for the few, the proud, to volunteer for the next St. Louis Housing Authority election (Tenant Affairs Board), which takes place on Saturday, October 24th, 2009. It's likely to be a larger election and require 50% more volunteers than this August election. You WILL be hearing from me!

*Kathleen Kelly*



Thanks to our members who volunteered in the office with mailings and other necessary tasks this month. Our volunteers are the best. Kudos this month to Susan Fluegel, Betty Ann Gilbert, Mickey Hall, Pat Jones Tom Mennerick, and Joyce Schuetz.

*Julie Behrens*

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REFLECTIONS

We have had a flurry of calls to the office recently from individuals who are interested in contacting their elected officials. Most of these are routine inquiries and require us only to look up and share the contact information. However, there are also those calls that come from people who have been stirred to action by alarming reports about health care reform legislation. Inaccurate and misleading messages increase fear and promote panic rather than informed discussion and debate. Fortunately, being a member of the League of Women Voters of St. Louis means you are a part of a tradition of accuracy in research and public education.

Accurate information helps everyone understand issues beyond the rhetoric and participate in good government. Be wise in deciding what news sources you trust. Take advantage of the accurate information compiled by the League of Women Voters. Dig below the surface of churning emotion and reaction to become knowledgeable about the issues of the day. And then, most importantly, lead your friends and neighbors to accurate sources of information. One conversation at a time, we can work to restore civil discourse based on accuracy and wisdom.

*Anna Mennerick*

# The League of Women Voters of St. Louis

## ANNUAL KICKOFF DINNER

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2009

### “Listening to Teens Argue CAN Be Fun”



**Program: St. Louis Urban Debate League Participants & Executive Director Ravi Rao**  
Mr. Rao is a young lawyer and a graduate of Washington University and of Ladue’s Horton Watkins High School. Last year, these national award winners commanded attention from both *60 Minutes* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. (more on page 2)

**Reservations Required by September 4<sup>th</sup> – 314.961.6869 - league@lwvstl.org**

Doors open at 5:30

\$25 per person includes dinner at 6:30 (salad, chicken breast, stuffed potato, broccoli and dessert)

For speaker only (no charge) please be seated by 6:55.

**REGIONAL ARTS COMMISSION - 6128 Delmar Boulevard - St. Louis, MO 63112**

Free parking is located behind the Pagent and/or the MetroLink lot. Metered street parking is also available.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#\_\_\_\_\_ Dinner and Program Reservations @ \$ 25.00 each #\_\_\_\_\_ Program Only (no charge) Reservations

Please make checks payable to League of Women Voters of St. Louis.

Mail to LWV of St. Louis, 8706 Manchester Rd., Suite 104, St. Louis, MO 63144



## **Pizza and Politics Series Offers Access to Important State Leaders**

LWV will co-sponsor a series known as Pizza and Politics during the upcoming school year. This is a continuation of our sponsorship of community forums in collaboration with FOCUS St. Louis and Metropolis. This particular series is being hosted by the Holden Public Policy Forum at Webster University.

It's a chance to be up close and personal with some of the region's leaders. Don't miss it.

The location of these forums at Webster University's home campus may make it more convenient for League members to attend. Frankly, our attendance at the forums that our Board voted to support has been close to non-existent, so it's quite important that we show our credibility as an organization to FOCUS St. Louis this fall.

Unfortunately, the first date conflicts with our kickoff. However, we'll include the information below for you to pass on to your friends and acquaintances who for some unfathomable reason don't want to attend the kickoff.

Here are the two events in September, followed by simply a listing of the dates and speakers for subsequent forums. All will be held at 6 p.m. in the Sunnen Lounge. The University Center is located at 175 Edgar Road, Webster Groves, with the closest parking in Lot H or on-street on Garden.

*Nancy Thompson – FOCUS St. Louis Liason*

### **Catherine Hanaway, Former U.S. Attorney & Speaker of the House**

Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>

6:00 pm in the Sunnen Lounge, University Center

Hanaway was the former U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri. She is also a former Republican Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives; and was the First Female Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives. She left her post in April 2009 to join former U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft in building a nationwide law firm. The firm is headquartered in Kansas City, and Hanaway leads the new St. Louis office, Ashcroft Hanaway.

### **Director Margaret Donnelly, Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services**

Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>

6:00 pm in the Sunnen Lounge, University Center

Donnelly is the current Director of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Prior to becoming Director of MODHSS, Donnelly served as a former state representative for Richmond Heights. Throughout her terms she served on many committees, such as the Appropriations Subcommittee for Health and Senior Services, the Mental Health and Social Services Committee, the Budget Committee, and the Medicaid Reform Commission.

### **Director Jon Hagler, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Wed., Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>**

**The Term Limit Debate: Representative Chris Kelly and Ed Martin, Wed., Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Director Linda Martinez, Missouri Department of Economic Development, Wed., Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**The Honorable Judge Richard Teitelman, Missouri Supreme Court, Wed., Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>**



Monday, Sept. 7th (Labor Day)  
 @ the Loop during the annual bike race  
 In University City  
 Starts: 7:30 a.m.  
 Ends: 3 p.m.

**Voter  
 Registration  
 on Site!**



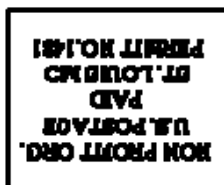
# Annual Tailgate Sale

**Come  
 Shop  
 for Treasures!**

**Make Extra Cash!**  
 Friends, neighbors, churches, organizations -  
 Sell Your Stuff @ Our Sale  
**Buy a Booth!**  
**\$30 each**

**League of Women Voters of St. Louis**—*Promoting an Educated & Empowered Electorate*  
 314-961-6869 or [league@lwwstl.org](mailto:league@lwwstl.org) CALL or EMAIL to reserve your booth space!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ST. LOUIS  
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 SAINT LOUIS, MO 63144

IN LEAGUE REPORTER

