

MissouriVOTER

Volume 68 Issue 2

League of Women Voters

March/April 2007

President's Letter

This will be my last column as your state President. As I look back over these four years as president, and the eleven before that as treasurer, I would describe them, above all else, as challenging and educational. It has been a true learning experience, exciting, rewarding, frustrating - even sometimes discouraging, fun times and sad times. But through it all, there were always league members there to give advice, hold my hand, to give encouragement, help celebrate the victories and the good times and for that I am grateful.

Those of you who know me, know that during the years I was treasurer, I didn't pay much attention to what was going on in voter service and advocacy. Being president changed that! Action Alerts, Legislative Day, bills in the house and senate - do we support or oppose, Voter's Guides, Candidate Forums - a new side of League for me. Development (it will always be fund raising to me) is always a challenge, but we were fortunate in getting grants from Harrah's for printing Voter's Guides and last fall a Public Advocacy Grant from LWVUS.

I have especially enjoyed the trips to visit the local leagues and participate in their activities. Also, during this time Missouri was privileged to have two (2) national presidents visit and I was honored to spend a couple of days with each of them traveling across Missouri, meeting with our local league members.

If I have a regret, it is that I was not able to do all the things that needed to be done. The League is a unique organization in the political arena. Known for our non-partisanship and knowledge, we are respected and we are needed. Each and every one of you is a vital

(Continued on page 3)

New Climate Task Force appointed

The Climate Change Task Force, chaired by LWVUS Vice-President, Sarah Diefendorf, was appointed by the LWVUS President last February to provide information and assistance to the Board and staff on climate change issues.

Chosen to represent the diversity of the League, the eight members (including one man) come from many parts of the country, and vary in work backgrounds and League experience. They bring a variety of perspectives, knowledge and expertise to the subject of climate change, and all are enthusiastic about working together on the year long project ahead.

The Climate Change Task Force is expected to prepare substantive information on climate change through research and study and to suggest actions that could be taken at the local, state, and national levels, and by individuals, to curb climate change. Group members are already researching and drafting materials to share by email and conference call. Later in the year the Task Force will explore and discuss possible federal legislation, in addition to measures already supported by the LWVUS, to address climate change.

The year promises to be very interesting, educational and challenging.

Win Colwill

Editor's note: Missouri LWV is very proud to have had Win appointed to this important committee. She joins members from Maine, Washington, Delaware, Wisconsin, Illinois, and California. The members' backgrounds include an Army nurse, a physical chemist, a Peace Corps volunteer, a physicist, a Public Administrator, and a lawyer, as well as leaders of environmental organizations as well as the League.

National Immigration Study news

At the last LWVUS convention, an immigration study request was adopted where consensus questions will be sent out for the membership to vote on; the result will be the formation of a national position on this subject which is in the news daily. League members have a chance to look at immigration laws past and present, illegal immigration, problems with immigrants who place more emphasis on their religious laws than on US civil law, etc. The field for study is enormous, and we must make an educated vote on our consensus.

We have just received news from the LWVUS Immigration Study Chair that the study has been shortened from three years to two. The consensus questions will be sent out in August and must be returned to the national committee by the first of next February (2008).

In the meantime, if you go to www.lwv.org – *member's section*, there are guides, a timeline, and a bibliography. There has been an article in the National Voter, and there is also a listserv which you can join. Several articles which have been written by members of the Study Committee can be found online: “Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration,” “Immigration and the Economy,” “Immigration: Diversity and Inclusion,” “Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms,” and “Effects of Global Interdependence on Migration.”

Judith Smart, LWVSTL Int'l Relations

The following partial resource list contains introductory and overview information on US immigration as recommended by the Study Committee:

Immigration and America's Future: A New Chapter. Report of the Independent Task Force on Immigration and America's Future. Spencer Abraham and Lee H. Hamilton, Co-Chairs. Migration Policy Institute. 2006

(Continued on page 4.)

Harriett Woods Tribute

Harriett—Everyone has a favorite story.

In life, she was someone we wanted to emulate, always having time for everyone, especially if pushing her agenda, which was putting women in power. In Harriett's book, Stepping Up To Power, she credits the League of Women Voters for getting her involved in government. She was asked to monitor the University City Human Relations Commission. She was a dedicated observer and, when a vacancy on the Commission occurred, Harriett was appointed. She never looked back; she like being in the middle of the action, and in this instance, it was desegregation.

From being a commission member, she went on to be an elected member of the city council, on to Jefferson City as a member of the Senate, and then Lt. Governor. Politics on a personal level ended with two defeats for the U.S. Senate, but she was not deterred; she remained involved, big time.

She successfully continued to work tirelessly for women to be appointed to commissions and elected office. The New York Times documented her history and lauded her in their February 10 issue.

She was so well known that when I moved into her building, in explaining to people where I lived, I finally would say, “where Harriett lives.”

There are many Harriett stories. Fearful that a great story will be omitted, in her memory, we urge you to share your favorite Harriett story with everyone and keep her with us.

To Harriett Woods, we say “Thank You for the legacy;” it is priceless.

Carol Portman

Editor's note: It is especially appropriate that we will be awarding the Harriett Woods Community Service Award this May at state convention. We are looking forward to seeing who has been nominated and who will be chosen for this special award.

2007 Legislative Day overview

29 League of Women Voters members from seven of the eight Missouri Leagues heard two Senators and 2 Representatives discuss bills they are sponsoring and League has as priorities.

Rep. Donnelly outlined HB867, which institutes two weeks of early voting starting the third Wednesday before any election.

Senator Shields then described SB 577, noting several features of the Missouri Health Improvement Act, which would replace the current Medicaid program.

Rep. Deeken explained HB445, which places a moratorium on the death penalty.

Finally Sen. Smith gave us many of the details of SB690, which would create the Metropolitan School Improvement Act and several other of his education bills.

We are really very appreciative of these legislators who took time to come down to HHR2, explain their bills and answer our questions. All of them were or had been in committee meetings earlier, and Sen. Smith stayed with us during the opening of the Senate session.

Our League Directors briefed the members on who needed to be visited, thanked and/or lobbied. Each League made their plan of action and fanned out to get the most use of their time at the capitol. Most were quite happy with their visits and the respect League has from our representatives in Jefferson City.

At 1:15, members gathered to tour the new DNR building. The tour was an added feature this year thanks to Win Colwill, and all really appreciated it.

Several members need a special thank you for helping make Legislative Day move along smoothly. Mary Merritt, Kathleen Boswell, Lael Von Holt, Elaine Blodgett, Chyanne Lockhart, Emogene Fox, Jo Sapp, Linda Ahmann and Jane Rankin registered participants, tracked down the speakers, took care of the food and countless other little necessities. Also, Micki in the office for the packets, and Mexico and Columbia League

members for the goodies and Mary for the fudge.

Again Thanks to each of you Leaguers who came and gave the Legislators a good look at citizens who are very interested in our state and “truly volunteers, not paid lobbyists.”

(Sen. Smith’s comment)

Laura Worstell, Legislative Action Chair

(President, Continued from Page 1)

part of the organization and your support, both financially and physically is appreciated. We just need to do more.

Always, I will remember those of you I was able to get to know on a personal basis, and now think of as “my friend” first and league member second. I look forward to continuing to see all of you at League statewide events in the future. (Including State Convention May 5-6 at the Lodge of Four Seasons!)

---Mary

FINAL CALL TO CONVENTION

Things are shaping up nicely for the 2007 LWVMO Convention on May 5 and 6 at Lodge of the Four Seasons at Lake Ozark. Dr. Jack Colwill will speak on “How Much Health Care Can We Afford?” and Donna Lauffer, our liaison from the National LWV board, will be our guest and speak on the “360 Degrees of LWV.” The Saturday evening banquet will be very special as it is when we will present the Lenore Leob and Harriett Woods Awards. For Sunday morning, after everyone has voted, the breakfast will be a special time with past LWVMO presidents. All members are welcome, either as a delegate or an observer. Get your registrations to the office by April 20.

We are very pleased to announce that Mary Merritt has been appointed to the LWVUS Budget Committee, one of three off-board members of the five-person committee. We are sure she will get their financial problems in order very quickly.

(Immigration Continued from page 2)

Report of the Independent Task Force on Immigration and America's Future. William Dudley, Ed. Illegal Immigration. Opposing Viewpoints Series. Greenhaven Press. 2002

Oscar Handlin. The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People. Little, Brown and Co. 1973 University of Pennsylvania Press. 2002.

Tamar Jacoby, Ed. Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What it Means to be American. NY: Free Press. 2004

Ann Chih Lin. Immigration CQs Vital Issues Series. CQ Press. 2002.

Ruben Martinez. Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail. (Henry Holt and Co.).

Aristide Zolberg. A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy: the Fashioning of America. (Russell Sage Foundation. 2006)

Raise Funds and Have Fun Traveling

The LWVMO has made arrangements with Travel Concepts International to encourage groups to book travel through their company. For each League member and their guests that book travel plans with Travel Concepts, the company will pay \$50, which will be split between LWVMO and the local league. You can call them at 1-800-762-4216, or navigate their website at www.tcitravel.com. Plans can be made on the website by destination or travel dates.

The Missouri VOTER is published bi-monthly by the League of Women Voters of Missouri (St. Louis)
Subscriptions are \$2 per year.
Kathleen Boswell, Editor
Periodicals postage pd at St. Louis, MO 63144 USPS 593-960
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
Missouri Voter, LWVMO
8706 Manchester Road, Suite 104, St. Louis, MO 63144
All other correspondence to Mary Merritt at the same address.
Voice: 314-961-6869 FAX: 314-961-8393
Email: lwvmo@yahoo.com