

# Missouri Voter

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The League of Women Voters

May/June 2007



Awards presentation at the LWVMO Convention. On left, President Mary Merritt presents the Lenore Loeb silver bowl to Margie Richcreek. On the right, Carol Portman is introduced as the recipient of the Harriett Woods Award.

## *58<sup>th</sup> State Convention*

Early May at the Lake of the Ozarks – the perfect time and the perfect setting for the 58<sup>th</sup> State Convention of the League of Women Voters of Missouri. Led by state president Mary Merritt, the LWVMO board planned an intense and instructive weekend.

Early Saturday morning, members from Missouri's local Leagues gathered to elect state board members, conduct the League's business, learn from a variety of speakers, and honor two members for outstanding contributions to the League and to the community.

**Margie Richcreek**, LWV Kansas City/JCP, received the Lenore Loeb Sterling Achievement Award for her Kids Voting project. For several years Margie was a teacher/leader involved in the Kids Voting program used in the Park Hill School District. After Margie retired, she was asked to teach a group of children in Platte County about the responsibilities of voting. It was then that Margie first developed her *Voter Power and Responsibility* project, an exercise to teach the importance of voting and of being a registered and informed voter. The project is for 4<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade students, and Margie has given the presentation over 25 times.

**Carol Portman**, LWV St. Louis, received The Harriett Woods Award for Exemplary Community Service. Carol was honored for her leadership as the Voter Registration Coordinator for Naturalization Ceremonies in St. Louis and other community service. The Voter Registration Project, which began in 2001, registers new citizens at all of the St. Louis naturalization ceremonies. A partial listing of Carol's community service includes her activities with the LWV

(past state president), Missouri Women’s Network, ACLU, Mentor St. Louis, OASIS, Habitat for Humanity, and St. Louis County Election Board.

Congratulations and thanks to Margie and Carol for all their hard work and for being an inspiration to other League members.

We also learned and were, hopefully, inspired by our thought-provoking speakers:

Dr. Jack Colwill (husband of our energy expert Win) spoke on *How Much Health Care Can We Afford*, focusing on trends in the U.S. health care system.

Margaret Phillips and Sydell Shayer (LWV St. Louis) spoke on the Death Penalty.

Dr. Margaret L. Harlan (LWV Sedalia) spoke on Restorative Justice/Alternative Sentencing and its benefits to the offender and the community.

State Librarian Margaret Conroy explained the value of the *Missouri State Library: Helping Libraries Help Missouri*.

Former LWVMO state presidents Sydell Shayer, Elaine Blodgett, Linda McDaniel, Carol Portman, and Debby Howard addressed the League’s “then and now” in *Honoring the Past—Building the Future*.

Donna Lauffer, LWVUS Director, discussed the *360 Degrees of League* – the circle formed by membership, action, fundraising, and visibility.

In addition to absorbing all these ideas, delegates attended to the practical business of the League – discussing and voting on the state budget, changes in the by-laws, proposed studies, and the 2007-2009 state board.

Mary Merritt presided over the weekend, keeping us on time and on topic. Then, a little before noon on Sunday, the weekend ended with the bang of the gavel as Mary adjourned the meeting and ended her four years as state president.



Left photo: LWVMO past presidents Debby Howard, Carol Portman, Linda McDaniel, Elaine Blodgett, and Sydell Shayer are introduced by presiding president Mary Merritt for their talk on *Honoring the Past – Building the Future*.

Right photo: With a rap of the gavel, Mary Merritt ends the 58<sup>th</sup> State Convention and becomes a past president.

*Idealists . . . foolish enough to throw caution to the winds . . . have advanced mankind and have enriched the world.*

*- - - Emma Goldman*

## *Meet Your 2007—2009 State Board*

At the June 2 organizational meeting, your new state board discussed the need to continue improving communication between the board and the local Leagues. We hope to hold board meetings in each of your areas and have a get-together with your League. Two meetings are already scheduled: August 11 in Moberly and November 2 in Sedalia. We look forward to meeting you and getting better acquainted. Until then, here's a brief introduction to the members of the 2007-2009 state board.

### *Officers:*

**Jo Sapp**, President. As a member of the Columbia/Boone County League for the past 10 years, Jo has served as unit leader, vice president, and president. She has studied and lobbied on the issues of land use, civil liberties, and libraries – most recently chairing our library study.

**Nancy Copenhaver**, First Vice President, has been active in the Moberly League since 1975 and has served as an officer, director, forum moderator, and lobbyist. Her portfolios have included international relations, government, education, election, campaign finance, and ethics. Board interest: legislation.

**Betty Ann Gilbert**, Second Vice President. Celebrating 45 years with the St. Louis League, Betty Ann has done it all – president, vice president, membership director, speakers' bureau, office volunteer, and delegate to state and national conventions. Board interests: office, membership, and local League outreach.

**Peg Prendergast**, Secretary, joined the League over 20 years ago in Lima, Ohio. After moving to Kansas City, she remained active, serving on local and state boards.

Peg is returning as state secretary and puts her high tech skills to use at every meeting. She does everything from membership to fundraising to mailings. Board interests: secretary and voter service coordinator.

**Debby Waite Howard**, Treasurer.

A league member since 1970, Debby has served as director, secretary, treasurer, and president of the St. Louis League. She is a past president of the state board, and is continuing her work as state treasurer.

### *Elected Directors:*

**Donna Bergen**, a fairly new member of the Southwest Missouri League, brings many years of experience and interest in the areas of correctional facilities and the environment.

Board interests: energy and the environment (co-chair with Win Colwill) and the death penalty.

**Elaine Blodgett**, Columbia/Boone County, has done educational outreach for the LWV Information Service. She has served in all capacities in her local League (currently as president) as well as on state board (past president). Elaine recently guided the major program revisions in Land Use and Taxes. Board interests: taxes and working with local Leagues on organization and structure.

**Win Colwill**, Columbia/Boone County, is a 40 year member of the LWV. She has held various offices and directorships on the local and state boards. Her energy has been on energy – studying and lobbying in Columbia and Jefferson City. Her efforts and expertise have been recognized with a recent appointment to the LWVUS Climatic Change Task Force – this will take Win's influence nationwide! Board interest: energy and the environment (co-chair with Donna Bergen).

**Lois Detrick**, Southwest Missouri League president. She recently attended the LWVUS Council meeting in Washington,

D.C., with Jo Sapp and Mary Merritt. Board interest: education.

**Rachel Farr-Fitch** joined the St. Louis League and the state board in 1985 and has served on the state level as an officer, director, and lobbyist – focusing primarily on health care. She represented the League on a Blue Cross issue, and, more recently, has chaired our calendar sales fundraising project. Board interest: calendars.

**Joan Mills**, serving her first term as state director, has over 50 years of experience in her local Leagues – Raytown, Independence, and Kansas City/JCP. Board interests: health and mental health.

**Maydell Senn**'s interests in government, history, and genealogy have carried over into her work with the Columbia/Boone County League. Board interests: board logistics, membership, outreach, and Members at Large.

**Lael Von Holt** brings many years of experience on the Columbia/Boone County and state boards as an officer and director. She has led efforts on studying and lobbying, primarily in the field of mental health. Lael also was instrumental in planning the League's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 1995. Board interests: mental health and health.

*Appointed Directors:*

**Mary Merritt**, Sedalia, recently completed 12 years as treasurer and four years as president of the LWVMO board. She has agreed to remain on the board in an advisory capacity. Board interests: finance and development.

**Charlotte King**, Columbia/Boone County, is a two-year League member and a member of the Civil Liberties Committee. Board interest: newsletter.

*Off Board Members (cannot vote on board issues):*

**Sydell Shayer**, St. Louis, a 49-year League member and past state president. Board interest: Death Penalty.

**Judith Smart** chairs the St. Louis Immigration Study. Board interest: Immigration.

*Not on the board, but we couldn't do without them:*

**Linda McDaniel**, St. Louis, has served as LWVMO President and LWVUS Director. She has agreed to be an advisor to the board.

Nominating Committee: **Margie Richcreek**, Kansas City/JCP, chair; **Lucy Hale**, St. Louis; **Bev Reichert**, Southwest Missouri.

**Your state board wants to hear from you**

Comments? Suggestions?  
Questions? Contact us at:

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St. Louis, MO 63144  
Phone: 314-961-6869  
Fax: 314-961-8393  
Email: [lwvmo@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvmo@yahoo.com)

Our great office manager, Micki Hoffman, will see that your message gets to the right person.

## *Building Our Future*

by Jo Sapp  
LWVMO President



2007-2009 State Board Members: Jo Sapp, Donna Bergen, Win Colwill, Nancy Copenhaver, Peg Prendergast, Joan Mills, Betty Ann Gilbert, Debby Waite Howard, Lois Detrick, Maydell Senn, and Lael Von Holt.

In order to choose a path forward sometimes it helps to know where you've been. This year's state board provides a nice balance of those who have mastered the League way of doing things and new members who bring energy and fresh insights to LWVMO. It is my hope that over the next two years we will build on the collaborative structure that Mary Merritt put in place, and we are fortunate that she has agreed to remain on the board both as a member and as trusted advisor.

Other members will continue as well, some in their current positions, some playing new roles. We'll welcome new members and say farewell, but not goodbye, to those who are moving on. Kathleen Boswell from Sedalia and the two Lauras from Mexico are retiring, for the time being, but we fully intend to call on their experience and wisdom.

Kathleen Boswell has served LWVMO in a number of capacities, most recently as Voter editor where she put her reporting skills to good use. During that time she was, and continues to be, a very busy person, and we wish her well in her tenure as president of her Rotary Club. When you see her on November 3 at Fall Conference, thank her for continuing to make the arrangements with State Fair Community College and for being such a gracious hostess.

Laura Worstell is a fine organizer, as well. Thanks to her efforts our Legislative Days in Jeff City went off without a hitch, and she also handled the Legislative Bulletin when the General Assembly was in session. Many members of the board have fond memories of her hospitality when the meetings were in Mexico and of the fine spread she and her husband provided the night before the meetings.

Laura Pitts kept track of children's issues for LWVMO, and there were plenty of them during her tenure on the board. Her reports were concise and organized with just the right amount of detail to help us understand the sometimes complex issues, and her caring and compassion were always evident.

These outgoing board members have earned our gratitude, not only for past service but for their willingness to support those who remain. One of the things that keeps an organization vibrant is a constant influx of new people coupled with the steady continuity provided by

experienced veterans. Over the next few months we'll be working on structure and organization, trying to find the best way to use the skills of this talented board and to build bridges between LWVMO and local Leagues.

Our traditions are worthy, our foundation strong. Together we can build on both as we move confidently into a future that holds great challenges and promise.

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## *Legislative Report* by Laura Worstell

This session of the Missouri Legislature has ended, and the Truly Agreed To and Finally Passed bills will be delivered to Governor Blunt for his signature or veto.

I hope you will take the time to thank the Directors for their study of legislation pending in their area and reporting to you via the Legislative Bulletin on bills League supported or opposed.

Truly Agreed To and Finally Passed Bills in Health and Mental Health include the mental health reform bill SB3 which protects residential care clientele from abuse, neglect, and fires and SB577, the controversial Mo Health Net bill that restores certain medical benefits, emphasizes prevention and wellness, controls fraud, advances health technology, and includes numerous other components. HB818 also passed. This complex health insurance bill emerged with serious controversy over two amendments.

Children's legislation going to the Governor includes SB16 which requires all children in kindergarten/first grade to have comprehensive vision tests; SB25 combined other bills to provide additional child support enforcement; and, SB84 combined five House and Senate bills to control child placement issues.

Education improvement legislation for the most part stalled. However SB389 which modified the powers of MOHELA passed. Beyond the controversy of selling assets, this act requires monitoring and

reporting to the General Assembly on performance measures, creates the Missouri Teaching Fellows program for qualified graduates who are hired to teach in unaccredited school districts, and increases the Bright Flight Scholarship amounts.

The Net Metering and Easy Connection Act HB869 which includes SB54 and SB328 passed. These bills require utilities to give customer-generators full credit for the electric power they send back to the grid. LWVMO strongly supported the bill.

All LWVMO members may receive the free, emailed Legislative Bulletin by contacting Micki at [lwvmo@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvmo@yahoo.com). Hard copies mailed to your home are \$10/year.



Missouri State Capitol

### *Political Note:*

Missouri Senator Claire McCaskill has opened an office in Columbia at 915 East Ash St.

\* \* \* \* \* *Immigration Study* \* \* \* \* \*

The focus for consensus this year is Immigration. Even though this is a national, not state, effort, the LWVMO board thought it would be helpful to our local Leagues to have a point person to coordinate and be a resource for the study.

Judith Smart, who chairs the Immigration Study for St. Louis, agreed to be that person. You can reach her at the state office: [lwvmo@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvmo@yahoo.com). There is a lot of information on the national website: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org). Go to projects and click on Immigration Study.

The Immigration Study Timeline:

Sept. 2006 – Jan. 2008: Local Leagues help educate members and communities about immigration issues.

Sept. 1, 2007: The LWVUS distributes a Leader's Guide that includes consensus questions.

Sept. 2007 – Jan. 2008: Local Leagues take consensus.

Feb. 1, 2008: Deadline for the LWVUS to receive consensus response forms.

Feb. 1, 2008 – March 20, 2008: Using consensus responses, the LWVUS Immigration Study Committee formulates the position.

Late March/early April 2008: The LWVUS Board adopts the position.

\* \* \* \* \* *Local Leagues* \* \* \* \* \*

Congratulations to **Margie Richcreek**, LWV Kansas City/JCP. She has recently taken over the chairmanship of the Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance. The alliance deals with public transit and light rail in the KC region. Margie's experience in LWV should serve her well in this very responsible and very public capacity.

Congratulations to **Chyanne Lockhart Cardarella**, LWV Kansas City/JCP president. She received the 2007 Amethyst Award at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership Academy Keynote Dinner on May 24. As a 2004 graduate of the University of Central Missouri, Chyanne earned a degree in political science with concentrations in state government and environmental policy. A leader in the drive for wind energy in Northwest Missouri, she works with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and other environmental organizations, traveling frequently to Jefferson City to lobby on environmental legislation.

*One of the state board's goals is to continue improving communication among the local Leagues and between the state board and local Leagues. Please share your news – projects, accomplishments, awards. We plan to include a Local Leagues summary in each issue of the Voter. Send your news to the state office: [lwvmo@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvmo@yahoo.com). The due date for news will listed on the calendar; it's July 25 for the next newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you!*

\* \* \* \* \* *Ask Linda* \* \* \* \* \*

At your board's organizational meeting June 2, we realized we didn't know or didn't understand many things about the League. If we feel that way, then maybe you do sometimes, too. So we decided to start a new column called *Ask Linda*.

Linda McDaniel, LWV St. Louis, is a past LWVMO president and LWVUS director. She's had lots of experience with the League's rules and bylaws and understands the details of the Education Fund. As a volunteer advisor to the state board, she's one of our "go to" people.

If you have a question about LWV (national, state, local) or the Ed Fund, then just *Ask Linda*. We'll print some of the questions and answers in each issue of the Voter. If you need an answer ASAP, then Linda, Mary, or Jo will get back to you. *Ask Linda*: [lwvmo@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvmo@yahoo.com).

### [LWVMO Calendar](#)

July 4 – Independence Day  
July 25 – MoVoter article deadline  
Aug.11 – State Board Meeting in Moberly;  
 lunch with Moberly League  
Sept.17 – Constitution Day  
Nov.2 – State Board Meeting in Sedalia;  
 supper with Sedalia League  
Nov.3 – Fall Conference at State Fair  
 Community College in Sedalia  
Nov.6 – Election Day  
Feb.1, 2008 – LWVUS deadline to receive  
 immigration consensus response forms



### *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 who 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](http://www.tcitravel.com). Plans can be made on the website by destination or travel dates.

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Charlotte King, Editor

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