



Missouri Voter

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The League of Women Voters

January/February 2008

Non-Partisan and Political

By Jo Sapp, LWVMO President

It's January and the political year has begun in earnest. Iowa and New Hampshire are history and a number of states, large and small, have made their choices. Presidential candidates, of which there were many, are becoming fewer as Super Duper Tuesday approaches. By the time you read this, chances are that the 2 major political parties have chosen their candidates for the presidency and that we will have seen a few surprises along the way. Some of the front runners will have fallen away and new ones may yet emerge. In politics a week is a year and all things are possible. It's an exciting and engaging and sometimes frustrating process. It's democracy, American style.

As the national, state, and local political campaigns heat up the LWV does what it was born to do. While issues keep us occupied for a good deal of our time, elections are our lifeblood. We are non-partisan, but definitely political.

Like it or not, policy can't be divorced from politics. To succeed the League must be mindful of both without losing sight of the value of protecting our status as a non-partisan organization, both in perception and in actuality. With the exception of certain key board members, the League encourages individual members to be active participants in the political process, whether it be by writing letters to public officials, testifying before the city council, or working hard to elect candidates that share your values. If that's your thing, take a closer look at your League's non-partisan policy and if it permits, get involved in a campaign, get to know the candidates, be a full participant in the democratic process. The country and the League deserve no less.



Legislative Happenings

By Nancy Copenhaver, LWVMO Legislative Chair

The first Legislative Bulletin should have arrived by mail or e-mail by now. If you want to continue a subscription by mail, a payment of \$10.00 is due to the LWVMO office. You can subscribe by e-mail at no charge by contacting the office or asking your local legislative chair to forward issues to you (less work for the office). The legislative priorities for the 2008 Session are included in that bulletin (also on the website) and in this newsletter.

Watch for the February 5 State of the Judiciary Address—particularly important this year due to the recent attacks on the Missouri Non-Partisan Court Plan. League is working with a coalition of groups fighting attempts to dilute this acclaimed plan for selection of judges and we expect it to be a “hot topic” this year. Other key dates include: February 28, last day to introduce bills in the Senate; March 13, LWVMO Legislative Day with Spring Break beginning upon adjournment; March 25 legislature reconvenes; April 1, last day to introduce bills in the House; May 9, appropriation bills finally passed; May 16, session ends. Leaguers will be providing refreshments and information to those filing for state office on opening day, February 26, at the Kirkpatrick Building.

Legislative Day for LWVMO at the Capitol in Jefferson City will be **Thursday, March 13**. Plans are tentative but should include visits by several key legislators regarding issues of particular concern to League, updates on legislation progressing, time to meet with individual legislators to promote League positions, and networking with League members around the state. Call or e-mail the state office to let us know you plan to attend. There is no charge this year, so watch future Legislative Bulletins for details, load up a car and plan on an informative day.

Candidate Filing Day

As we have before, LWVMO will have a presence and a table at the Secretary of State's office for candidate filing day, **Tuesday, February 26**. Although filing can be done over a period of time, we will only be present on the morning of the 26th. Laura Worstell and the Mexico League are collaborating with Lael Von Holt and the Columbia League to provide coffee, snacks, LWV literature, and our welcome to the candidates as they stop by – non-partisan, as always. All LWV members are invited to participate.

The address is

Kirkpatrick State Information Center
3rd Floor, 600 W. Main, Jefferson City

Offices that file with the Secretary of State in 2008:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Governor | Treasurer |
| Lt. Governor | 9 U.S. Representatives |
| Secretary of State | 17 State Senators – odd numbered districts |
| Attorney General | 163 State Representatives |
| | Various Judges |



Nancy Copenhaver and Lael Von Holt
at the LWVMO board meeting in Columbia on January 5th.

MO HealthNet Survey

By Lael Von Holt, LWVMO Health Co-chair

MO HealthNet has been in effect since August 28, 2007. This is Missouri's new public health care program, formerly known as Medicaid.

Because of LWVMO's continuing interest in matters of health and health reform, we are now asking Local Leagues to assist us by scheduling interviews with professionals in their county Departments of Health and/or Social Service. The intent here is to assess the impact of MO HealthNet on their clientele.

We are hopeful that local presidents and their membership will respond favorably to our request. Sample questions have been sent to them to assist in this informal survey, which we expect to report on at State Council on May 31 in Springfield.

Carbon Footprints

By Win Colwill, LWVMO Energy Co-chair

Missouri's carbon footprint is bigger and growing faster than many other states, according to a recent report of eight Midwestern states* by the World Resources Institute, an environmental think tank. "Charting the Midwest" shows that Missouri emitted 163 million tons of greenhouse gases in 2003, making it the 5th largest emitter in the Midwest and 15th largest in the U.S.

The largest GHG sources were electricity generation (45%) and transportation (26%); 85% of Missouri's electricity is fueled by coal, which produces more CO₂ per BTU than other fuels. Between 1990 and 2003, carbon emissions from power plants grew more than twice the regional and national average, though population growth was slowing.

Missouri should take action by setting greenhouse gas reduction targets and offering financial incentives to spur energy conservation and renewable electricity sources statewide.

* IL, IN, IO, MI, MN, MO, OH, and WI.

How To Talk With Anyone About LWV

The LWVUS designed the Membership Recruitment Initiative to train state and local Leagues to help gain and retain new members. Among their many suggestions: ask people to join – at every event and with every communication. Be intentional, consistent, and constant. Share what the League means to you and your community. Be inviting and inclusive. Begin with the basics.

The League of Women Voters Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We are an organization of women and men who want to make a difference in the political future of our country. We research and explore public policy issues and pass that information on to others. We advocate by taking action on these issues and by encouraging citizens to participate in government.

- We educate ourselves on all sides of an issue.
- We extend this information to others through public forums, education publications, coalitions, and public speaking.
- We lobby for causes in which our organization has reach consensus.
- We encourage citizens to contact their legislators.
- We encourage broad-based citizen participation in the democratic process.

LWVMO Legislative Priorities 2008

League priorities are:

- Electoral process that is fair, accurate, efficient, accessible, accountable, and uniform.
- Tax policy that promotes financial stability.
- Energy initiatives to reduce global warming.

League supports and continues to monitor:

- Access to quality, affordable healthcare, including mental health.
- Equal access to quality public education for all Missouri children.
- Children's safety and well-being.
- Non-partisan court plan.

“Making democracy work with grassroots leadership since 1920”

MissouriVoter Email/Snail Mail

In the last *MissouriVoter*, your LWVMO board asked if you would be interested in receiving your state newsletter by email. To date, about 160 members have responded “yes” to the online option – the *Voter* delivered to your inbox, in color, in PDF format. In addition to the convenience to you, this will result in a \$42 savings per issue (or about \$250/year) for the League.

If you didn’t get a chance to respond and would like to receive the electronic *Voter*, it’s not too late. Just email Micki at the League office (lwvmo@yahoo.com) and ask her to move you from snail mail to email. The *Voter* is sent bcc, and the League does not share or sell its email list.

Remember: email or snail mail is your choice. If you prefer to receive your newsletter from the post office, you may continue to do so. Your board wants to serve you in the best way possible.

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Local Leagues

St. Louis LWV (reported by Doris Buzzell, St. Louis LWV President)

Oaths and swearing are not, generally speaking, part of the image associated with the League of Women Voters---unless you are referring to Carol Portman and our team of voting registrars. They stay active year-round registering new citizens to vote at the naturalization ceremonies in the St. Louis Court House. Now, with election year in full swing, they are busier than ever. It is encouraging to note that requests are coming from schools. One high school senior undertook a voter registration project to get his eligible classmates launched on their civic careers. Yea, him!

And, speaking of images, we have a ravishing new web site just a-borning thanks to the know-how and Herculean efforts of our two Mickeys: Mickey Croyle and Micki Hoffman. Fortunately for us, we are being propelled into the electronic age in fine style. Do visit it at www.lwvstl.org.

Sedalia LWV

The Sedalia LWV will conduct a mock election for the Girl Scout Heart of American Council Quadrennial Rendezvous on April 19 at the State Fairgrounds. The League is preparing a *Voters Guide* to inform the scouts about two fictional presidential candidates and one ballot issue. The polling area will be set up like an actual polling place on Election Day, and Pettis County has agreed to provide voting booths and electronic scanning equipment. About 1500 Girl Scouts will be given this opportunity to participate in hands-on democracy.

SWMO LWV (reported by Lois Detrick, SWMO LWV President)

LWV of Southwest Missouri has been selected, along with LWV of Baltimore, to each host teams of four women and a facilitator from Azerbaijan, April 10-19. The purpose of the visit is to allow the group to gain first-hand knowledge of America’s democratic, accountable government and free-market system. Among many planned activities, the group will travel to Jefferson City to see the legislature in session and meet with legislators, visit the Springfield City Council, meet members of the Springfield Bar Association, and accompany Observer Corps members to various city commission meetings. This project is made possible with the support of the League of Women Voters Education Fund, and with funding from the Open World Leadership Center.

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SWMO LWV Hosts State Council

The SWMO LWV will welcome us to Springfield for the LWVMO State Council on **Saturday, May 31**. The day’s agenda includes programs on Mental Health and Member Recruitment, plus presentation of the Rachel Farr Fitch Health Care Award. We’ll have more details in the next issue of the *Voter*, but mark your calendars now for this opportunity to meet, greet, and learn more about LWV’s priorities.

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Reaching New Heights Together

It’s time to start thinking about the 2008 LWVUS convention to be held **June 13-17** at the Hilton Portland & Executive Tower in Portland, OR. Each local League that has met its per member payment (PMP) obligation is entitled to at least one delegate plus one for each hundred additional members. More information is available at www.LWV.org under the “For Members” drop down tab at the top of the page. If you are interested in attending this, the 48th National Convention, please talk with your local League president.

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Rachel Farr Fitch Health Care Award

By Joan Mills, LWVMO Health Co-chair

The Rachel Farr Fitch Health Care Award is given to an individual or group that has done outstanding work in the field of health care. The nominee does not have to be a member of the League of Women Voters. The service or activity does not have to be a League project, but it must be compatible with LWV ideals and not in conflict in any way with our program positions.

Each local League may submit one nominee. Written nominations should follow the format set up and available from the LWVMO office. A committee appointed by LWVMO president will select the winner.

Criteria:

1. The number of people served or impacted.
2. The project was health care service that impacted the community or world.
3. The number of people involved in carrying out the activity.
4. The project should have taken place in the last two (2) years.
5. Special consideration will be given to other groups that were networked during the project.

Nomination information required includes description, time frame, and outcome of the project; number of people involved; and, resources and other groups used to carry out the project.

Nomination forms are available from the LWVMO office (lwvmo@yahoo.com or phone 314-961-6869). **Nominations are due April 30, 2008**, and nominees must be able to attend the presentation. The award, given each two (2) years, will be announced and presented at LWVMO State Council on May 31 in Springfield.



Maydell Senn, Betty Ann Gilbert, and Mary Merritt
at the LWVMO board meeting January 5th.

Calendar

Feb. 5 - Presidential Primary
Feb.14 - LWV's 88th Birthday
Feb.26 - Candidate Filing
March – Women's History Month
Mar. 1 - LWVMO Board meets in St. Louis
Mar.13 - Legislative Day in Jefferson City
Mar.20 – *MoVoter* copy deadline
Apr.30 - Rachel Farr Fitch Award deadline
May 31 – State Council in Springfield
June 13-17 – LWVUS Convention



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.tcittravel.com. Plans can be made on the website by destination or travel dates.

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