



# Missouri Voter

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The League of Women Voters

March/April 2010

## Early Voting Study/No Excuse Absentee Voting Consensus

*By Cheryl Barnes and Donna Hoch, Early Voting Study Co-chairs*

The LWVMO Board approved the 2009-2010 Early Voting / No Excuse Absentee Voting Study Consensus at their March 12 meeting. The new position:

### **State Program Position in Brief**

Support absentee voting, advance voting and measures that facilitate participation in the election process.

#### **The League of Women Voters of Missouri supports:**

1. No excuse absentee voting either by mail or in person
2. Maintaining the practice of a permanent absentee disabled voter list
3. Clear and concise instructions to minimize spoiled and uncountable ballots
4. Adequate state funding for elections; elections should be a funded mandate
5. Early, in-person voting also referred to as advance voting
6. Centralized voting via Voter Centers, *i.e.*, combined precincts, satellite or super precincts where any registered Missouri voter can cast a ballot
7. Election consolidation by moving special elections to primary and general election days

\* \* \*

The Kansas City/JCP LWV initiated the study after record long lines during the 2008 Presidential election prevented citizens from voting. In May 2009, the State Board approved the study at the State Convention. The Missouri Leagues used study materials, including an overview of best practices in the 33 other states which allow some form of early/no excuse absentee voting, and local Leagues also interviewed their election officials. Local Leagues used the Internet, a Google group site, and Survey Monkey to gain and share information quickly and easily.

An educational panel providing a variety of perspectives included Peggy McGaugh, President of the Missouri Assoc. of Counties and Carroll County Clerk for the rural perspective; Shelley McThomas, Director of the Kansas City Election Board; State Rep. Paul LeVota; Connie Schmidt, a national election expert; and Emily Allen, communications manager for the Int'l. Assoc. of Administrative Professionals, who represented working families.

Following this in-depth study, individual Missouri Leagues reached consensus in December, January, and February.

Many thanks to committee members Crystal Bruner, Janice Dahl, Mary Merritt, Marty Ott, Janie Riley, Susan Rubino, Carol Schreiber, and Nelda Steffen who worked with co-chairs Donna Hoch and Cheryl Barnes on the project. Special thanks to Janis McMillen, the Missouri national liaison, and Debby Howard, Sydell Shayer, and Jo Sapp for sharing their experience.

Currently there are three bills referring to early voting in the state legislature.

A complete copy of the new position is available through the state office.

## Filing Day in Jefferson City

*By Charlotte King, LWVMO Director  
and Missouri Voter Editor*

League members from Columbia, Mexico, Moberly, and Sedalia gathered at the State Information Center Building on February 23 for the first day of candidate filing at the Secretary of State’s office. At this traditional event, we offered the candidates coffee and snacks along with LWV brochures and conversation. We answered questions, discussed issues, and gained two new League members.



Mary Merritt (Sedalia/PC) and new St. Louis member Rhoda Womack. Rhoda had accompanied a friend to Filing Day and saw our table. She had always wanted to join LWV, and we were there to welcome her!



Jo Sapp (Columbia/BC) and new Columbia/BC member Margaret Conroy. Margaret is State Librarian; some LWVMO members may remember her as our banquet speaker at State Convention in 2007.

## Legislative Day

*By Nancy Copenhaver, LWVMO Legislative Director*

About twenty dedicated League members from around the state converged on the Capitol very early March 23 for our annual Legislative Day. The purpose of the day is to motivate and energize our members to forge crucial relationships with their legislators, give them the information and tools they need to advocate for League’s priorities “where the action happens,” and to continue when they return home.

A steady stream of visitors stopped by, including State Senators and Representatives, Legislative Assistants, and other speakers. Additional “talking points” were provided by several LWVMO Directors to help attendees in their communications with their legislators.

Paula Hodges (and Jane Whitesides) with State Voices brought helpful information and explained the current situation with pending ballot issues and initiative petitions. Ron Berry with the Secretary of State’s Office, updated attendees on elections issues, particularly the move to make voting by overseas military easier. Both indicated that the ongoing budget crisis in the state has superseded most action in the legislature, so many issues are stalled. Ruth Ehresman, Director of Health and Budget Policy of the Missouri Budget Project, detailed the dangers of the proposed “FairTax” and answered many questions about the proposed elimination of earnings tax in St. Louis and Kansas City and tax policy. Otto Fajen, Legislative Director for Missouri NEA, spoke about the problems of maintaining crucial government services (including education) with a tax system that is woefully inadequate to meet budget needs.



Kelly Schultz (right in photo above), Legislative Assistant to Representative Sara Lampe of Springfield,

spoke briefly with attendees about the day's events (House debating budget, Senate in special committees studying budget recommendations by citizens) and presented LWVMO President Lois Detrick with a resolution from the House of Representatives honoring League's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and service to our state.

Leaguers then took a special tour of the Supreme Court building, just across from the Capitol. After a "working box lunch" back in the Capitol, members fanned out to visit with legislators, sit in on committee hearings, and watch action on the floor from the gallery.

For more information about specific legislation, please refer to the *Legislative Bulletin*.

## **LWVMO and Oxfam**

*By Sue Brockett, LWVMO Environment Director*

Our state LWV has been privileged to receive a grant from LWVUS and Oxfam America to raise consciousness around the climate change issue. The grant activities have centered on the theme of Sisters of the Planet. Oxfam created a DVD of this title and is continuing the theme by recruiting women to be Ambassadors for effective government action to ameliorate climate change.

The grant has allowed us to sponsor four forums featuring *Sisters of the Planet* and discussion of the implications of climate change on humans. The Leagues in Kansas City, Columbia, St. Louis and Southeast held these successful forums.



**St. Louis Climate Change Meeting  
with Speaker Thomas Mitchell**

Across the state we identified several "grasstops" as potential Ambassadors for the climate. Grasstops are women in a position to influence the outcome of the issue, and we recruited former Missouri Secretary of State Bekki Cook from Cape Girardeau to be an Ambassador to work with Oxfam. She accompanied LWVMO President Lois Detrick to Washington, DC, in March on an Oxfam-sponsored trip to celebrate International Women's Day where they met

with Senator Claire McCaskill and discussed upcoming climate change legislation.



**Bekki Cook**

Activities on the Oxfam grant will continue through May with an upcoming letter to the editor from Win Colwill, LWVMO Energy Director, and Lois. You will be notified of efforts to lobby for this issue using CapWiz/Salsa.

## **PAVP**

*By Jo Sapp, LWVMO Director, PAVP Committee*

Since 2006 LWVMO has been part of PAVP – the Public Advocacy for Voter Protection project. PAVP is aimed at protecting at-risk communities of voters from onerous voter identification rules and complex statewide voter registration procedures that place obstacles in the way of voting. Funding from LWVUS and work with a coalition of like-minded groups have helped us to succeed in educating the public on voting issues and hold back repeated efforts to impose a photo identification requirement on Missouri voters.

2010 brings renewed efforts in the legislature to place impediments before voters, and LWVMO is watching the situation closely. This year our participation in the Missouri Civic Engagement table will be a great help in organizing for action, and we have requested another round of funding from LWVMO to continue our work. Our strength lies in our collective voice and collective action. This year we will shift from CapWiz to Salsa as our primary means of communicating with you when action is needed, and there's a good chance you'll be hearing from us as the legislative session heats up. Watch for the alerts and help us protect a fundamental right of democracy.

## **Making A Difference!**

*By Elaine Blodgett, LWVMO MRI Director, and Charlotte King, Missouri Voter Editor*

YOU can make a difference in League – locally, statewide, and nationally. The wonderful thing is you can choose how you want to participate. Here are a few ideas you might want to try or share with new members:

### Be involved!

- Offer to serve on the board or a committee – contact your League president
- Attend unit meetings, public programs, forums
- Be trained to register voters
- Be an Observer at public meeting and report to your League

### Speak Up!

- Contact your elected representatives about issues that are important to you
- Participate in meetings and forums

### Get Informed!

- Attend a board meeting and learn how your League functions
- Check out our websites: national - [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org); state – [www.lwvmissouri.org](http://www.lwvmissouri.org); local
- Read the *Missouri Voter* and your local newsletter
- Read the *Legislative Bulletin*

### Spread the Word!

- Tell your friends and acquaintances about League
- Share our state and local newsletters
- Help staff the League table at Earth Day and other festivals
- Ask people to join League

### Help the League Run Smoothly!

- Share your gifts of time and money
- Send your suggestions for making a difference to [league@lwvmissouri.org](mailto:league@lwvmissouri.org)

### Have fun!

- Enjoy League and the friends you make!

**Share League with a friend or new member!**

**Bring your guest(s) to our**



**ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
of  
The Women's Right to Vote Amendment  
and  
The Founding of the League of Women Voters**

**Saturday, April 24, 2010, St. Louis**

## [Don't Let Deniers Stop Federal Climate Action](#)

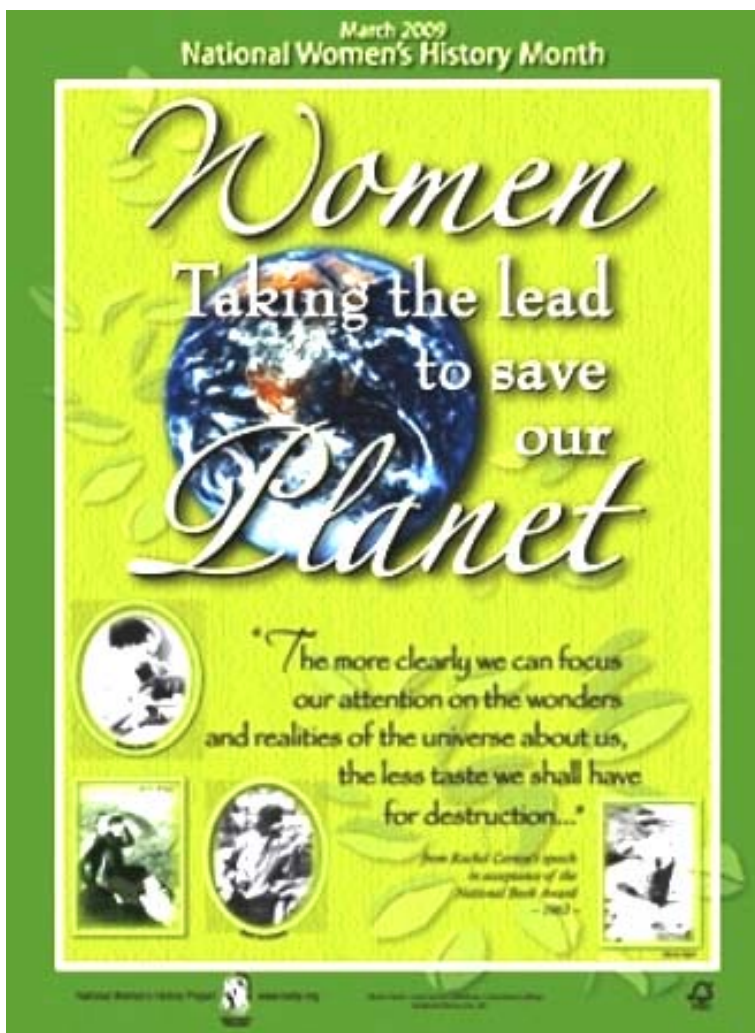
*By Win Colwill, LWVMO Energy Director*

Climate action naysayers are in denial. They ignore the evidence of climate change around the globe – melting glaciers, rising sea levels, intensified storms, higher global temperatures, record-breaking droughts and floods. They refuse to accept scientific consensus worldwide that global warming is real or that human activities, primarily fossil fuel use and land use changes, are the main causes.

In a NY Times Opinion Editorial on February 28, Al Gore responded strongly to critics, stating "the overwhelming scientific consensus on global warming remains unchanged." Contrary to deniers' claims that there had been no warming in the last decade, he said scientists had confirmed in January that the last decade was the hottest on record. And although January was unusually cold in much of the U.S., globally it was the second-hottest January since surface temperatures were first measured 130 years ago.

If heat-trapping emissions are allowed to increase at the current rate, projections show the impacts on Missouri will be devastating. Heat waves will be more frequent, more severe, and longer lasting, stressing livestock and crops, as well as endangering lives. Air quality will worsen, exacerbating lung and respiratory problems. Long summer dry spells are expected to increase evaporation, causing water deficits. More frequent heavy downpours will mean more disastrous floods and sewage overflows. Warmer winters will enable insect pests and invasive weeds to expand their range, requiring increased use of pesticides. Is this the future we want?

Our Members of Congress need to hear from us. A comprehensive energy/climate bill will spur transition to cleaner energy sources, producing new jobs, healthier air, greater energy independence and national security.



The quote is from a Rachel Carson speech.

## Local Leagues

**Kansas City/JCP LWV** (from Peg Prendergast, KC/JCP President)

LWV Kansas City/JCP members continue celebrating LWV 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday by walking in Brookside neighborhood St. Patrick Day Parade March 13, 2010.



**SWMO LWV** (from Cindy Stephens, SWMO President)

The SWMO LWV is hosting a public forum for Ozarks Technical Community College Board of Trustees on March 29. Five candidates are running for the two available six-year term seats. Following their opening statements, candidates will answer questions presented by the moderator and questions submitted in writing from audience members.



## In Brief

**LWVMO Board.** Joan Mills (KC/JCP), a director for the past three years, submitted her resignation, and the board accepted it with regret. During her tenure on the board, Joan's portfolios have included Health Care and the 90<sup>th</sup> Memory Book. Joan, thank you for all your work on both the state and local level!

**Gift.** To thank Cheryl Barnes and Donna Hoch for their work as co-chairs of the Early Voting Study, Linda McDaniel made a contribution to LWVMO.

*(Ed. Note: Beginning with this issue of the Missouri Voter, gifts to LWVMO in memory of, in honor of, or as a thank you to a person or persons who were/are a part of LWV may be listed in this section of the newsletter. The donor's name will be listed; the amount of the donation will not. Gifts to local Leagues will continue to be acknowledged by those Leagues.)*

**Emailed Missouri Voter.** Would you like to see the Missouri Voter in color? Save LWVMO printing and mailing costs? You can now get the Missouri Voter direct to your computer early by contacting Anna or Julie at the office. Let them know the email address at which you would like to receive your Missouri Voter. Your email address is not shared with any person or company, and your newsletter will be sent bcc.

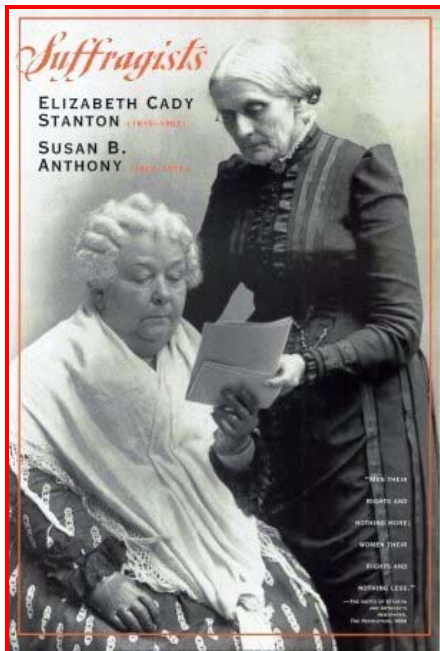
**LWVMO Online Store.** We have wonderful League items available at our Online Store – 90<sup>th</sup> Celebration mugs, lapel pins, stickers; Missouri Voters' Handbook; 2010 calendars; pins and notes cards. Take a look and order something special today! We accept PayPal!

### **Contact Your LWVMO:**

LWVMO  
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Fax: 314-961-8393  
Email: [league@lwvmissouri.org](mailto:league@lwvmissouri.org)  
Website: [www.lwvmissouri.org](http://www.lwvmissouri.org)

## Calendar

- April 6 - LWVMO President in LWV office  
 - Election Day



### *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 \$100, which will be split 50/50 between LWVMO and the local League.

You may call Travel Concepts at 1-800-762-4216 or navigate their website at [www.SeriousTraveler.com](http://www.SeriousTraveler.com) Plans can be made on the website by destination or travel dates.

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**April 24 - League's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

- May 4 - LWVMO President in LWV office  
 May 7 - LWVMO Board Meeting – Columbia  
 May 12 - Last day to register for June 8 elections  
 May 31 - Memorial Day observed (office closed)  
 June 8 - Election Day  
 June 11-15 - LWVUS Convention – Atlanta  
 June 14 - Flag Day  
 July 4 - Independence Day  
 July 5 - Office closed  
 July 16 - LWVMO Board Retreat - Columbia



## 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Check List

Here's a check list for you to make sure you are ready for the 90<sup>th</sup> Celebration on April 24:

- Made luncheon reservation(s)
- Bought my quilt raffle tickets
- Have been selling quilt raffle tickets
- Made contribution to League in honor of 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Purchased my 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary lapel pin

- Purchased my 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary mug
- Using 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary stickers on my outgoing mail

