



Missouri Voter

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League of Women Voters

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“Clean Air Promise” One Step in Influencing Legislators

The LWVUS, in collaboration with groups such as the American Lung Association, has developed the Clean Air Promise as a way to show support for continued and strengthened government action to protect our air. The EPA is currently updating rules on allowable ozone and other air pollutants. While it may not seem like much, the number of people taking the promise is a powerful tool in lobbying our elected officials.

Clean Air Promise

- I promise to protect America’s children and families from dangerous air pollution.
- Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths,
- I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality.

Act by taking the Clean Air Promise at the LWV website, <http://www.peoplenotpolluters.org>. The site also allows you to send an email to your elected officials by entering your zip code. Clean Air is a right, not a privilege. Information about the Clean Air Campaign and EPA efforts on limiting ozone and other gases can be found on the LWVSEMO web site: www.lwvsemo.org.

Key League Dates

September 24	State Board meeting, Columbia
November 4	State Board meeting, Sedalia
November 5	Fall Conference in Sedalia
January 21	State Board meeting, Columbia [in the event of inclement weather, the board meeting will be held on January 28]
March 10	State Board meeting, Columbia

May will be spring conference – date depending on location, but May 12 is being considered



LOOK HERE!

Please do not forget to order your calendars regular or pocket size!

Please remember to post your check to RESTORE THE DAY!

Call the office 314-961-6869 between 9:30 and 3:30 if you need more information.

WHAT ABOUT EDUCATION?

By Marty Ott, LWVMO Director and State Education Chair

League members may be asking, “What’s this buzz about education?” A consensus study, “Role of Federal Government in Public Education” was approved by the delegates at the LWVUS Convention in 2010. This study is broad and includes the following areas: Historical Timeline, Equity and Funding, and the Common Core Standards. Our members will have the opportunity to ask questions, voice their opinion, and contribute ideas during the Consensus process. Your participation is strongly encouraged.

From the very beginning of our Republic, a well-educated citizenry was thought to be essential to protect liberty and the general welfare of the people. From Land Grants, Supreme Courts decisions, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, to the reauthorization of ESEA--known as No Child Left Behind, the federal government has increasingly played a significant role in public education.

Public school funding comes from many sources – federal, state and local taxes as well as grants. The federal government adds less than 10 percent to local education budgets, yet it contributes significantly to the rules for how the funding is used. Traditionally, all federal money has been aimed at special groups through categorical funding targeted to a specific student population, such as low-income students.

In March, 2009, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) launched the Common Core State Standards initiative. By early 2011, forty states have adopted the Standards. The adopting states are currently using them to align their own state standards.

What is the role of the Federal Government in early childhood education? Should it extend to all children? Should funding be targeted for special groups, block granted or blended into the general revenue?

Should the United States have a consistent set of academic assessments? Does the United States need a national curriculum?

These are a few of the questions we will be asking for this most important study, “Role of the Federal Government in Public Education”. YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

MRI, NOW CARRIE: Caring Active Recruitment/ Real Issues for Everyone

Welcome to CARRIE or the new, but same membership recruitment and fundraising development committee. From LWVUS to our local leagues, we are involved in building each of our chapters and making the League more important in people’s lives. If there ever was a time when our organization is needed in the hubbub of noise and confusion, it’s now.

You can never have too much money or too many members. With more of everything, we can reach our communities with the political issues in their lives. Granted, its a little like teaching, luring people into actually learning about the issues on the ballot before election day, and comparing candidates running for office.

We have new state board members on our committee who will be talking with you throughout this year, Barb Davis, Mexico; Janie Riley, Moberly; ELizabeth Fahey, Springfield; and Marcia Coccozza, Sedalia; along with Mary Merritt and me. We want to hear from you and know what everyone is doing. Send us your newsletters, and any other information on activities that you think might interest us.

--Elaine Blodgett, Carrie Chair

Local Chapter Information and Activities

Moberly-Randolph County

The Moberly/Randolph County LWV met Monday, August 8, to prepare for the upcoming year. We set our schedule for the year which will include the two LWVUS studies as well as preparing forums for the November elections.

We have met with our Moberly Public Schools Superintendent Mark Penny as well as Dr. Evelyn Jorgensen who is President of Moberly Area Community College. Our meeting with Penny and Jorgensen was quite interesting and will be helpful as we go into the Education Study and the consensus questions.

We also discussed a membership gathering but that is still in the works.

Reporting--Janie Riley

Mexico/Audrain County

Mexico/ Audrain League will "kickoff" 2011-2012 with a public forum on the "Role of the Federal Government in Education" on Sept 13th. Special guests with a known interest in education will be sent a written invitation and a follow up telephone call.

The second study meeting will be with the same format at our regular meeting Oct.11th. (New member opportunities)

New voter registration has continued in July and August with much success at Baby shows and the Back to School Fair. (Lots of young parents)

STD Awareness program continues with LWV contacts to church youth groups, Scouts and 4H clubs and with civic groups.

Reporting--Laura Worstell, County president

Southwest Missouri Chapter

The LWV of Southwest Missouri has enjoyed a great summer, even with the heat.

We hosted two Summer Sounding Boards, our casual summer meetings. One was at a local chocolate factory (Askinosie Chocolate) where we learned about this company's fair trade policies with farmers in Central and South America.

The other was a presentation on a pilot program in Springfield, "Turning the Tide on Poverty," that seeks to engage neighborhoods in community action.

Now, we are excited to move into fall. Our new board is encouraging every member to "Choose to Get Involved" this year. We already have a strong committee for the national study on education and also have a small group formed to initiate the Youth Voter Registration effort.

Voter Summary "Deceives;" League Acts in Concert

The League of Women Voters is dedicated to the idea that informed participation of all citizens in the electoral process is a central tenet of democracy. For the past five years, we have participated in Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP), an LWVUS Ed Fund project aimed at protecting at-risk communities of voters from onerous voter identification rules and other measures that place obstacles before voters. LWVUS funding has allowed us to work with a coalition of like-minded people and groups dubbed Missourians for Fair Elections to prevent a mandated state-issued photo ID as a condition of voting.

The Missouri legislature proposes a constitutional amendment proposal that will go to voters in November 2012. The ballot summary approved by legislators asks voters: "Shall the Missouri Constitution be amended to adopt the Voter Protection Act and allow

the General Assembly to provide by general law for advance voting prior to election day, voter photo identification requirements, and voter requirements based on whether one appears to vote in person or by absentee ballot?"

A suit has been filed to prevent the measure from going to voters. The basis of the suit is that the summary "deceives and misleads voters" in several ways. Although the summary refers to it as the "Voter Protection Act," that wording never appears in the constitutional amendment, and the effect of the legislation is the opposite of its title. The suit also challenges the inclusion of a very limited early voting period and minimal forms of photo identification.

Unless the lawsuit is successful, LWVMO will be called on to make sure that voters understand the proposal and its implications. Read more at: <http://www.firedupmissouri.com/node/14362>

A QUIZ

What has 120 legs, 60 heads, enjoys air conditioning, eats fudge, laughs a lot, and loves to learn new things?

Attendees at the Fall Conference, of course! All of this and more can be yours in just one day. We will be back at our favorite fall haunt at the Sedalia Community College for Fall Conference on November 5th, 2011.

What is the name of a Mexican style sauce, a dance or a, incredibly adaptable computer program?

Salsa! And you can learn all about it, how YOU can use it, and what it is going to mean to you in the coming months. It can inform you, help with interleague communication and alert you to action items.

Who knows all about the second National Study, and in fact is leading the writing of it? And what does "Privatization" mean? (and don't bother looking it up. It wasn't in my Merriam-Webster) Our very own National liaison person – Janis McMillen. Kick start your own local study with the very best info you can get.

ALL THIS AND MORE AT THE FALL CONFERENCE. November 5th at State Fair Community College in Sedalia 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM. And only \$20. SEE YOU THERE!

Fall Conference Registration Form

Saturday, November 5, 2011 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.
State Fair Community College, Sedalia. Mo.

Local League _____ # _____ @ \$15.00 each= \$ _____

Persons attending: _____

Mail to: Mary Merritt, 1812 S. Grand, Sedalia, MO 65301
Please return this information by October 30.

President's WOW - (Words of Wisdom, that is)

Perhaps it is only from the perspective of the times we live in, but it seems that every day as one reads the newspapers or listens to TV, the pressure heightens to constrict the freedoms our country has worked so hard to secure. The photo ID issue hacks away at the very things the League was founded to ensure; not just the right of women to vote, but of all citizens to vote.

Our two studies, the Role of Federal Government in Public Education and Privatization are certainly at the top of many persons' agenda of importance in society today.

The opportunity National is affording us to teach about voting and get young adults involved in the process of voting is at the heart of League purpose.

The Clean Air Promise is keeping us all aware of the importance of all citizens to be able to breathe, especially the children whose lungs are in danger of having to fight the pollution and carcinogens we can't see or smell but are nonetheless present in our air.

If space allowed, many other opportunities the League of Women Voters offers us to be so meaningfully involved in our world could be cited. When there is so much happening in the world that is out of the sphere we can influence, we have a wonderful avenue to do whatever we can locally, in our state and nationally.

As we begin our new year, I would urge each League member to renew that sense of urgency, to get excited about one or more of the projects offered and be a part of everything possible as we continue to Make Democracy Work!

Federal Budget News

The Budget Control Act of 2011 was passed by both chambers of Congress and signed into law by President Obama on August 2nd. The Act includes a series of debt limit increases estimated to carry through to early 2013, accompanied by corresponding spending cuts. Major elements of the deal include:

- Binding caps on discretionary spending that will reduce the deficit by approximately \$900 billion over ten years. These caps do not apply to entitlement programs, and apply to fiscal years 2012 through 2021.

- The appointment of a special committee comprised of 12 members of Congress will be appointed by Congressional leaders within two weeks to identify an additional \$1.2 to \$1.5 trillion in budget savings by November 23rd. The committee can consider revenue measures, as well as cuts to spending, including entitlement and defense spending.

If the committee agrees on a proposal, Congress must vote on it by December 23rd. If the committee fails to come to consensus or the agreement does not pass Congress, across-the-board cuts will be triggered, going into effect in January, 2013. Half of the cuts would be from defense and security related spending, and Medicare would

be cut. Social Security and Medicaid are exempted from automatic cuts.

To learn more about how these across-the-board cuts, read the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) report “How the Potential Across-the-Board Cuts in the Debt Limit Deal Would Occur.”

- A required vote in the fall on a balanced budget amendment.

According to the CBPP report, if the across-the-board cuts are enacted, defense and security programs would be cut by about \$55 million annually from 2013 through 2021. Non-defense cuts of the same amount would also take effect; about \$17 billion would be cut from Medicare provider payments (\$10 billion) and other entitlement programs (\$7 billion). (Several mandatory programs are exempt from these cuts, including Medicaid, Social Security, SNAP and child nutrition programs, and the Earned Income Tax Credit).

For more background on the issues involved in resolving the nation’s debt and deficit, including global spending caps and balanced budget amendments, visit Missouri Budget Project’s federal policy page.



Vote411.org Provides “One-Stop” Location for Election Information



Vote411.org was launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006. Leagues in Missouri tested the product in the 2010 election to rave reviews, partly because it provided a “one-stop-shop” for election related information. A person could enter an address, see specifically which issues and races were on the ballot, and review information about each. In essence, it was an electronic voters guide with additional bells and whistles.

In 2010 it was offered to local Leagues at no cost. Going forward, there is an expense. Interesting, it is cheaper for Missouri to participate as a State, than for local Leagues to participate individually. It costs \$5,000 per year to be able to upload the necessary information. This is a perfect project for grant requests and corporate fundraising since there are expenses relating to training volunteers and clerical support to assure proper utilization of the site in addition to the site license.

You will be hearing more about this project

since we will need all Leagues to assist in making this a reality. Meanwhile, here are a few reasons this project is an exciting idea:

- Because of redistricting, voters in 2012 will need more assistance than usual in determining “which person” represents them.
- More people are turning to the internet instead of newspapers, television, and radio as a source of information.
- People can find all of the information in one place, and thus make more informed decisions.
- This format allows Leagues to convert the electronic information into a printed booklet for individuals not wishing to access the internet.
- People can assist relatives in a different part of the State [or nation!] with information regarding polling places and other election-related information.

Watch here for additional details in future editions.