



The Voter

League of Women Voters of Columbia/Boone

VOLUME 75, No. 9

SEPTEMBER, 2010

Constitution Day Celebration

In January, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission that corporations and labor unions were “persons” and, as such, could not have limitations placed upon their 1st Amendment rights regarding campaign contributions. LWV was one of many groups that submitted briefs arguing against this interpretation. How did we get here? What does this decision mean for elections and political campaigns in the future?

The Civil Liberties Committee of the League is sponsoring a forum in which these and other, similar questions will be addressed. Four experts in the 1st Amendment, constitutional law and elections will present their views and invite questions from the audience. The title, presenters, date, time and location for the program are.....

If You Prick Them, Do They Bleed? Corporations as Persons

Paul Litton (Professor of Law, UMC)
Marvin Overby (Professor of Political Science, UMC)
Richard Reuben (Professor of Law, UMC)
Christina Wells (Professor of Constitutional Law, UMC)

Wednesday, September 15, 2010, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Refreshments at 6:30

County Commission Chambers of Roger B. Wilson
Boone County Government Center
801 East Walnut

Come join us as we celebrate Constitution Day 2010!
(And, using the enclosed flyer, invite others to come and learn, too)

It’s That Time Again!



Now is the time to renew your LWV membership for the year of 2011. We begin that process in the fall when hot weather abates, and all new activities begin. We already have a few early birds. For your convenience, we have enclosed an addressed envelope along with our new membership brochure.

Membership Co-chairs: Linda Brown, 447-3939 or Liz Schmidt 445-0655

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

- **Civil Liberties Com. Mtg., Thurs., Sept. 9, 1: 15 pm., Library**
- **Constitution Day Panel, Wed., Sept 15, 7:00 p.m., County Commission Chambers**
- **Voter Service Com. Mtg., Mon., Sept. 20, 7 pm, Library C.**
- **Energy Matters Com., Tues., Sept. 21, Library B**
- **Unit Mtg. of local/state ballot issues, Wed., Sept. 22, 7:00 p.m., 701 Hilltop Cr.**
- **Unit Mtg. of local/state ballot issues, Thurs., Sept. 23, 12 noon., 1st Pres. Ch.**
- **Education Com., Thurs., Sept. 23, 6:30 pm, Library**
- **Sustainable Living Fair, Sun., Sept. 26, 11 am—6 pm, Columbia College**
- **Board Mtg., Mon., Sept. 27, 6:30 pm, Boone Electric**
- **LEED tour of City Hall, Tues., Sept 28, 7 pm.**

Last day to register to vote in November election is Wed., Oct. 6

Fact Checking

In this election cycle, voters wanting to check the accuracy of campaign ads can go to

www.politifact.com or www.factcheck.org

Statesman or Politician – the Culture of Fear and Hate



According to Merriam-Webster, a statesman is one who exercises political leadership wisely and without narrow partisanship. Abraham Lincoln differentiated between statesmen and politicians when he said, “A statesman is he who thinks in the future generations, and a politician is he who thinks in the upcoming elections.” Unfortunately, it seems lately that too many of our leaders, whatever their party, have become merely politicians with statesmen or stateswomen rarely seen.

As we watch television news and read the newspapers and news magazines, the attention seems to be on division, hatred of those who are different from us, and fear. Is this a result of the times in which we find ourselves or is it being created, and, if so, why? A Wikipedia article on the culture of fear suggests that “deliberate programs of scaremongering vary, but can hinge on the potential for increased social control that a mistrustful and mutually fearing population might offer to those in power...” How is such a culture of fear created? Perhaps through such techniques as “careful selection and omission of news (some relevant facts are shown and some are not); distortion of statistics or numbers; transformation of single events into social epidemics (Salem witch trials); corruption and distortion of words or terminology according to specific goals; stigmatization of minorities; causal inversion (turning a cause into an effect or vice-versa); and, finally, outright fabrication of events or claims and then deliberately whipping up outrage at the false claims and fabrications.” Sound familiar?

Compromise seems to be a lost art, both locally and nationally, with our politicians focused only on what “my people” want, not on what is best for all of us. I don’t have an answer to this problem. However, as Meghan McCain, writer for The Daily Beast and daughter of John McCain, recently wrote, “The lines of social acceptability and just plain courteous behavior are becoming harder to define when it comes to politics, and for the first time in a long time I am truly concerned about where this fear and frustration in politics is taking us.”

Linda Kaiser
President

*In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.
Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Energy Matters Committee Update

The next Committee meeting is Tuesday, September 21, at the Library (conference room B). The main topics are Planning for the year: (1) What should our emphasis and goals be this year? (2) When is the best time to meet to fit individual schedules?

Two items are occurring shortly after this meeting but I think that they are largely worked out already and will not require any action at the meeting. (1) Sustainable Living Fair, Sept. 26 at Columbia College. We have coverage of our booth by one person but, if you could help, it is more fun with two people covering shifts for an hour or two between 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The booth will be easy to set up so I will not need assistance with that. (2) Tour City Hall with Barbara Buffaloe, Sept 28 7:00 p.m. Since there is limited space please contact me for tickets.

Dick Parker, Co-Chair

Though the Energy Matters Committee has not been meeting this summer, it has not been totally inactive. In addition to the City Hall addition tour (see Win's article), Dick Parker has made presentations to Boonslick Kiwanis and the Unitarian Universalist Church Forum on the conversion of our local electric power plant to burning biomass fuel as a means of reducing Columbia's greenhouse gas emissions. He is looking for other venues to get this idea wider exposure in Columbia. Please contact him with suggestions at rbparker1@centurytel.net or 256-4397.

Joni O'Connor

LEED Tour Offers Unusual Opportunity

On September 28, Barbara Buffaloe, Columbia's Sustainability Manager, will conduct a special tour of the City Hall Addition's sustainability design features that may enable the building to receive prestigious LEED Silver certification.

LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design) is a rating program developed by the U.S. Building Council to encourage the design and construction of "green" buildings that conserve energy and water, reduce waste, improve indoor environment, and reduce greenhouse gases.

This event is an unusual opportunity to learn from a LEED Accredited Professional about this green building rating program and to see firsthand many of the unusual materials and innovative design elements in the City Hall Addition that earn certification points.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The tour is limited to 25 people, so reservations are required. Make your reservation today by sending an email to Energy Matters Co-Chair, Dick Parker – rbparker1@centurytel.net

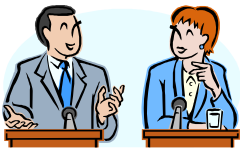
Tour participants will meet with Ms. Buffaloe at 7:00 pm in Conference Room 1-A of the City Hall Addition, at Broadway and Eighth Streets. She will give a brief presentation before the tour, which should conclude by 8:30 p.m.

You can park free of charge at the parking garage north of City Hall.



Win Colwill
Energy Matters Co-Chair

General Election Forums Set



The Voter Service Committee has completed plans for the League forums for the November 2nd election. The October 13th forum will focus on candidate races and the October 19th forum will focus on ballot issues. Both forums are co-sponsored by the Columbia Public Library and will be in the Friends Room at the library. Both forums will be from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. with refreshments at 6:00 p.m.

The candidates invited to the October 13th forum will include Democratic and Republican candidates for State Representative districts 21, 23 and 24, and Presiding County Commissioner.

The ballot issues we will try to get pro and con speakers for are the Columbia City Issues: City Parks Tax and the Tasers Ban; and State Ballot Issues: Proposition A (earnings tax changes) and Proposition B (puppy mill restrictions). For the two Constitutional Amendments only the ballot language will be read.

Carol Schreiber
Chair

Learn About the November Ballot Issues

The unit meetings in September will focus on the initiatives on the November ballot, both local and statewide. LWVMO does have a position on the earnings tax ballot initiative (see press release on page 4). Information as to current LWVMO positions which support this stance as well as related background information will be available at both unit meetings.

Neither LWVMO nor our local league have any current positions directly related to two other initiatives on the ballot—the proposed ban on tasers and Proposition B (puppy mill restrictions). Although our local league can, therefore, take no positions for or against these issues, we will have pro and con materials related to these issues at the meeting, which will allow members to become more educated on these issues.

The local League does have a position related to the Columbia recreational facilities (*Support of improved recreational facilities, including development of the downtown portion of Flat Branch area*). At issue is whether or not our League should publicly support the proposed parks tax.

Come to the meetings to learn more about all of these issues at one or both of the September unit meetings - Wednesday, September 22, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at 703 Hilltop Drive (Wayne & Rachel Brekhus), 875-4295; or on Thursday, September 23, 12:00-1:30 p.m. (brown bag lunch), 1st Presbyterian Church conference room 16 Hitt Street.



What's Up with the League and CAT TV



The new League CAT TV committee has met with CAT TV to plan for the next year's programs. Our major emphasis is on "civil discourse." Some of the interesting ideas we are looking at are one to two minute comments on "hot topics"; updating our web site to include weekly web blogs on current issues; and revamping our studio programs to get a larger audience. Some of the programs will include additional costs to the League and we will be looking for underwriters for these segments.

One very important item we found out is that ALL of the League's past programs over the last three years with CAT TV are now accessible on their web site (www.columbiaaccess.tv). This is great news for members and the public who do not get the CAT TV channel and for those wanting to see a past program.

We have looked at several topics for the studio programs and want to keep them current and educational, but we are looking at a different format. We are always interested in ideas from League members for topics and speakers.

Our committee members are Elaine Blodgett, Holly Burgess and Carol Schreiber. If you would like to join our committee or have suggestions, please contact Elaine Blodgett at elaineblodgett@gmail.com

Welcome to our newest members of our League:

Jennifer Bukowsky, 2140 East Bluebird Lane, 65201

jbukowsky@gmail.com

Casey Millburg, 4803 Moniteau Court, 65202 ctmillburg@gmail.com

Karl & Mahree Skala, 5201 Gasconade Drive, 65202 skalamahree@yahoo.com



News from Our Members

Nan Unklesbay (a member of the Education Committee) has written a book entitled Swimming Against the Tide, Strong Recovery From Stroke, which will be released soon. We understand that she will be having a book signing at the Columbia Public Library in October, so watch for the announcement.



Betty Cook Rottman: Holly Burgess reports that she had a lovely phone visit with Betty in mid-August. She is doing well and is ready to meet "kindred spirits" down in Arkansas. Her email (which may be the same as when in Columbia) is bcookrottman@gmail.com and her phone number is 479-444-8830 and her mailing address is 11196 Pioneer Road, Prairie Grove, AR 72753. Holly indicated that Betty would love to continue hearing from her Columbia friends!

Holly Burgess (Board member and Education Committee Co-Chair) was herself in the news recently. Holly was featured as one of several active professional women in Columbia in the *Columbia Missourian's* Vox magazine, published on July 1st. If you missed the article, you can see it at www.voxmagazine.com/stories/2010/07/01 and click on "Columbia's Professional Citizens."

Sustainable Living Fair

This is always a good event to learn about how we can live a low environmental impact life style. It occurs this year again at Columbia College on Sunday Sept. 26 from 11:00 to 6:00. It will be in the main building on Rogers St. at the east side of the building. There will be speakers and workshops. Our Energy Matters Committee will have a booth along with a couple of dozen others. See you there.

Dick Parker
Energy Matters Co-Chair

Joanna Whitley died at her home July 22. She was a devoted member and hard worker in our League - a fervent advocate for the environment and leader in the local recycling movement. She was on the local Board for many years, most recently Recycling Chair. Joanne was a lovely lady with a strong love for nature. Her late husband, Jim Whitley, was also a strong supporter of the League and educated us about the adverse impact of coal mining wastes on Missouri waters.

Her memorial service is planned for Monday, Sept. 20 at the Reichmann Pavilion at Stephens Lake Park at 1:30 p.m.

Public Advocacy for Voter Protection Project

The League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) Public Advocacy for Voter Protection Project has been created to help to bolster its capacity for continuing and expanding its critical state-based advocacy to prevent the disenfranchisement of eligible citizens, particularly underserved populations.



Background:

In 2002, in the wake of the tumultuous 2000 election, Congress passed the Help America Vote Act ("HAVA") to modernize the nation's election processes and to help ensure that eligible voters are no longer deprived of the franchise due to administrative errors.

Unfortunately, in many states, politicians have seized on this opportunity as a means of disenfranchising targeted voters through changes in election laws. These new measures have the potential of disenfranchising more Americans than any Election Day problems we have seen in the past.

In an effort to fight back, the League of Women Voters is focusing on five specific issues:

1. Oppose ID and documentary proof of citizenship
2. Improve administration of statewide database systems
3. Guard against undue restrictions on voter registration
4. Improve polling place management
5. Improve poll worker training and strengthening poll workers

Note: Missouri is one of the states who have received a grant for this this project. Jo Sapp (Columbia) and Mary Merritt (Sedalia) head up Missouri's efforts.

LWVMO Press Release on Earnings Tax



The League of Women Voters of Missouri strongly opposes the November 2nd, 2010 ballot issue which would mandate an eventual elimination of the earnings tax in St. Louis and Kansas City unless those cities vote to retain the tax. In addition, it would prohibit any other city from adopting an earnings tax.

The present earnings tax provides one third or more of the general revenue for St. Louis and Kansas City. It pays for essential services such as fire and police protection. Were the tax to be eliminated, the cities would have to find another source of income. The only two that would provide sufficient revenue would be either a large increase in the sales tax or the property tax or a combination of the two.

These taxes would be prohibitively higher for residents and businesses alike. Local sales taxes would rise to over 5% in each city. The great disparity between the present sales tax rate and a likely new one would result in fewer purchases being made by those living both within and outside of the city, hurting retail business drastically and in no way making up for the lost revenue.

If the city chose to increase property taxes instead, the sale of homes would decrease, many residents would move to a more competitive location, construction industries would suffer.

In both cases, the tax burden for residents and business alike would increase because the burden would be spread among fewer people. The resulting negative impact to the communities would have a domino effect.

In the present economic climate, especially one in which cities struggle to survive, eliminating a dependable source of revenue, for no predictable gain, is not logical.

The League of Women Voters of Missouri supports an adequate and balanced tax system to finance necessary governmental services which emphasizes equity and the fair sharing of the tax burden. The tax base should be broad. Communities should continue to rely on the three major tax sources, income, sales and property. Financial stability is an important goal of fiscal policy. The earnings tax meets these criteria. To sustain a representative government, elected officials must be responsible for making fiscal decisions. They are then accountable to the voters for their actions. Therefore, the League of Women Voters of Missouri urges a No Vote on the November 2010 earnings tax ballot issue.

For more information contact: Nancy Copenhaver, Legislative Chair, LWV of Missouri, 660/263-5725

The Cost of Electing State Supreme Court Judges

BRENNAN CENTER
FOR JUSTICE

at New York University School of Law

According to a release from the Brennan Center for Justice on August 3, 2010, spending on state Supreme Court elections (in states without a nonpartisan court plan) has more than doubled in the past decade, from **\$83.3 million in 1990-1999 to \$206.9 million in 2000-2009**, in a report by the Justice at Stake Campaign, the Brennan Center, and the National Institute on Money in State Politics. For more than a decade, partisans and special interests of all stripes have grown more organized in their efforts to tilt the scales of justice their way. This surge in spending—much of it funneled through secret channels—has fundamentally transformed state Supreme Court elections. “This crisis of confidence in the judiciary is real and growing,” Justice O’Connor warns in the foreword of the report. “Left unaddressed, the perception that justice is for sale will undermine the rule of law that the courts are supposed to uphold.”

See “The New Politics of Judicial Elections 2000-2009” at www.brennancenter.org for the complete report.

Officers**President:** Linda Kaiser (474-1407)**1st Vice President:** Rachel Brekhuis
(875-4295)**2nd Vice President:** Carol Schreiber
(657-1467)**Secretary:** Joni O'Connor (234-1012)**Treasurer:** Liz Schmidt (445-0655)**Board Members &
Committee Chairs****Budget:** Shirley Troth (634-6157)**Civil Liberties:** Linda Kaiser &
Aline Kultgen (449-2149)**Communications:** Maydell Senn
(445-7844)**Discussion Groups/Unit Meetings:**
Midge Pinkerton (445-2052)**Education:** Holly Burgess (449-0625)
& Zona Burk (234-1083)**Energy Matters:** Win Colwill (469-
1383) & Dick Parker**Fundraising:****Historian:** Marilyn McLeod (445-3500)**Hospitality:** Pam Springsteel
(445-0642)**CAT TV:** Elaine Blodgett
(256-2803)**Membership:** Linda Lenau Brown
(447-3939) & Liz Schmidt**Mental Health:** Lael Von Holt
(443-7747)**Nominating:** Sarah Wolcott (449-
4407)**Peace:** Dick Parker (256-4397)**Special Events:****Land Use/Sunshine Coalition:** Jo
Sapp (443-8964)**Voter Editors:** Joni O'Connor &
Linda Kaiser**Voter Service:** Carol Schreiber**Meetings****Board:** 4th Monday, 6:30 pm,
Boone Electric Coop**Civil Liberties:** 2nd Thurs., 1:15 pm***Education:** 4th Thurs., 6:30 pm***Energy Matters:** 4th Tuesday, 1 pm***Fundraising:** Varies**Peace:** Varies***Voter Service:** Varies*

*Meetings at Library

Membership

If you are a member and wish to receive a membership list, please contact Liz Schmidt at 445-0655 or email at lizschmidt@centurytel.net.

To join the League, fill in the information below and mail it, with your check, to Membership Chair, League of Women Voters, PO Box 239, Columbia, MO 65205. Dues are \$55 for individuals, \$80 for a household and \$15 for local students. (An "11" after your name indicates paid for 2011. A 2011 renewal membership form and envelope will be included in the September Voter.)

Name _____

Email Address _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

I am particularly interested in _____

(Note: Tax deductible donations to the Education Fund should be a separate check, payable to LWVMO Education Fund.)

For more information, contact Liz Schmidt at 445-0655 or Linda Brown at 447-3939.

Websiteslww.columbia.missouri.org (ours)lwwmissouri.org (state)lww.org (national)

Would you like to see the Voter in color? Save the League printing and mailing costs? You can now get the Voter direct to your computer early by contacting co-editor Linda Kaiser at lindaskaiser@gmail.com. Let her know you would like to receive your Voter via email and send Linda the email address to which you would like to receive the Voter.



This began with the February, 2010 Voter!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Columbia – Boone County MO

P.O. Box 239

Columbia, MO 65205

<http://lww.columbia.missouri.org>

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LWV: Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

September 2010						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 Civil Liberties Com., 1:15 pm, Library B	10	11
12	13	14	15 Constitution Day Event, County Commission Chambers, 7 pm	16	17 Constitution Day	18
19	20 Voter Service Com, Library C, 7 pm	21 Energy Matters Com. Library B, 1 pm	22 Unit Mtg. on Ballot issues, 703 Hilltop, 7 pm	23 Unit Mtg., on Ballot Issues, 1st Pres. Church, 12 noon Ed. Com., 6:15 pm, Library B	24	25
26 Sustainable Living Fair, Co- lumbia College, 11 am-6 pm	27 Board Mtg., 6:30 pm, Boone Electric Community Room	28 LEED Tour, City Hall, 7 pm	29	30	Oct. 1	Oct. 2
Oct. 3	Oct. 4	Oct. 5	Oct. 6	Oct. 7	Oct. 8	Oct. 9