



The Voter

League of Women Voters of Columbia/Boone

VOLUME 76, No. 11

NOVEMBER, 2011

Come Hear the City Manager !



On Tuesday, November 15, City Manager **Mike Matthes**, speaking on "**Planning for Columbia's Future Energy Needs**," will be at the Columbia Public Library, with the usual refreshments at 6:30 p.m. and forum starting at 7:00 p.m.. This will be his first major public speech since coming to Columbia in May, certainly his first on energy.

The League's invitation said, "We would like to hear your views regarding the city's energy programs and implementation of Columbia's climate protection agreement." Barbara Buffalo, Columbia's Sustainability Manager, will accompany him. She will likely speak about what has been accomplished in city-owned buildings with the major energy efficiency grant she has been managing and the opportunities she sees in Columbia's energy future.

There are major renewable energy initiatives going on in Columbia at this time. Significant amounts of both wind and solar power are being added to the utility's electric power supply this year. In addition, utility staff report that homes participating in the Home Performance with Energy Star program have reduced their energy consumption on average by 30%.

Bring your questions as we have planned generous discussion time. Bring friends and colleagues too.

Dick Parker, Co-Chair
Energy Matters Committee

League Member Honored



Retired Daniel Boone Regional Library librarian Marilyn McLeod was presented with the Missouri Library Association Meritorious Achievement Award at the annual MLA conference on October 6 in Kansas City. She worked at DBRL for 25 years before retiring in May 2011.

The Meritorious Achievement Award recognizes an individual who has made a significant contribution to libraries in Missouri, thereby gaining recognition beyond the local level or making an innovative contribution in the decisive factors in library development.

In 1986, McLeod received MLA's Outstanding New Librarian Award.

When she first joined the DBRL staff, she served as a Public Services librarian and became head of Reference and Information Services a few years later. In the 90s, she also managed COIN (Columbia Online Information Network) that helped launch Internet services in Mid-Missouri. As the Reference and Information Services Manager, she assisted patrons, managed the databases and other online resources, led the planning for adult library programming and worked with innumerable community groups to provide co-sponsored programs at the library.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

November

- **Energy Matters Com.,** Wed., Nov. 9, 9:30 am, Library Conf. Rm. A
- **Civil Liberties Com., Mtg.,** 1:15 pm, Thurs. Nov. 10
- **Privatization Study Com. Mtg.,** Sun., Nov. 13, 3:30 pm, Library Conf. Rm. A
- **Board Mtg.,** 6:30 pm, Mon., Nov. 14, Boone Electric Coop.
- **Planning for Columbia's Future Energy Needs,"** Tues., Nov. 15, 7 pm, Columbia Public Library

Fact Checking

Want to check the accuracy of allegations or emails? Go to ...

**www.politifact.com or
www.factcheck.org
www.snopes.com**

Citizen Voices?



As you go through this current issue of the Voter, it is apparent that the League is involved with a number of issues important to the well being of our county. What is not included is efforts by our Voter Services committee to get citizens registered and to get candidate/issue information to voters (more about this later) and the work of the Education Committee on the study of the federal role in public education (the consensus meeting was just a week or so ago).

All of this work can be done only if members volunteer to help in some area (most importantly) and/or contribute to the local or national league's Education Funds (it's tax deductible).

Columbia citizens recently demonstrated that government officials will respond if enough people are energized on an issue. What are you energized about? Can you find an position within the League that will help further your issue? Let me know and maybe we can find others who share your interests and we can make a difference. Or, if a committee already exists for your issue, join the committee and make your voice heard.

Linda Kaiser
President

Dues: Send to Liz Schmidt, 1700 Forum Blvd, #3101, 65203. We appreciate gifts to our regular operating fund, which may be over and above your dues. If you wish to make a tax deductible gift to the LWV Education Fund, please make a separate check, payable to the LWVMO Education Fund.

Privatization Study

The 2010 LWV convention approved a study on privatization of government services. Our local League is now in the beginning stages of this study. Come to our first meeting to find out more about this study and, perhaps, to get involved. Board member Dick Parker has agreed to serve as Chair of this committee. The meeting will be in the Columbia Public Library, conference room A, at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 13. It will last no more than an hour.

The purpose of this study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good.

The first paper from the national committee is now on the League website (www.lwv.org) in the "For Members" section. The executive summary of this paper is on page 4 of this issue of the Voter.

Additional resources include (1) a study by the Illinois legislature, *Government Privatization: History, Examples, and Issues*, www.ilga.gov/commission/cgfa2006/Upload/2006Gov_Privatization_Rprt.pdf; (2) an article by Paul Starr, "The Meaning of Privatization," *Yale Law and Policy Review* 6 (1988): 6-41. at www.princeton.edu/~starr/meaning.html; and a study by the Seattle LWV entitled "*Privatization: A Seattle League Study*," which can be found at www.seattlelwv.org/sites/default/files/privatization2009.pdf

Join us on November 13 and learn more about this important issue!

Clean Air Defense

On October 19, the League of Women Voters of the United States sent a strong letter to U. S. Senators urging them to protect clear air laws. It reads in part:



“The League of Women Voters urges you to protect America’s children and families from dangerous air pollution. Clean air saves lives, and we need your help to ensure that everyone in communities across the nation can breathe healthy air, uncontaminated by mercury, smog, carbon, soot and other threats to our health.

“Public health protections under the Clean Air Act continue to be attacked in Congress, with proposals to roll back the cross-state air pollution rule and the mercury and air toxics standards for power plants, as well as other significant rules by EPA. If these proposals are enacted, they will result in the release of toxic pollutants that cause tens of thousands of asthma attacks, hospital visits and even deaths every year. We urge you to oppose such initiatives in the Senate.

“For too long, polluters have been able to focus the debate on “overregulation” and false assertions that environmental protections hurt our economy. Clean air is an issue of public health and multiple studies have demonstrated that efforts to clean up the air not only protect our health but also provide a significant economic benefit to the country.

“A recent public opinion poll by the League of Women Voters, the League of United Latin American Citizens and the Natural Resources Defense Council confirms that voters strongly support tough pollution standards. Nearly four out of five Americans want EPA to hold corporate polluters accountable for pollution they release. Voters are equally clear that the scientists and experts at EPA should set pollution standards rather than having those decisions second-guessed by politicians.”

In addition, “Studies show that the economic benefits of the Act have far exceeded the costs of controlling air pollution emissions. According to the Office of Management and Budget, the total economic benefits of the Clean Air Act are estimated at more than four to eight times the costs of compliance.” http://www.smallbusinessmajority.org/pdf/Benefits_of_CAA_100410.pdf

TAKE ACTION TODAY: Amplify this important message by calling the offices of Senators Blunt and McCaskill and Congressman Luetkemeyer and by visiting the League’s special website: www.peoplenotpolluters.org where you can sign the Clean Air Promise and send a message to our members of Congress. *Remember, unless you take action, how will they know you care?*

Senator Roy Blunt: Columbia office: 442-8151; Washington DC office: (202) 224-5721

Senator Claire McCaskill: Columbia office: 442-7130; DC office: (202) 224-6154

Congressman Luetkemeyer: Columbia office: 886-8929; DC office: (202) 225-2956

Note: A recent editorial in the St. Louis Post Dispatch challenges as “distorted and misleading” charges in the recent television ad campaign produced by Energy for Missouri Jobs. The editorial notes that this group is largely funded by coal industry proponents who “promote coal usage generally and campaign against tough regulation limiting coal-related pollution.” The editorial notes that “coal-fired plants account for 50% of mercury emissions, 62% of arsenic emissions and 82% of hydrochloric acid emissions,” control of which was required in the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990. To read the entire editorial, go to ...

http://www.stltoday.com/news/opinion/columns/the-platform/article_238a0c70-0003-5137-b87b-65574397dbf6.html

Do you or someone you know have a story to tell about how air quality impacts your quality of life? The League of Women Voters wants to hear it. In order to best communicate to the public that clean air affects the lives of people, we need your personal stories. We want to reframe the debate to emphasize that people lose when pollution is present. Please email your story to the League office, league@lwvmissouri.org or mail it to LWVMO, 8706 Manchester Road, Suite 104, Saint Louis, Missouri, 63144.

The Legal Framework of Transparency and Accountability within the Context of Privatization

Below is the Executive Summary of the first paper posted for the League's Privatization Study. To read the full paper, go to www.lwv.org and click on the "For Members" section and then on "Projects and Programs." Look for additional papers over the next few weeks and summaries will appear in upcoming Voters.



The legal frameworks within which public and private sector entities operate differ. One difference is that, unlike private entities, government entities are statutorily required to conduct their business through open, transparent processes to ensure that they are accountable to the citizenry. This modern practice of open government is viewed as both a key feature and a necessary condition of a contemporary democratic state. It is based upon the conviction that the people can only effectively exercise their constitutional role as overseers of government action where their unfettered rights of access to information about government operations are secure.

Public transparency laws thus have been enacted throughout the United States at both the federal and state level for the purpose of maintaining free and open access to the government's proceedings, deliberations, decision-making and records. Such laws include sunshine or open meeting laws, which seek to ensure that the public may observe the meetings and deliberations of government bodies, and freedom of information or public record acts, which seek to ensure public access to the documents and records of government.

Privatization raises particular issues with respect to transparency, however, because as a general matter, such transparency laws apply exclusively to public bodies, and not to private entities. Where the provision of government services are transferred into private hands, what then becomes of the public's right of access to information regarding the provision of those services?

Judicial and legislative efforts to address concerns regarding public transparency within the context of privatization have emerged over several years. Some state courts, for instance, have adopted a judicial doctrine that subjects a private contractor to the applicable transparency law when the contractor is performing a government function in such a manner that it may be deemed the "functional equivalent of the public body." In addition, state legislatures have been modifying their public accountability statutes over the years in order to make such laws applicable to certain private entities carrying out government functions. Public accountability advocates nonetheless are concerned that public access to information in the hands of private contractors often is frustrated when statutory language does not adequately cover the private entity or a court ruling is not obtained. Moreover, even when private contractors are subject to such laws, they often dispute it or are not aware of such requirements, and, thus, refuse to provide the information.

A recent example involves one of the nation's largest not-for-profit providers of community-based supervision and treatment services to individuals within the criminal justice systems. The company is 97 percent publicly funded from sources such as state departments of corrections and the federal prison bureau. Following revelations of certain unusual and high profile expenditures by the private contractor in Kentucky (including hundreds of thousands of dollars in stadium suites, sponsorship of a university basketball team and extravagant social events), the Kentucky state auditor sought to examine how its tax dollars were being spent. The private contractor, however, refused to provide the state auditor with the requested financial information, and neither the state public records law nor any decision by a state court required the contractor to provide the information. This case illustrates the importance of yet another approach to ensuring public accessibility of information and records in the hands of a private contractor: that is, using the bidding or contract negotiation process of the privatization deal itself to require agreement on the part of the private contractor to make all pertinent information available to the government agency with which it is contracting before any privatization of services is put in place.

Finally, this paper concludes with a call by accountability advocates for special transparency requirements to apply to any privatization proposal. The notion, here, is that government action to privatize is of such import and consequence that special (super) public accountability procedures should apply with respect to the initial privatization decision itself in order to ensure the proper constitutional role of the people as overseers of government action.

Diane Dilanni, LWVUS Privatization Study Committee

Voting Rights

A new publication of the Brennan Center for Justice, “*Voting Law Changes in 2012*,” suggests that the new legislation makes it more difficult for at least some citizens to register and/or to vote.

“These new restrictions fall most heavily on young, minority, and low-income voters, as well as on voters with disabilities. This wave of changes may sharply tilt the political terrain for the 2012 election. Based on the Brennan Center’s analysis of the 19 laws and two executive actions that passed in 14 states, it is clear that:

- These new laws could make it significantly harder for more than five million eligible voters to cast ballots in 2012.
- The states that have already cut back on voting rights will provide 171 electoral votes in 2012 – 63 percent of the 270 needed to win the presidency.
- Of the 12 likely battleground states, as assessed by an August Los Angeles Times analysis of Gallup polling, five have already cut back on voting rights (and may pass additional restrictive legislation), and two more are currently considering new restrictions.

States have changed their laws so rapidly that no single analysis has assessed the overall impact of such moves. Although it is too early to quantify how the changes will impact voter turnout, they will be a hindrance to many voters at a time when the United States continues to turn out less than two thirds of its eligible citizens in presidential elections and less than half in midterm elections.”



To see the entire report, go to www.brennancenter.org/content/resource/voting_law_changes_in_2012

More information on Missouri’s Photo ID Proposed Constitutional Amendment (to appear on the November, 2012 ballot):

The estimated costs for the requirement to have a government-issued photo ID in order to vote come from a variety of sources and vary widely. Comparisons are difficult as not all states include the same items (e.g., voter education and outreach – individual contacts vs. public media, implementation costs – machines, poll worker training, lost revenues, provision of supporting documents such as birth certificates and provision of the actual IDs.

Based on a review of existing court decisions from both state and federal courts (including the Supreme Court), the Brennan Center has identified three requirements for photo ID legislation to pass judicial muster:

- Photo IDs sufficient for voting must be available free of charge for all those who do not have them. States cannot limit free IDs to those who swear they are indigent
- Photo IDs must be readily accessible to all voters, without undue burden (including factors such as the time, transportation and advance planning required to obtain the ID prior to an election).
- States must undertake substantial voter outreach and public education efforts to ensure that voters are apprised of the law’s requirement and the procedures for obtaining the IDs they will need to vote well in advance of elections.



Indiana, which has had the government-issued photo ID requirement since 2007, has incurred costs of \$10,020,221 (2007 - \$2,278,900; 2008 - \$2,849,639; 2009- \$2,707,250; 2010 - \$2,187,432). Fiscal notes on legislation introduced in the last session of the Missouri legislature estimates a cost of \$7,046,628 the first year (FY 2013) and \$3,179,402 for fiscal year 2014 (and likely annually thereafter).

References:

The Cost of Voter ID Laws: What the Courts Say. Vishal Agraharkar, Wendy Weiser and Adam Skaggs; Brennan Center for Justice, 2011. (www.brennancenter.org)

Debate over Photo ID at the polls shifts to costs, Sean Greene, *electionlineWeekly* – March 17, 2011; The Pew Center on the States. (www.pewcenteronthestates.org/initiatives)

Fast Facts on the Impact of Photo ID: The Data, Justine Levitt, Brennan Center for Justice, April, 2008. (www.brennancenter.org).

A Report of Photo ID for Voting Purposes, Iowa State Association of County Auditors (www.iowaauditors.org)

Immigration Myths: Part 2

Immigrants don't want to learn English or become Americans: Within ten years of arrival, more than 75% of immigrants speak English well; moreover, demand for English classes at the adult level far exceeds supply. Greater than 33% of immigrants are naturalized citizens; given increased immigration in the 1990s, this figure will rise as more legal permanent residents become eligible for naturalization in the coming years. The number of Immigrants naturalizing spiked sharply after two events: enactment of immigration and welfare reform laws in 1996, and the terrorist attacks in 2001.



(Source: American Immigration Lawyers Association, "Myths & Facts in the immigration Debate", 8/14/03.
<http://www.aiala.org/contentViewer.aspx?bc=17,142fection4>)

(Source: Simon Romero and Janet Elder, "Hispanics in the US Report Optimism" New York Times, (Aug. 6, 2003).

Today's immigrants are different than those of 100 years ago: The percentage of the US. population that is foreign-born now stands at 11.5%: in the early 20th century it was approximately 15%. Similar to accusations about today's immigrants, those of 100 years ago initially often settled in mono-ethnic neighborhoods, spoke their native languages, and built up newspapers and businesses that catered to their fellow émigrés. They also experienced the same types of discrimination that today's immigrants face, and integrated within American culture at a similar rate. If we view history objectively, we remember that every new wave of immigrants has been met with suspicion and doubt and yet, ultimately, every past wave of immigrants has been vindicated and saluted.

(Source: Census Data: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/c2kprafOO-us.pdf>; <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/censr-4.pdf>)

Weak U.S. Border enforcement has led to high undocumented immigration: From 1986 to 1998, the Border Patrol's budget increased six-fold and the number of agents stationed on our southwest border doubled to 8,500. The Border Patrol also toughened its enforcement strategy, heavily fortifying typical urban entry points and pushing migrants into dangerous desert areas, in hopes of deterring crossings. Instead, the undocumented immigrant population doubled in that time-frame, to 8 million—despite the legalization of nearly 3 million immigrants after the enactment of the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986. Insufficient legal avenues for immigrants to enter the U.S., compared with the number of jobs in need of workers, has significantly contributed to this current conundrum.

(Source: Immigration and Naturalization website: http://www.ncjri.org/ncdcpubs/publications/enforce/borderfe_3.hBn)

The war on terrorism can be won through immigration restrictions: No security expert since September 11th, 2001 has said that restrictive immigration measures would have prevented the terrorist attacks— instead, the key is effective use of good intelligence. Most of the 9/11 hijackers were here on legal visas. Since 9/11, the myriad of measures targeting immigrants in the name of national security have netted no terrorism prosecutions. In fact, several of these measures could have the opposite effect and actually make us less safe, as targeted communities of immigrants are afraid to come forward with information.

(Source: Associated Press/Dow Jones Newswires, "US Senate Subcommittee Hears Immigration Testimony", Oct. 17, 2001,)

(Source: Cato Institute: "Don't Blame Immigrants for Terrorism", Daniel Griswold, Assoc. Director of Cato Institute's Center for Trade Policy Studies (see: <http://www.cato.org/dailys/10-23-01.html>)

Note: See the October Voter for Part 1.

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Meetings

Board: 2nd Monday, 6:30 pm, Boone Electric Coop
Civil Liberties: 2nd Thurs., 1:15 pm*
Education: Varies
Energy Matters: 3rd Tuesday, 1 pm*
Fundraising: Varies
Peace: 2nd Fri., 9 am*
Voter Service: Varies*
 *Meetings at Library

Membership

We are now collecting dues through December for 2012. (If you have an "11" after your name, you are presently paid. When you pay for 2012, a "12" will appear after your name. Our membership year runs January 1-December 31.)

To join the League or renew your membership, 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.

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.

Name _____

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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.

Websites

lwcabc.wordpress.com (local)
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 the email address you would like used.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

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democracy leads to civic improvement.*



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

November 2011						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 LWVMO Fall Conf., Sedalia
6	7	8	9 Energy Matters Com, 9:30 am, Li- brary rm. A	10 Civil Liberties Com., 1:15 pm, Library	11	12
13 Privatization Study Com. Mtg., 3:30, Li- brary A	14 Board mtg. 6:30, Boone Electric	15 Planning for Co- lumbia's Future Energy Needs, 7 pm, Library	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving	25	26
27	28	29	30	Dec. 1	Dec 2	Dec 3
Dec. 4	Dec. 5	Dec. 6	Dec. 7	Dec. 8 Civil Lib. Com. Mtg.	Dec. 9 Founders Lunch	Dec. 10