



March 2016 Newsletter

UPCOMING UNIT MEETINGS

March Unit Meetings

The February unit meetings will be **Monday, March 21st** at 5:30pm at Nonna’s South, 3512 S. National and **Tuesday, March 15th** at noon at Drury University Findlay Student Center.

Staff from the City of Springfield will present an overview of two tax renewal issues which will be on the April ballot. One ballot question will ask voters to renew the 1/4 cent sales tax for high priority capital improvements. The other question is whether to continue the 1/8 cent sales tax to fund high priority transportation improvements. The City asked specifically to speak to League members, as they know we are interested in educating ourselves, and others, about the upcoming ballot issues.

**Directions for Tuesday Unit Meeting: From Central and Summit, go north on Summit and park in the first lot on your right or left. The Student Center is the red brick building in the northwest corner of the parking lot on your left. Go up the stairs by the pergola and Room 204 is immediately inside.*

TAKE ACTION

The LWVUS Board is recommending that Local Leagues consider **action** versus **study** for the next two years. Support for a League-wide focus comes from a recent member survey. In November 2015, the LWVUS conducted an online survey of individual League members in order to understand how members are involved in the organization and their specific public policy issues. Responses came from individuals representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Virgin Islands and Hong Kong.

The survey findings showed members engage with the League primarily at the local level. Local Leagues have plenty of positions, so instead of adding to that list with a new study, instead take action on those positions, as these are the issues where Leagues are knowledgeable and play a leadership role in their communities. Our local board will be working on our “action plan” and how we will roll that out over the next couple of years.

The LWVUS Board is recommending a focus on Making Democracy Work with emphasis on the following:

- Money in Politics
- Supporting Voting Rights and Voter Protection in the States
- Supporting Voting Rights and Voter Protection in Local Communities
- Voting Rights and Voter Protection following 2016 election
- Redistricting Reform

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

On Saturday, May 7th, the League of Women Voters of Southwest Missouri will participate in the [Springfield Community Event](#) hosted by the Convoy of Hope. The event serves families in our community by providing them with free groceries, health and dental screenings, haircuts, family portraits, meals and more. *Hope Starts here.*

Our League will have a table to register people to vote and serve as hosts generally. **We need you!** The event runs from 10am-3pm at the E*Plex at the Fairgrounds with shifts in the morning and afternoon. Lunch will be provided for mid-day shifts. To participate, please email Kelly Wood at kellywood@missouristate.edu by April 25th. It is preferable that you have bene deputized previously. If not, you may still participate and give to your community!

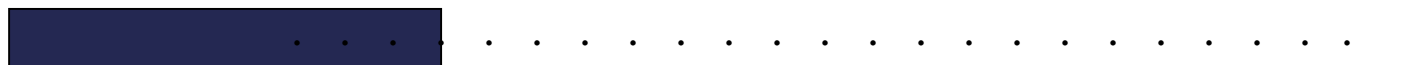
SCHOOL BOARD FORUM

When: Tuesday, March 29, 2016 from 6:30-8:00pm
Where: MSU Meyer Alumni Center, 300 S. Jefferson

The League will moderate this candidate forum for the 6 individuals running for School Board for Springfield Public Schools. Plan to attend...better yet, call a League friend or neighbor and carpool together to the forum!

SPRING CONFERENCE!

The annual Spring Conference will be held in Columbia on Saturday, April 30th from 9am-3pm. We will be taking at least one carload of members and would love to have two cars. Grab a league friend and let’s go! If you’d like to attend, contact Leslie at rlcarrier@sbcglobal.net.



OZARKS MENTAL HEALTH CARE NETWORK (OZMHN) NEWS

There were twenty-three attendees at the February meeting. Alyson Harder, CEO of Heartland Behavioral Health spoke about the inevitable statewide spread of Medicaid Managed Care and its effects on patients, practitioners, hospitals and the state. She encourage awareness and advocacy for improved implementation.

The next meetings (open to the public) are:

Thursday, March 17th from 3:30-5:30pm at the Ozarks Community Hospital Conference Room, 2828 N. National Ave, Springfield

Thursday, April 21st: Events will be scheduled throughout the day featuring speakers from the Mental Health Association Oklahoma in Tulsa, including a lunch meeting at Ozarks Community Hospital and an evening presentation at Hammons Hart Institute (this is in conjunction with the League’s April General Meeting). Watch for more information via email, the newsletter and the website <http://www.lwvswmo.org/Studies.html>

OZMHN NOMINATED FOR AWARD

Rachel Farr Fitch was born in Arkansas, but lived in St. Louis most of her life. She was a nurse and also the director of health issues for the League of Women Voters of Missouri. She then became chairwoman of the Missouri Consumer Health Care WATCH, a coalition of 90 organizations representing more than a million Missourians. Her work led to the development of the Missouri Foundation for Health. When she passed away in 2013, Dr. James R. Kimmey, the founding President of the Foundation, remembered her as “every inch a lady and very quiet...but she was very persistent, and when she got into an issue, she was a wolverine” (Sorkin, St. Louis Post Dispatch, August 4, 2013).

In that spirit, the League of Women Voters of Missouri has created an annual award in her name. *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....It must be compatible with LWV ideals and not in conflict in any way with our program positions.*

At the February Board meeting, Ilga Vise moved to nominate the Ozarks Mental Health Network (OzMHN) for the award and the members were in agreement. The OzMHN grew out of our local two-year study (2013-2015) of the affordability and accessibility of mental health

Upcoming Dates

Missouri Presidential Primary

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Medicaid Rally

Thursday, March 17, 2016

March Unit Meetings

Monday, March 21, 2016, 5:30pm
Nonna’s South, 3512 S. National

Tuesday, March 15, 2016, Noon
Drury University Findlay Student Center

OzMHN Meeting

Thursday, March 17, 2016, 3:30-5:30pm
Location: Ozarks Community Hospital

School Board Forum

Tuesday, March 29, 2016, 6:30-8:00pm
MSU Meyer Alumni Center, 300 S. Jefferson

Notable & Notorious Greene Co. Women Program

Wednesday, March 30, 2016, 7pm
Library Center, 4653 S. Campbell

Women’s Equality Pay Day

Tuesday, April 12, 2016
Location: State Capitol

April Unit Meetings

Monday, April 18, 2016, 5:30pm
Nonna’s South, 3512 S. National

Tuesday, April 19, 2016, Noon
Drury University Findlay Student Center

OzMHN Meeting

Thursday, April 21, 2016
See more details under OzMHN News section.

Spring Conference

Saturday, April 30, 2016
Columbia, MO

Convoy of Hope Springfield Community Event

Saturday, May 7, 2016, 10am-3pm
Ozark Empire Fairgrounds E*Plex

Annual Meeting

Monday, May 16, 2016
Location: TBA



services for adults in Greene County. Since October 2015, it has brought together citizens, community leaders, and practitioners to discuss creative ways to improve collaboration, services and policy related to mental health.

MEET THE LEAGUE

By Angie Filbeck

Note: While I love writing up bios each month, Fran did a great job writing her own, so I thought I would share it, in her own words.

Fran Harris



I grew up in the Great Depression. Times were hard. We had reason to appreciate the efforts of FDR to devise programs to improve conditions. By WWII things were better, and a good peach crop in 1946 enabled me to attend Smith College, a broadening experience for a small town Georgia girl! I

transferred to Duke University for my Junior and Senior years. In return for agreeing to work wherever assigned in Tennessee, I received a Child Welfare stipend to attend graduate school at Louisiana State University, in Baton Rouge, for a year.

Weeks after signing my contract, I met my future husband, Leo. That contract was one of the factors that led to a three year, long distance courtship! Except for about seven months spent living outside Gate 4 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, immediately after we were married, I worked as a Child Welfare Worker in eastern Tennessee until Leo returned from Korea. Then I was a social worker in University Hospitals in Iowa City, where our first child was born at the end of 1958. Within a little less than 4 years, we had two more children, who were born in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Leo had joined the faculty at Southeast Missouri State University. My social worker career ended with three years at a psychiatric hospital (Florida State Hospital) while Leo earned his Ph.D. As a sort of insurance in the event I needed to return to work, I earned a Master's Degree in Counseling at SEMO in the early 1980s. Cape Girardeau was home for us from 1959 until Leo died in 2003. I moved to Springfield in 2008 to be near my daughter, Cecelia. Later my son, Ben, moved here and currently lives with me. My daughter Olivia lives in Atlanta.

I was a charter member of the League of Women Voters in Cape Girardeau, which organized in 1968, and I have been a member ever since. Compared to Springfield, we were a small League, but I am very proud of our accomplishments locally. Although early on our state Senator referred to us as the "menopause brigade," we gained the respect and

appreciation of the community. Candidates' Forums, and Voters' Guides came to be expected. Of the many local projects, household hazardous waste collection (for which Yvonne Ketcham wrote the grant--some of you will remember her), recycling projects which led to city collection, and persistence over several elections to get a mill tax passed so we could have a County Public Health Department come to mind. Our study and work together bonded us as friends, an important part of League membership for me. When I moved to Springfield, I received a warm welcome into the League, a ready-made group of dynamic women. Thank you!

A NOTE FROM THE LWV OF THE UNITED STATES

We are pleased to share our presidential voters' guide to help voters learn about the candidates and their visions for America's future. Our voters' guide includes thoughts from the candidates on a range of issues from the economy to foreign policy, as well as their position on the role money plays in our political process. The guess will be updated as candidates update their answers, additional candidates answer or meet our criteria, and as candidates end their campaigns, so bookmark it and check back closer to our March 15th primary date!

Presidential Voters' Guide:
www.vote411.org/voter-guide-2016#

KNEE DEEP IN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES

While voters in several states have already weighed in on the presidential primaries, *primary elections and caucuses will occur in every state over the coming months*. Primaries are a key part in selecting the next President and provide a crucial opportunity for voters to take control and influence the process by selecting their top candidate to represent a political party in the general election. [Click here](#) to learn more about the presidential primaries.

MISSOURI PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY

The Missouri Presidential Primary will be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2016. Primary voters may select only one party's ballot. Voters who do not wish to give a political party preference may request an issues only ballot, if one is available in that particular jurisdiction. To see a list of candidates go to <http://www.sos.mo.gov/>



WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

March is National Women’s History Month and the theme for 2016 honors women who have shaped America’s history and its future through their public service and government leadership. Although often overlooked and undervalued, collectively they have dramatically influenced our public policy and the building of viable institutions and organizations. From championing basic human rights to ensuring access and equal opportunity for all Americans, they have led the way in establishing a stronger and more democratic country. For more information visit <http://www.nwhp.org/womens-history-month/2016-theme/>

DID YOU MAKE THE LIST?

The Springfield-Greene County Library is hosting a program called *Notable and Notorious Greene County Women* on Wednesday, March 30th at 7pm at the Library Center, 4653 S. Campbell. Local history associate Konrad Stump will discuss some of the women who have shaped our county’s history. For more information, call 882-0714.

PROGRAM BY LEAGUE

MEMBER, FRANCIÉ WOLFF

League Member, Francie Wolff will be giving a program, *“Their Cause is Marching on: How Suffrage was won in the state of Missouri as revealed through song”* at 7pm on Thursday, March 31st at the Missouri River Regional Library in Jefferson City. Her program will include singing, costuming, and a slide show. Francie gave a short program on this same topic at our annual Holiday Party and her stories and songs were a big hit! She has written a songbook on suffrage songs and has performed her one-woman show to many community organizations. Click here for more details: <http://bit.ly/1RHgiIb>

CUBA AND COCKTAILS EVENT

Thanks to Carolyn Gerdes for hosting a fun evening and to Ann Elwell and Kay Murnan for sharing photos and experiences from their recent trip to Cuba. It was a great opportunity to get a peek into this interesting country and hear how the Cuban people are embracing their new relationship with the United States.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

INITIATIVE PETITIONS FOR NOVEMBER 2016 GENERAL ELECTION

As the 2016 election year gets underway, the signature seekers for the Initiative Petitions for the ballot are also appearing at libraries, community centers, and other public venues. A bumper crop of over 200 have been submitted with 90 proposals currently on the list approved for

signatures. The good news is that these include multiple. That leaves a possible 30 to be circulated, if the sponsors of the petitions can raise the necessary funds to acquire the necessary signatures.

Several of the topics appear to have the backing necessary to accomplish this. One is the addition of a cigarette tax. Prohibiting new state sales and use taxes, campaign ethics, and the minimum wage are also hot items.

Enhancing the adoption and inclusion in the power grid of alternative energy, legalizing marijuana for medicinal use and recreational use, limiting the power of the Missouri Board of Education and local boards of education; and eliminating term limits, reducing the age requirement, and reducing the numbers for Missouri Legislators are just a few of the proposals approved for signatures. For a complete list and copies of the full text, go to <http://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/petitions>

All Signature Petitions must be filed at the Secretary of State’s office in Jefferson City by 5:00pm. on May 8, 2016. A simple majority is needed for an Initiative Petition to become law. ~ Nancy Miller, LWV Metro St. Louis

HB 1892, the Narcotics Control Act, has stalled. Missouri is the only state without a system for monitoring opioids and related pain killers. Mark your calendar, **March 17, Medicaid Rally at the Capitol.** ~ Dianne Modrell, Health Care Chair

COMING IN 2016!

Celebrate the Vote – September 3, 2016. The celebration planned for next September is not for the 100th anniversary of the right to vote (that will be in 2020, as we all know). Rather, this is the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the *Walkless-Talkless Parade*, which took place during the 1916 Democratic National Convention in St. Louis. This was a staged event where thousands of women in white dresses with yellow sashes and umbrellas stood on both sides of the street and formed a “golden lane” that Democratic delegates had to walk through to get to the Convention on its opening day. It was an attempt to draw attention to the suffrage campaign for voting rights for women.

Candidate Forum – October 2016. The Missouri Library Association will be hosting its annual state conference in Springfield in October 2016. They would like to hold a candidate forum for those running for Missouri Secretary of State in the November 2016 election. The Secretary of State’s position is responsible for allocating monies for public libraries.

