

# LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI

## The Voter

### UNIT MEETINGS

#### February Unit Meetings

**Monday, February 19, 2024, at 5:30pm at the Pitch**

**Tuesday, February 20, 2024, Noon at Schweitzer-Brentwood Library**

**Speaker, Dan Chiles, Missouri Guardrails**

**Topic: Our Right to Clean Water**

**Empower: Abilities, 1350 W Cambridge**



Do you agree our land & water is worth protecting? Why are people upset? What can we do about it? Dan Chiles will present a case for Guardrails to protect us from unlimited and largely unregulated animal waste dumping in Missouri. He will discuss new Missouri laws which permit unlimited animal waste dumping across

Missouri. Dan is a former Springfield City Council member and Mayor Pro-Tem. He is a tree farmer and local manufacturer. He is a Springfield native and honors graduate of Harvard University. Dan serves as President of the Board for **Renew Missouri** and is co-founder of **Missouri Guardrails**.

Join us at one of the February unit meetings to learn how to defend your right to clean land and water.

### PAWS TO POLLS

Paws to the Polls was formed as a grassroots campus-wide initiative in February of 2020.

[Click here](#) to view the report that conveys the rationale, history and scope of this voter education initiative and its impact thus far at MSU. In particular, the Executive Summary within the report describes the impact in terms of numbers of students reached through various means and the change in voting behavior on campus.

There is still much to do!

### LWVMO PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE WEBINAR

The League hosted an informational webinar for voters on changes in Missouri's presidential selection process on Wednesday, Jan. 17. Chris Grahn-Howard shared information on the GOP's March 2 caucus and Democratic Party Executive Director Matthew Patterson sharing the latest on its process with mail-in ballots and in-person voting on March 23.

A recording of the webinar is available in two parts. Click [here](#) to learn about the March 2 Republican Caucus and [here](#) to learn about the Democratic election on March 23.

For information on changing your voter registration to add your party affiliation, contact your local election authority or go to [Register to Vote \(mo.gov\)](#).

Click [here](#) for a Fact Sheet. Click [here](#) for information on the speakers.

### PROGRAM / POLICY PLANNING

LWVUS Program/Policy planning for 2025-2026 is in progress. Changes to [Impact On Issues](#) will be voted on at the national conference in June. LWVUS encourages all members to review the "Summary of Public Policy Positions" on pages 11-15 of the 2022-2024 and give feedback to local leaders before March 1. Are the positions still relevant to our work? Should consideration be given to new issues? Other changes? [Click here](#) to view the [Impact on Issues](#).

At the same time, we will be reviewing our local policy statements for proposed changes to be adopted at our Annual Meeting in May. The Board would appreciate your ideas about these also. Links to local policies can be found on our website: [lvswmo.org](#)

Please send your feedback about national or local issues to [sherrybuchanan66@gmail.com](mailto:sherrybuchanan66@gmail.com).

# REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM INITIATIVE PETITION

After more than six months of attacks, litigation and delays following the filing the constitutional amendment, Missourians for Constitutional Freedom (MCF) is finally able to move forward to begin collecting signatures for Version 086.

THE OFFICIAL BALLOT SUMMARY is as follows: Do you want to amend the Missouri Constitution to:

- establish a right to make decisions about reproductive health care, including abortion and contraceptives, with any governmental interference of that right presumed invalid;
- remove Missouri’s ban on abortion;
- allow regulation of reproductive health care to improve or maintain the health of the patient;
- require the government not to discriminate, in government programs, funding, and other activities, against persons providing or obtaining reproductive health care; and
- allow abortion to be restricted or banned after Fetal Viability except to protect the life or health of the woman?

“The deliberate tactics being used by politicians to stop the voice of the people on this issue foretells a troubling precedent for future ballot issues,” says LWVMO President Marilyn McLeod.

The LWVMO is joining other groups supportive of this IP to begin collecting the necessary 171,000 signatures by May 5 to get this IP on the Nov 2024 ballot. If you would like to help, contact Kay Park at [ReproRights@lwvstl.org](mailto:ReproRights@lwvstl.org).

The LWVUS position on reproductive choices was approved in January 1983: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

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# INFORMED VOTER COALITION

The Informed Voter Coalition will focus their attention on local school board races for the April 2024 election. Races include Nixa, Ozark, Springfield and Willard.

Each coalition member organization is asked to submit questions for the candidate interviews. If you have specific questions related to one of these districts or would like to submit a general question for all school board candidates, please submit them to Lisa Langley at [llangley902@gmail.com](mailto:llangley902@gmail.com) by February 6th.

The interviews are scheduled to air on KSMU the week of March 18th and will be available to share on our websites and social media platforms immediately after airing. We invite you to help us in sharing the interviews once they have aired.

# DEI UPDATE

NAACP Springfield will host a 115th Founders Day event Monday, February 12, 6:30 p.m. at Q Enoteca. Food, drinks, music. See their FB page for details: [NAACP 115<sup>th</sup> Founders Day Event](#)

# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

The Environment and Sustainability Committee will continue to fulfill its commitment to the Adopt-A-Street program by picking up trash along Sunshine Street. Please join us on the following dates:

- Saturday, March 23, 9:00 am
- Saturday, April 20, 9:00 am
- Saturday, October 19, 9:00 am

# VOTER SERVICES UPDATE

Our last registration event for the 2023 year was held in December during the Young Adults meeting at the Glo Center. We talked about the importance of voting and two folks updated their registration information. Our first two 2024 events were cancelled due to weather so our first official event for the 2024 election season was January 25 at Harmony House followed by participation in the Commercial Street Inside Market. January

outreach will end with voting matters and civic engagement the topic for discussion during a meeting with the Glo Center Youth group on January 30. Plans are being made for high school registration events to occur during February and new information card highlighting the April Municipal election is available for distribution. At this time, we have forty-six deputy registrars, forty in Greene County and six in Christian County.

A voter services action committee meeting was held January 23. We discussed the importance of League participation in community events as it relates to voter registration, education and outreach and get-out-the-vote. Please keep ears and eyes open for opportunities for the League to be a presence during any such gathering. You may contact me at [joangentry2012@gmail.com](mailto:joangentry2012@gmail.com).

## RIGHT TO READ COALITION



Our chapter has joined the [Right to Read Coalition](#). The purpose of the coalition is to support Missouri librarians and open, free, public access to Missouri's libraries.

### Keeping a close eye on Jefferson City

Several bills that affect libraries have been filed in the Missouri Legislature which opened its 2024 session January 3. We will be closely monitoring these bills and will keep you posted on their status throughout the session.

This is a good time to join the "Right to Read" coalition and show your support for libraries, librarians, and educators.

### Become a coalition member!

See who's joined: [Right to Read Coalition - National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis \(ncjwstl.org\)](#)  
*The coalition is open to individuals and organizations. There is no financial commitment to joining the coalition.*

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## UPCOMING DATES

### **NAACP 115<sup>th</sup> Founders Day**

Monday, February 12, 2024, 6:30pm  
 Q Enoteca, 308 W Commercial St

### **Unit Meetings**

Monday, February 19, 2024, at 5:30pm at the Pitch  
 Tuesday, February 20, 2024, Noon at Schweitzer-Brentwood Library

### **Candidate Interviews**

Week of March 18<sup>th</sup> on KSMU

### **Trash Pick-Up Dates**

Saturday, March 23, 2024, 9:00 am  
 Saturday, April 20, 2024, 9:00 am  
 Saturday, October 19, 2024, 9:00am

### **LWVMO Spring Conference**

June 8, 2024  
 Location TBD

## RADIO PROGRAM

Have you listened recently to our weekly Making Democracy Work program on KSMU radio? The League hosts a weekly program, every Monday at 9:45am, on KSMU 91.1FM. In case you missed the most recent episodes, you can click here to browse through the archives for topics you might want to listen to now: [Making Democracy Work](#).

January 1: [Downtown Springfield Association shares updates on Grant Avenue Parkway project](#)

January 8: [Foster children should remain in their hometown when possible, according to a nonprofit working to transform children's mental health care in Missouri](#)

January 15: [Springfield attorney discusses updates since the decriminalization of marijuana in Missouri in 2022](#)

January 22: [Springfield attorney discusses updates since the decriminalization of marijuana in Missouri in 2022](#)

## LEGISLATIVE CALLS TO ACTION

The League of Women Voters of Missouri Statewide Legislative Committee has shared the following calls to action. The combined listing of bills would have the same Talking Points.

[Calls to Action](#)  
[Talking Points](#)

Click [here](#) for a PDF of the January 28, 2024 and other Legislative Bulletin for 2024.

"Voting is the foundation stone for political action."  
— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## LEAGUE MOURNS LOSS OF LWVUS PRESIDENT DR. DEBORAH ANN TURNER



It is with profound sadness that the League of Women Voters announces the passing of our esteemed president, Dr. Deborah Ann Turner, who passed away on Sunday, January 28, 2024, from complications from a pulmonary embolism.

A fearless advocate for voting rights and women's rights, Dr. Turner devoted her life's work to impacting meaningful changes in the lives of voters across the nation. As the 20th president of the 103-year-old voting rights organization, Dr. Turner played a pivotal role in

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fighting for a more fair and representative union, while uplifting racial equity in the League's mission work.

Dr. Turner first joined the League of Women Voters of Metro Des Moines in 2010 and later served as president until 2015. At the same time, she also served on the LWV of Iowa board as the state vice president from 2011 to 2015, becoming co-president in 2015. In her dual roles with state and local Leagues, Deborah has devoted her leadership to strengthening relationships between local leagues and the state Board.

"Dr. Turner was the consummate leader who poured her heart and soul for the preservation of our democracy," said **Virginia Kase Solomón, CEO of the League of Women Voters**. "Her leadership exemplified grace, empathy, strength, and determination, and we will forever be grateful for her passion and dedication to this organization."

Dr. Turner practiced gynecologic oncology for 35 years, working directly with patients and teaching students and trained residents in university programs across the Midwest. She participated in a dozen international medical missions and served as the associate medical director of Planned Parenthood of North Central States.

The League of Women Voters staff, board, and Leagues from across the country mourn this loss, and our thoughts are with Dr. Turner's family during this difficult time. We are committed to honoring her legacy by continuing to uphold our values to empower voters and build a stronger, more inclusive democracy.

