

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI

The Voter

GENERAL MEETING

January General Membership Meeting

Saturday, January 20, 2024

Coffee & Conversation 9:30 AM

**Speaker, Dr. Lloyd Smith, Computer Science at MSU
10:00 AM**

Empower: Abilities, 1350 W Cambridge



Have you wanted to learn more about Artificial Intelligence or AI? Here is your opportunity to discuss how AI works, hear projections on how AI might affect employment rates and how AI might be misused. Lloyd Smith holds degrees in Music, Speech, and Computer Science from the University of

North Texas. He worked in the computer speech industry before moving to New Zealand to teach at the University of Waikato. While there, he had opportunities to work on software used by the United Nations to disseminate humanitarian information to third-world countries and on widely used software for machine learning. He has also directed the development of a forerunner to Shazam and other music recognition systems. Dr. Smith is currently Professor of Computer Science at Missouri State University, where he directs the department's graduate program.

CRIMINALIZING HOMELESSNESS

In March our Board voted to support a Statement of Values Against the Criminalization of Homelessness. The vote signaled agreement with the Community Partnership of the Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness and numerous other statewide agencies at the time that our legislators were passing HB 1606. This legislation made it illegal to camp on state-owned property, to use state-owned land for "unauthorized sleeping" or for long-term shelters. It included provisions for withholding state funds from political subdivisions that did not enforce the law. HB 1606 was challenged by

Springfield's Eden Village and other plaintiffs. In December the Missouri Supreme Court found the bill unconstitutional because it contained more than one subject. Though this was a victory, the "one subject" reason given by the Court leaves the door open for other legislative attempts to pursue criminalization of homelessness. We must remain vigilant.

PROGRAM / POLICY PLANNING

Program/Policy Planning for LWWUS will be completed by 3/10/24, with proposals to be voted on at Convention 6/27-30/24. Each chapter is asked to complete a planning survey to be considered for changes. These changes, if adopted, will be incorporated into LWWUS **Impact on Issues** for 2025-26. **Missouri's Guide to State Action** is in place for 2023-25, so program/policy changes will not be acted upon until the 2025 State Convention. Locally, we review our policy positions annually for action, if needed, at our Annual Meetings.

Two requests of our members: 1) Would you serve on our policy review team during January and February 2024? and, 2) Are there priority areas that you think LWW needs to focus on, nationally and/or locally?

Please contact Sherry Buchanan if you can help with either of these requests: sherrybuchanan66@gmail.com

DEI UPDATE

The annual MLK Jr. Day March will begin at 8:30 a.m., Mediacom Ice Park, on Monday, January 15. Doors to the ice rink open at 7:30. A program will follow the march. NAACP Springfield will collect socks, gloves, and hot hands donations.

LOST & FOUND



Did you forget something at the Holiday Party?
If so, email: JPSMULL@gmail.com

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](#).

- December 4: [Area nonprofit publication supports African-American community for more than 3 decades](#)
December 11: [Local high school student in new Springfield aviation program](#)
December 18: [Connecting Grounds offers services to area's homeless, and here's how you can help](#)

SPRINGFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Our co-presidents spoke on behalf of the League at the 12/19/23 meeting of Springfield's Board of Education. Our Observer Corps had brought issues to our Board who decided it was time for clear advocacy. Letters were read to address the BOE's failure to support LGBTQ+ students and staff, BOE members spreading misinformation about LGBTQ+ issues, and the need for civil discourse, especially when dealing with controversial agenda items. This is an example of collaboration between our Observer Corps, Education Committee, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and of our chapter's responsibility to advocate for League policies.

LEGISLATIVE TRACKING & ADVOCACY

The 2024 MO legislative session starts January 3. Members will receive weekly **Legislative Bulletins** that will show progress regarding bills identified as priority areas for LWVMO. Action items will be included. It is very important that we follow through on action items to support League priorities.

If you are interested in helping to track bills or do research on topics that are being monitored, please contact Sherry Buchanan, sherrybuchanan66@gmail.

January 2024

NEW GUIDE TO STATE ACTION

The *Guide to State Action* has been updated for 2023-2025. Click [here](#) for a PDF of the 66-page document with all the State League issue positions.

SIGN UP FOR TEXT MESSAGES

Sign up for text message announcements from the League. Message 81010 with the text @lww2023 to join.

UPCOMING DATES

MLK Jr. Day March

Monday, January 15, 2024, at 8:30am
Begins at Mediacom Ice Park

General Meeting

Saturday, January 20, 2024, 10:00am
Empower: Abilities, 1350 W Cambridge

Education Committee Meeting

Saturday, January 20, 2024, at 11:00am
Empower: Abilities, 1350 W Cambridge

LWVMO Spring Conference

June 8, 2024
Location TBD

