

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI

The Voter

UNIT MEETINGS

The October unit meetings topic is LGBTQ+. Join us for one or both of these meetings to learn more about the LGBTQ+ community and the legislative struggle occurring in Missouri. What can you do to help the LGBTQ+ community? Let's find out!

Monday, October 16 5:30 PM at The Pitch, 2924 E Sunshine

Speaker: Dany Lacio, MNCL, Equality Organizer at PROMO. PROMO is a statewide LGBTQ+ public policy and advocacy group, mobilizing community members across the state to build broad-based support for and to advance the LGBTQ+ community and PROMO. They serve on the Board of Directors for the GLO Center and the SGF Police Chief Citizen Board. Outside of time standing up and fighting for others, Dany enjoys spending time with their wife of 13 years, and two children, exploring the great outdoors from hiking, kayaking, and even skydiving.

Tuesday, October 17 Noon at the Schweitzer Brentwood Library, 2214 Brentwood Boulevard.

Speaker: Cassie E Brown, MSW, LCSW, Executive Director of the NASW Missouri Chapter. Cassie has spoken to many groups on LGBTQ+ inclusion, as well as being an active advocate for that community on many levels. They have been an advocate both in Kentucky and Missouri. They have testified over a dozen times in the 2023 Missouri Legislative Session, on bills ranging from protecting the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals to expansion of postpartum Medicaid. Cassie is a published author of poetry, essays and short fiction.

PAWS TO THE POLLS UPDATE

Paws to the Polls helps show college students the importance of voting, registers dozens in campus, community events.

By W. Paul Bohlen, PTTP

A month into the fall semester, Missouri State University voter initiative Paws to the Polls has already participated in several events around campus and the community to aid in voter education and registration.



Even before the semester began, Paws partnered with the League of Women Voters of Southwest Missouri on Aug. 3 to present "The Power of Your Vote" to the Youth Civic Leadership Institute for high school seniors in Springfield.

The event was held at the Chamber of Commerce, and the session objective was to explore how and why civic participation and voting advocacy is vital to the function and sustainability of democracy.

On Aug. 20, during the festivities on Missouri State's campus known as Welcome Weekend, Paws registered 17 students to vote at the Belong-B-Q – a bookend to the most active day of Welcome Weekend, where countless student organizations tabled at the North Mall on campus to welcome new students to Missouri State.



Paws was also invited to participate in Exploring Public Relations on Aug. 24. This was a Student Activities Council-sponsored event in which student organizations involved with public affairs promoted their causes to members of the

university community. Paws registered four voters at the SAC event.

On Sept. 4, Paws participated in the Labor Day festivities at Fassnacht Creek Park with a booth at which five new voters were registered. This was the second time the initiative has been invited to participate in the community-based event.

Paws also has major events coming up. In mid-October, the same week as Homecoming, will be the second annual Voter Awareness Week, which will focus on the theme of the importance of local government.



Voter Awareness Week will include several days of tabling where students can register to vote or just get information if they are

unsure of anything regarding the next elections.

On Wednesday, Oct. 18, the main event of the week will take place – the Voting Fair. At this event, there will be a meet-and-greet with local and state elected officials to interact with students about their role in our government. There will also be other student organizations tabling about community engagement and hosting yard games, a social media contest, and the Greene County Clerk with mock-voting machines to help students know what to expect when they go to vote for the first time.

Students are preparing for the upcoming 2024 legislative session and hope to bring awareness to student engagement in the political process. Paws’ goals for the year include improving outreach, student education, and multi-campus coordination with OTC and Drury.

OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Members in Greene County and Christian County continue to attend school board meetings and there are several observers in Christian County who attend the Library Board meetings. Several of us who attended our last general meeting and heard Sheila Michaels, a Nixa school librarian, speak to what is happening in public

October 2023

school libraries, came away with renewed concerns about book banning, curriculum development, school vouchers, and other issues that impact the ability to maintain strong, independent public schools and libraries. Our presence is important at these meetings.

VOTER SERVICES UPDATE

Voter Registrations: September will have been a busy month for voter registration tabling in both Greene and Christian County by the time September 30 shows up on the calendar. Registrars will have tabled five events at the Farmers' Markets, eight high school registrations (six in Springfield, two in Ozark), two Greene County libraries, one Christian County library, and events at Day of Hope at the O'Reilly Center, Springfield Tenants Unite, the Fairbanks Fall Festival and the C-Street CultureFest, the Excel Center Community Expo, and the KY3 Sponsored Seminole Holland Block Party. Paws to the Polls students assisted with the Springfield high school registrations. As of September 29, 2023, 101 Greene and Christian County residents have been able to either register or update existing registrations by visiting a League registration table. Included in those registrations were forty from Springfield high school students, thirty-three from Ozark high school students and twenty-one MSU students. Many thanks to all the registrars who spend hours of time making it possible for registration opportunities to occur in our counties.

Voter Education and Advocacy: Sherry Buchanan and Joan met with Kai Sutton and Dee Ogilvy to discuss a potential collaboration between LWVSWMO, NAACP, and Faith Voices related to community education, advocacy and get out the vote. The collaboration resulted in a presentation during the September NAACP meeting titled "Supporting Democracy: One Vote at a Time". Participants had an opportunity to look more closely at the registration application and to be reminded about the 2024 election season and what ID is acceptable when you go to vote. A similar presentation is scheduled with the pastors who are active in Faith Voices during October. Joan, Cheryl Clay, Dee Ogilvy, Librarian Kim Flores and Shane Schoeller participated in a National Voter Registration Day press conference that was held at the Library Station.

Meet the Elected: Thirty-eight people (including eight elected officials) participated in the September 22 Meet the Electeds event. Among those thirty-eight were

sixteen League members. The mayor, five councilpersons and two county commissioners answered questions from members of the collaborating organizations. Comments concerning the event were very positive. The next Meet the Elected will be held in February of 2024.

DEI UPDATE

The DEI Committee plans to set up a training session at Empower: Abilities on how to do restaurant reviews in the area. These reviews would focus on evaluating restaurants for their compliance in matters of disability accessibility. Anyone interested in learning more may contact Cynthia Erb (cynerb@gmail.com).

Pride in the Park: An LGBTQIA+ History Celebration will take place Saturday, October 28, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Phelps Grove Park. Speakers, music, food, and more. Check Pride in the Park FB page for details.

Springfield Contemporary Theatre and Springfield Chamber Chorus will perform *Considering Matthew Shepard* October 12-13 at the Fox Theatre. See SGFTheatre.org for details.

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](#).

- September 4: [Culture Fest will celebrate diversity](#)
September 11: [55+ community designed to prevent housing insecurity for seniors and veterans](#)
September 18: [History Museum on the Square has a new Executive Director](#)
September 25: [University professor weighs in on the ever changing field of AI and how impacts higher education](#)

October 2023

NAACP FREEDOM FUND BANQUET

The League will show strong support for the NAACP at their annual Freedom Fund Banquet on October 28. Over 20 League members are planning to attend. We very much appreciate our relationship with this organization. The Banquet will be a special event for us because Joan Gentry will receive an award for her education advocacy. Congratulations to Joan for being recognized by the NAACP!

POLICY POSITIONS

The public policy positions of the LWVUS and LWVMO can be found at these links:

Impact on Issues 2022-2024--LWVUS
https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/LWV_ImpactOnIssues2022-2024.pdf

Guide to State Action 2021-2023---LWVMO
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uEsQ44pt4oI8Pwg_18-aYHiZ1PbueyL6/view

Members are encouraged to review these publications that outline the issues our collective energy is addressing and to see how Missouri applies national policy positions to things that pertain to our state.

STATE BOARD REPORT

The LWVMO state board met Friday, September 29, with Joan Gentry and Marge Bramer attending. The board voted to approve supporting the Minimum Wage/Paid Leave initiative, and members may gather signatures on this vital issue. The board also approved use of our education funds to publish 3000 booklets for Voter Awareness Week at MSU in October. Donations made to LWVMO Education Fund for LWVSWMO fund many important projects, and we appreciate the generosity of our member and non-member donors. We approved joining an inter-League action to protect the Upper Mississippi River, received an update on our two court cases, considered the ballot issue on reproductive health, and approved participating in a coalition against library censorship. Our LWVSWMO League accomplishes much important work, but joining with other local Leagues to accomplish our mission at the

state level gives us a strong voice and ability to act on legislative policies and other important issues in Missouri.

UPCOMING DATES

Deputy Registrar Training

Wednesday, October 4, 2023, 10:30am
Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 2pm
Friday, December 8, 2023, 10am

Considering Matthew Shepard

October 12-13, 2023
Fox Theatre

Unit Meetings

Monday, October 16, 2023, at 5:30pm
Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at Noon

Pride in the Park

Saturday, October 28, 2023, 11am-3pm
Phelps Grove Park

NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet

Saturday, October 28, 2023
DoubleTree Hotel

LWVMO Fall Conference

Saturday, November 4, 2023
Boone County Electric Co-Op Bldg.
Columbia, MO

LWVMO Spring Conference

June 8, 2024
Location TBD

October 2023

LWVMO FALL CONFERENCE

Saturday, November 4, the State Fall Conference will be held at Boone Electric in Columbia. This will be a hybrid event, with both in-person and Zoom options. The cost is \$30 to attend in person, \$10 for Zoom. We have funds to reimburse those who attend. Sessions include Democracy in Danger, Miss/dis information, preview of upcoming photo ID case, the minimum-wage and family leave petition, and an update on the court case on reproductive health IP fair ballot language that was appealed this week by SOS Ashcroft. Watch for flyer coming soon! Please let Sherry Buchanan or Emily Fessler know if you plan to attend, especially if you will need overnight accommodations.





**Saturday,
November 4th
9:00-3:00**



**Boone Electric
Cooperative &
Zoom**

Possible Topics:

- LWVUS Transformation
- Minimum Wage
- National Popular Vote
- Reproductive Freedom
- KnowDisinfo

Questions? Call the Office @
314-961-6869

**SAVE
THE
DATE**