

The Voter

GENERAL MEETING

March General Membership Meeting

Saturday, March 16, 2024

9:30am Coffee & Conversation

10:00am Speakers – Cheyenne Guzman, Administrative Assistant and Jerry Scott, Accounting Eden Village, a permanent housing community for the chronically homeless.

Eden Village is the first of its kind tiny home community that originated in Springfield. It is designed to serve the vulnerable population of chronically disabled homeless individuals. Come and hear from Cheyenne and Jerry about how David & Linda Brown's efforts have served the chronically homeless. Over 15 years ago, David and Linda realized there were many organizations focused on serving those living on the streets, but there were few focused on getting them off the streets. Join us to hear about the progress made to impact on this population, to ask questions about how tiny homes have been an answer to the problem and to find out how you can be involved.

ANNUAL MEETING

The LVWSWMO Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, May 20, 2024, at 5:30pm at Empower: Abilities. Dinner will be catered by Bambinos and includes iced tea, dessert, and gluten free/vegan options.

The cost is \$15.00 per person. You can bring cash or a check to a meeting, pay online on our website

<https://lvvswmo.org/donate/> or mail a check to:

LWVSWMO

PO Box 3036

Springfield, MO 65808

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

New Members are invited to join us for a new member orientation on Saturday, March 9, 2024 at 10:30 am at the Green House Coffee + Affogato Bar located at 431 S Jefferson Ave.

PAWS TO POLLS

Paws to the Polls was invited to serve on a panel for “Becoming an Informed and Active Citizen” for Leadership Springfield Academy on December 5, 2023, at the CASA Headquarters. Zion Riffe-Stevens (graduate assistant for Paws to the Polls) featured prominently on the panel as he talked to the high school students about his experience with civic engagement and how his perspective changed when he became old enough to vote. Panel members, shown from left to right, were: Hayley Cobb (Leadership Springfield), Jonathan Groves (Drury University), Rance Burger (Springfield Daily Citizen), Zion Riffe-Stevens (Paws to the Polls, MSU), Christine Temple (Springfield Business Journal)



Paws to the Polls is deeply invested in increasing voter access and promoting civic engagement. One example of their advocacy efforts is through trips to the Missouri State Capitol. Their fourth such trip took place on February 13th; the group met with ten legislators in their offices and was recognized by Crystal Quade on the House floor.

The purpose of this trip was advocate for three House bills that would expand voter access:

- HB 1927 would restore access to voting for those currently on probation and parole, after they have served their time. When people on probation and parole are allowed to vote and

engage with their communities, it reduces recidivism rates.

- HB 2379 would allow restoring of university IDs as valid for voting, as could be until a Missouri House bill was signed into law in 2022. This is especially important for our out-of-state students so they can vote here in Greene County while they study and reside in our community.
- HB 2510 would create provisions for automatic voter registration for U.S. citizens in Missouri through information via the DMV, increasing the number of registered voters and make voting more accessible.



Paws to the Polls students with Representatives Melanie Stinnett (R), Betsy Fogle (D), Crystal Quade (D), and Stephanie Hein (D) in Jefferson City (Photo Credit: Tim Bommel, House Photographer)

For the third semester in a row, Paws to the Polls partnered with the League of Women Voters of



Southwest Missouri from February 20th to 26th to register students at five of the six high schools in Springfield.

They conducted voter registrations at Hillcrest, Kickapoo, Central, Study, and Glendale high schools. One of these events included Paws to the Polls' newest

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and youngest member, who is also a League member! She helped register voters at her own high school, Kickapoo.

Paws to the Polls was invited to conduct voter registration alongside an NAACP/Alpha Phi Alpha (Sigma Nu Chapter) Town Hall Panel on February 23, 2024. Shown in the photo are Zion Riffe-Stevens (graduate assistant) and Kinli Miller



Join Paws to the Polls for Voting Events
ahead of the April 2 Municipal Election

March 5: Voting Fair
12 - 4:00 pm PSU Atrium (2nd floor)

Pizza, snacks, prizes, tie-dye!
Photo booth with Big Dill & The Bill!

Chat with elected officials!
Try out actual voting machines!
Want to vote on campus? Register to vote in Greene County!

FREE!

March 27: Local Election Candidate Panel

3:30 - 5 pm PSU Rm 313

Get to know the seven candidates for the Springfield Public Schools School Board!

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST!
@pawstothepolls
Begins 3/27 - winners announced 4/21

Missouri State

Sponsors: Paws to the Polls
pawstothepolls@missouristate.edu
Office of Public Affairs Support
Student Activities Council

PETITIONS

Reproductive Freedom Initiative Petition: After more than six months of attacks, litigation and delays following the filing of 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.

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.

Petitions will be available at our meetings until the May 5 deadline for submitting signatures.

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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.

The interviews are scheduled to air on KSMU 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.

The dates are:

- Thursday, February 29, 2024, 3:00pm
- Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 10:00am-12:30pm
- Wednesday, March 6, 2024, 3:30pm
- Thursday, March 7, 2024, 1:30pm

LEGISLATIVE CALLS TO ACTION

Members are urged to use the weekly LWVMO Legislative Bulletins and devote time each week to follow through on Calls to Action. Even 5 minutes a week can make an impact! Remember to communicate with legislators as individuals, not in the name of LWV. You can voice your opinions to any senator and representative, not just your own. But it is important to mention that you are a constituent if communicating with ones from your district.

[Click here](#) to view the LWVMO Legislative Bulletins.

DEI UPDATE

Two events are upcoming at the GLO Center: Turn Out to Vote 2024, Saturday, March 2, 12-3 pm. An educational event featuring representatives from PROMO and LWVSWMO. Queer Artists Showcase will happen March 15 (6 p.m.) and 16 (11 a.m.) The evening event features wine and requires a ticket. The March 16 event is free. For details, visit glocenter.org.



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ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

Our date for picking up trash along Sunshine Street is being moved from Saturday, March 23 to Saturday, April 28, at 9:00 am to avoid a conflict with the Democratic caucus.

Also, our committee initiated support for a change to the Clean Water Commission policy for a majority of citizens to hold seats on this commission. The Board voted to support this action, and then Sherry Buchanan contacted Marilyn McCleod to attain state support. We gained that support, thanks to Sherry’s persistence and a lot of emails. Many thanks to everyone on the board for supporting this action.

VOTER SERVICES UPDATE

In anticipation of the March 6 new voter registration deadline and the April 2 Municipal elections, registrars and Paws will have been available or will be available through March 5 for a total of twenty-one events. Registration opportunities have occurred at all 6 Springfield high schools and at two locations for Ozark high school students. We were present at the NAACP Birthday Party, during Taxapalooza and at Harmony House. An afternoon was spent at the Fair Grove Branch Library and events are scheduled to take place the O’Reilly Center Day of Hope, the Township Senior Living Community, Eden Village 1 and 2, at the Glo Center, during the Strafford Transition Fair and during the March 5 SPS University event. We are on a recurring schedule for both the Center of Hope and Harmony. The April 2 Election cards are in the process of distribution, and we are now able to educate voters as to specifically “What’s on my Ballot” via the Office of the Secretary of State.

The League participated in the MLK Voter Registration Town Hall sponsored by Sigma Nu Lambda-Alpha Phi Alpha as well as the first of the History Museum’s “Civics on the Square” education programs. This program provides an opportunity for girl scouts to earn the Senior Behind the Ballot badge.

Paws to the Polls students were present during five of the six SPS registration events as well as during the town hall and the girl scout badge program. The League’s

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youngest member, a sixteen-year-old student at Kickapoo, also attended the program at the History Museum.

OBSERVER CORPS

Members continue to attend school board meetings in Springfield, Nixa and Ozark. We also have members present during the Christian County Library Board meetings. We would like to have League volunteers present during city council and county commissioner meetings. We would also like to know if we have members who already participate on any local boards. If interested, contact Joan at joangentry2012@gmail.com.

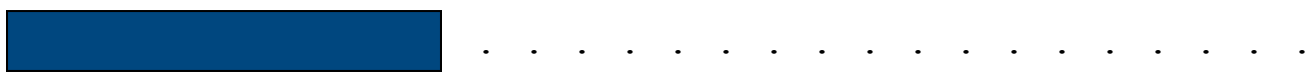
RADIO PROGRAM

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](#).

January 30: [Winter road preparedness is more of an art than a science](#)

February 15: [Community health organization provides wrap around medical care to underserved population for over 20 years](#)

February 23: [Local collaboration seeks to get students on a path to a health care career earlier in school](#)



BUS WRAP

Thanks to a collaborative effort with Leadership Springfield and NAACP, the bus wrap is rolling! Funding for this project was acquired from a grant award from the League of Women Voters of Missouri and private donations from two individuals. Voter turnout has been a Red Flag in the Community Report since 2004. Bringing attention to Election Day is a way to encourage and remind voters to exercise their right to vote.



Look for the bus as you're driving around town!



UPCOMING DATES

Candidate Interviews on KSMU

- Thursday, February 29, 3:00 pm
- Tuesday, March 5, 10-12:30
- Wednesday, March 6, 3:30
- Thursday, March 7, 1:30

Turn Out to Vote 2024

Saturday, March 2, 2024, 12:00-3:00pm
The Glo Center, 518 E Commercial St

Paws to the Polls Voting Fair

Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 12:00-4:00pm
PSU Atrium (2nd Floor)

New Member Orientation

Saturday, March 9, 2024, 10:30 am
Green House Coffee + Affogato Bar
431 S Jefferson Ave, Ste 172

Queer Artists Showcase

March 15-16, 2024
The Glo Center, 518 E Commercial St

General Meeting

Saturday, March 16, 2024, 5:30 pm
Empower:Abilities, 1450 W Cambridge St

Paws to the Polls Local Election Candidate Panel

Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 3:30-5:00 pm
PSU Rm 313

Trash Pick-Up Dates

- Saturday, April 20, 2024, 9:00 am
- Saturday, April 28, 2024, 9:00 am
- Saturday, October 19, 2024, 9:00 am

Annual Meeting

Monday, May 20, 2024, 5:30pm
Empower:Abilities, 1450 W Cambridge St

LWVMO Spring Conference

June 8, 2024
Location TBD