

# LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI

## The Voter

### GENERAL MEETING

#### The Push to End the State Income Tax: What You Should Know

Join us on **Saturday, March 21 at 9:30 AM at The Library Center** for an important and timely discussion on proposals to eliminate Missouri's state income tax.

Our featured speaker, Jessica Ann, Strategist at the Missouri Budget Project, will break down what these proposals could mean for Missouri families, communities, and the state's long-term economic health.

Across the country, some states — including Tennessee, Florida, and Texas — operate without a state income tax. Instead, they rely more heavily on sales taxes and other revenue sources. Jessica will compare Missouri's economic indicators and tax structure with those states, helping attendees better understand:

- How Missouri currently funds public services
- What replacing income taxes with expanded sales taxes could mean for working families
- How tax burdens differ across income levels
- The broader fiscal impact on education, infrastructure, and essential services

Jessica brings extensive experience in public policy and government leadership. Before joining the Missouri Budget Project in early 2025, she served as Chief of Staff in the Missouri State Senate, managing a legislative portfolio that included the appropriations committee.

For additional background and research on Missouri's budget and tax policy, visit the Missouri Budget Project's highly informative website at: <https://mobudget.org>

This will be a thoughtful, fact-based presentation designed to inform and empower citizens. We encourage members to attend, ask questions, and engage in this important conversation about Missouri's financial future.

### JEDI & NONPARTISAN TRAINING

Last year, the LWVSWMO Board of Directors voted to implement a mandatory JEDI & Non-Partisan Training for all LWV SWMO volunteers in alignment with our JEDI Statement and Non-Partisan Policies. Our community looks to the League as experts, and our members uphold the values and positions of the League. These trainings will take place quarterly and must be done to be a forward-facing LWV SWMO member. If a member is on multiple committees and/or action teams, they only need to attend the Training once.

Thursday, April 23rd at 6:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85977956507?pwd=QbnuIw5gSXU9HjidhPtv4DNtjblWbQ.1>

Meeting ID: 859 7795 6507

Passcode: 888650

If you have any questions regarding the implementation of the JEDI & Non-Partisan Training, please connect with Co-Presidents Liz Wertz ([elizabethwertz220@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethwertz220@gmail.com)) and Sandy Michaels ([slm7593@gmail.com](mailto:slm7593@gmail.com))

### ANNUAL MEETING

Join us for the LWVSWMO Annual Meeting on:

 **Monday, May 18 | 5:30 PM**

 **Springfield Botanical Gardens Banquet Hall**  
2400 S Scenic Ave, Springfield, MO 65807

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with fellow League members! Please RSVP using this form: [RSVP Here](#)

## SUPPORT DEMOCRACY: SERVE ON THE LEAGUE BOARD

Looking for a meaningful way to get more involved with the League? Consider serving on our **Board of Directors** and help guide the future of our organization. If you're interested, please fill out this form: [Board Interest Form](#)

## LWVMO: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE PODCAST

As of March 2025, Michele Breshears, Skyler Hawkins, and Anna Miller Lyu of the League of Women Voters of Southwest Missouri (LWVSWMO) have taken the lead on the statewide weekly podcast LWVMO: Missouri Legislative Update. Their work opens a powerful new channel for the League to connect with voters and future voters across Missouri.

The podcast delivers a clear, accessible rundown of the legislation being introduced, debated, and voted on each week in Jefferson City during the Missouri Legislative Session, which runs from November through May. Each 5–15-minute episode highlights key bills, provides talking points, and shares the League's position on each item. The goal is to make civic engagement easy by giving listeners the information they need—and direct links they can act on—from their phones.



LWVMO: Missouri Legislative Update is produced entirely by LWVSWMO volunteers, using content drawn from the weekly legislative update compiled by trackers and contributors at the State League level. New episodes are

released every Sunday while the Legislature is in session. The podcast is hosted on RedCircle and is also available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Amazon. Please listen, like, subscribe, and share!

March 2026

## COMMUNITY FORUM: UNDERSTANDING THE PROPERTY TAX FREEZE PROPOSAL

The League of Women Voters (LWV) is hosting a community forum to address the proposed property tax freeze that will appear on the April ballot for Christian County and several surrounding counties.

**Please note:** This issue is **NOT** on the ballot in Greene County.

The property tax freeze measure was passed during June's special legislative session and will now be decided by voters. If approved, the proposal would significantly reduce property tax revenue for many local entities that depend on this funding, including:

- Public school districts
- Fire protection districts
- Library districts
- Other local services supported by property taxes

Because property taxes provide critical funding for essential community services, this proposal could have a substantial impact on local budgets and operations.

### Event Details

Date: Thursday, March 26  
Time: 6:00–8:00 p.m.  
Location: OTC Richwood Valley Campus  
Life Science Center Building  
3369 W. Jackson St., Ozark, MO

The League of Women Voters is partnering with Show Me Christian County to provide this important educational event. The forum will offer factual information, explain how the proposal works, and outline potential impacts so citizens can make an informed decision at the ballot box.

Community members are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and learn more about how this issue could affect local services and taxpayers.



## LEAGUE SOCIAL EVENTS

Spring is the perfect time to connect, and we have two fun opportunities for League members—both new and seasoned—to gather and socialize.

### 🍷 New Member Social – Pie in Your PJs

Saturday, April 18 at 10:00 AM

Hosted at the home of Rebecca Callaway

New members — and any League member who would like to join — are invited to enjoy “Pie in Your PJs” in a relaxed, welcoming setting. Come meet fellow members, build connections, and enjoy a sweet treat!

### 🍷 League Social Happy Hour

Thursday, March 26 at 5:30 PM

📍 Georgia Mac's

Join us for a casual happy hour — grab a drink of your choice, enjoy a snack, and spend time catching up with fellow League members.

Please RSVP (for both events) to:

📞 417-224-2790 or 417-270-7271

✉ [ellwyrbcc@yahoo.com](mailto:ellwyrbcc@yahoo.com)

or [shop91548@yahoo.com](mailto:shop91548@yahoo.com)

We hope to see you at one — or both — of these fun gatherings!

## INFORMED VOTER COALITION

The Informed Voter Coalition brings together 13 community organizations in the Springfield region who share the goal of educating voters and engaging candidates with constituents. Ahead of the April 2026 Election, we will be covering two races - the Ozark School Board and the Nixa City Council race. Tune into KSMU the week of March 23rd to hear the candidate interviews for those two races.

Stay tuned for more information on a Greene County Meet the Electeds Event to be held April 22nd from 5-7pm at OTC. Events details and information to come!

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## FIGHTING FOR MISSOURI: EMERGENCY SPRING BREAK MASS MEETING

Join us for a Spring Break Mass Meeting to raise your voice on Missouri’s critical tax issues:

📅 Wednesday, March 18 | 6:00–7:30 PM

📍 Hatch Auditorium, The Library Center  
4653 S Campbell Ave, Springfield, MO 65810



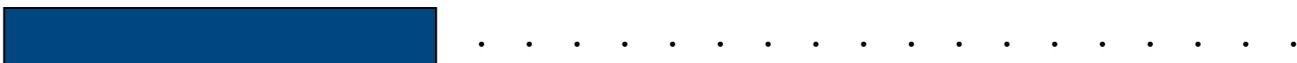
This statewide grassroots event invites area representatives and senators to hear constituent concerns, particularly about the potential crisis from eliminating Missouri’s income tax. Share your priorities and engage in shaping the conversation as the legislative session enters its second half.

RSVP and select “The League of Women Voters of Southwest Missouri” here: [RSVP Now](#)

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Education Committee will not meet in March. Our plan is to share our research on public schools with other League members at the Unit Meetings in April. Here is an example of some changes being made at the federal level. The video is 14 minutes, and we urge anyone interested in protecting public schools to view this report from ProPublica:

[Inside the Trump Administration’s Plan to Change Public Education](#) (YouTube Video)



# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

All League members are invited to join us on March 4 from 6:30–8:00 PM for a special presentation by David Stokely of Renew Missouri.

📍 Location: Big Whiskey’s American Restaurant & Bar - 1550 E Battlefield Rd

If you plan to have dinner, you may want to arrive early or order ahead to ensure timely service before the presentation begins.

Our committee will also continue caring for our adopted stretch of Sunshine Street. Mark your calendars and come lend a hand!

- 📅 March 29 – 9:00 AM
- 📅 April 26 – 9:00 AM
- 📅 October 25 – 9:00 AM

Thank you to everyone who helps keep our community clean and welcoming. We appreciate your continued support and involvement!

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE UPDATE

About League Policies and Programs  
Our May annual meeting includes a celebration and summary of the year, the election of new officers, and the approval of by-law changes. At this time we look ahead to the upcoming year by noting what positions/policies matter most to our members.

All our actions, including lobbying, partnering, endorsements, protesting, commenting, sponsoring, and education, must be guided by national, state, or local policies. State and national policies are updated every two years. Links are provided on our local website: <https://lwvswmo.org/>.

- National League Policy: [Impact on Issues](#) (2024-2026)
- State (MO) League Policy: [Guide to State Action](#) (2025-2027)
- Our Local “Short Form” highlights Policies that currently drive the work of our committee. The

March 2026

“Long Form” includes local policies we may still support, but are not an active part of our current program

**With so many potential policy areas to consider, each League decides which issues matter most to its members. In other words: where do we want to focus our energy? Those choices become our program priorities.** Because the League is a grassroots organization, we check in with members every year to determine which issues should guide our work. This year, our annual program survey will be conducted electronically throughout March and April. You’ll find the survey link in the next newsletter as well as through upcoming League communications.

So, what happens if there is an issue that you feel is important, but does not fall under a national, state, or local policy? Under those circumstances, a new policy may need to be developed. For instance, the National League recently conducted a year-long consensus study about the federal judiciary. It involved 321 Leagues-- including our own,-- representing 45 states and DC. The study resulted in the adoption of a new policy. If there is a need, there are two ways that a league adopts a new policy, but neither one is fast:

- **CONSENSUS:** The League conducts a local study on an issue, develops consensus questions to understand where our members stand on the issue, and eventually votes to adopt a new policy. Some of our league members conducted a study on payday loans in 2019 ([Link to Payday Loan Study pdf](#)). The resulting policy was adopted at both the local and state levels. This is the longer path.
- **CONCURRENCE:** The League identifies a policy that another League has already researched, debated, and adopted—and then formally requests to adopt that same position. Our education committee successfully used this method last year when it proposed adopting a school voucher policy originally developed by the New Hampshire League ([Link to Education Policy Proposal pdf](#)). It was the shorter route, but even so, the process took about eight months. The League is nothing if not deliberate.

A link to the survey will be available in the April newsletter and will be sent via email to our members. The deadline to respond is April 23, 2026. Results will



be shared at the annual meeting in May. We hope that all LWVSWMO members will respond with the issues YOU care about and want to devote energy to in the upcoming year!

## STAND FOR FAIR MAPS: RALLY AT THE MISSOURI SUPREME COURT

Join the **People Not Politicians Campaign** as we rally outside the **Missouri Supreme Court** while justices hear arguments in *Luther v. Hoskins*, a case challenging unconstitutional legislative gerrymandering outside the Census cycle.

-  **Date:** March 10
-  **Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Leave Springfield at 7:30 AM)
-  **Location:** Jefferson City (carpools available)

Make your voice heard for fair representation! Sign up here: [Rally Registration](#)

## STAY CONNECTED

Don't miss important League news and opportunities to take action! By signing up for our SMS program, you'll receive timely updates, event reminders, advocacy alerts, and ways to stay engaged — all delivered directly to your phone.

We're committed to keeping messages meaningful, concise, and respectful of your time. You can reply with questions at any time, and you may opt out whenever you choose.

Sign up today:  
<https://mailchi.mp/f614c099e92e/sms-signup>

## RADIO PROGRAM

Have you caught our **weekly Making Democracy Work** program on **KSMU 91.1 FM**? The League hosts this show every **Monday at 9:45 AM**, covering timely topics about civic engagement and public policy. If you missed recent episodes, you can explore past programs and listen at your convenience here: [Making Democracy Work Archives](#).

- February 11: [‘Lived experience’ a key component to address poverty issues](#)
- February 18: [Local cities receive grants for improvement projects](#)
- February 18: [Nationwide program shares ‘collection of American wisdom’ for US 250th anniversary](#)

## UPCOMING DATES

**Presentation by David Stokely of Renew MO**  
Wednesday, March 4, 2026; 6:30-8:00 PM  
Big Whiskey's, 1550 E Battlefield Rd.

**Stand for Fair Maps Rally**  
Tuesday, March 10, 2026; 10:00 AM-12:00 PM  
(Leave from Springfield at 7:30 AM)  
Jefferson City

**Fighting for MO Emergency Spring Break Mass Meeting**  
Wednesday, March 18, 2026; 6:00-7:30 PM  
Hatch Auditorium, The Library Center

**General Meeting**  
Saturday, March 21, 2026; 9:30 AM  
The Library Center  
Topic: The Push to End the State Income Tax

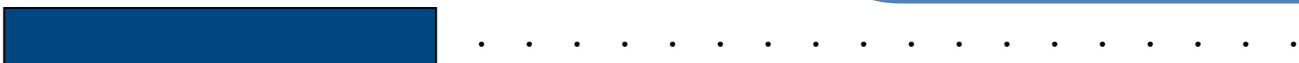
**Community Forum**  
Thursday, March 26, 2026; 6:00-8:00 PM  
OTC Richwood Valley Campus, Life Science Center Building, 3369 W Jackson St, Ozark

**League Social Hour**  
Thursday, March 26, 2026; 5:30 PM  
Georgia Macs, 1440 E Republic Rd

**No Kings**  
Saturday, March 28, 2026; 12:00-3:00 PM

**Adopt-A-Street Cleanup Dates**  
Monday, March 9, 2026; 9:00 AM  
Sunday, April 26, 2026; 9:00 AM  
Sunday, October 25, 2026; 9:00 AM

**LWVSWMO Board Meeting**  
Monday, March 30, 2026; 5:30 PM



# UPCOMING DATES CONTINUED

**New Member Social**  
Saturday, April 18, 2026; 10:00 AM  
Rebecca Callaway's home

**Unit Meetings**  
Monday, April 20, 2026; 5:30 PM  
Tuesday, April 21, 2026; 12:00 PM  
The Library Center  
Topic: Public Education

**Greene County Meet the Electeds**  
Wednesday, April 22, 2026; 5:00-7:00 PM  
OTC

**JEDI & Nonpartisan Training**  
Thursday, April 23, 2026; 6:00 PM  
Zoom Meeting

**LWVSWMO Board Meeting**  
Monday, April 27, 2026; 5:30 PM

**Annual Meeting**  
Monday, May 18, 2026; 5:30 PM  
Nathaniel Greene Botanical Garden  
Community Room

**LWV National Convention**  
Thursday, June 25 – Sunday, June 28, 2026  
Columbus, OH

## PAWS TO THE POLLS UPDATE

Paws to the Polls traveled to Jefferson City on Tuesday, Feb 17<sup>th</sup> and spoke with 16 legislators about voting-related legislation. Because most of the bills expanded access to voting, Paws supported almost all of them.



Paws will soon be preparing our three Voter Information Stations for placement on campus. These were made possible by a grant from the LVWMO Education Fund. They will be placed in the Plaster Student Union, the library, and Strong Hall to advertise Paws to the Polls events and anything related to civic engagement.

The Paws to the Polls Spring 2026 Voting Fair will be on Tuesday, March 3. The theme is “A Day in the Neighborhood: Beyond the Vote.”

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Is it time for you to pay your annual dues?  
Click here to pay online: [portal.lwv.org](https://portal.lwv.org)

To pay by mail send a check to:  
League of Women Voters of SW Missouri  
PO Box 3036  
Springfield, MO 65808-3036

