



IN LEAGUE REPORTER
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ST. LOUIS
8706 Manchester Road, Ste. 104, St. Louis, MO 63144
314-961-6869
www.lwvstl.org
February, 2009

From the President:

Dear Members and Friends,

An old time comedian used to have as his tag line “I hope-a, hope-a, hope-a”. I am reminded of that when I consider how the country is clamoring for change, and the hopeful response to a new administration. Even in the midst of a terrible worldwide economic downturn, assorted wars, tattered national esteem and global warming, we feel hopeful that we have another chance to make things better.

Hope is that wonderful motivator that spurs us on, but, by itself it will not get the job done. It also requires leadership, involvement, and enthusiasm. It has been a pleasure to watch those qualities at work in the City unit of our League. Under the leadership of Kathleen Farrell and Betty Ann Gilbert and with help of some dedicated members that unit has grown in membership, increasingly engaged in civic activities, and developed a rare sense of camaraderie.

I feel like a mother committing the transgression of praising one child in front of the others. However, my point is that the League of Women Voters fosters that kind of leadership and enthusiasm. We have 40 new members. Let’s make them feel welcome and encourage them to get involved in units, committees and events. Let’s do more than hope-a.

Sincerely,

Doris Buzzell

**2008-2009 LWV ST. LOUIS
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CALENDAR

Sat.	Jan. 31	1:00 PM	Local Government Committee	pg 6	League Office
	Feb. 10-14		February Units	pg 2	
Thurs.	Feb. 5	10:00 AM	Health Care Committee	pg 3	Cape Albeon Ret. Com.
Tue.	Feb. 10	5:30 PM	Environmental Quality Committee	pg 4	League Office
Fri.	Feb. 13	10:00 AM	International Relations Committee	pg 3	St. Louis County Library
Mon.	Feb. 16		President’s Day		Office Closed
Sat.	Feb. 21	9:30 AM	Education Committee	pg 4	League Office
Sat.	Feb. 28	11:00 AM	Housing Committee	pg 5	Companion Bread Co. 4651 Maryland CWE

February Unit Meetings

Consensus on the National Popular Vote Compact

UNIVERSITY CITY/CLAYTON

Tuesday, February 10
9:15 a.m. coffee
9:30 a.m. meeting
National Popular Vote Compact

HOME OF ELISE JOERGER

7136 Kingsbury
314-725-4829
Leader: Carol Portman
314-726-3269

North on Big Bend, 1st stoplight past Forest Park Parkway, turn left, 2nd block on left.

WEBSTER GROVES/KIRKWOOD

Wednesday, February 11
9:30 a.m. meeting
National Popular Vote Compact

HOME OF MARY LONG

10 Zinzer Court
314-849-7045
Leader: Mary Long
314-849-7045

Grant Rd. to Gravois, left on Gravois, Left again at 2nd entrance. Stop sign is Zinzer Ct. Right on Zinzer Ct. to 3rd house on right. (If you hit Laclede Station, you have gone too far.)

CHESTERFIELD/CREVE COEUR

Thursday February 12
9:30 a.m. meeting
Noon salad lunch
National Popular Vote Compact

HOME OF SYDELL SHAYER

709 Champeix Lane
314-434-5116
Leader: Marion Stuvland
636-391-7589

From 270 take Ladue Road west 1.4 miles to Chasselle, Right on Chasselle, at 2nd circle, turn right on Champeix, 5th house on the right. White house with red sculpture

WEBSTER GROVES/KIRKWOOD

Thursday, February 12
7:00 p.m.
National Popular Vote Compact

LEAGUE OFFICE

8706 Manchester Road, Suite 104
314-961-6869
Leader: Esther Clark
314-416-0366

ST. LOUIS CITY UNIT

Saturday, February 14
10:30 a.m.
National Popular Vote Compact

TRINITY CHURCH

Euclid and Washington
Contact: Betty Ann Gilbert
314-773-8719

Corner of Euclid and Washington, one block east of Kingshighway, one block south of Delmar

At the February Unit Meetings, members will learn about the National Popular Vote Compact and take consensus on whether the League should support this proposal. See Article on Topic, pages 7-9.

Enid Tennebaum, Vice President



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The International Relations (IR) committee will meet on Friday, February 13 at the County Library HQ to continue their study on Pakistan. Additional topics of interest will be the Great Decisions programs at the Ethical Society starting Thursday, February 12 and continuing on each Thursday through April 2. The programs start at 12 Noon with introduction of moderator and showing of Foreign Policy Association Video. The topics for February are:

Feb. 12 The U.S. and Rising Powers

Feb. 19 Afghanistan and Pakistan

Feb. 26 Energy and the Global Economy

Light refreshments will be available. Parking is free and convenient located in the rear of the building.

The program is free, but a book on the topics is available for \$16.50 at the meeting.

Judith Smart, IR Chair

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE



Health Care Committee will meet on Thursday, February 5th at 10 am. We will meet in the private dining room at Cape Albeon. Several new members have asked to be included in our committee. If you have material that you wish to share as handouts please bring at least 12 copies. The matter of reform in our health care is a priority in both state and national legislatures and we are fortunate to have some very well informed people on our committee. Please call me if you wish to have time on the agenda or if you need directions to Cape Albeon (636)861-7148.

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

Health care is a top priority of the new Obama administration. At the request of Senator Tom Daschle, Secretary –designate for Health and Human Services, an in depth health care community discussion, hosted by Missouri Health Care for All, was held at the Central Reform Congregation in December. Fifty health professionals, social service workers and interested parties gathered and each participant was given a prepared guide for the specific questions to be considered.

Well informed participants included some from St. Louis University Law School and Washington University. When asked about the biggest problem in the health care system, the group identified “Access” as a core problem and attributed problems with access to other core problems – insurance companies and drug companies: the profit motive which limits access and relies on incentives that are out of sync with the needs of both consumers and providers.

A majority of those present said that any health reform plan should have a robust public (Medicare like) option (which must include a government negotiated drug plan). In addition, any plan which includes an insurance exchange should insure that the coverage and costs are well controlled and regulated by government. The group was divided on whether the Medicare like plan would or would not involve private insurance and a slight majority indicated that they would like to see the employer based coverage system phased out in time. While preventative medicine is crucial to the success of any plan the meeting had gone well over the time allotted and that important component not examined to any extent.

(Material was taken from a copy of the information sent to the Obama-Biden Transition Project)

Katharine Kilpatric, LWV Health Care Committee



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING

A growing number of communities in the St. Louis area are using single stream recycling to manage their solid waste. Single stream recycling is a system for collecting all recyclables in one container rather than in separate bins. Usually the single stream bins are large containers, which can be rolled to the curb for pickup. The advantage to the resident is that it does not require time to sort and several trips to the curb with different containers. Generally more items can be recycled by this system than by the source separation system. The result – more material recycled. Educational materials are usually distributed as the system is introduced. If you do not have information on what can be recycled, contact your city hall or waste hauler.

Benefits to the community include a reduction in the volume of material sent to landfills which reduces the landfill fees and extends the life of landfills. Also, there are reduced pick-up costs because a single, automated truck can be used for collection. Frequently the start-up costs are financed partially or in full from grants.

The benefits to the environment come from the reduction of use of landfills and the use of resources such as lumber or bauxite. There is a growing market for recycled materials as more and better recycled products are developed and more people are “going green” by using recycled products. There is also an increase in the international market for the recyclables, particularly in countries like China.

The single stream material is now sorted in sophisticated facilities that use magnetics, lasers, electric currents, vacuums and other technology to recover the material. One downside to single stream is that there is sometimes contamination, particularly to paper. This may mean that some of the material cannot be reused. Usually, however, the paper can be reused but in a lower level of use such as cardboard rather than computer paper.

Nationally the estimated increase in recycling from single stream is 10 to 15 percent. In Webster Groves, the goal was to increase participation in recycling by 15 percent. In the first six months of the program there was an increase in recycling participation from 46% to 55% and since that time the participation has continued to grow. According to Dennis Wells of Webster Groves, “Over the past twelve months, the amount of refuse collected, by weight, decreased by a monthly average of 13 percent whereas, during the same period, recyclables collected increased by 48 percent.”

Recycling is an important component of the fight to save our environment. We should utilize whatever recycling programs are available and follow the guidelines to insure minimum contamination.

From the Environmental Quality Committee

The next meeting of the Environmental Quality Committee: Tuesday, February 10, at 5:30 p.m. in the League office.

Nancy Bowser, Chair



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee will meet on Saturday, February 21 at 9:30 a.m. at the League office.

Everyone is welcome.

Georgia Archibald, Chair

HOUSING COMMITTEE



The Housing Committee will meet on Saturday, February 28 at 11 a.m. at the Companion Bread Company 4651 Maryland in the Central West End, 2 doors east of Euclid. All interested members are invited. For more information contact Charlene Dummett at 314-652-6266. The Jan. 31st meeting has been cancelled.

Charlene Dummett, Chair

The Development Committee is Looking For A Few Good Hostesses!

‘Good Hostesses, Smart Discussion and About 10 Good Friends’ and it will be a WINNER!

Capitalizing on what the League does best – intelligent discussion – the Development Committee is trying out a new concept for raising funds in support of the organization. And we need some League members to make it work.

Here’s how it works:

1. Volunteer to host/hostess a party (dinner or otherwise but it has to be good!) You can team up with another League member to do this if you want.
 - a. You cover the cost of the food.
 - b. You buy one fun or nice door prize.
 - c. The League will provide you with the discussion materials – DVD movie or written materials (or you can do it if you prefer a different topic)
 - d. The League will provide you with the membership materials.
2. Invite at least 10 friends who are not League members but who like intelligent discussion. They make a \$20 donation to come to your party.
3. You have dinner or appetizers and fun.
 - a. Start the program
 - b. Play the DVD/movie (history, i.e. Iron Jawed Angels, or topical such as healthcare)
 - c. Discussion; panel on topic or led by a leader (much like our Unit concept)
 - d. Tell them about the League (no hard membership push, please)
4. Our goal is 20 parties totaling \$4,000 to fund the League.
 - a. The far greater benefit is the greater knowledge about our SMART discussions – the thing we love about the League!
 - b. And perhaps the growth in membership!

If you are interested in being a hostess, call or email Janice Dahl @ 314-503-7580.

Janice Dahl, 1st Vice President

City Unit Involved and Thriving

The City Unit held a special holiday brunch meeting in December. Member Kathleen Kelly led a stimulating discussion about lessons learned from the November general election. The Unit has attracted 5 new members this year and is busy preparing a SMART VOTER guide for the March 3rd primary. Our next meeting is February 14th at Trinity Episcopal Church in the Central West End. Our topic will be the National Popular Vote Initiative.

Kathleen Farrell

Local Government Committee Meets to Plan Spring Program

The Local Government Committee will meet on Saturday, January 31st from 1-3 pm at the League Office, 8706 Manchester, Suite 104. We will discuss the challenges facing local government entities in these tough economic times and will plan a member-wide meeting to be held later this spring. For information contact Kathleen Farrell at kathleenfarrell@earthlink.net or 314-773-2876

Kathleen Farrell, Chair

Smart Voter

Thanks again to all who helped make Smart Voter a success!

The two most frequently asked questions dealt with Voting Process

We had over 120 questions on Straight Ticket Voting and over 100 questions on Early Voting in Missouri. (Straight Ticket voting option was eliminated and Early Voting is not an option in Missouri.)

We also received many positive comments and Thanks for providing the Election Resource including just two examples are shown below:

“What a fantastic website and such a useful tool. You have restored our faith that there are non-partisan folks like us out there. You do a great service and we thank you.”

“Love this site. Great references, going to get the word out so that people can cast an EDUCATED VOTE! Thank you for this absolutely wonderful resource!”

Thanks to all of the hard working LWV Saint Louis Members!

Mickey Croyle

LWVIS Reports to the Community With a Colorful New Look

The Information Service launched a new look in its Report to the Community, taking the annual report of activities to supporters and potential funding sources in both print and electronic format.

The three-page newsletter format featured a front-page photo of League members walking in the Yellow Umbrella Event last September to support voting rights. The publication outlined all of the work of LWVIS in voter education and information in 2007-08, and also talked about the tremendous work being done in 2008-09 in taking voter education to the Greater St. Louis Community.

If you have an email address, you will likely be receiving a copy of the new publication. Or take a look on the LWV website at www.lwvstl.org where it will be posted. If you would like a copy of it, let the office know.

Janice Dahl, 1st Vice President

UNIVERSITY CITY ICE CARNIVAL

On Saturday, January 17 the League participated in the annual Ice Carnival in University City. We are very fortunate to have our table set up across from Blueberry Hill in the front of the former Red Sea Restaurant. It was a sunny and cool day but we were able to reach out and talk to many St. Louis people about the League and Smart Voter. Most of all, it was a very successful day. I want to thank the volunteers who joined me that day to work the event because without them, the League could not have done it. So thank you to Kathleen Farrell, Janice Dahl, Marj Courtney, Becky Clausen and Mary Beth Reynolds for coming and standing out in the cold with me to talk about the League.

Patti Walley, Membership Chair

NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The February units will be consensus meetings on whether the League should support a proposed National Popular Vote Compact, (NPV). The LWWUS has prepared the following three brief articles for local League newsletters. You may read the entire articles at www.Lwv.org. This is a very interesting and complicated subject for discussion. The NPV committee hopes to see you at the February units.

Background for the National Popular Vote Compact

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

Currently four states have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact.

Support for the National Popular Vote Compact

Because the League already supports direct election of the president, arguments against the Electoral College (EC) are not included in the material supporting the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact).

Constitutional Issues The NPV Compact is a way to assure that every person's vote counts equally and that the person receiving the most votes is the winner of the presidency. The same result would be achieved by constitutional amendment but the U.S. Constitution is difficult to amend. The NPV Compact is a viable way to attain the same goal as amending the Constitution to eliminate the EC.

A constitutional amendment is not needed to effectuate the NPV Compact because states already have the right to implement changes in how electors are appointed.

The NPV Compact is a compact between states—a method of concerted state action that has long been sanctioned by the Constitution and the courts.

Evaluating Fairness A candidate can be elected president by receiving the most electoral votes even though he or she did not receive the most popular votes. This is not a result voters expect or desire. As election campaigns are now waged, major emphasis and resources are concentrated in key EC battleground states because that is where elections are won or lost. The NPV Compact would eliminate the emphasis on battleground states and would be more apt to assure campaign strategies that appeal to a broad spectrum of the electorate which would foster greater voter participation.

The argument that the plan would negatively impact states' rights is countered by poll results showing that most voters want their individual vote to count, rather than allotting them to electors representing the state as a whole.

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The argument that the plan would negatively impact states' rights is countered by poll results showing that most voters want their individual vote to count, rather than allotting them to electors representing the state as a whole. Any claim that the NPV Compact is an unprecedented disregard for the U.S. Constitution ignores the reality that voting rights have been changed through state action many times. Women's suffrage, for example, was instituted by twenty states before passage of the constitutional amendment that made the right universal.

Mechanical Considerations Those opposed to the NPV Compact cite mechanical issues that might lead the NPV to fail, but the Compact includes provisions that address issues of enforcement, winning levels and recounts.

Other Issues The Voting Rights Act and the NPV Compact are in harmony, assuring equality of votes throughout the United States.

League Issues Opponents say that the NPV Compact conflicts with the League's support of uniform voting standards. Supporters of the Compact advocate its passage in all states, which would result in uniform voting standards. It is true that the NPV Compact could be in effect for an interlude when not all states had signed on to it.

The same could be demonstrated for other laws, such as the Equal Rights Amendment. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that uniform voting standards are not now in effect. The NPV Compact could help assure that every vote would be counted equally.

Further, implementation of a method which assures direct election of the president by popular vote is in keeping with the League's long-held position.

Opposition to the National Popular Vote Compact

There is little respect for the Electoral College (EC). The League opposes it and most voters want a direct popular vote. But is the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) an appropriate way to achieve that result?

Evaluating Fairness Voters supporting the candidate who receives the majority of votes in their state want their state's electors to support their choice. Adoption of the NPV Compact may require a state elections official to direct its state's electors to cast their ballots in support of a candidate who was not favored by the voters of that state.

Passage of the NPV Compact will result in the emphasis of presidential campaigns shifting from the battleground states to areas of large concentrations of population. So, while some voters are disenfranchised by the EC, others might be disenfranchised by the NPV Compact. Because the Compact requires entry into a contract with other states which binds state elections officials to direct electors to vote in a certain way, regardless of the outcome of the election in their state, states' rights are diminished.

In addition, one can question the advisability of a method that bypasses the normal constitutional amendment process in this manner.

Constitutional Issues Many constitutional scholars argue that this plan will lead to extensive litigation involving challenges to the NVP Compact on issues such as the scope of constitutional powers, the Compact itself, the need for congressional approval, the concerns of non-compacting states, and constitutional protections of state interests and their role in elections.

Mechanical Issues/Flaws The methods for enforcement of this plan are unclear. Opponents question the power and timing to withdraw from the Compact and the power to enforce compliance.

Others express concern about an onslaught of lawsuits between compacting and non-compacting states, as well as procedures in close elections.

The plan, allowing the election of a president by a plurality of votes, does not improve on the current system; neither the present system nor the NPV Compact requires that the president be elected by a majority.

Other Issues The Voting Rights Act requires pre-clearance for legislative changes. This, too, has the capacity to engender lawsuits to ensure compliance.

League Issues This proposal does nothing to achieve the goal of uniform standards of voting. The NPV Compact is effective when passed by states representing 270 electoral votes, effectively negating the impact on presidential elections of the voters in states which represent the other half of electoral votes. A system which assures no voter disenfranchisement is a better way to assure that every person's vote counts.

The League has long supported the abolition of the EC. Although the NPV Compact purports to foster the same result, it creates additional concerns. Amending the U.S. Constitution is a difficult process, and we should seriously consider supporting the normal amendment procedures to abolish the EC versus this specific "work-around."

To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (available at www.lwv.org) by the LWWUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.

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Plans for the Theater Party are Underway

Plans for the annual Theater Party fundraiser for the League of Women Voters Information Service are underway.

This year, the League is working on an agreement with Prison Performing Arts, a nonprofit dedicated to enriching the lives of adults and young people in the Missouri criminal and juvenile justice systems. They foster individual and social change by providing current and former inmates opportunities to participate in the performing arts as artists, students and audience members.

The group performs a combination of classic work, a repertoire of Sophocles and Shakespeare, and sometimes includes modern and even original work.

The tentative date is Sunday, March 29 at the Centene Center for the Arts, though final arrangements have not been made. Please understand this date may change.

The actors, who are alumni of the Prison Performing Arts program, will participate in a reception and discussion following the theater program.

“We are so very excited at the potential this program offers to the League of Women Voters, with the melding of theater and learning for our members,” said Development Chair Janice Dahl. “The opportunity of meeting these amazing artists and to learn about their lives is an important part of the League’s mission. We will learn while we enjoy their performance art.”

The event is the major annual fundraiser for the Information Service. Letters of invitation will go out to League members as soon as the date/time is confirmed. Sponsor levels will be: \$3000 for Diamond level (6 tickets); \$1,000 for Platinum level (6 tickets); \$500 for Gold level (4 tickets); \$300 for Silver level (4 tickets); \$150 for Bronze level (2 tickets). Individual tickets are \$55.

Janice Dahl, 1st Vice President

VOTER REGISTRATION

“You are a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state of Missouri.” With those lines, the start of the oath to register to vote, members of the League of Women Voters of St. Louis said it approximately 2300 times from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008. Most of the registrations, new or change of addresses/names, took place following 45 naturalization ceremonies in St. Louis, 1700. As requested we were at 24 sites...schools, health centers, community activities. Sometimes we registered 50 in three hours and sometimes none...but our presence was there to answer a myriad of questions. There were times when we had to say “no”...about 10 times.

Carol Portman, Voters Chair

P.S. Individuals who want to register voters will have to wait until the City and County Boards of Elections can organize a training session. Watch the ILR when training will take place...probably in May.

TRIBUTES & MEMORIALS

In honor of the love and generosity of Mary Merritt from Alan Portman to LWV St. Louis.

In memory of Helen Silverman from Verna & Clyde Creel and Cynthia Mitchell to LWV Information Service.

In memory of Keith Parker, Mary Parker’s son, and Joseph Burke Chilton, Emma Lee Chilton’s son, to the LWV St. Louis from the International Relations Committee

We wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Sheila Lumpe on the death of her husband, Gus.

Requests for Candidate Forums Rolling In

With a new wave of local elections in March and April, requests for candidate forums are rolling in and sure to keep League moderators, timers, and card collectors busy.

Requests so far include two for school boards: Parkway and Rockwood. Two requests for mayors and council members: Pine Lawn and O'Fallon. One request for council members: Wildwood Two for mayor: Downtown and 25th ward, St. Louis City. One for aldermanic race: 21st Ward, St. Louis City.

With the blossoming of spring flowers, hopefully, candidate forums will bloom and continue to affirm the good reputation of the League of Women Voters-St. Louis.

Helen Louise Herndon, Coordinator, Candidate Forums

No Cost Fundraising Opportunity

Attention *Schnucks* Shoppers

Schnucks will donate up to 3% of your purchases to the League's Information Service. (LWVIS)
It's as easy as 1 2 3

1. Pick up a *Schnucks* eScrip card at the customer service counter.
2. Activate the card by calling 800-931-6258. Say your charity is the LWVIS, Group # 500015391 or go to www.escrip.com/schnucks.jsp and follow instructions.
3. Present your card to the cashier for scanning every time you shop at *Schnucks*.

The League benefits and it costs you nothing.

****Thirty League members are participating in this no cost fundraiser. We hope you will add your name to this list. We receive a check monthly and it requires no soliciting. There is no easier way for you to help the League budget. Join today!

* * * * *

SIU Edwardsville's Arts & Issues present historian Doris Kearns Goodwin on Thursday, Feb. 5 at 7:30 pm in the SIUE's Meridian Ballroom. Her topic will be "Leadership Lessons from Abraham Lincoln.

The Missouri History Museum will present "Give 'Em Hell, Harry", the one-man show about the life of Harry Truman Feb. 12-22. For details go to the website: www.midnightcompany.com.

