



The Voter

League of Women Voters of Columbia/Boone

VOLUME 76, NO. 3

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Election Forum



Candidates for the Columbia City Council Wards 1 and 5 have been invited to our forum on Tuesday, March 8th. We have also invited the Columbia School Board candidates for the three open positions. One of the two Boone Hospital Board of Trustees positions is being contested and those candidates have also been invited. To round out our forum we will have speakers on the City ballot issues

The Columbia Public Library is our co-sponsor and will host the forum. Refreshments will be at 6:00 p.m. and the forum will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Carol Schreiber, Chair
Voter Service

Climate Change: Global Concerns and Local Actions

Rising seas. Floods. Droughts. Extreme weather events. Climate change affects the entire planet, but it's hitting the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities first and hardest, particularly the women.



Join the discussion of these challenging issues at a free public forum hosted by the League of Women Voters on **Monday, March 14, 7:00 - 8:30 pm at the Columbia Public Library, Friends Room.** Refreshments: 6:30 p.m.

A short documentary film, *Sisters on the Planet*, will showcase four inspirational women who are helping their communities cope with climate changes.

Guest panelists, Anita Randolph, former director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Energy Center and Meredith Dorneker, 2006-2008 Peace Corps Volunteer in Peru, will share their perspectives and offer actions we can take to help.

Co-sponsors: American Association of University Women; MU Asian Affairs Center; Columbia Garden Club; Columbia Climate Change Coalition; Columbia Public Library; MU Environmental Studies; Mid-Missouri Peaceworks; Mid-Missouri Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Columbia Area National Organization of Women, Unity Center of Columbia, Social Action Committee, Unitarian-Universalist Church.

Supported in part by the LWVUS Education Fund

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

- *Election Forum, Tues., Mar. 8, 6:30 pm, Library*
- *Civil Liberties Com. Mtg., Thurs., Mar. 10, 1: 15 pm., Library*
- *Peace Com., Fri., Mar. 11, 9 am, Library*
- *Sunshine Week, March 13-19 Climate Change, Mon. Mar. 14, 7 pm, Library*
- *Energy Matters Com, Tues., Mar. 15, 1 pm, Library*

April

- *Election Day, Tuesday, Apr. 5*
- *Peace Com., Fri., Apr. 8, 9 am, Library*
- *"Anchors Away," Tues., Apr. 12, 7 pm, Library*
- *Civil Liberties Com. Mtg., Thurs., Apr. 14, 1: 15 pm., Library*
- *Energy Matters Com, Tues., Apr. 19, 1 pm, Library*
- *Earth Day, Fri., Apr. 22*
- *Annual meeting, Tues., Apr. 26*

Fact Checking

In this political climate, citizens wanting to check the accuracy of allegations about political figures can go to ...

www.politifact.com or
www.factcheck.org

Its Spring Again (almost)



It's been a long year already, even though we are only two months in to it. Civility continues to be a lost art (along with compromise), too often the budget knives are focused on the most vulnerable of us and too many individuals threatened by the economic conditions look to blame those who are "not like us." (Of course, the record-breaking snow fall throughout much of the country have not helped!)

However, spring is coming. Our record-breaking heat wave in mid-February has melted virtually all the snow. I looked outside and, to my joy, the daffodils are coming up again. Although I have not yet seen the other harbingers of spring—crocus, snowdrops and hyacinths, the daffodils pushing up through the leaves and grass are enough to restore one's optimism.

Let's hope that those who were elected will yet remember their responsibility to govern all of us, not just the special interests and those with the most money to contribute to their re-election. For those who do, let's be sure they know how much we appreciate their efforts.

Linda Kaiser
President

Earth Hour 2011

The Columbia Climate Change Coalition invites League members to join the celebration of Earth Hour 2011. Mayor McDavid has proclaimed Earth Hour Day and Hour for the City of Columbia, Saturday, March 26th, from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and is urging all citizens to participate.



On Tuesday, March 22 at 9:00 a.m. there will be a tour of the new, "green-designed" City Building expansion followed at 10 a.m. by an official 'Reading of the Proclamation' and comments by officials and organization representatives in the Council Chambers. If you missed the League's tour last September, take advantage of this special opportunity.

A "kick-off" challenge will be issued for Columbians to take alternative transportation, as part of the Earth Hour celebration, beginning Monday, March 21, through the weekend.

Win Colwill, Co-Chair
Energy Matters Committee

What is Patriotism?



Elaine Blodgett moderated our CAT TV program on What is Patriotism? The participants were Mehdi Ben-Ayed and Tommy Palmer. Mehdi is a Rock Bridge student and Tommy is a University of Missouri student. City Councilman Daryl Dudley was scheduled to participate, but had to cancel at the last minute. So, our program focused on what is the next generation's view of patriotism. Mehdi brought the unique perspective with having dual citizenship in the United States and Tunisia. Tommy related how 9/11 occurred his freshman year in high school and he has spent his entire adult life in a country at war. Air times are currently 7:30 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays and 7:00 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. However, you can view it any time on line at www.columbiaaccess.tv.

To celebrate Women's History Month in March, we are planning our CAT TV show on women running and serving in public office. All of our CAT TV shows this year are being underwritten by the Lorene Bangert Emerson Memorial Fund.

Carol Schreiber

What is Sunshine Week?

Sunshine Week is a national initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, non-profits, schools and others interested in the public's right to know.



Sunshine Week as a national effort is spearheaded by the American Society of News Editors. The key funder has been the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, with significant support from ASNE Foundation. In 2011, The Gridiron Club and Foundation contributed \$10,000.

Though created by journalists, Sunshine Week is about the public's right to know what its government is doing, and why. Sunshine Week seeks to enlighten and empower people to play an active role in their government at all levels, and to give them access to information that makes their lives better and their communities stronger.

Sunshine Week is a nonpartisan, non-profit initiative.

How much do you know about Missouri's Sunshine Law? Take the following quiz from items on the Attorney General's website. (For more information, or to take the full 11-item quiz, go to <http://ago.mo.gov> and click on "Sunshine Law.")

1. A citizen wants to bring a tape recorder in to a city council meeting to record the open portion of the meeting. What response by the city clerk is consistent with the Sunshine Law?
 - a. We already videotape the meeting on the local access channel. Why don't you just set your VCR at home and you will have a copy of the proceedings?
 - b. We do not allow citizens to tape record our meetings. We once had a citizen that "doctored" a tape to try to make one of our council members look bad.
 - c. You are allowed to bring in a tape recorder to record our meeting. Please place your recorder in the portion of the council chambers designated for recording equipment.

2. A citizen makes a request for all e-mails exchanged between any of the County Commissioners relating to a proposed road extension. Under the Sunshine Law, what is the proper response to this request?
 - a. These e-mails are not open because they relate to legal actions that the Commission may have to take to obtain easements from a number of property owners. You may have the e-mails once the project is finished.
 - b. These e-mails are open, subject to any exceptions that may apply under Section 610.021. Therefore, I may need to print some e-mails out to redact material that is exempt from disclosure. I will provide a cost estimate to provide those records to you.
 - c. These e-mails are open, but you need to attend the next Commission meeting to explain to the Commissioners why you want these records.

3. You are making a request for information to your Board of Alderman. You want to know why the stop lights at particular intersections are timed differently than recommended by a national organization. You pose this question as a Sunshine Law request to the city Custodian of Records. What should her response be?
 - a. I cannot fill this request because you did not state your purpose for requesting the records.
 - b. I cannot fill this request because records relating to law enforcement and traffic are closed to the public.
 - c. I cannot fill this request because it does not ask for records. Please tailor your request to the records you are seeking.

4. A citizen wants a copy of the tape from the city hall lobby security camera from a particular morning. When she makes her request, she tells the custodian, "I need it in DVD format." What should the custodian provide?
 - a. A DVD copy of the tape if the city has the equipment to make a copy in that format; if not, the custodian should offer a copy in whatever format is available.
 - b. Nothing. Providing the tape would be an invasion of privacy for those who visited city hall that morning.
 - c. Nothing. A videotape is not a public record.

(See page 5 for answers)

Ever Take the Bus?



Rather than just hopping into your car when you have an errand around town, how about riding a bus on the Columbia Transit System? It covers a variety of routes covering much of the city. The general fare is \$1, only \$.50 for seniors. If you've looked into riding the bus in the past, it may be different now, as the current system of routes and schedules was changed last August. The new schedule may be picked up at the City Hall, the bus station on 10th Street or retrieved online at www.gocolumbiamo.com.

Transportation Supervisor Drew Brooks met with the Energy Matters Committee on February 15th for a most enlightening session. In the past, schedules were frequently not on time; however, that has now changed and buses arrive quite close to the scheduled time. Under the Public Works Department, the Transportation budget is \$5 million with a ridership increasing annually.

The Black and Gold route, serving mostly University students, has buses with standing room only and can accommodate up to 80 people per bus. Regular buses accommodate wheelchairs and are equipped with a front rack for bicycles, so all can ride.

Last year the Energy Matters Committee rode the bus to and from downtown starting in our respective neighborhoods. You may want to do the same.

Joni O'Connor
Energy Matters Committee

League Snow Policy: If school is cancelled by the Columbia Public School district, all League activities for that day are also cancelled.



Member Updates

Long time League member Betty Cook Rottmann, who often portrayed women's rights and temperance advocate Amelia Bloomer, recently wrote,

"Springtime was beautiful here in Arkansas. But fall with major tree planting about ten years ago was magnificent in Fayetteville. My apartment windows open on a woods. From it have flown some nineteen species of birds to feed. I have improved somewhat, but will not get well. Many doctors' appointments and laboratory processes. Tina and I attended a new group, Women's Empowerment, planning setting up monthly salons. Is this the 1960's and 70' again, new this place?"

Betty moved last spring to be closer to her daughter, Tina, in Arkansas. Her address there is: 415 E. Longview Street, Fayetteville, AR 72708.

On a sadder note, Robert Bevins, husband of longtime League member, Priscilla Bevins, died on February 14th. His memorial service will be March 26th, 1 p.m. at Calvary Episcopal Church, Columbia. Our condolences go to Priscilla at this time.

LWVUS Updates

LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2011:

The Board adopted the following LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2011 at its meeting last weekend: Clean Air Defense; Health Care Defense; Money in Elections (campaign finance reform); and Voter Registration and Election Administration. The Legislative Watch List* is as follows: CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women); Climate Change; Ethics; Immigration; and Safe Drilling and Mining ("Fracking"). **The Watch List means that if an opportunity arises on these issues and does not interfere with action on an advocacy priority, the LWVUS may take action if it appears we can make an impact.*



The Board discussed many issues and the responses from members suggesting Legislative Priorities. The decisions were made based on what issues are likely to come before the 112th Congress, the opportunities to make an impact, program decisions made at the 2010 Convention, member interest and resources available to manage these priorities effectively. The Board reviews these priorities throughout the year, making changes if warranted.

Privatization of Government Services Study Committee:

Committee members selected for the Privatization of Government Service study are: Susan Baer, San Diego (CA), Diane Di Ianni, Nashville (TN), Carole Garrison, Hampton (VA), Ann Henkener, Columbus (OH), Cathy Lazarus, Los Altos (CA), Nora Leech, Seattle (WA) and Ted Volskay, Simpsonville (SC). Janis McMillen, LWVUS Board, is the chair. Over the next few months, the Committee will be doing research and defining the scope of the study. Finalization of the study scope is anticipated by June 2011.

Sunshine Quiz Answers

#1. **The correct answer is C.** - Section 610.020.3 states that a public body **shall allow** for the recording by audiotape, videotape or other electronic means of any open meeting. The provision goes on to say that the public body may establish guidelines regarding the manner in which such recording is conducted to minimize disruption to the meeting.



#2. **The correct answer is B.** - Section 610.010(6) defines "public record" to include electronic records. Moreover, Section 610.023.3 requires that if a person request records in a certain format, the public body shall provide the records in that format, if such format is available. While some of the e-mails, or portions of some of the e-mails, may be closed, the clerk would have to identify the legal basis for closing any records, or portions thereof, under Section 610.021. Also, the Sunshine Law requires that the clerk provide the records within 3 business days or explain the reason for any delay beyond 3 business days - Section 610.023.3.

#3. **The correct answer is C.** - The Sunshine Law pertains to **records**, not **information** (§ 610.010(6)). A request for records may be somewhat general, because the requester may not know what specific records are in existence. But the request must be specific enough that the custodian of records can identify and provide access to the records being sought (See *Anderson v. Village of Jacksonville*, 103 S.W.3d 190 (Mo. App. W.D. 2003)). In this case, it may be helpful for the custodian to explain – in general terms – the type of records that may pertain to the question.

Some records relating to law enforcement are closed, but not those contemplated in this question. And although no purpose was provided for requesting the records, the purpose is irrelevant. The Sunshine Law does not give public governmental bodies the authority to veto requests because of the requester's purpose.

#4. **The correct answer is A.** - The term "public record" is defined as, "Any record, whether written or electronically stored, retained by or of any public governmental body....," and for however long a record is retained by the public body, the public has a right to inspect or copy it. (See, *Hemeyer v. KRCG-TV*, 6 S.W.3d 880 (Mo.banc 1999)). Section 610.023.3 provides, "If records are requested in a certain format, the public body shall provide the records in the requested format, if such format is available."

LWVUS Activities



How does LWVUS spend its time and resources? A summary of its most recent activities is below. For more information about any of them, go to www.lwv.org.

League Urges Senate to Oppose Elimination of Presidential Public Financing: League President, Elisabeth MacNamara, sent a letter to Senators urging them to oppose S. 194 and any other moves to eliminate the public financing system for presidential elections.

League Urges Missouri Lawmakers to Oppose Photo ID Bill: LWVUS and coalition partners sent key legislators in Missouri a letter urging them to oppose onerous photo identification legislation.

League Urges House and Senate to Investigate FEC Failure: The League, with coalition partners, urged House and Senate committee leaders to investigate and hold hearings on the systemic problems with the Federal Election Commission.

ACTION ALERT: Keep Our Air Clean: Take action now to tell your Representative to oppose any legislation that would block or prevent action to clean up our air and protect the most vulnerable Americans.

League Files Amicus Brief In Opposition to Arizona Proof-of-Citizenship Requirement: In an amicus curiae brief, the League asked the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals not to grant en banc review of a previous decision invalidating the Arizona proof-of-citizenship requirement for voter registration.

League Urges Senators to Oppose Repeal of Presidential Public Financing: The League and coalition partners sent a letter to Senators urging them to oppose legislation to repeal presidential public financing and support modernization legislation instead.

ACTION ALERT: Protect America's Health Care: Take action now. Tell your Senators not to repeal the Affordable Care Act and to stand firm in support of this law which extends coverage to millions of uninsured Americans.

January 2011 League Newsletter: This month, we continued our reform efforts by speaking out against attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and Presidential Public Financing.

Honoring Women In Congress 2010: Rachel's Network the League of Women Voters of the United States sponsored a swearing-in reception honoring the women of the U.S. House of Representatives, 112th Congress on Wednesday, January 5, 2011. Watch the video.

Were you interested in, but unable to attend, the League's recent programs on campaign financing ("If You Prick Them, Do They Bleed? Corporations as Persons") and federal health care legislation ("The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: How Will It Affect You?")?. The League now has DVDs of both available. If you would like to view them, you may borrow them for two weeks. Contact Linda Kaiser (474-1407 or lindaskaiser@gmail.com) to make the arrangements.



Officers

President: Linda Kaiser (474-1407)
1st Vice President: Rachel Brekhuis (875-4295)
2nd Vice President: Carol Schreiber (657-1467)
Secretary: Joni O'Connor (234-1012)
Treasurer: Liz Schmidt (445-0655)

Board Members & Committee Chairs

Budget: Shirley Troth (634-6157)
Civil Liberties: Linda Kaiser & Aline Kultgen (449-2149)
Communications: Maydell Senn (445-7844)
Discussion Groups/Unit Meetings: Midge Pinkerton (445-2052)
Education: Holly Burgess (449-0625) & Zona Burk (234-1083)
Energy Matters: Win Colwill (445-4663) & Dick Parker (below)
Fundraising:
Historian: Marilyn McLeod (445-3500)
Hospitality: Pam Springsteel (445-0642)
CAT TV: Elaine Blodgett (256-2803)
Membership: Linda Lenau Brown (447-3939) & Liz Schmidt
Mental Health: Lael Von Holt (443-7747)
Nominating: Sarah Wolcott (449-4407)
Peace: Dick Parker (256-4397)
Special Events:
Land Use/Sunshine Coalition: Jo Sapp (443-8964)
Voter Editors: Joni O'Connor & Linda Kaiser
Voter Service: Carol Schreiber

Meetings

Board: 4th Monday, 6:30 pm, Boone Electric Coop
Civil Liberties: 2nd Thurs., 1:15 pm*
Education: 4th Thurs., 6:30 pm*
Energy Matters: 3rd Tuesday, 1 pm*
Fundraising: Varies
Peace: 2nd Fri., 9 am*
Voter Service: Varies*
 *Meetings at Library

Membership

If you are a member and wish to receive a membership list, please contact Liz Schmidt at 445-0655 or email at lizschmidt@centurytel.net.

To join the League, fill in the information below and mail it, with your check, to Membership Chair, League of Women Voters, PO Box 239, Columbia, MO 65205. Dues are \$55 for individuals, \$80 for a household and \$15 for local students. (An "11" after your name indicates paid for 2011.)

Name _____

Email Address _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

I am particularly interested in _____

(Note: Tax deductible donations to the Education Fund should be a separate check, payable to LWVMO Education Fund.)

For more information, contact Liz Schmidt at 445-0655 or Linda Brown at 447-3939.

Websites

lww.columbia.missouri.org (local)
lwwmissouri.org (state)
lww.org (national)

Would you like to see the Voter in color? Save the League printing and mailing costs? You can now get the Voter direct to your computer early by contacting co-editor Linda Kaiser at lindaskaiser@gmail.com. Let her know you would like to receive your Voter via email and send Linda the email address to which you would like to receive the Voter.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Columbia – Boone County MO

P.O. Box 239

Columbia, MO 65205

<http://lwv.columbia.missouri.org>

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*LWV: Where hands-on work to safeguard
democracy leads to civic improvement.*



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

March 2011						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Election Forum, 6:30 pm, Library	9	10 Civil Liberties Com., 1:15 pm, Library	11 Peace Com. Mtg., 1 pm, Library	12
13 Sunshine Week, March 13-19	14 Climate Change Discussion, 7 pm, Library	15 Energy Matters Mtg., Library, 1 pm	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Board Mtg., Boone Electric, 6:30 pm	29	30	31	April 1	April 2
April 3	April 4	April 5 Election Day	April 6	April 7	April 8	April 9