



# The Voter

League of Women Voters of Columbia/Boone

VOLUME 77, No. 5

MAY, 2012

## Clean Air and Your Health: Is Your Family at Risk?

Is a member of your family or someone you know battling asthma? About 25 million Americans are, and one of those 25 million is my granddaughter. Air pollution can produce a variety of harmful health effects including asthma attacks, lung inflammation, and aggravated heart conditions that send victims to the hospital. Air-borne mercury has so contaminated Missouri's rivers and streams that a statewide health advisory was issued warning against eating certain fish.



Everyone has a right to expect that the air they breathe is clean and healthy. In the 40 years since its enactment, the Clean Air Act has made steady progress in reducing the threats posed by air pollution, allowing us all to breathe easier, but millions of Americans still live in areas with unhealthy air. The St. Louis Metro area, for example, frequently violates the federal clean air standards for ground-level ozone and fine particulates. Recent efforts by the Environmental Protection Agency to tighten air pollution standards have been slowed or stymied by opponents' lawsuits.

Clean air and your health unit discussion meetings will be held at the home of Joni O'Connor, 2401 Tahoe Ct. at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 23 and at Elda Kurzejeski's home, 4651 S. Scott Blvd. at 1:30p.m. on Thursday, May 24. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy a social half hour and then join the discussion concerning the current threats of air pollution to our health and our families, the sources of pollution, and what we can do about the problem.

Win Colwill, Energy Matters Co-Chair

## The Play is the Thing

It is never too early to make your reservation for a most enjoyable fun evening at the Columbia Entertainment Company production of "The Drowsy Chaperone" on Wednesday, June 13. Come and bring your family and friends to share in this LWV sponsored evening. This is a family-friendly musical comedy with tons of laughs and the winner of the most 2006 Tony Awards of any musical on Broadway! A zany, hilarious and yet poignant tale of a celebrity bride and her uproarious wedding day. The Drowsy Chaperone is full of thrills and surprises that take the cast and audience soaring to the rafters.



Our happy hour starts at 6:30 PM. The curtain goes up at 7:30 PM. Tickets are \$25 for this LWV fundraiser. (There is a handicap entrance and parking.)

Reservations can be made with Liz Schmidt at PO Box 239, Columbia, 65205 or 1700 Forum Blvd, #3101, 65203. (You may pay at the door or ahead of time)

## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

### May

- **LWVMO Council, Sat., May 5, St. Charles**
- **Energy Matters Com., Thurs., May 10, 9:30 am, Library B**
- **Civil Liberties Com., Thurs., May 10, 1:15 pm, Library**
- **Voter Service Com., Mon., May 14, 6:30 pm, Library B**
- **Education Com., Mon., May 21, 6:30 pm, Library**
- **Unit Discussion mtg. on Clean Air, Wed., May 23, 7:00 pm, 2401 Tahoe Ct.**
- **Unit Discussion mtg. On Clean Air, Thurs., May 24, 1:30 pm, 4651 S. Scott Blvd.**

### June

- **"The Drowsy Chaperone," a League Fundraiser, Wed., June 13, 6:30 p.m., CEC**
- **Energy Matters Com., Thurs., June 14, 9:30 am, Library**
- **Civil Liberties Com., Thurs., June 14, 1:15 pm, Library**
- **Education Com., Mon., Jun 18, 6:30 pm, Library**
- **Unit Discussion mtg. on Photo ID, Wed., Jun 27, 7:00 pm, 1012 Hickory Hill**

### **Fact Checking**

**Want to check the accuracy of allegations or emails? Go to ...**

**[www.politifact.com](http://www.politifact.com) or  
[www.factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org)  
[www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com)**

## Boone County Mental Health Board: An Update

The latest news is that the Boone County Mental Health Board of Trustees will disband due to lack of member commitment, continuous lack of a quorum, and no operating treasury or specific goal.

At their last public meeting on March 13, 2012, board members in attendance and the county commission liaison agreed to disband the BCMHBT, and to seek out other options to replace this statutory board.

The City/County Health Department may be asked to pick up the cause and, in November, the voters may be asked to support a 1/4 cent county sales tax to establish a Community Children's Services Fund - to include mental health services.

A more comprehensive Observer Report will follow in due time when the issues are more settled. Perhaps the board and commission will re-think their decision.

May is Mental Health Month - a good time for all to seriously look at these developments.

Lael Von Holt, Observer

## KFRU will Broadcast Candidate Forums Live!



The LWV candidate forums for the August primary election will be broadcast live by KFRU radio. The two forums for contested races will be on Thursday, July 12 and Tuesday, July 17. Both forums will be in the Friends Room at the Columbia Public Library and will be from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The July 12th forum will focus on state representative contested races: Republican candidates for the 44th House District and Democratic candidates for the 47th House District. The July 17th forum will focus on Boone County contested races: both Republican and Democratic candidates for the Boone County Administrator; and both Republican and Democratic candidates for the Boone County Northern District Commissioner. Popular radio host David Lile will moderate the forums.

Carol Schreiber, Chair  
Voter Service

## Annual Meeting

New officers and board members were elected at the recent annual meeting of our League. Elected were Carol Schreiber and Marilyn McLeod as Co-Presidents, a new approach to leadership. Also elected was Liz Schmidt as Treasurer, Elda Kurzejeski as First Vice President, Ava Fajen as Second Vice President and, as Directors, Dick Parker, Midge Pinkerton, Maydell Senn, Diane Suhler and Lael Von Holt. Linda Lou Brown was elected Chair of the 2012-13 Nominating Committee and Marie Scruggs and Sarah Wolcott-Twaddle were elected as members of the Nominating Committee.

Members also re-affirmed the Local Positions and approved two changes to the By-Laws—to permit the election of a president or co-presidents and made the Treasurer's term of office to coincide with the fiscal year.

## Women's Lobby Day



Missouri Women's Lobby Day and Equal Pay Day Rally was held on April 17 at the State Capitol. LWV members attending were Elaine Blodgett, Holly Burgess, Ava Fajen, Carol Schreiber, and Sue Tillema. Around 60 women from across the state attended the rally and heard from several state legislators including Rep. Chris Kelly, Rep. Stephen Webber and Rep. Mary Still. Each senator and representative received a cookie missing one-fourth of the cookie representing the fact that women earn around 75% of what men make. Information on equal pay was included in the cookie package.

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## Eleanor Goodge Award 2012

*Editor's Note: Carolyn died on April 6, 2012. The League was able to present Carolyn with this award in her home on Tuesday, March 27 by reading this tribute and a certificate, a yellow rose and a notebook showing some of the many activities in which Carolyn was engaged on behalf of both our local league and the LWV of Missouri. She will be missed.*

The League of Women Voters of Columbia-Boone County is proud to name Carolyn Leuthold the 2012 recipient of the Eleanor Goodge Award for Service to the League.

Carolyn has been a loyal, enthusiastic and hard-working member of the league for nearly 50 years. She served as president of the Columbia-Boone County LWV from 1982 to 1984. She has been a valued member of numerous study committees, most recently the Energy Matters Committee, and has enthusiastically supported Earth Day activities. Her leadership on League Nominating Committees, both local and state, has assured the continuing strength of our non-partisan political organization. Her interest in matters of mental health brought forth her leadership and service in Mental Health Associations, both in Missouri and recently in Montana.



In every case she provided her energy, thoughtful insights, creativity and questioning mind. She admits that she likes to play "devil's advocate" sometimes. Carolyn's presence assured everyone that all sides of the issue would be thoroughly examined and discussed.

Always generous and willing to help, Carolyn often opened her home for League meetings. Her friendly smile and positive outlook encouraged others to participate and be actively involved.

A strong supporter of the League message that informed voters are essential for a strong democracy, Carolyn has devoted much of her league career to Voter Service. She organized and moderated many Candidate and Ballot Issue Forums, researched and edited Voter Guides and, for many years, published regular updates of the League's Citizen Flyer. She gave talks to school classes, club groups and delegates to Missouri Girls State, encouraging involvement in public policy decisions.

As a member of the local Observer Corps in the early 1970s to 1988, Carolyn faithfully attended hundreds of meetings of the Board of Health and the Planning and Zoning Commission, calling them "the best night life in town". She was instrumental in gathering over 2000 signatures on petitions to bring Boone County Home Rule to a vote of the people.

Carolyn also served on the State Board of the League of Women Voters of Missouri from 1985 to the mid-1990s. She was Director of Government and Elections and, in 1985-86, she expertly directed the League's study of the caucus and primary systems of nominating presidential candidates. The study materials she developed were used by local leagues and later by other Missouri organizations. In 1996, she co-authored with Marilyn McLeod the publication titled "Promoting Voter Awareness". In 1987, Carolyn created an informational video titled "Meet the Candidates-Missouri Choices '88", which was shown at the LWVMO Convention and also sold to the public.

Beginning in 1989, Carolyn regularly attended Ethics Commission meetings of the Missouri Legislature. She wrote articles and letters to the editor urging adoption of an Ethics Commission, improved reporting of lobbyist expenses and meaningful financial disclosure by public officials. Legislation was passed in 1990 and 1991 which improved both reporting and disclosure, and established the Missouri Ethics Commission. Carolyn was recognized by Governor Carnahan for her exemplary work.

Carolyn authored a compilation of the early history and accomplishments of the local LWV from 1912 to 1990. She was the initial motivator and co-chair in 1994, with Lael Von Holt and Jan Wiese-Fales of the Public Library, of our 75th anniversary celebration of the 19th Amendment for Women's Right to Vote and of the League of Women Voters. This celebration began on August 26, 1994 with a parade from the County Court House to Columbia College, and culminated on August 26, 1995 with a parade from the MU Columns to Stephens College. League members, including Carolyn and many students and local community organizations, paraded in traditional suffrage dress with the yellow Votes for Women sash and the traditional yellow umbrella. Carolyn was also one of our Suffrage Singers for the 75th anniversary and for Governor Holden's inaugural in 2001 in Jefferson City.

Even after Carolyn and David began to spend seven months of the year on their ranch in Montana, Carolyn has stayed active in League, both here and in Montana, benefiting both. She has remained a strong advocate for voting rights, education, mental health, energy conservation, ethics in government, and a strong democracy.

Thank you, Carolyn, for your significant contributions to the League of Women Voters and the community.

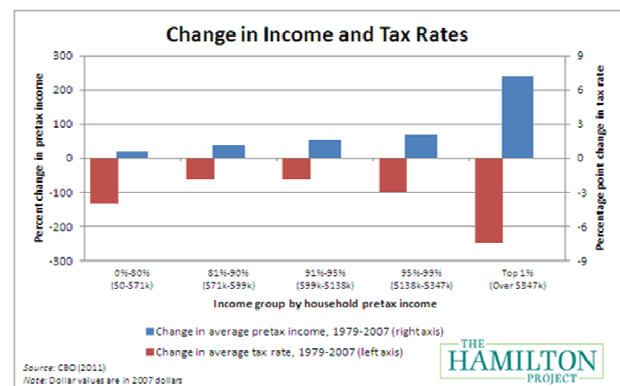
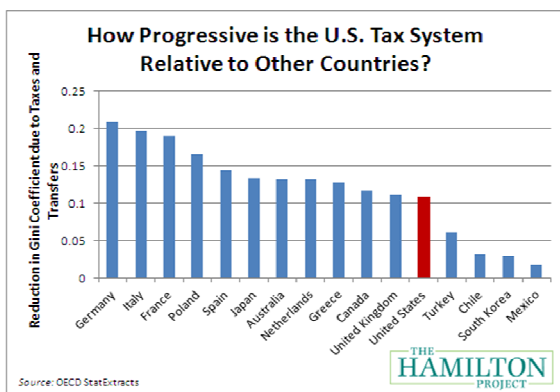
## A Progressive Tax Code?

*Editor's Note: The Brookings Institute has recently compared the US tax code to other countries. To some, the results may be a little startling. The following material is from an article by Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney of the Hamilton Policy Institute entitled, "Just How Progressive is the U.S. Tax Code?"*

The analysis shows that "current U.S. tax system is less progressive than the tax systems of other industrialized countries, and considerably less progressive today than it was just a few decades ago. The figure below shows how much influence taxes and transfers have in reducing inequality (measured using a common metric called the "Gini coefficient") in various countries around the world. As indicated in the chart, the U.S. tax and transfer system does less to counteract pre-tax income inequality than the tax systems of most of our peer countries, meaning that our system is actually less progressive. In addition to being less progressive relative to other countries, the U.S. tax system has also become less progressive over time. Over the last fifty years, tax rates for the wealthiest Americans have declined by 40 percent, while tax rates for average Americans have remained roughly constant.

This decline in tax rates for the wealthy has coincided with an increase in income inequality, where most of the wage gains have been concentrated among a relatively small portion of the American people. For example, since 1979, earnings for households in the top 1 percent of the income distribution have risen by over 250 percent. At the same time, many households at the middle and bottom of the income distribution have experienced stagnating incomes or even declines in earnings (figure below, blue bars). This means that the very people who have received the biggest income gains in the past three decades have also seen the largest tax cuts (figure below, red bars).

These estimates may come as a surprise to observers focused on the share of federal taxes paid by high-income individuals, rather than the tax rates that those individuals face. Without a doubt, the share of taxes paid by high-income individuals has increased. But the reason why the share of taxes paid by the top 10 percent has increased is because their share of income has increased. In 1979, the top 1 percent of Americans earned 9.3 percent of all income in the United States and paid 15.4 percent of all federal taxes. While the share of income earned by the top 1 percent had more than doubled by 2007—to 19.4 percent—the share of federal tax liability paid by that group only increased by about 80 percent, to 28.1 percent. The share of taxes increased less for this group because high-income tax rates fell by more than the tax rates for everyone else—reductions that made the system less progressive.



For more information, go to [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu)

*The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that federal fiscal policy should provide for: adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad based income tax; responsible deficit policies; and a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.*



## ALEC—What Is It?

*Editor's Note: The following material was taken from the introduction to "Legislating Under the Influence: Money Power, and the American Legislative Exchange Council - August 2011," produced by Common Cause.*

Some of the nation's largest and richest companies, including Wal-Mart, Coca-Cola, Koch Industries and AT&T, have joined forces to invest millions of dollars each year to promote the careers of thousands of state legislators and secure passage of legislation that puts corporate interests ahead of the interests of ordinary Americans.

The American Legislative Exchange Council, also known as ALEC, counts among its members some 2,000 state legislators and corporate executives. They sit side-by-side and collaborate to draft "model" bills that reach into areas of American life ranging from voting rights to environmental protection. Then they work in concert to get those bills passed in statehouses across the country.

For example, legislators in at least seven states last year drew on a proposal drafted by ALEC to advance legislation withdrawing their states from regional agreements aimed at fighting global warming. ALEC also is a key player in a national drive to toughen voter ID laws, successful so far in 18 states. And in the wake of a series of Supreme Court decisions lowering barriers to corporate political spending, ALEC has encouraged states to reject bills that would require companies to get shareholder approval for their political contributions.

In the past decade, ALEC's corporate leaders have invested more than \$370 million in state elections. Their money, and additional millions from other ALEC-aligned businesses, has financed campaigns for and against state ballot issues and helped elect thousands of state senators and representatives willing to champion ALEC bills at state capitols.

The money also has reinforced ALEC's issue agenda, spelled out in the group's model bills. Among other things, ALEC supports public subsidies for private schools, the development of privately-owned prisons, restrictions on the voting rights of thousands of college students and senior citizens and unlimited, secret corporate spending on behalf of political candidates and parties.

Along with all that, ALEC has a lengthy list of things it opposes, including federal and state environmental regulations, the new federal health care reform law, state minimum wage laws, and trade and public employee unions.

ALEC is a force. By the organization's own account, about 180 of its model bills are enacted in at least one state every year. ALEC scored some of its highest-profile victories during 2011 in Wisconsin and Ohio, where newly-elected Republican governors and legislators attacked budget shortfalls with legislation that sharply restricts the bargaining power of public worker unions. The bills were passed just a few months after companies in ALEC's leadership put more than \$304,000 into the campaigns of Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and Wisconsin state legislators, and spent more than \$563,000 on Ohio Gov. John Kasich and lawmakers in the Buckeye State. Both Walker and Kasich are ALEC alumni.

Common Cause examined ALEC's political clout by analyzing campaign contributions from corporate treasuries, political action committees, and executives and employees linked to the 22 companies represented on the council's "private enterprise board" during 2010. Those donors spent more than \$38 million on state politics during the 2009-10 election cycle.

While an estimated 2,000 state legislators currently are members of ALEC, they pay only \$50 each – a total of \$100,000 toward the organization's annual budget, now about \$7 million. The rest comes from the board companies, foundations, and about 300 other businesses affiliated with ALEC.

Note: ALEC is a 501(c)(3) organization. Common Cause is apparently filing a complaint with the Internal Revenue Service, alleging misuse of this non-profit status.

Note: In Missouri, there are some 40 Representatives and 6 Senators with ties to ALEC.

For more information on ALEC, see [www.commoncause.org](http://www.commoncause.org) and [www.sourcewatch.org](http://www.sourcewatch.org). In addition, an article by Mike McIntire, "Conservative Nonprofit Acts as a Stealth Business Lobbyist," in the New York Times, April 21, 2012

## Emily Newell Blair



Emily Newell Blair (January 9, 1877 – August 3, 1951) was an American writer, suffragist, feminist, national Democratic Party political leader, and a founder of the League of Women Voters.

Born in Joplin, Missouri on January 9, 1877, she was an avid reader, a talented writer, excelling in her schoolwork and the leader of her siblings at home. She was an 1894 graduate of Carthage Senior High School (Carthage, Missouri). She was educated at Goucher College and the University of Missouri. She returned to Carthage upon her father's death, before graduating, to help support and care for her brother and three sisters.

She was married on December 24, 1900 to Harry Wallace Blair. Blair was a graduate of the George Washington University School of Law. After practicing law in Joplin for a number of years, he was appointed in 1933 as an Assistant U.S. Attorney General overseeing the United States Department of Justice Environment and Natural Resources Division. After serving as Assistant U.S. Attorney General, he served as a special assistant to the Attorney General for several years, and then went into private practice in Washington, D.C. From 1947 until 1950, he served on a Regional Loyalty Board, and from 1950-53 served on the President's Loyalty Review Board, which reviewed federal agency loyalty board determinations regarding whether federal workers were pro-Communist.

Emily Newell Blair became active in the local suffragist campaign. In 1914, she became publicity chair for the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association and the first editor of its monthly publication, "Missouri Woman."

After United States' entry into World War I, Blair became vice chair of the Missouri Woman's Committee of the Council of Defense. When her husband went abroad for the YMCA, she accepted a position in the publicity department of the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense, working for Ida M. Tarbell and Anna Howard Shaw. In 1920, Blair published its history, "The Women's Committee, U.S. Council of National Defense: An Interpretive Report."

She had been a founder of the League of Women Voters, but realized that since gaining suffrage, women had lost political clout. Although they had the right to vote, they tended not to vote in blocks. Women must, Blair contended, organize and support strong women candidates for office who could lead the demand for equality. As a result, she organized more than 2,000 Democratic Women's Clubs around the country and built regional training programs for women party workers. She first served as secretary (1922–1926) and then later as president (1928–1929) of the Woman's National Democratic Club, and was the club's principal founder.

She was the first woman to attain a prominent position in Democratic Party politics. She was first elected as the party's national vice chairman in 1922 and reelected in 1924, serving until 1928. During her tenure, she worked to elect women to public office and was continually seeking support in Congress for issues in which women were interested such as the United States Children's Bureau created by President William Howard Taft in 1912.

She also served as a key player in Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 1932 Presidential campaign. She helped secure the nomination for Roosevelt; during the campaign she was one of four women sent by the DNC on speaking tours across the country. She was one of a handful of women rewarded for her contributions to his election. Blair was active in securing positions for women in the New Deal. Appointed to the Consumers' Advisory Board of the National Industrial Recovery Act, she became its chairman in 1935. Her last public service came in 1942 when she was appointed chief of the women's interest section of the War Department's Bureau of Public Relations.

A prolific writer, she was the author of several books, many short stories, and innumerable articles on politics. She also served from 1925 to 1934 as an Editor of Good Housekeeping magazine.

She retired from public life in 1944 after suffering a stroke and died on August 3, 1951, in Alexandria, Virginia.

*Material taken from Wikipedia. For more information go to [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org). Also, see her autobiography, "Bridging Two Eras."*

*As Mankind becomes more liberal, they will be more apt to allow that all those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are equally entitled to the protections of civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations of justice and liberality.*

*George Washington*

**Officers**

**Co-Presidents:** Carol Schreiber (657-1467) and Marilyn McLeod (445-3500)

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:** Elda Kurzejeski (445-4633)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:** Ava Fajen (442-0803)

**Secretary:** Joni O'Connor (234-1012)

**Treasurer:** Liz Schmidt (445-0655)

**Board Members & Committee Chairs**

**CAT TV:** Carol Schreiber

**Civil Liberties:** Linda Kaiser & Aline Kultgen (449-2149)

**Communications:** Maydell Senn (445-7844)

**Discussion Groups/Unit Meetings:** Midge Pinkerton (445-2052)

**Education:** Ava Fajen (above)

**Energy Matters:** Win Colwill (445-4663) & Dick Parker (below)

**Historian:** Marilyn McLeod

**Hospitality:** Pam Springsteel (445-0642)

**Membership:** Linda Lenau Brown (447-3939) & Liz Schmidt

**Mental Health:** Lael Von Holt (443-7747)

**Nominating:** Linda Brown (above)

**Other:** Joan Eisenstark (449-5790) & Diane Suhler (443-0549)

**Peace:** Dick Parker (256-4397)

**Voter Editors:** Joni O'Connor & Linda Kaiser (474-1407)

**Voter Service:** Carol Schreiber

**Web & Social Media:** Rachel Brekhus (875-4295)

**Meetings**

**Board:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, 6:30 pm, Boone Electric Coop

**Civil Liberties:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs., 1:15 pm\*

**Education:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon., 6:30 pm\*

**Energy Matters:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs., 10 am\*

**Fundraising:** Varies

**Peace:** Varies

**Voter Service:** Varies\*

\*Meetings at Library

**Membership**

If you have an "12" after your name, your membership is current. Our membership year runs January 1-December 31.

To join the League or renew your membership, 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.

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.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

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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**

**lwvcbc.wordpress.com** (local)

**lwvmissouri.org** (state)

**lwv.org** (national)

**www.covermissouri.org** (Missouri Foundation for Health)

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 the email address you would like used.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

**Columbia – Boone County MO**

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MAY 2012						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Energy Matters Com, 9:30 am, Library B Civil Lib. Com., 1:15 pm, Library	11	12
13	14 Voter Serv. Com., 6:30 pm, Library B	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Education Com., 6:30 pm, Library	22	23 Unit/Disc. Mtg. on Clean Air, 7-8:30 pm 2401 Tahoe Ct	24 Unit/Disc. Mtg. on Clean Air, 1:30-3 pm, 4651 S. Scott Blvd.	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	June 1	June 2
June 3	June 4	June 5	June 6	June 7	June 8	June 9