League of Women Voters of Columbia-Boone County
100th Anniversary
December 1919 - December 2019

Governor Gardner signing Missouri’s ratification of the 19th Amendment on July 3, 1919.

Proclamation Ceremony, July 8, 2019, commemorating the Centennial of Missouri’s ratification of the 19th Amendment.
Jay Ashcroft, secretary of state, presented the proclamation.
(In photo, left to right: Mahree Skala, Brianna Lennon, Meredith Donaldson, Ellen Atkins, Marilyn McLeod, Ruth Milledge, Pam Springsteel, Joni O’Connor, Elaine Blodgett and Carol Schreiber.)
### LWVCBC MEMBERS OF LONG STANDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>50+ Year Members</th>
<th>40+ Year Members</th>
<th>30+ Year Members</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharon Schneeberger – 1979</td>
<td>Vicky Wilson – 1984</td>
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<td>Sharon Curry – 1979</td>
<td>John O’Connor – 1985</td>
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<td>Margaret Tyler – 1986</td>
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<td>Carol Lane – 1988</td>
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<td>Hank Waters – 1988</td>
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### LWVCBC Awards

**Eleanor Goodge Award for Exemplary Service to the LWVCBC**
- 2009 - Lorene Emmerson
- 2011 - Marilyn McLeod
- 2012 - Carolyn Leuthold
- 2013 - Maydell Senn
- 2014 - Lael Von Holt
- 2015 - Kathryn Allen
- 2016 - Win Colwill
- 2017 - Elaine Blodgett
- 2018 - Joni O’Connor
- 2019 - Ava Fajen

**LWVCBC Outstanding Citizen Award**
- 2006 - Dr. Wendy Libby, president, Stephens College
- 2007 - Cindy Mustard
- 2008 - Almeta Crayton
- 2009 - Paul Pepper and James Mouser
- 2010 - Darwin and Axie Hindman
- 2011 - Lucille Salerno
- 2012 - Anne Deaton
- 2013 - Ann Covington
- 2014 - Chris Kelly
- 2015 - Pat Fowler
- 2017 - Wendy Noren
- 2019 - Steve Hollis

**Liz Schmidt Community Service Award**
- 2016 - Verna LaBoy
- 2017 - Room at the Inn
- 2018 - Central Missouri Stop Human Trafficking Coalition
- 2019 - Voluntary Action Center
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COLUMBIA-BOONE COUNTY

HONOR ROLL OF PRESIDENTS

12/1919-1921  Mrs. Jesse Wrench (Jane Louise)
1921?  Mrs. Rosa Ingles
1921-1922?  Mrs. W. K. Freudenberger
1923-1924  Ella Victoria Dobbs
1925-1929  Mrs. H. O. Severance
1929-1931  Mrs. Frederick Middlebush (Katherine)
1931-1932  Mrs. E. F. Van Buskirk (Edna)
1932-1934  Mrs. G. A. McCleary (Julia)
1934-1935  Mrs. Richard Clark (resigned)
1933-1937  Mrs. F. F. Stephens (Louise)
1937-1939  Mrs. H. L. Kempster (Essie)
1939-1941  Mrs. E. S. Haynes (Nola Lee)
1941-1943  Mrs. Martin Faust (Ann)
1943-1944  Mrs. Newell Gingrich (Fern)
1944-1946  Mrs. H. P. Hartkemeier (Fannie)
1946-1948  Mrs. John Harris
1947-1949  Mrs. Edgar Baskett (Janet)
1949-1950  Mrs. B. Lamar Johnson (Agnes)
1950-1952  Mrs. George Ewing (Alice)
1952-1954  Mrs. Guy Head (Mabel)
1954-1956  Mrs. Henry Bent (Florence)
1956-1958  Mrs. John Peterson (Merle)
1958-1960  Mrs. Robert Benson (Dorothy)
1960-1962  Mrs. Melvin Marx (Kay)
1962-1965  Mrs. Paul Mathews (Gertrude)
1965-1966  Mrs. T. William Hall (Ruth)
1966-1968  Mrs. Robert Spier (Veva)
1968-1969  Mrs. James McKenzie (Lucy)

1969-1972  Mrs. Calvin Woodruff (Betty)
1972-1974  Mrs. John Farmer (Margaret)
1974-1976  Mrs. Donald Joseph (Margaret)
1976-1979  Mrs. Paul Schmidt (Liz)
1979-1981  Mrs. Jack Colwill (Win)
1981-1982  Mrs. Robert Wixom (Jeanne)
1982-1984  Mrs. David Leuthold (Carolyn)
1984-1985  Sandra Rosenholtz
1985-1989  Joni O’Connor
1989-1991  Liz Schmidt
1992 (Jan-Apr)  Eleanor Goodge
1992-1994  Kathyrn Allen
1994-1998  Kathryn Allen
1998-2002  Pat Danner
2002-2004  Maydell Senn
2004-2006  Jo Sapp
2006-2010  Elaine Blodgett
2010-2012  Linda Kaiser
2012-2014  Carol Schreiber
2014-2015  Marilyn McLeod
2015-2017  Carole Schreiber
2017-2018  Peggy Placier
2018-2019  Diane Suhler
2019-2021  Executive Committee
2021-2022  Maydell Senn
2022-2023  Elaine Blodgett
2023-2024  Marilyn McLeod
2024-2025  Peggy Placier

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MISSOURI

Presidents from Columbia-Boone County

1925-1917  Luella St. Clair Moss
1932-1934  Mrs. E. F. Van Buskirk (Edna)
2007-2009  Jo Sapp
2013-2017  Elaine Blodgett

Elaine Blodgett
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF COLUMBIA-BOONE COUNTY

In the Beginning...

The League of Women Voters in Columbia officially began on November 16, 1912 when a group of 18 local citizens gathered at the Athens Hotel. Three of the citizens were men, including Dr. Richard Jesse, former president of the University of Missouri. Another well-known person attending was Mrs. Luella St. Clair Moss, president of Christian College (now Columbia College). Their purpose was to “form a working organization of those interested in Equal Suffrage” and they established the Columbia Equal Suffrage Association.

Between 1913 and 1919, the members worked tirelessly to carry the message of suffrage to Columbia, Centralia, Ashland, Hallsville, Rocheport and Sturgeon as well as other parts of the state. Several local members participated in the famous “Golden Lane” in St. Louis at the Democratic National Convention in St. Louis on June 14, 1916. Helen Guthrie Miller, a local suffrage leader from Columbia, served as president of the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association.

Becoming the League of Women Voters

The 72-year national struggle for women’s equal voting rights finally ended when the U.S. House passed the 19th Amendment in January 1918 and the Senate on June 4, 1919. It was then submitted to the states for ratification. Missouri, the 11th state, ratified the Amendment on July 3, 1919. Before final ratification by Tennessee a year later, the Columbia Equal Suffrage Association transformed into the Columbia League of Women Voters on December 11, 1919.

The League over the years

The League model has long been to study public policy issues as a non-partisan organization, and to take a position on issues by consensus of the members after study on the local, state and national level. The overriding mission has always been to encourage and support everyone’s right to vote and to encourage citizens to be informed voters.

In the 1920’s, once the right to vote was affirmed, the women of the local League turned to providing citizen information classes and voter information services, held meetings with candidates, supported changes in election laws including putting women on juries, and sought more maternal and childcare funding and seeking to improve child hygiene (i.e. health).

In the 1930’s, they studied and took action on various issues including support for an equal rights amendment and for membership in a world peace organization, a state government merit system and a nonpartisan court plan. They supported unemployment and old age assistance and studied correctional institutions.

Junior League of Women Voters

From 1926 to 1943, the Columbia League of Women Voters sponsored a chapter of a Junior League of Women Voters at the University of Missouri. It was an organization for university women who were interested in current politics, on campus, in state and national government, and in understanding legislative issues which they would face when they become voters. Voting age was 21. Most students were not yet eligible to vote, but they were already interested in political issues. During those years, the Junior League had as many as 70 members, and the organization was included each year in the Savitar, the yearbook of the University of Missouri.
In the 1940’s
During WWII, they followed the national LWV model on “War-time Service for Carrying Information to the Public”. Later they worked toward changing the city government to a city manager model which was finally adopted in Columbia. The League supported a revision of the state Constitution. They continued candidate meetings, registered voters, and set up an observer corps to attend City Council meetings. They worked for “modern” (residential) garbage collection. In 1944, they adopted a position that separate segregated schools do not result in equal opportunity.

In the 1950’s and 1960’s, League members worked on issues including redistricting for political boundaries, state aid to schools, civil rights and supported prompt integration in schools, public accommodations and fair housing were major issues. They supported increased aid for schools. In 1964, a major local activity was a study of slum clearance and a public housing study. LWV and NAACP worked together to register more African-American voters.

Unit Meetings
The concept of Unit meetings began where small groups of members would meet monthly in member homes or other locations to discuss public policy issues. There were as many as nine Units in the 1950’s and 1960s, but by 2010, there were only two (one evening, one daytime). Due to low attendance, the decision was reached in 2012 to change to a monthly “Lunch & Share” general meeting for presentations and discussions of public policy topics, now called “Lunch & Learn”. In 2019, the Columbia Public Library began to cosponsor these programs with the League.

The League Had an Office!
From about 1957 to 1975, our League had an office in the building at 800 E. Broadway and then moved to an office in the building at 5 S. 9th Street until 1988. Liz Schmidt often shared memories of a cranky old mimeograph at the office which they used to print the monthly “bulletin”.

The Observer Corps
LWV conducted a program where members attended meetings throughout each year of various local boards and commissions, including the Columbia City Council and the Boone County Commission, as part of an “Observer Corps”. They published an annual record of their observations in conjunction with Daniel Boone Regional Library. To quote from the 1975 Observer Report, “there is no substitute for seeing, firsthand, what the problems are and how solutions are determined.” Although the local League no longer has an official observer program, many members currently serve or have served as appointed members of many local boards and commissions.

Becoming the LWV of Columbia-Boone County
After approval at the local unit meetings, followed by approval of the membership at the Annual meeting on April 19, 1967, the LWV of Columbia became the League of Women Voters of Columbia-Boone County.

In the 1970’s, local members studied and supported elementary and secondary school education and juvenile justice needs, public library funding, waste management, recycling, environmental issues, a better city-county health program, and comprehensive physical planning for city and county. The U.S. Congress passed the E.R.A. League campaigned for state ratification from 1972-1984, until the deadline for ratification ended.
From 1977-1981, local members studied and supported a Charter government for Boone County, which was brought to a vote but was defeated in 1982.

In the 1980’s, the fact that more women were working outside the home impacted membership but offered new expertise. An evening unit was established to accommodate working women. There were voter service programs on cable TV and radio. Some Missouri LWV priorities included: public policy on reproductive choice; solid waste management; access to health care. Columbia’s LWV did a study on local power alternatives. They supported: energy efficiency planning and use of renewable resources; housing as a basic human need and enforcement of housing inspection; solid waste management; and access to health care.

In the 1990’s, the League celebrated the 70th anniversary of the LWV with a party at the Tiger Kensington Ballroom in 1990. There was a celebration of the 75th anniversary with a parade in downtown Columbia, followed by a rally on Francis Quadrangle at MU, and speakers including County Clerk Wendy Noren and Assistant Superintendent of Schools Muriel Battle at Stephens College. During this decade, topics of interest to be studied and often supported included many that were of interest in the past, included recycling and energy efficiency.

In the 2000’s

topics that were of great interest included the need for healthcare for all, campaign finance reform (especially after the Supreme Court’s Citizens United decision), civil liberties, immigration issues, protection of the environment, and concerns about the effects of climate change. The Energy Matters Committee, co-chaired by Win Colwill and Dick Parker, took the case about renewable energy for the city to the Columbia City Council with positive results. The League participates in the annual Earth Day and Sustainability Fairs. Beginning in 2007, the League presents an annual celebration of National Constitution Day event each September, under the auspices of the Civil Liberties Committee.

CAT TV

Beginning in 2005, “The League Presents” was a series of monthly programs on local cable TV, called CAT TV, about topics of public interest under the leadership of Jo Sapp, Elaine Blodgett and Carol Schreiber, until the end of the video service in 2019. Regular moderators included Jim Robertson, managing editor of the Columbia Daily Tribune and Randy Picht, executive director, of the Reynolds Journalism Institute.

Department of Peace

Local members, led by Dick Parker and Midge Pinkerton, studied the idea for a U.S. Department of Peace and brought the recommendation for a national study to two LWV Conventions (2010 and 2012). Although the idea was not taken up as a national League study, it was an honor to have an idea developed by LWVCBC members be heard at the national level.

Voter Protection and Voter Service

Voter protection issues, including concerns about voter ID’s, have been an important focus of activities to LWVMO and members around the state. The essential work of the Voter Service Committee, led by chair Carol Schreiber for more than 10 years, continues.

Our core mission hasn’t changed: it is critical in a democracy that every eligible citizen has the right to vote and that the electorate be knowledgeable about candidates and issues.
Some Special Ladies of the League

*The League of Women Voters of Columbia-Boone County has had the good fortune to have had many illustrious leaders in our history. Here are just a few brief biographies of a few of the members who represent different decades of our history.*

Luella St. Clair Moss (1865-1947)
President, 1925-1927, League of Women Voters of Missouri

“A Steam Engine in Petticoats”

Luella came to Columbia in 1893 when her husband was appointed to the presidency of Christian College (later Columbia College). After he died, the trustees of the College were so impressed with Luella, that they appointed her president, probably the only woman college president in the nation. Her excellent administration of the college earned her the reputation as one of the most capable businesswomen in the state. After marrying Dr. Woodson Moss in 1911, Luella became active in community, church, and political activities. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Columbia Equal Suffrage Association in 1912 and worked for women’s suffrage until the 19th Amendment was passed.

In 1922, Luella St. Clair Moss was the first woman elected to the Columbia Board of Education. In that same year, she was a candidate for Congress in Missouri’s 8th District. She won the Democratic nomination in the primary, the first woman in Missouri ever nominated for a national office. Despite a vigorous campaign, she lost the general election by a small margin in November to the incumbent representative.

Although Luella didn’t enter politics again, she continued her contributions to civic life, including serving as president of the League of Women Voters of Missouri, the Missouri Federation of Women’s Clubs, and the first woman president of the Missouri Library Commission. Her name is inscribed in the bronze tablet in the rotunda at Missouri’s Capitol and as one of three Missourians in the LWV National Roll of Honor tablet in Washington, D.C. for her service in securing equal political status for women.

Jane Louise Wrench
President, 1919-1921
League of Women Voters of Columbia

A graduate of Teacher’s College in New York, she moved to Columbia with her husband Jesse, a professor of mathematics. She was an original founder and then president of the Equal Suffrage Association (predecessor to the League of Women Voters).

As a civic minded individual, she was actively involved in the community in numerous ways, including providing citizenship classes for women regarding voting responsibilities.

Mrs. Wrench hosted dinners for foreign student groups and supported coal miners in Boone County. She considered the idea of women working a “generally good idea” and promoted education for women. She had grave concerns about the lack of sanitation services in the city and fought for an ordinance to be passed by the city council.
Helen Guthrie Miller
(1861-1949)
President, Missouri Equal Suffrage Association
Vice-President, National Suffrage Association

Born in Zanesville, Ohio, Mrs. Miller came to Columbia with her husband. In 1906, she took an active part in legislation for the Food and Drug Act. From that time, she was an officer of many committees dealing with health, especially children’s health and tuberculosis groups. She was recognized nationally for her work in helping enact federal and state pure food and drug laws.

But her greatest role was her work as a leader in the struggle for women’s right to vote, in Missouri, and at the national level. She began by helping establish the Columbia Equal Suffrage Association and went on to serve on the state level. From there, she served as auditor of the National Suffrage Association with Anna Howard Shaw and then its first vice president under Carrie Chapman Catt. As president of the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association, Mrs. Miller, along with other women, joined Governor Frederick Gardner for the signing of the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1919.

She served as a special agent in the state for the Hoover Food Administration and as a member of Herbert Hoover’s National Speakers Committee. Calling herself a “progressive Republican”, Mrs. Miller was a member of the Republican National Committee Platform and Policies Committee and a member of the state committee from the Eighth Congressional District. Very active in the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, she went on to chair nationally the departments of general health and public welfare for that group in the 1920’s.

Ella Victoria Dobbs (1866-1952)
President, 1923-24
League of Women Voters of Columbia

*Her life goals were directed towards the betterment of children’s lives through their education, especially in the primary grades and in the cultivation of professional attitudes among women teachers.*

Ella Dobbs earned a teaching certificate in Iowa (1885) and taught at Teacher’s College at Columbia University (NY) (1907). She became a faculty member in the Manual Arts Department at University of Missouri (1909).

Ella was a founding member of the Columbia Equal Suffrage Association. After passage of the 19th Amendment, she served as president of the local chapter of the League of Women Voters.

She had a distinguished career as an educator and was a founder of the National Council of Primary Education and Pi Lambda Theta. She was named first chair of the Applied Arts Department at University of Missouri (1924). Miss Dobbs encouraged women to run for the Columbia Public School board. Fellow suffragist Luella St. Clair Moss, former president of Christian College, was the first woman to serve on that board.
Dr. Nola Lee Haynes  
(1897-1996)  
President, 1939-1941  
League of Women Voters of Columbia

Dr. Haynes was a founder of the Columbia League of Women Voters. She voted in the first election where women would vote (1920) and lived to be 100! Highly educated at the time, with a Bachelor’s in Education and Master’s in Mathematics and a Doctorate in Mathematics, she was included in the Smithsonian Institutes Division of Mathematics in their honor roll of American women with pre-World War II PhDs in Mathematics. She was on the faculty of the Mathematics Department at the University of Missouri, was a member of Pi Lambda Theta and Pi Mu Epsilon honor societies in education and was recognized by the University with their Silver Chalk Award for her contributions to teaching (1995).

Throughout her time at the university Nola was active in civic duties and was elected LWV president in 1939. She was recognized by the League in 1995 for outstanding citizenship and achievement during the 75th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.

Gertrude McIver Mathews Marshall Marble  
(“Gertrude of the 3 M’s”)  
President, 1962-1965  
League of Women Voters of Columbia

As she found empowerment, she empowered others.

A lifelong member of the League of Women Voters where Gertrude found her power as a woman, she was motivated to empower other women. She founded Mother Singers to encourage women to find outlets for their talents outside the home.

Gertrude became an activist serving on many city commissions and social service boards, including the Board of the Human Development Corporation, City Services Commission and the Community Development Commission. Her dedication led to her establishing a model housing project, and cofounding of the Voluntary Action Committee and the Wardrobe.

As a champion for peace, Gertrude was a founding member of the Columbia Friends Meeting when it was formed in 1967. She hosted the first Alternative to Violence Program in Columbia and was instrumental in establishing the Peace Studies Program at MU.
Members of the State Legislature recognized her knowledge and persistence that made her a most effective advocate for issues of concern to the League of Women Voters.

Carolyn helped voters become informed and organized LWV candidate forums and prepared the voter guides. As a League Observer who recorded what happened at city and county meetings, she spent hours looking into city issues to help voters understand their city government. She was an advocate of LWV positions on issues that were addressed in the Missouri State Legislature and recognized for her in depth research of all aspects of a bill.

She was secretary of the Missouri Association of Consumers (in the 1970s), consumer member of the Missouri Governor’s Energy Council, and consumer activist on Farm-City Committees. She chaired the mental health association in Boone County and was a member of the Community Housing Resource Board.

Liz Schmidt (1929-2016)
President, 1989-1991
League of Women Voters of Columbia-Boone County

She knew everyone and who was connected to who and worked to bring people with different perspectives together.

Liz was a quiet woman who operated without grand display. She devoted hours to the League of Women Voters as president, board member, and as observer attending meetings of Columbia City Council to ensure she understood the workings of the town and motivations of its populace. The first woman on the Columbia City Planning and Zoning Commission (appointed in 1971), Liz served as chair of the Columbia Board of Adjustments and was a member of the Columbia Environment and Natural Resources Commission.

A champion for open housing, activist for Boone County Home rule, and champion for the equal rights amendment, Liz stood each Saturday at the Columbia Post Office in the name of peace. An active member of countless organizations, Liz knew that she alone couldn't end war, or abolish the death penalty, or bring calm to the larger world, but she did everything she could to spread messages of love and acceptance.
Eva Jo Sapp (1944-2012)
LWVCBC President, 2006-2008

A mild mannered but determined activist who got things done!

President of the local League chapter and president of the state League, Jo was an advocate for voting rights and opponent of voter ID laws. A member of the Missouri Sunshine Coalition, she challenged the process of government to make it responsive to its citizens.

Jo served on Columbia’s Comprehensive Plan Task Force, was president of the Daniel Boone Regional Library Board of Trustees during reconstruction of the main library in Columbia. A member of the Missouri Humanities Council, Jo chaired the Columbia Commission on the Arts, was a founding member of the Smart Growth Coalition, and also helped establish the Columbia Access Television and advocated city support and staff for that operation as well.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MISSOURI
State Awards to Columbia-Boone County Members

Lenore Loeb Sterling Achievement Award
2001 LWV Columbia-Boone County
2005 Win Colwill

Harriett Woods Award for Exemplary Community Service
1999 Liz Schmidt
2009 Win Colwill

Rachel Farr Fitch Health Care Award
2010 Lael Von Holt

The Records of the League of Women Voters of Columbia-Boone County

The majority of the LWVCBC papers can be found at the State Historical Society, now in its new location in the Center for Missouri Studies, 605 Elm Street in Columbia. These include Minutes, newsletters, news clippings, correspondence, etc. related to the LWVCBC. The materials can be viewed there but cannot be removed.

With gratitude to those papers being available at the SHS and especially thanks to earlier historical reports by past presidents Carolyn Leuthold and Liz Schmidt which were used to prepare the historical article of the LWVCBC.
November 16, 1912 - Establishment of the Columbia Equal Suffrage Association

June 14, 1916 - The Golden Lane - Major Suffrage Demonstration at the Democratic Convention in St. Louis

April 5, 1919 - Missouri Presidential Suffrage Bill signed by Governor Gardner, allowing women in Missouri to vote in the presidential election

June 1919 - U.S. Senate finally passed the 19th Amendment and ratification process began.

July 3, 1919 - Missouri was the 11th state to ratify the 19th Amendment; signed by Governor Gardner

October 16-18, 1919 - Establishment of the League of Women Voters of Missouri

December 11, 1919 - Establishment of the League of Women Voters of Columbia, MO

February 14, 1920 - Establishment of the national League of Women Voters

August 18, 1920 - 19th Amendment final state ratification - Tennessee

1922 - Luella St. Clair Moss was elected to the Columbia School Board and was a candidate for U.S. House

April 19, 1967 - The LWV of Columbia changed its name to the LWV of Columbia-Boone County

1972 - The U.S. Congress passed the E.R.A. The League campaigned for state ratification from 1972-1984, until the deadline for ratification ended. As of 2019, it has not yet been ratified by the state of Missouri.

1974 - LWVUS voted to admit men as full members of the League.

2016 - LWVUS voted to lower the age of eligible members to 16.

Photo of a celebration in the 1990's - front row to back row, l to r: Lorene Emmerson, Betty Cook Rottman, Liz Schmidt, Kathryn Allen, P. Susan Daniel, Carol Blount, Carolyn Leuthold, Patsy Danner, Joanne Whitley, Linda Brown, Joan Mudrick, Mary Harbourt, Midge Pinkerton, Cy Harbourt

Thanks to the 100th Anniversary Planning Committee

This committee has planned a year-long (August 2019-August 2020) celebration of the Centennial of the 19th Amendment and the League of Women Voters with activities that include a special historic display at the Boone County History & Culture Center; a march in a downtown parade with banners and in costume; educational programs on related subjects; film programs; an “Equali-Tea”; and much more.

Members of the committee include: Pam Springsteel (chair), Kathryn Allen, Linda Lou Brown, Kate Canterbury, Win Colwill, Meredith Donaldson, Brianna Lennon, David Leuthold, Marilyn McLeod, Teri Miller, Joni O’Connor, David Sapp, Janet Thompson, Vicky Riback Wilson and Lael Von Holt.