

Photo by Vincent Hsiao



Ladue residents should educate themselves on elected officials and measures that impact the local community

23 OUT OF 23 LADUE PUBLICATIONS EDITORS AGREE

Whether someone's political information comes from news, social media or word of mouth, most of it likely pertains to one topic: the presidential election. With how close the race is and the strong sentiments from both sides, it's logical for the presidential race to generate some attention. What isn't logical, however, are the limited opinions regarding local elections and measures that directly affect our respective lives.


The president's job is to preside over the United States, not local communities. To the next president, a Ladue student is just one of the 17.3 million high school students listed in the 2021 Census. To the next president, St. Louis County is just one of over 3,000 nationwide counties. To the next president, Missouri is just one of 50 states.

Locally, Missouri has key state and national congress races that will be decided at the Nov. 5 general election. In addition, other significant elections and measures, including the governor's race along with Propositions 2 and 3, are also to be decided Nov. 5. Unlike the presidential race, these determine how Missouri is represented, along with the state of local education, infrastructure and economics.

One of the most prominent issues in local elections is the lack of people exercising their right to vote. According to Pew Research Center, 66% of eligible voters voted in the 2020 general election, compared to 46% turnout in the 2022 midterm elections.

This 20% decrease when the presidency isn't on the ballot reflects a lack of care for local elections. When people opt to save a little time instead of voting locally, they sacrifice their right and ability to directly impact their local community.

Then, there is uninformed voting in local elections. Often, people neglect doing their own research and instead vote along the party line. There is no issue using political allegiances to guide one's vote as a candidate's party often signifies what they stand for, helping voters distinguish between candidates. However, going all blue or all red without batting an eye is very problematic. Not all Democrats are alike, nor are all Republicans. Every candidate has specific opinions, experiences and qualities that define them. Reducing what the candidates stand for simply to a party isn't a recipe for the most qualified candidates elected.

These problems have one simple solution: a communal commitment to being educated. While educating oneself on local elections may seem difficult, it really isn't too demanding. Local news, social media and conversing with knowledgeable community members are all effective and painless methods to educate oneself. Additionally, ballotpedia.org offers nonpartisan descriptions of candidates and measures in local elections, which is a good way to immerse oneself in community-oriented issues. Prioritizing this research ensures participation in local elections, which is key due to these elections' significant impact on our communities. 

Editorial Note: Each editorial, Panorama selects an issue that the staff thinks is important to address and expresses a view that belongs to the majority of the staff. Panorama welcomes the opinions of its readers and encourages letters to the editors. Panorama reserves the right to revise submissions for length as long as original intent remains unaltered.

SOMETHING TO ADD?
Scan here for more on letters to the editor, guest essays, submitting corrections and the full editorial policy

