



Voter

League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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SPRING IS HERE!



April Calendar

April 2, 2015 Board Meeting

Location: Debbie Blake’s Home

April 18, 2015 61st Annual Meeting

Speaker: Bees and Pollinators

Location: McCoy’s Restaurant

April 18, 2015 CMAL Quarterly Meeting

Location: Crystal City Hall

April 23, 2015 Empty Bowls

Westwood Lutheran Church

April 29, 2014 Career Day at SLP High School

May Calendar

May 7, 2015 Board Meeting 7 pm

Location: Aggie Leitheiser’s Home

May 13, 2015 Unit 2 meeting 1:00 PM

Location: Tower Light Apartments

TOPIC: SLP Post Office Service and Issues

May 14, 2015 Unit 3 meeting 7:00 PM

Location: City Hall Westwood Room

TOPIC: SLP Post Office Service and Issues

May 27, 2015 Scholarship Day at SLP High School 7 pm

May 17, 2015 Ice Cream Social

2:00 to 5:00 pm

Children First - Wolfe Park

President's Message April 2015

It's that time of year; I see water instead of ice, I see grass instead of snow, and I received an invoice for our annual dues. Thank you, Judy. Please remember donations and dues above \$31.00 are tax deductible. This is just one more opportunity to make a tax deductible contribution to our scholarship fund or to cover other program costs. Thank you, as always, for your generosity in funds, time, effort, collaboration, friendship and leadership.

The West Metro meeting on Mental Health was held at St. Louis Park City Hall and was taped by Reg. If you did not attend the meeting, I encourage you to watch the recording.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjBFjfttlzs&feature=youtu.be> It certainly made me aware of how we unintentionally treat people who are struggling. The CMAL meeting on housing was enlightening. It was reassuring to see how several cities have adapted housing needs to the needs and to learn how housing needs have changed over the years.

Our Flight Behavior book review, led by Dorothy, was excellent. I appreciate hearing so many positive comments. I also attended the City Council meeting with Dorothy where the Bee Proclamation was presented. There is definitely a lot of support for this vital resource. We also met Nora Wildgen, who will be our speaker at the Annual Meeting. I'm looking forward to seeing you there! Feel free to bring a friend.

It is with a heavy heart that we remember the life of Louise Ross, who was a member of League for several years. She had a spirit that inspired everyone she connected with, was the center of her family and active in our community. Please keep The Ross family in your thoughts and prayers.

Deb Brinkman, President

Highlights from the March 2015 LWV SLP Board Meeting:

- Retrospective review of the Storm Water Meeting and the West Metro meeting on Mental Illness.
- Form updates requested for the scholarship evaluation
- Confirmed plans for the Unit meetings and the Flight Behavior Book Review
- Discussed additional plans for the Annual Meeting.
- Barbara Aslakson will schedule a date and time for a Tea to recognize Eleanor Sach's Lifetime member celebration.
- Kids Voting plans are continuing to take shape. We'll start discussing the budget and financing.
- The Children's First Breakfast of Champions was attended by Aggie, Deb and Debbie Blake.
- Empty Bowls is April 23. The volunteer sign up is online.

Upcoming Events

League of Women Voters St. Louis Park
Invites you to our 61st Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 18, 2015
McCoy's Public House

Speaker: Nora Wildgen
Humming For Bees



Business Meeting & Coffee – 10:00
Speaker - 11:15
Lunch - 12:00

Please complete the enclosed form
with your lunch choice and check
by April 5

LWV SLP 2015 61st Annual Meeting

- Saturday, April 18, 2015
McCoy's Public House 3801 Grand Way, St. Louis Park
- Business Meeting with Refreshments 10 am
 - Presentation by Nora Wildgen, Humming For Bees 11:15 am
 - Lunch and Beverage 12 noon

St. Louis Park City Council Adopts Bee-Safe Resolution on March 16, 2015

The SLP City Council unanimously passed the following resolution which describes the City's commitment to using bee-safe pesticide management in area parks. Several LWV members were in attendance in support of the resolution. Member Dorothy Karlson showed her support through her bee-friendly attire:



Resolution Endorsing “Bee-Safe” Policies and Procedures

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators are integral to a wide diversity of essential foods including fruit, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS bees and other pollinators are threatened due to habitat loss and pesticide use; and native bees and honey bees are also threatened due to pathogens and parasites; and

WHEREAS pollinators need to eat throughout the growing season, early spring through fall; and

WHEREAS, recent research suggests that there is a link between pesticides that contain neonicotinoids and the die-off of plant pollinators, including honeybees, native bees, butterflies, moths, and other insects; and

WHEREAS, neonicotinoids are synthetic chemical insecticides that are similar in structure and action to nicotine, a naturally occurring plant compound; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis Park is committed to Hennepin County's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program, which considers the use of pesticides as a last resort, while the

potential for the use of biological controls such as parasitoids and microbes could be a safer option; and

WHEREAS, the Precautionary Principle states that in environmental matters, the theory that if the effects of a product or action are unknown, then the product should not be used and the

action should not be taken.

WHEREAS, although Americans' annual expenditures on lawn and garden products ranks third highest in how we spend our money, most Americans lack knowledge of the toxic consequences of their purchases; and

WHEREAS, citizens need current, science-based information regarding environmentally sound garden and pest practices so that they can make informed decisions, and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it is in the public interest and consistent with the City's Vision of Environmental Stewardship for the City to demonstrate its commitment to a safe and healthy community environment through the implementation of best management practices in the maintenance of the city parks, open spaces and city property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of St. Louis Park, Minnesota, that:

1. The City shall undertake its best efforts to become a Bee-Safe City based upon the Precautionary Principle.
2. The City shall adhere to Hennepin County's Integrated P

Understanding Mental Illness And Breaking Down Barriers

Saturday March 7, 2015

Presentation by Sue Abderholden, Executive Director, NAMI Minnesota

The presentation began with an overview of the mental health system and the goals set by President Kennedy to build a community mental health system. 9,000 people were in institutions in 1963 but only 1500 were in institutions in 1978. Not a bad thing that institutions closed but there was not a concerted effort to have a new system to take its place.

The new system wasn't in place because of discrimination in payment, lack of understanding of the impact of symptoms, few community supports, provider shortages and stigma. How we talk about mental illnesses is different from other types of illnesses. We should all rethink using the slang words to describe mental illnesses and encourage others to do so as well. Media portrayals of mental illnesses are usually negative.

As a result, people with mental illnesses frequently don't receive treatment, don't get support when in the hospital or otherwise affected, have trouble with employment, housing, family support and die an average of 20 years earlier than their peers.

Progress has been made with support from the legislature to develop crisis teams, school programs, treatment, rate increases for MH providers. In 2015 there are initiatives to build on what is in place, ensure statewide access, and ensure viability in prevention, treatment, recovery, workforce and other – such as suicide prevention.

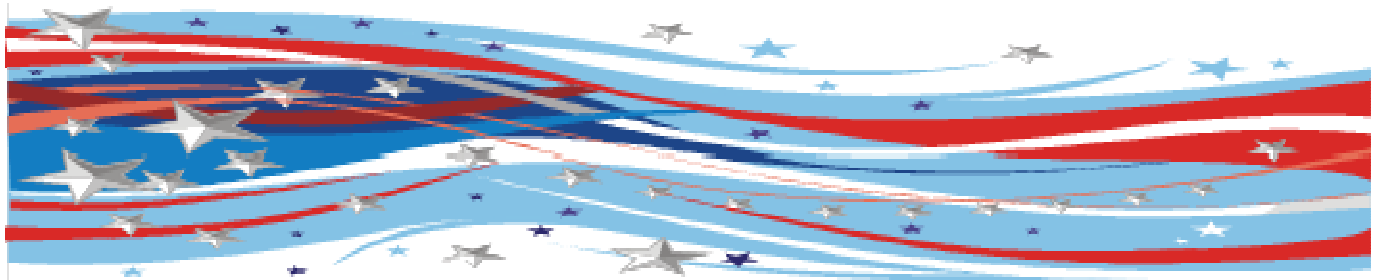
•Mary Regan MSW, LICSW, Executive Director, Minnesota Council of Child Caring Agencies

This presentation was about children's mental health. Mentally healthy children have a positive quality of life and can function well at home, in school, and in their communities. 1 in 5 children have some form of mental illness. She described the impact of depression and anxiety on children. Some symptoms may be part of developmental stages (separation anxiety for 3 to 18 month olds). You should seek help when symptoms last for more than two weeks and interfere with regular activities and relationships. When seeking a provider ask questions about licensure, experience, outcomes, expected length of treatment, how the family will be involved, who to contact with questions and the cost and insurance coverage.

Click here for meeting video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjBFjfttlzs&feature=youtu.be>

St. Louis Park Children's First Assets #25 Reading for Pleasure

Did you know 26% of St. Louis Park young people read for pleasure at least three hours a week? As a family, participate in the community-reading project, Bookmark in the Park, and read the selected book together. Help young people find books about an area that interests them. Read a book based on a movie, see the movie together and talk about how the two are similar and different.



From LWVUS

Looking Back, Moving Forward: Former LWVUS Presidents Reflect on 95 Years of Making Democracy Work

By: Stephanie Drahan 03/27/2015

Ninety-six years ago this week, [Carrie Chapman Catt](#) speaking at the National American Woman Suffrage Association 50th anniversary Convention proposed the formation of a "league of women voters" to "finish the fight" for women's quality and to promote civic engagement and interest in political issues over partisan politics. Within a year, Catt's vision would be realized with the founding of the League of Women Voters on February 14, 1920 and later that year women would finally win the right to vote after decades of advocacy by Catt and her compatriots.

As we look to the next 95 years and beyond, the League of Women Voters continues fighting to keep the power of our democracy in the hands of the people. As a powerful national network that includes 800 state and local chapters across the country, [the League empowers people every day](#) to tackle the most important issues facing our communities and to improve local, state and federal government.

In the 95 years since Catt set forth the ideals that guide the League today, 17 national presidents, have steadfastly worked to realize our mission of Making Democracy Work®. To mark Women's History

Month and to reflect on the League's history, we recently spoke with some of our former presidents to hear about their best memories as well as their vision for the future of our organization.

It was the League's commitment to impartiality and a balanced approach to the issues that caught the attention of former president Dorothy Ridings (1982-1986) while she worked as a journalist in North Carolina: "I learned that the League was a marvelous source to understand the differing positions on many political issues, thoroughly and without bias... [The League's work] is gold to the American public today because of that long reputation for fairness and accuracy."

Yet when the League advocates on a policy issue, our tenacity, determination and hard work are readily apparent. Former president Nancy Neuman (1986-1990) recounts when an early version of the [National Voter Registration Act](#) (NVRA) passed through the House of Representatives in 1990: "[We] lobbied for the bill and, despite harsh opposition, it passed. Rep. Al Swift (D-WA), chief sponsor of the bill, wrote me that 'Without the League we wouldn't have had a bill or our overwhelming victory... Stalwart is the word for the League.' Majority Whip Bill Gray (D-PA) sent this message: 'No organization in America has done more to bring the process of democracy to its citizens than the League. Your personal leadership on this bill is a testament to the League's effort to make our system more accessible to the voters.'"

Over twenty years after the passage of the NVRA, [the League remains committed to protecting this vital law](#) that streamlined the federal voter registration process, enabling the voter registration work of organizations like the League. We've also looked for [new ways to implement the law](#) in order to help more Americans register to vote when interacting with federal agencies like the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Throughout the last century, our national presidents have led us through a number of [notable accomplishments](#). And while, we've helped protect voting rights, made elections more accessible, cleaned up campaign finance regulations, worked to protect the planet and [so much more](#), the need for the League and our work remains. [Test your knowledge on some of the League's key accomplishments!](#)

Through our unwavering commitment to our country and government, the League is building on our legacy: "There is much work still to be done if all citizens are to have access to and engage in the electoral process...the League's work is, in fact, the work of each person who cares about social justice. The League's work is the work that keeps our democracy strong. The grassroots efforts that are the foundation of the League allow people to participate in issues that affect them on a daily basis," said Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins (1998-2002) whose tenure spanned the passage of the Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act and lobbying for the Help America Vote Act. Added former president Kay Maxwell (2002-2006): "The League continues to be the premier citizen organization dedicated to informing voters and a significant voice on issues that matter to us all. Especially in this era of partisanship and gridlock, the League stands as a beacon for reasoned, nonpartisan debate!"

When Catt called for a 'league of women voters,' she asked: "What could be more patriotic than that these women should use their new freedom to make their nation safer for their children and their children's children?...Let us then raise up a league of women voters – the name and form of organization to be determined by the voters themselves; a league that shall be non-partisan and nonsectarian in character..." For 95 years the League has sought to fulfill Catt's goal, and today we march into 2020 and beyond with new means to empower and mobilize voters that activists like Catt could not have imagined in 1919.

From LWVMN

I Have a Name: The Struggle of Undocumented Immigrants from Mexico & Central America

"I Have a Name" seeks to give immigrants from Mexico and Central America a face, a name and a chance to share their own story. Through Robert Adler's writing and Tom Feher's photography, this traveling exhibition shares near life-sized photographs of over 30 undocumented immigrants, accompanied by each person's unique story.

TOWN HALL FORUM & RECEPTION April 13, 2015

RSVP Reception with cash bar from 6-7:00pm. Music by Calliope. Program begins 7:00pm

Panel Discussion: Immigration Reform - A Minnesota Issue

Moderated by Stacy Doepner-Hove, LWV Minnesota President

John Keller, Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota

Emilia Gonzalez Avalos, Navigate MN

Andi Egbert, MN State Demographic Center

Non-Toxic Cleaning Recipes



Have you ever made your own cleaning products? I have done so for a long time because of my allergies. Here is a site where you can get some recipes to use around your home. They were created by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Website URL: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11368>

Barbara Aslakson

Observer Reports

St. Louis Park City Council – March 16, 2015. Deb Brinkman, Reporter

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm. Jake Spano led the Pledge of Allegiance. All were in attendance except Mayor Jeff Jacobs. Nancy Stroth was recognized for her years of service as City Clerk of St. Louis Park. Jake Spano presented her with a plaque. Several Council members mentioned how easy it was to work with Nancy. Nancy followed up by addressing the council with her appreciation.

The Study Session Minutes from February 23 were approved with one change. The Agenda and Consent Calendar were approved.

There was one student appointed to a Commission. Council Members encouraged more students to check out volunteer opportunities. There were no Public Hearings. There were no Requests, Petitions or Communications from the Public.

2015 Connect the Park Resolutions

Amend Project No. 4015-2000, Segment A-E, deleting 3A, 3B, 3C, and 3D sidewalks due to constituent requests. Council Member Tim Brausen commented that it is already a safe-walkable neighborhood. All approved the amendment except Mavity, who opposed.

Amend Project 4015-2000 Segment F-I reducing the sidewalk to 5 foot instead six foot and reduce the boulevard to 5 foot instead of 6 foot. This will give a little more distance between the sidewalk and the homes. All approved the amendment.

Resolution for Project 4015-2000 Segment J-R. Approved unanimously.

Municipal State Aid Project plans were approved unanimously. It will add bike lanes or widen shoulders and restrict parking on some roads for bike traffic.

Parking restrictions on Ottawa were approved unanimously. Council members noted that with the Highway 100 work and bridge work that is scheduled, traffic will be routed down Ottawa. Ottawa is only 28' feet wide and it is difficult to pass another car.

Excavation at 4106 Forest Lane approved unanimously. The owner will build a new house on the lot. Plans have been reviewed with neighbors.

Bee-Safe Community Resolution presented by Jim Vaughan passed unanimously. Eight parks will be bee friendly – no chemicals. Several community members spoke on behalf of the Bee Safe Resolution including Beekeeper Joe, Nora Wildgren of Humming for Bees and Melissa who lives on Raleigh but farms a plot in Minnetrista. There were several audience members dressed in 'bee attire' to help support this important resolution.

Communications included reminders about the date change for the Minnetonka Boulevard exit and a notice the Police are holding neighborhood meetings. Council members encourage residents to get to know the police staff before a crisis.

St Louis Park School Board – March 23, 2015. Shelley Colvin, Reporter

Called to order by Chair, Julie Sweitzer, at 7:00PM
No one spoke at the Open Forum.

The meeting began with a Spotlight on a Teacher, LeeAnn Stephens. LeeAnn Stephens serves as the HAP (High Achievement Program) supporter for Latino and Black Students in AP, IB, and Honors classes. She was Minnesota Teacher of the Year in 2006. She is a very dynamic and charismatic educator. Besides her duties at St. Louis Park High School, she is involved in many national organizations, promoting excellence in education.

Superintendent Metz presented the Minnetonka Blvd/High Way 100 closing and its effects on bus routes. He wanted parents to be aware of new pick up and drop off times. He is encouraging parents to call the schools directly, which is different from the usual directive of calling the bus company directly. This is so that the bus company does not become overwhelmed and that parents can receive quick answers to their questions. His other topic was an update on the hiring of a new high school principal. The hope is to bring a recommendation to the Board at the May meeting.

Some other topics discussed:

- All three swimming pools are going to be renovated. Two configurations of financing were presented with a plan that would add \$2.00 to a household with a home worth \$250,000. There had been numerous complaints and though the pools are compliant with any regulations, there is an air flow issue. The pools are heavily used by the schools, the community, and other groups.
- St. Louis Park Schools is the recipient of a grant that finances equity coaches to close the achievement gap. It also provides Plato, which is an online credit recovery program. This money also allows the opportunity to try new things, grounded in research.
- St. Louis Park is in a group of 100 schools nationally that has been chosen by a Perdue University study. It is a gifted and talented model, particularly effective at the Elementary level.
- The Echo, a student written newspaper, both online and printed, has received a gold award from the Columbia Scholastic Press. This is a high honor.

New Strategic Planning for St. Louis Park School System

A new 5 year plan is being put together for the school system. The prior plan was very successful. Basically, the goals were met. There is some excitement about crafting a new plan that would be accountable to the community.

St. Louis Park residents were invited to gather in what was called the *Strategic Plan World Café Community Conversation*. This involved an interesting style of brainstorming. One Hundred fifty community members gathered on February 24, 2015 during 3 different sessions, 7:30-9:30, 4:00-6:00, 7:00-9:00. A "host" would stay at a table while other participants randomly moved from table to table. This exercise would start anew with each question. The comments would accumulate with each new group. All the comment sheets were then collected for use by the Core Strategic Committee. An invitation was issued to apply to serve on this committee.
Link to Flyer- (with questions that were put to participants)

<http://slpschools.schoolwires.net/cms/lib8/MN01909695/Centricity/Domain/464/worldcafe/flyer.pdf>
Shelley Colvin and Deb Brinkman took part in the exercise.

New information- The Core Team has been formed:

Members of the Core Planning Team are:

School Board: Karen Waters, Bruce Richardson

District Administrators: Kari Ross, Lisa Greene, Tami Reynolds

Principals: Les Bork, Corey Maslowski, Freida Bailey

Teachers: Kara Mueller, Derek Wennerberg, Renee Robinson, Kay Carlson

Paraprofessionals and Other Staff: Danya Castro, Chris Weaver, Tarabi Jama, Julie Wells, Aria Jones

Parents and Community Members: Najwa Bukhari, Anne Casey, Christa Getchell, Carrie Jennissen, Greg Lindberg, Bob Ramsey, Luis Versalles, Ann Walsh

Student: Cailey Hanson-Mahoney

This observer’s report is being submitted by Shelley Colvin

LWV SLP Calendar 2015

May	Celebrate St. Louis Park Kids May 19, 1919 Women’s Right to Vote	19th Amendment
May 7, 2015 7 pm	Board Meeting Location: Aggie’s Home	Aggie Leitheiser
May 13, 2015 1 pm	Unit 2 Meeting Topic: Post Office Location: Tower Light	Barbara Aslakson Debbie Blake Deb Brinkman
May 14, 2015 7 pm	Unit 3 Meeting Topic: Post Office Location: SLP City Hall	Deb Brinkman
May 23, 2015	Ice Cream Social – Children First Wolfe Park	Deb
May 27, 2015	Scholarship Program SLP High School	Deb
June	Parktacular June 10, 1963 Equal Pay for Women June 23, 1972 Equality in education and sports	Fair Labor Standards Act Title IX
June 4, 2015	Board Meeting Location:	
June 13 -14	LWV Minnesota Convention Location: Duluth	LWV Minnesota
June 2015	Parktacular	
July	July 1, 1971 – age to vote from 21 to 18 July 2, 1964 – Equal Rights Amendment	26th Amendment Title VII Employment Equality
July 9, 2015	Board Meeting Location:	
August	Getting Ready	
August 6, 2015 6 pm	Planning Meeting Location: Deb’s Home	Deb Brinkman
August, 2015	Concert – Salute to Bob Dylan	Judy Cook



LWV SLP OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2014-15

OFFICERS:

President: Deb Brinkman
 Vice President: Barb Person
 Secretary: Barbara Aslakson
 Treasurer: Judy Cook
 Observer: Dorothy Karlson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Voter Service: Eilseen Knisley
 Public Relations: Judy Cook
 Membership: Barb Person
 CMAL: Debbie Blake
 Voter Editor: Aggie Leitheiser

**YES! I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE
 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ST. LOUIS PARK**

Name (Family Member #1): _____

Name (Family Member #2): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Membership Dues

(a portion of dues are now tax deductible):

- Single Active Attending Member \$55.00
- Supporting/Member-at-Large \$60.00
- Family Membership \$70.00
 (2 or more in single household)

**Make checks payable to LWV SLP
 and send check & this form to:**

Barb Person, Membership Chair
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