



Voter

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Calendar Highlights

February – Black History Month

- February 1 – 96th Anniversary of LWVMN
- February 18 – Unit 3 Meeting
- February 24 – Unit 2 Meeting

March

- March 3 – Board Meeting
- March 10 – Unit 3 Meeting Book Review
- March 23 – Unit 2 Meeting



Beth Johnson

LWV President Deb Brinkman with Cheryl Youakim and Peggy Flanagan



Dorothy Karlson and Elaine Savick

LWV Mission Statement

LWV, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. www.lwvslp.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE JANUARY 2016

Let it snow. Let it snow. Let it snow! The days are getting longer and it is much brighter outside.

Thank you's to Dorothy Karlson, Barb Person, Judy Cook, Elaine Savick, Eilseen Knisely, Shelley Colvin, Heidi Stulberg, and her daughter Della, for the Gift Wrapping Fund Raiser at Barnes and Nobel. Customers were very generous and it will really help our scholarship fund. In the past I was able to use a 'Dollars for Doers' donation to help our scholarship fund. If your employer participates in the Giving Program, please consider a donation to the League of Women Voters.

More thank you's to Eilseen, for coordinating our Legislative Interview luncheon on Saturday, and to all of our Board Members for contributing the chili lunch. A special thank you to Carlota for bringing her brownies. Traditionally our luncheon falls on the coldest day of the year, so I can't help being grateful we didn't schedule it for last weekend! It is always great to hear from our legislative team. We'll look forward to hearing more as the Session progresses. Stay tuned for updates.

I attended an event hosted by Think Again Brooklyns and the LWV Brooklyn Park. Steve Simon spoke and noted that he will continue to work to eliminate barriers to voting. He is looking into Early Voting, Pre-registration for 16 and 17 year olds, and changing the law that says we can only help 3 people vote.

The new state website is up. I encourage you to subscribe to help stay up to date. Go to <https://www.lwvmn.org>, click 'Media', 'Subscribe', and then complete the form.

Looking ahead, February is Black History month. Unit 3 is planning to watch a Selma documentary followed by discussion. Date: Thursday evening, February 18 at 7 pm. We will be meeting at City Hall.

I would also like to acknowledge the 96th anniversary of the League of Women Voters Minnesota. There are so many powerful women who worked hard so we can have the right to vote. My great grandmother was a key influence in Minnesota. I don't know if she was a member of The League of Women Voters, but I have been reminded many times of the important role she played.

I'm looking forward to seeing you soon.

Cheers,

Highlights from the December 2015 LWV SLP Board Meeting:

- *Unit 2 had a speaker from Fair Vote, MN to discuss Ranked Choice Voting. They would like St. Louis Park to consider Ranked Choice Voting.
- *Unit 3 discussed National and Local Positions for the Lively Issues discussion. There were no changes recommended.
- *We will be hosting the next CMAL meeting.
- *Unit 3 answered Money In Politics Consensus Questions.
- * We also decided to support the national bylaws amendment allowing inclusive membership, but will not actively participate with lobbying activities.
- * We finalized plans for the legislative interviews meeting in January.

WOMEN IN HISTORY



Marie M. Daly

Teacher of Biochemistry and First African-American woman to receive a Ph.D. in chemistry in the United States.

“[Her research team helped to disclose] the relationship between high cholesterol and clogged arteries. That work opened up a new understanding of how foods and diet can affect the health of the heart and the circulatory system.

Read more at [Biography.com](http://www.biography.com)

<http://www.biography.com/people/marie-m-daly-604034>

From the LWV US...

LWVUS goals for 2016 are simple:

- Grow the vote – by registering a quarter of a million voters, educating them about voting procedures, and preparing them to arrive at the polls with everything they need to cast their ballots
- Protect the vote – by working with local elections officials, organizing poll watching programs, and continuing to fight against voter suppression efforts at the state and local level
- Empower the vote – by providing six million voters with election information, through our nonpartisan voters’ guides and other printed materials, our candidate forums and debates, and through our online tools—especially VOTE411.org

These goals are inextricably linked. We can register new voters, but unless we empower them with information and ask them to vote, we’re going to have trouble getting them to the polls on Election Day. And if we get them to the polls on Election Day, and they have a bad experience—because their polling place has moved or their identity is questioned or the machines are broken so they have to vote provisionally, we’re going to have a harder time getting that voter to come back next time.

ST. LOUIS PARK CHILDREN FIRST ASSETS

Positive Values

#31 Restraint

Did you know 53% of St. Louis Park young people believe it is important not to be sexually active or use alcohol or other drugs? Practice with your teen how to address situations that require restraint. What should they do? Come up with a phrase that they can use when calling you which is a code to come get out of a situation that makes them uncomfortable.

Asset Champion training is *free* and available to all St. Louis Park residents.

Visit the Children First website under “[Asset Champion Training](#)” _

(<http://www.children-first.org/asset-network/>) to sign up. It is a great organization. These 40 assets have been defined for teenagers – but could really apply to all adults in the St. Louis Park Community.

Continued from December Newsletter:

4 More Things Every Voter Should Know About Money-in-Politics

-Opensecrets.org

Interests behind the \$\$ are predictable [How does one beat big interest group monies?]

There are hundreds of interest groups

There are literally hundreds of different special interest groups seeking to promote their agendas by way of the wallet -- from Big Oil to Big Labor, pharmaceutical companies to cable TV operators, and a full spectrum of ideological groups from the Sierra Club to the National Rifle Association. The money they deliver to politicians, year after year, is what pays the biggest part of the bill for American elections.

Donors seek a long term relationship [Once elected can focus be on the job to be done or does it take lots of time to look towards being reelected?]

While it's sometimes possible to see last-minute contributions before a big vote in Congress, that's not usually the way it works. The biggest supporters of incumbent members tend to be long-term donors giving not once, but every election year.

Partly that's because the politicians never stop asking for money. But it's also because strategic donors -- PACs, lobbyists and interest groups -- want friendly access to lawmakers on a host of issues that may emerge many times over the course of their careers. Major bills often take years to grind through the legislative process and a one-time donor simply isn't going to get the same attention from a politician as one who keeps giving year after year.

For those repeat donors, giving is a way of life and a cost of doing business. It's how you win friends and influence people in Washington. And it doesn't happen overnight.

The Fund-raising never stops [Help! Who is taking care of business?]

Practically every day that Congress is in session, fundraisers are going on all over Washington -- especially in and around Capitol Hill. Attending campaign affairs, to raise money for their next re-election campaign, is nearly **as vital a part** of the congressional calendar as showing up on the House or Senate floor to vote.

Fundraising for the next election begins as soon as the last election ends.

Fundraisers are happening all over D.C. every day that Congress is in session.

Enforcement of campaign laws is weak [Why doesn't the FEC do anything?]

One of the biggest open secrets in Washington is that the agency that's supposed to oversee and enforce the campaign finance laws -- the Federal Election Commission -- is notoriously ineffective. In fact, it was designed that way.

When Congress created the FEC after the Watergate scandal, it set up an agency whose primary mission was to monitor the behavior of the lawmakers themselves. They certainly knew that, so they took pains to make sure the campaign watchdog would have a very tight leash indeed.

First off, they set up the commission as a six-member body. Because that's an even number, no ruling can go into effect unless it gets at least 4 votes -- which is often impossible because the FEC six members consist of three Democrats and three Republicans, nominated by their respective parties.

Tie votes -- which mean no action can be taken -- are commonplace at the agency on some of the most important issues. Thus the campaign finance system is riddled with loopholes. "Soft money" -- contributions to political parties from otherwise prohibited sources such as corporations, unions and other groups -- was one such loophole that persisted for years until it was finally closed in 2002 by an act of Congress.

Because of this, and because the agency often takes years to resolve complaints, political operatives have learned they can live on the edge of the law with little fear of interference from the FEC.

Show me the paper

The one exception to the FEC's reputation as an ineffective agency is the work it has done to improve disclosure of campaign contributions. From its earliest days, when the public records room was filled with microfiche readers and the clackety-clack of dot matrix printers, the agency has made great strides in making the information filed by candidates available to the public at large -- as well as to groups like the Center for Responsive Politics that uses the data to produce easy-to-understand charts and tables on the web.

Yet even there, Congress has thrown up roadblocks. In this age of computers, the Internet, and instant information, the U.S. Senate has effectively exempted itself from the rule that requires every other federal office to file their campaign finance reports by computer.

Republican senators have regularly used arcane procedural rules to stop proposals to require that senators also file electronically. So unlike everyone else, senators and Senate candidates file their reports on paper -- computer printouts, actually. The FEC then hires an outside contractor to re-type all those printouts back into the computer. The bottom line: during the busy fall campaign season, it typically takes about six weeks for the Senate's contribution data to reach the web where the public can see it. The cost to taxpayers for this re-typing of computer data is around \$100,000 every election year.

OBSERVER REPORT

Observer school board, 1-25-16

Spotlight Award:



High School liaison Officer – Max Peltola. Max also received the honor of St. Louis Park officer of the year. His work was commended for the great support of the school. The High School, the Middle School, and a float for all of the Elementary School have a St. Louis Park liaison officer assigned. A picture from the presentation of the award during the School Board meeting is already on the St. Louis Park Police website:

Open Forum:

Ralph Peterson

Topic- Trains and whistle quiet zones- Does the whistle quiet zone include Dakota and Library Lane? School Board should ask and coordinate with the city around the zone. It is a confusing area with visibility issues. Even though there is an arm that goes down, there are many pedestrians, including students in the area. Mr. Peterson is concerned about safety.

Superintendent's Report

- The Kindergarten information nights just finished. The registration nights will be in March.
- The strategic plan will continue to be tracked.

The MYP – Middle School IB full accreditation awarded.

Just days ago the letter arrived awarding the Middle School full status as an IB Middle School. There was some excited talk about having to replace the sign at the Middle School to reflect the IB status. This was announced by Principal Bork and the IB coordinator at the Middle School. There had been several false starts to completing the certification with the IB World Program, but now the certification is not only finished, but there were 0 comments to improve..

St. Louis Park Schools 125th Anniversary - 2016

Because of the history of the beginnings of the St. Louis Park School system, the 125 year was somewhat arbitrary.

A calendar was passed for the 2015/2016 school year.

Human Resources.

Different contracts with several of the employee groups and unions were settled.

The School Board voted themselves a raise as out of 30 similar Minnesota school districts, only 2 were below St. Louis Park in the amount of the stipend that was paid to the Board Members.

Adjourned

8:20PM

St. Louis Park City Council Meeting December 7, 2015

Deb Brinkman - Observer

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm. All council members were in attendance.

Presentations included recognition of a \$100 donation to the City of St. Louis Park and recognition of 15 new members of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) introduced. These new members allow CERT to start training internally.

The minutes were approved with two changes. The Agenda and Items on the Consent Calendar were approved.

The first public hearing for closing the 16th street access ramps on the west side of Highway 169 was approved unanimously. There were many residents who spoke on behalf of closing the ramps. Four residents wanted to keep it open.

The first reading of the proposed Zero Waste Packaging Ordinance was approved unanimously. There were several residents who spoke in favor of the ordinance. One resident spoke against

There were no comments and no actions for the 2016 Budget, 2016 Preliminary Property Tax Levy and other information.

The first discussion item approved unanimously was a first reading amending the micro-distillery cocktail room licenses and micro-distillery off-sale licenses.

The first reading for development of 4900 Excelsior Unit Development was approved 6-1. Council Member Sue Sanger mentioned we don't need more small apartments.

This was Mayor Jeff Jacobs last City Council Meeting. He commented that he's never used the gavel, also that his retirement celebration was wonderful.

St. Louis Park School Board Meeting December 14, 2015

Shelley Colvin - Observer

SPOTLIGHT 2015 TIES Teachers of the Year

-Penny Dupris; Scott Beglinger

SPOTLIGHT 2015 National Merit Scholars

-Commended Scholars:

Ryan Casey, Margaret Coleman, Jackson Eilers, Zoe Leuthner,
TessMcQuillan, Duncan Raynor, Peregrine Stephens

Semi-Finalists - Daniel Takata, Mario Collacio, Jamie Halper

Each student said a few words that included thanking 3 teachers (one from elementary school, one from junior high or middle school, and one from high school), thanking their family, and speaking briefly about their future plans. Most or of the teachers that the students honored were present. It was a very moving experience and spoke to the excellence of the students and teachers in the St. Louis Park School system.

Open Forum- No one spoke.**Superintendent's Report** - This mainly focused on the Strategic Planning. There was progress in 3 areas: examining instructional practices that recognize cultural diversity; using real time data to make decisions around diversity; and insuring that our community understands our mission and values.**Some of the Other Topics of Interest-**

A brief summary of the 2015 audit was presented. The district received an excellent rating.

There was a request for Travel to Europe In the Spring from a history teacher that was granted.

The PSI enrollment data demonstrated that this school continues to be very popular.

There is work on a Policy for the Development for Memorials & Memorial Activities for Deceased Students and Staff.

St. Louis Park City Council Meeting December 21, 2015

Deb Brinkman - Observer

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm. Mayor Jeff Jacobs was not in attendance.

The Minutes were approved with changes. The Agenda and items on the consent calendar were approved after removing 4a and 4b.

The first resolution approved unanimously was the Final 2016 Budge, HRA Levy and 2016 - 2015 Capital Improvement Program. This represents a 6% increase or \$16.47 per household.

The second reading of the Zero Waste Packaging Ordinance was approved unanimously. A couple of small business expressed their concern.

The 2.5% general increase for non-union employees passed unanimously.

The Labor Agreement between the City and the IAFF Local (International Association of Firefighters) approved with a 2½ % increase. There were several comments about how well the negotiations went.

The Motion for the International Union of Operating Engineers Labor Agreement was adopted with a 2.5 increase in 2016 and 2.75 increase in 2017.

Communications included a Happy Holidays greeting from the City Council. The meeting adjourned.

Time it takes for garbage to decompose in the environment:

Glass Bottle.....	1 million years
Monofilament Fishing Line...	600 years
Plastic Beverage Bottles.....	450 years
Disposable Diapers.....	450 years
Aluminum Can.....	80-200 years
Foamed Plastic Buoy.....	80 years
Foamed Plastic Cups.....	50 years
Rubber-Boot Sole.....	50-80 years
Tin Cans.....	50 years
Leather.....	50 years
Nylon Fabric.....	30-40 years
Plastic Film Container.....	20-30 years
Plastic Bag.....	10-20 years
Cigarette Butt.....	1-5 years
Wool Sock.....	1-5 years
Plywood.....	1-3 years
Waxed Milk Carton.....	3 months
Apple Core.....	2 months
Newspaper.....	6 weeks
Orange or Banana Peel.....	2-5 weeks
Paper Towel.....	2-4 weeks

Information Source:

U.S. National Park Service; Mote Marine Lab, Sarasota, FL.

MINNPOST EARTH JOURNAL EVENT

**LAND OF 10,000 LAKES:
Can We Achieve Water
Sustainability?**

Monday, Feb. 22, 5:30-7:30pm

Dr. Deborah Swackhamer
will discuss issues
threatening regional water
quality and quantity.
Earth Journal writer
Ron Meador will moderate
the Q&A session.




TICKETS ON SALE NOW
\$28 for MinnPost members, \$38 for non-members
includes program, dinner, soft drinks, tax and gratuity

CMAL in City Chambers...

City Planning Balancing Act: Serving Regional and Local Needs.

Hosted by the Council of *Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters*, and moderated by Karen Schaffer. **Recorded by Park TV January 16, 2016**

Presenters: Karl Batalden, Woodbury Housing & Economic Development Coordinator; Donna Drummond, St. Paul Director of Planning; Kersten Elverum, Hopkins Director of Planning; Jason Lindahl, Hopkins City Planner; and Rachel Juba, Hugo Planner

WATCH:

<https://youtu.be/6cTvIn-h0RA>

FROM THE MINNPOST

Remember the **water cycle** from junior high? It doesn't work that way anymore

“Two Swedish scientists argue in a paper published last week in the journal Science, then current estimates underestimate human freshwater consumption by a factor of five – and actual use may already exceed a widely accepted upper limit of sustainability.”

READ MORE...

<https://www.minnpost.com/earth-journal/2015/12/remember-water-cycle-junior-high-it-doesnt-work-way-anymore>

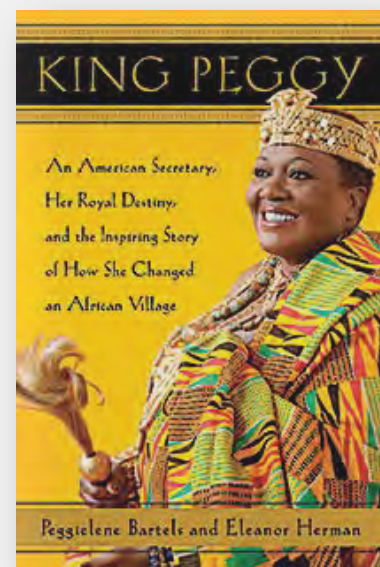


League Book Review

King Peggy

by Peggien Bartels

The true story of a secretary living in Washington D.C. who is named king of a town in Ghana. She confronts dishonesty and subversion along the way while trying to help her home town with issues involving water and education. There are lots of laughs amid the problems along the way.



Available at: <http://www.hclib.org/>

LWV St. Louis Park

Mon 2016-02-01

All day 96th Anniversary of LWVMN

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

All day Black History Month

Video call: Join video call

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

Thu 2016-02-18

7pm LWVSLP Unit 3 Meeting - Selma Documentary

Where:

St Louis Park City Offices, 5005 Minnetonka Boulevard, Saint Louis Park, MN 55416, United States

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

Wed 2016-02-24

2:30pm LWVSLP Unit 2 Meeting - Water

Where:

TowerLight on Wooddale Avenue, 3601 Wooddale Avenue South, Saint Louis Park, MN 55416, United States

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

Tue 2016-03-01

All day Women's History Month

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

Thu 2016-03-03

7pm LWV Board Meeting

Where: Deb Brinkman and Deb Blake

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

Mon 2016-03-07

12:30am West Metro - Transportation

Where: TBD

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

Thu 2016-03-10

7pm LWVSLP Unit 3 Meeting - King Peggy Book Review

Where:

St Louis Park City Offices, 5005 Minnetonka Boulevard, Saint Louis Park, MN 55416, United States

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com

LWV St. Louis Park

Wed 2016-03-23

2:30pm LWVSLP Unit 2 Meeting

Where:

TowerLight on Wooddale Avenue, 3601 Wooddale Avenue South, Saint Louis Park, MN 55416, United States

Calendar: LWV St. Louis Park

Created by: deb.brinkman@gmail.com



LWV SLP OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2014-15

OFFICERS:

President: Deb Brinkman
 Vice President: Barb Person
 Secretary: Shelly Colvin
 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: Heidi Stulberg

**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
 2049 Utah Avenue South
 St. Louis Park, MN 55426
 952/546-3490
barbperson2049@gmail.com



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED