



Voter

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Annual Meeting April 21
Please Register For The LWV SLP Annual
Meeting By April 1.

The Annual Meeting registration form is on page 4. We have a great speaker lined up. For lunch, choose from a Mandarin Chicken Salad or Sand Wedge Sandwich.

We are looking forward to seeing you 9:30 am on Saturday, April 21, at the Minneapolis Golf Club.

Meeting details on page 4



April Calendar

- April 3, 2012 - 7 pm**
LWV SLP Board Meeting
Host: Barb Person
- April 11, 2012 - 12:30 pm**
LWV SLP Unit 2 Meeting
Topic: Gerrymandering
Location: Parkshore Card Room
- April 21, 2012 9:30 am - 1 pm**
58th Annual Meeting
Minneapolis Golf Club

Upcoming Events

- May 1, 2012 - 7 pm**
LWV SLP Board Meeting
Host: Eilseen Knisley
- May 9, 2012 - 12:30 pm**
LWV SLP Unit 2 Meeting
Topic: Recycling / Rain Gardens
Location: Parkshore Card Room
- May 17, 2012 (location change)**
General Meeting
Topic: Recycling / Rain Gardens
Location: St. Louis Park City Hall
- June 16, 2012**
Parktacular
- August 2, 2012**
Planning Meeting
Aggie Leitheiser's home

LWV Minnesota Council 2012

Please join us for LWV Minnesota Council on May 5th at the beautiful Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Learn more about LWV Minnesota, current programs and projects, and enjoy the camaraderie with other LWV members. More information and registration is now available at: <http://www.lwvmn.org/Council2012>

President's Message

Our 58th Annual meeting will be Saturday, April 21st at the Minneapolis Golf Club in St. Louis Park. The Board members and I look forward to seeing you and sharing highlights of our work this past year. As we did last year, we'll ask for your input on program ideas for the 2012-13 program year. We are very excited to welcome Karen Mariska Atkinson from the St. Louis Park's Children First initiative. Karen has been with this project since 1994. Children First is a pioneering community initiative focusing on the healthy development of young people. Karen has consulted with people interested in this community engagement model from communities across the United States and four other continents. Prior to Children First, she was vice president of the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce. Karen has a degree in public relations from the School of Journalism & Mass Communications at San Jose State University.

St. Louis Park is known for its support of children through this program and we're excited to learn first-hand about their activities and goals. Please contact me at 952-938-6255 if you need a ride to the Annual Meeting. Invitations were sent mid-March. Contact me if you did not get an invitation.

The House and Senate both passed the Voter ID bills and are now working on the language in conference committees. Of continuing concern to those of us who support expanded access to voting is the impact on voters who don't meet the yet-to-be-determined definition of government issued ID; the concept of provisional voting which has been shown in other states to slow down voting results, require additional work for election judges and staff, and reduces active voting participation; and the lack of specificity in the language which will need to be addressed by the next legislature.

However, spring is really and truly here. Bunnies are eating the tulips, trees are budding, and the days are longer. Any bets on a late snow storm anyone?

—Aggie Leitheiser, LWV SLP President, 952-938-6255

Highlights from the March LWV St. Louis Park Board meeting:

- We reviewed the Unit voter ID meeting options for action. LWV will put a lot of energy into educating the public. Education continues: Michael Rose is planning a piece on Voter ID for The Patch.
- Plans for the March events and April events were reviewed.
- The Minneapolis Golf Club reservation is all set for the Annual meeting. Everyone is reminded to get their reports in for the Annual Report.
- We have been discussing changing our budget year to align with our program year. This change would result in a change to our Bylaws, which needs to be approved by the State Board.
- The topic for May is "Recycling / Rain Gardens". Barbara Aslakson is arranging the speaker. There was some discussion about topic details: Rain barrels, rain gardens and or composting.
- Candidate selection for our Dollars for Scholars scholarship begins in April.
- Judy has published the new Roster, which includes 3 new members.



Worth Noting

Annual Meeting Speaker Karen Mariska Atkinson Children First Initiative

"Please Pass the Assets"

Karen Mariska Atkinson has been with St. Louis Park's Children First initiative since 1994. Children First is a pioneering community initiative focusing on the healthy development of young people. Karen has consulted with people interested in this community engagement model from communities across the United States and four other continents. Prior to this, she was vice president of the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce. Karen has a degree in public relations from the School of Journalism & Mass Communications at San Jose State University.

Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework

Thursday, April 12 ◊ 9:45-11:30am

Edina Library

5280 Grandview Square

Edina, MN

The Framework is available online.

[http://wrc.umn.edu/watersustainabilityfram
ework/index.html.](http://wrc.umn.edu/watersustainabilityframework/index.html)

Sponsored by LWV Edina

March 22, 1972 – Equal Rights Amendment passed by U.S. Senate and sent to the states for ratification

Recycle your printer cartridges and other technical extras. Bring them to any Unit or Board meeting. We can send them in for money. Proceeds will go to support the Dollars for Scholars Scholarship.

March 29, 1961 – The 23rd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified, allowing residents of Washington, DC, to vote for president

Thank You!

Thanks to Judy Cook, Debbie Blake, Eilseen Knisely, Deb Brinkman, Aggie Leitheiser, and Dorothy Karlson for helping at the donations table at Empty Bowls! It was another hugely successful event!

Voter Registration For High School Seniors

The SLP High School Orchestra is holding a concert in May as a way of giving back to the community and the students were wondering if LWV would want to have a voter registration table at the event.

We are planning a couple of other times to set up a table for voter registration. Contact Eilseen Knisely if you would like to help with voter registration for high school seniors.

LWV St. Louis Park 58th Annual Meeting

LWV SLP 2012 Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 21 - 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Minneapolis Golf Club, 2001 Flag Avenue South, St. Louis Park 55426
(952) 544-4471

The annual meeting is a great time to meet up with LWVSLP members, especially if you haven't had a chance to attend all of our events over the past year. It's also a wonderful opportunity to meet new members. We're very excited to have several new members who have joined recently. If you need a ride to the meeting, call Aggie Leitheiser:

YES! I WILL BE ATTENDING. Enclosed is my check (payable to LWV SLP)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Please, mark your choices:

\$20.00 Mandarin Chicken Salad (Baby greens tossed with sliced strawberries, mandarin oranges and caramelized walnuts. Topped with mandarin marinated chicken breast and served with raspberry/poppy seed dressing)

\$17.00 Sand Wedge Sandwich (Turkey, provolone cheese, lettuce and tomato served on focaccia bread with garlic mayonnaise. Accompanied by house made pasta salad and a fresh fruit garnish)

All entrees accompanied by coffee and tea. Additional beverages (soda, wine or beer) are available at an additional cost.

MAIL CHECK (payable to LWV SLP) & THIS FORM No Later than April 16th TO:

**Barb Person
LWV St. Louis Park Treasurer
2049 Utah Ave. S.
St. Louis Park, MN 55426**

Metro Blast

**An Earth Day Celebration of America's Arctic
Join the League of Women Voters – Bloomington and Alaska Wilderness League
for a great presentation on America's Arctic**

**Tuesday April 10,
7:00 p.m. – doors open 6 p.m.
Minnesota River Valley National Wildlife Refuge
3815 American Blvd. East
Bloomington, MN 55425
A short walk from the 34th Ave. Lightrail Station!
Free and open to the public**

Celebrating 50 years of protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

The Arctic is alive and it is all around us. Every year, birds that begin their lives in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge journey to all 50 states and across six continents, before heading back to the Arctic where the cycle of life begins again. The Refuge's Coastal Plain is a vital habitat for some of the world's most beloved birds as well as caribou, polar bears and more. Come hear about this amazing place and celebrate the natural connection we all have with our amazing Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

This will be a presentation and discussion on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, with short updates on other important special places in Alaska – the Arctic Ocean, and Western Arctic Reserve.

For more information – lois@alaskawild.org

Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework

**Thursday, April 12 ◊ 9:45-11:30am
Edina Library
5280 Grandview Square, Edina, MN**

Speaker:

Dr. Deborah Swackhamer, Professor; Charles M. Denny, Jr., Chair of Science, Technology, and Public Policy-Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs; and Co-Director, Water Resources Center at the University of Minnesota

**Saturday, April 14 ◊ 9:45-11:30am
Edina City Hall
4801 W. 50th St., Edina, MN**

Speaker:

Jean Coleman, Attorney and Land use planner

According to the Water Resource Management website- "In fall of 2008, Minnesotans passed The Clean Water, Land and Legacy Act, an amendment to the state's constitution that created a three-eighths of a percent sales tax to fund, among other things, the protection and preservation of Minnesota's freshwater. The amendment has the potential to raise more than \$275 million a year – of which roughly one third—about \$85 million a year—will go toward protecting and preserving Minnesota's surface and ground water.

Metro Blast, continued

In spring 2009, the legislature took the first step in investing that money, appropriating \$750,000 to the University of Minnesota's Water Resources Center to create a comprehensive, 25-year framework for the sustainable management of Minnesota's water resources. The framework is intended to serve as a roadmap—with clear signposts on how and when to spend the money and on what initiatives—based on scientific research, expert opinion, and input from citizens around the state. "

The Framework is available online <http://wrc.umn.edu/watersustainabilityframework/index.html>.

Sponsored by LWV Edina

**LWV Minnetonka, Eden Prairie, Hopkins
Presents
Our Deteriorating Infrastructure - Innovative Solutions
for Our Times**

**Saturday, April 14, 2012 ◊ 9:30 to 11:00 am
Minnetonka Community Center ◊ City Council Chambers
14600 Minnetonka Blvd, Minnetonka, MN 55345**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

"The hunt is on for new ways to pay to fix and expand Minnesota's transportation infrastructure. It's a tall order. According to one estimate, the state could spend more than \$670 million a year for the next two decades just to fix existing roads. New roads? That's another big dollar sign." (Minnesota Finance & Commerce, September 14, 2011)

With our cities and state facing economic challenges, improvements to our streets, roads, and bridges are often postponed or neglected. Is this the case with all Minnesota cities? What help can cities expect to get from the state to address infrastructure needs? What innovative solutions are cities finding to keep up with these needs?

Two Minnesota experts will present information and respond to your questions.
John Gunyou, Minnetonka City Manager; Chair, MNDOT Public Private Partnerships in Transportation Task Force
Anne Finn, League of Minnesota Cities, Assistant Director, Intergovernmental Relations

Sponsored by LWV Minnetonka, Eden Prairie, Hopkins

Metro Blast, continued...

Volunteers Needed For Citizenship Ceremonies

We have registered nearly 1,800 new citizens to vote at the 10 citizenship ceremonies during the months of January, February and March. The volunteer turnout has been wonderful and I think we all enjoy this meaningful experience. At the end of a recent ceremony at St. Thomas Law School, a tall man on crutches (he had slipped on the ice a few days before) was sobbing. He kept saying "I didn't think it would ever happen." He was talking about gaining his citizenship! His emotional expression of joy reminds us of our democracy and the important work we do to include new citizens' participation in our communities. Yes, he registered to vote (Pat, LWV Mpls made a special point to collect his registration form.)

If you are able to help at any of these ceremonies, please contact Judy Stuthman at jastuthman@aol.com or 651-644-8588.

| Date | Time | Location |
|-------------|---------------------|--|
| April 6th | 1:00 PM | Duluth – Thank you LWV Duluth for handling this ceremony |
| April 20th | 10:00 AM | Mankato – Thank you LWV St. Peter for handling this ceremony |
| May 11th | 10:30 AM | Minnesota Historical Society. We will begin our work at 9:45 AM |
| May 17th | 10:00 AM | St. Paul Academy and Summit. We will begin at 9:30 AM |
| May 25th | 11:00 AM 2:00 PM | University of MN Law School. We will begin at 10:15 AM University of MN Law School. We will begin at 1:15 PM |
| June 1st | 10:30 AM 2:00 PM | Earle Brown Heritage Center. We will begin at 9:45 AM Earle Brown Heritage Center. We will begin at 1:15 PM |
| June 13th | 1:00 PM | Fergus Falls - Thank you LWV Detroit Lakes Area State Unit |
| June 19th | 10:00 AM 2:00 PM | JF Kennedy High School, Bloomington. We'll begin at 9:15 AM JF Kennedy High School, Bloomington. We'll begin at 1:15 AM |

Thank you,

Judy Stuthman



Take Action

LWV Minnesota Action Alert 4.3.12

Oppose Federal Bill Which Puts MN Communities at Risk

Action: Please contact Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Sen. Al Franken and urge opposition to S2188, the "National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2012."

Sen. Klobuchar: Washington D.C. office: 202-224-3244

Toll-free MN office: 1-888-224-9043

Email form: [http://www.klobuchar.senate.gov/emailamy.cfm?
contactForm=emailamy&submit=Go](http://www.klobuchar.senate.gov/emailamy.cfm?contactForm=emailamy&submit=Go)

Sen. Franken: Washington, D.C. office: (202) 224-5641

MN office: (651) 221-1016

Email form: http://www.franken.senate.gov/?p=email_al

Background:

Currently, each state determines the standards that must be met for a person to acquire a permit to carry. In Minnesota, permit-holders must pass a background check, receive firearms training, be twenty-one or older, and must not have committed certain violent misdemeanors within three years prior to the permit application.

S2188 would require states with strong permitting standards such as Minnesota to honor permits from states with low-to-no permitting standards. Since some states grant permits to carry to those who have had previous violent offenses and those who have not undergone background checks or training, S2188 would undermine public safety by mandating that those currently prohibited from carrying loaded firearms in Minnesota be able to bring their loaded guns here. Minnesota should not be overridden in its desire to keep such people from bringing their loaded guns into our state.

Law enforcement believes that S2188 would endanger their officers as well as the public and facilitate gun trafficking from out-of-state.

LWVUS Position: Support strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of [handguns and assault weapons] by private citizens; support regulating firearms for consumer safety.

LWVMN Position: Support restrictions on the sale, possession and use of firearms by private parties in the state of Minnesota.

Action Alert, continued...

LWV Minnesota Action Alert 4.2.12

LOCAL CONTROL AT RISK, AGAIN

Local Power to Enact Temporary Moratoriums on the Senate Floor

Calls & E-mails Needed NOW

(This action alert is forwarded from the Land Stewardship Project, with which LWV works on agricultural issues).

Senate File 270 is authored by Sen. Ray Vandeveer (R- Forest Lake) and Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove). Its Senate companion, House File 389, passed off the House floor last week and has now been substituted for SF 270 on the Senate floor.

Don't let the Minnesota Legislature weaken local control. HF 389, which weakens local government rights by making it more difficult to enact an interim ordinance, will be on the Senate floor this week, perhaps as early as Tuesday, April 3. PLEASE CALL OR E-MAIL LAWMAKERS TODAY.

How this bill weakens township local control. The Land Stewardship Project opposes this proposed legislation because it weakens the power of local governments to enact interim ordinances in order to protect their community from possible harmful development. An interim ordinance allows townships and counties to quickly put a temporary freeze on major development over which there is significant community concern.

Although modified, the provision left in the House bill that undermines local control requires a 10-day notice and a public hearing before a city, county or township enacts a moratorium. Problems:

Neighbors often don't learn about a proposed project until a few days before a permit is going to be issued and do not have time to contact their local unit of government.

Under this bill, by the time the township board posts 10-day notice and has a public hearing on adopting the moratorium, the project could already be permitted. (Note: Township boards consist of volunteers with no paid staff. Meeting this requirement will often take them 20 days or more.)

TAKE ACTION! We have kept our rights strong in Minnesota by standing up for them. Public opposition to this legislation is strong, and our calls to date have had an impact. The time is now to make sure the Senate version of this legislation, S.F. 270/H.F.389, does not make it off the Senate floor. By speaking up at every step of the process, we have had a measurable impact. Let's keep the pressure up.

1. Contact your Senator. For your Senator's contact information, go here or call 651-296-0504 or 888-234-1112. Here is a suggested message: "I urge you to oppose S.F. 270/H.F. 389 and vote against it if it comes up on the Senate Floor. This bill weakens local control by putting barriers in the way of local governments enacting moratoriums. The House passed a version of the bill that requires a 10-day public notice and public hearing before enacting a moratorium. The problem with this requirement is that neighbors and township officials can first learn about a proposed project with only a few days left until permits are to be issued. This doesn't give them time to issue a 10-day notice and hold a public hearing before enacting a moratorium. This bill favors corporate special interests over local control. The current law works well and you should oppose any changes to it."

2. Contact Senate Majority Leader Sen. Dave Senjem at 651-296-3903 or sen.david.senjem@senate.mn. Use the message above and add that he should use his leadership position to stand up for local control and not bring the bill up on the Senate floor.

Contact Bobby King at bking@landstewardshipproject.org or call 612-722-6377 for more information.

Thanks for your help! Gwen Myers, LWVMN Lobbyist

Action Alert, continued

Full details on the legislation:

House File 389 is authored by Reps. Beard (R-Shakopee), Quam (R-Byron), Nelson (DFL-Brooklyn Park), Sanders (R-Blaine)

Senate File 270 is authored by Sens. Vandeveer (R-Forest Lake), Limmer (R-Maple Grove)

House File 389 and Senate File 270 weaken township, county and city local control. The proposals weaken the power of local governments to enact moratoriums (also called interim ordinances.) A moratorium allows local governments to quickly put a temporary freeze on major development. This power is essential when the community is caught off-guard by unanticipated and potentially harmful proposals, especially those from corporate interests and outside investors, such as frac sand mines, big box stores like Wal-Mart or a large-scale factory farm. This bill favors corporate control over local control.

The power to enact a moratorium matters. For example, communities in southeast Minnesota have been bombarded with outside corporate interests wanting to mine for sand to be used in hydraulic fracturing, also known as "fracing." These mining proposals are much different in scale and scope from the aggregate mining that takes place there now. In response to citizen concerns, Wabasha, Goodhue, Winona, Fillmore and Houston counties have enacted moratoriums on frac sand mining while they study the issue to see if their current ordinances are sufficient to deal with this new type of mining.

Both House File 389 and Senate File 270 have been amended since being introduced, but still weaken local control and are NOT a compromise. The new language is being touted as a "compromise" by some even though it still weakens local control and local communities gain nothing from the bill. That is not a compromise.

Here are the details of how House File 389 and Senate File 270 as amended weaken local control:

House File 389 and Senate File 270 slow the process for enacting a moratorium by mandating 10 days public notice and a hearing before a moratorium can be put in place. In many cases, a local unit of government — particularly a township — does not get complete information on a proposed development until shortly before approval. In those cases, there can be legitimate concerns that the local government needs to address. When that happens, a moratorium must be enacted quickly to be effective. A moratorium can only be adopted at a public meeting, but currently no special notice is required to be given for that meeting. The very nature of a moratorium is to address unanticipated situations, and so there are times when it must be enacted quickly as an emergency measure.

Senate File 270 exempts a proposed development from a moratorium after a narrow window of time. After a project applies for a permit, the local unit of government has a narrow window of time in which to enact a moratorium. If it misses that window, then the proposed project is exempt. The clock starts running before any public hearing. The local unit of government has 60 days to adopt a moratorium. The critical thing to understand is that submitting a permit application does not require any public notice, yet under this proposal that is what triggers the clock. This clock can be expired or almost expired by the time the public is aware of the proposal.

LWV United States

League Position on the Federal Role in Public Education (NEW)

The LWVUS now has a position on the Federal Role in Public Education! The LWVUS Board approved a new Education position at its March 2012 meeting. The position is based on responses received from the 377 Leagues across the country that participated in the Education Study. The position states that "the League of Women Voters believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12. A quality public education is essential for a strong, viable and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right."

Thanks to the many local and state Leagues and ILOs that held meetings, involved their communities, and worked to reach consensus on this critical issue of importance to all Americans. Committee Chairs Peggy Hill (TX) and Joanne Leavitt (CA) and their Committee: Pat Aaron (IL), Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins (CO), Patricia Libutti (NJ), Sanford Ostroy (MA), Jean Pierce (IL) and Janelle Rivers (SC) are to be commended for their excellent work and leadership.

Elections: Infographic Shows Impact of Voter Suppression Laws (NEW)

Today, Craigslist founder Craig Newmark published an infographic, illustrating the impact of U.S. voting restriction laws, on his craigconnects website. The infographic explores the extensive state actions to limit opportunities for Americans to vote. It provides an overview of the flood of voter suppression laws that the League has been fighting and the negative impact that those laws could have on millions of citizens.

LWVUS provided information and feedback to Newmark. <http://craigconnects.org/voter-protection-infographic>

Power the Vote: VOTE411, Super Tuesday's Go-To Resource

March was a busy month with a constant schedule of primaries and caucuses. The League had voters covered. VOTE411.org, the nation's premier online election resource was ready to go with information on voting locations, the latest candidate and ballot information, and general and state-specific information on voter registration, absentee ballot rules, early voting options, and details of what voters need to bring to the polls. For young and first-time voters, the League created a new Take Control web video. This 30-second spot is designed to encourage young voters – our newest generations of voters - to get registered and vote.

Affordable Care Act, Two Years Later

This month was the second anniversary of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Already to millions of Americans, this historic law has made a difference to their health and in their lives. Now is the time to stop, celebrate and take note of the advances that have already taken place and those yet to come in the next few years. On Monday March 26, the U.S. Supreme Court heard three days of oral arguments on various legal challenges to the ACA and there are congressional attempts to destructively amend the ACA and others to defund the law. The League joined a broad coalition of healthcare, education and child welfare organizations in filing an amicus brief on the Affordable Care Act. For now, it is important to focus on the facts, and how the ACA has already helped the lives of so many Americans. To learn more about the ACA and what it has done, see www.healthcareandyou.org or <http://www.healthcare.gov/mycare>.

LWV Minnesota

"Votes for Women" tour of the State Capitol

Organized by Minnesota Historical Society and led by a professional tour staff , this special 90-minute tour of the Minnesota State Capitol highlights the leaders in the struggle of Minnesota women to achieve suffrage, and the impact the 19th amendment has had on Minnesota's political history.

The tour will be offered on the following days/times:

Saturday, March 24th, at 1:00 p.m

Saturday, May 12, 2012 - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 25, 2012 - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 13, 2012 - 1:00 p.m.

Tickets are available by calling the tour reservation line: 651-296-2881.

Elections: Photo ID Constitutional Amendment One Step Closer to Being on the November Ballot in MN (New)

Despite a hard fought battle by LWVMN and their coalition allies, the Minnesota House passed a bill that seeks to change the state Constitution so it would allow voter photo ID at the polls. The bill now heads to the state Senate. If the Senate passes the bill, it will appear on this November's ballot. Learn more about the bill [here](#).

Capitol Letter™

The latest issue of the Capitol Letter™ is now [online](#). Here is a sampling of the reports: State Government Finance: What's in the Governor's supplemental general fund budget? How is the legislature proposing to deal with the money shifted from the schools? Read it here. Education: So much is happening! Such as how to pay for our schools, the responsibility for setting academic standards, and teacher tenure changes.

Housing: The renter's credit may be sharply reduced, affecting many low-income households.

We also report on committee deadlines in the legislature and what they mean to the work of the legislature.

League Supports [DISCLOSE Act](#) in the Senate (NEW)

The League signed onto a coalition letter in support of the DISCLOSE Act, introduced in the U.S. Senate by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse on March 21. It works to close loopholes created by the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision as does a similar House bill introduced earlier by Rep. Chris Van Hollen. The legislation focuses solely on disclosure provisions and does not contain special exceptions for any group. It also fixes the problem of untimely disclosure of donors to Super PACs that have surfaced during the 2012 presidential primaries.

The Citizens United (CU) Decision Impact On Minnesota has been completed and was posted the first week in March. Several local leagues have already hosted discussion and informational sessions on the topic with some very positive outcomes. A PDF version of the completed report is [available](#).

<http://www.lwvmn.org/document.doc?id=413>

League Praises Decision to Continue to Put People Before Polluters

League Praises Decision to Continue to Put People Before Polluters

March 27, 2012 | by Kelly | Tags: carbon, power plants, Clean Air, EPA, Obama Administration

Washington, DC (March 27, 2012) – League of Women Voters national President, Elisabeth MacNamara issued the following statement regarding the Obama Administration's new rules, released earlier today, regulating carbon emissions for future power plants.

"EPA's action on new fossil-fuel power plants is a necessary and long-delayed first step in controlling the carbon pollution that is harming our health," she said.

"EPA and the Administration deserve credit for taking this important step. Carbon pollution's biggest contributor comes from power plants in the United States," added MacNamara. This rule ensures that there is a uniform national limit on the amount of carbon emissions that new power plants will emit, and falls in line with steps that states across the U.S. and industry officials are already working to implement.

"Today the EPA took an historic step towards protecting our children and the environment," MacNamara said. "As with the Cross State Air Regulations and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, the Obama Administration continues to show their commitment to put people before polluters. The League looks forward to encouraging the public to participate by adding their comments on this historic standard, and to the Administration issuing additional standards for existing dirty coal plants in the future," concluded MacNamara.

Contact: Kelly Ceballos, kceballos@lwv.org

CMAL

Submitted by Dorothy Karlson

CMAL MEETING March 24, 2012

"Water" was the topic of the March Quarterly Meeting of CMAL at Kings Crossing Apartments in St. Paul. Three panel members knowledgeable on the subject talked and answered questions on this important topic. They were: Linda Loomis, former mayor of Golden Valley and a member of LWVGV; Blair Tremere, also a former Golden Valley mayor and currently working with the 6th District Commissioner, Linda Loblick; and Patricia Nauman, executive Director of Metro Cities.

Tremere spoke about water as the staff of life. In Minnesota there is less problem with getting water and more of a problem of getting rid of the water we use. The pure ground water is in danger of being contaminated if used water is not properly treated. When lakes were becoming polluted in the late 60's, finding a solution to that problem drove the establishment of the Met Council. The Metro Waste Control Commission bought up many area sewer systems and worked to assure that water was pure when it went back into the river. Water resources was not a part of the discussion then, waste water was the driving force.

Now the importance of water resources is being recognized. Local cities take care of their own water supplies and it hasn't been a regional issue in the past. Loomis told about the experience of Golden Valley. They purchased their water from Minneapolis and the rates continued to go up so they decided to build their own wells and treatment system. In order to do that, they had to get permission from the legislature. Together with Crystal and New Hope they got the authority to go on their own. Government involvement is expected and needed. When there was a drought in 1987 it was decided that water should be brought into the cities from the head waters, this required permission from the US Congress.

The Metro water Supply Advisory Commission has published a book that profiles every city. It is a report of annual water usage plus projections of water needs up to 2050. In 2011 the water levels in the Mississippi were the lowest in history. Communities need a back up plan if their current source becomes unavailable.

Nauman explained that clean water is now dealt with with as much importance as waste water. The Met Council is very much involved, but there are bills advancing in the legislature now that would diminish its authority and would pit providers against each other. She said that MN residents need to contact their legislators in opposition to these bills.

The panel talked about the problem of aging sewer pipes in Golden Valley. Now when a person wants to sell a house there, they have to have a "sewer-oscopy." (a camera takes pictures of the inside of the sewer pipe) and they have to present a certificate of compliance before the house is put on the market. Some residents have had to pay up to \$10,000 to meet these requirements.

The Met Council has no jurisdiction over the water shed issue. There was some encouragement for people to look into having rain barrels and rain gardens to make better use of rain water.

Spring Fling

Submitted by Barbara Aslakson

Barbara Aslakson

Spring is when you feel like whistling, even with a shoe full of slush. ~Doug Larson

Ah, spring is here and so is spring cleaning. When you plan your cleaning chores, don't forget these five things:

- 1) medicines -- check expiration dates - set aside all expired ones - check county website for drop off places (some are at sheriff's office locations)
- 2) regular batteries -- have you been saving them all winter? The best drop off place is the SLP library. There is a big container in the entry way for batteries.
- 3) rechargeable batteries and cell phones -- Radio Shack at Knollwood and Home Depot at West End area
- 4) hazardous waste -- June 7 - 9, Parking lot at the corner of Hwy 7 and Louisiana Ave. S in St. Louis Park
- 5) There are many things that should not go into the regular waste pickups. Not sure about something or want to know the proper way to prepare for disposal? - check the county website <http://www.co.Hennepin.mn.us/dropoffs>



LWV Minnesota Briefing Papers Update



Educate. Advocate. Reform.

The briefing paper study groups have been working hard since August to research, review, compile and summarize the topics of importance that were prioritized and voted on by our membership at last year's 2011 state convention. Below is a short summary of some of the findings / implication of the research that is in the process of being finalized, reviewed and formatted for LWVs to discuss and use as a resource in future programming and recruiting efforts.

Citizens United (CU) Decision Impact on Minnesota

In January 2010, the United States Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (FEC) provided that corporations and other entities may make unlimited political expenditures, opening the door to a new flood of money in our elections. In response, a bipartisan group of lawmakers and stakeholders, including LWV Minnesota, began meeting to discuss legislation that would increase the level of transparency in elections, a kind of disclosure specifically contemplated by justices in the CU decision.

As anticipated, the outcomes and complications of the CU ruling are now becoming apparent. In the days prior to the January 3, 2012 Iowa Caucuses, the first of the negative 2012 election cycle independent expenditure and "Super PAC" advertisements hit the airwaves, with an onslaught of ads against Republican presidential candidate and former U.S.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Currently, the flurry of fundraising and advertising continues on both ends of the political spectrum. Although neither the LWVUS nor LWV Minnesota currently have an official position on the Citizens United decision; both do have positions on Campaign Finance Reform, relevant to the CU decision impact. The LWVUS Lobby Corps is carrying a message of support for disclosure to U.S. House offices, asking Representatives to cosponsor H.R. 4010, DISCLOSES

2012, introduced by Rep. Chris Van Hollen. The legislation provides essential new disclosure requirements to cover the hundreds of millions of dollars in secret contributions being injected into federal elections by non-profit groups and other entities. The legislation also ensures that there will be timely disclosure by Super PACs. In January 2012, LWVUS leaders requested through Listserv discussions that the LWVUS Board of Directors determine a LWV position on Citizens United and a potential constitutional amendment and also determine if this is a priority for LWV lobbying. Discussion of an official position and related actions is expected in 2012. LWV Minnesota should be prepared to participate in such discussions.

The completed briefing paper (anticipated for publication by March 1) will highlight what existed prior to the Citizens United decision, what the decision was, and what the decision has so far meant to Minnesota's campaign finance law and laws in other states.

Missing and Exploited Children in Minnesota

In Minnesota alone, hundreds if not thousands of children are missing or sexually exploited each year. This has often been an issue clouded by secrecy and denial, reinforcing the ideas that it does not happen in our families or to our friends. Our society has historically given little public attention to sexual victimization and missing children. The problem is not a new one but is receiving new attention at a national, state, and community level from diverse groups committed to combating the issue.

In the 1950s and 1960s our society's primary focus was limited to stranger danger.

Beginning in the 1970s and 1980s we became increasingly aware of sexual victimization, often by a relative.

By the 1980s sexual victimization of our children for most professionals became synonymous with incest in father daughter/stepfather daughter relationships.

Today the problems we hear about in the news are acquaintance victimization and sexual trafficking of children.

LWV Minnesota supports "policies and programs that promote the well being, development and safety of all children". (Social Policy: Early Intervention for Children at Risk). LWV Minnesota also supports "violence prevention programs in all communities." (Social Policy: Violence Prevention). The Missing and Exploited Children in Minnesota briefing paper, chartered by the LWV Minnesota convention in June, 2011 (publication anticipated in March), is an effort to educate our members about some of the realities around missing and exploited children in Minnesota.



Spotlight On New Member Rosemary Ruffenach

Submitted by Judy Cook



I had an opportunity to have coffee with our newest member, Rosemary Ruffenach. Rosemary moved to St. Louis Park and bought a condo in 2008. Prior to that time she lived other places in Minnesota, including St. Paul, Duluth and Minneapolis. While In Minneapolis, she was a member of the Planning Commission, an aide to Mayor Frasier focusing on women's issues and legislative programs. She worked at the State house and also as a lobbyist. With this background, Rosemary will be a great asset to LWVSLP and LWVMN.

Currently, Rosemary is employed as a teacher in Eden Prairie, District 287, serving the western suburbs. She teaches in an alternative school for children who have been suspended from other schools, or have dropped out, and have now decided to return, or have suffered severe illness and fallen behind by a year . These students have normal intelligence, but need the extra help an alternative school gives. She teaches journalism, two art classes and a specialized reading class.

Rosemary has many interests including cross country skiing, biking, genealogy and travel. She has published articles on genealogy and is writing a mystery novel, with lots of dialogue. She also likes to paint. She has traveled to many places such as Syria, Jordan, Israel, Georgia, England and Azerbaijan. And those are only the places, I remember her mentioning. Rosemary has a Doctorate in Education Policy and a Masters in Theology. She has 3 children and 4 grandchildren. Her daughter, who works in immigration, told her about the LWV involvement in citizenship ceremonies. Upon hearing about that, Rosemary decided this is a group in which she should be involved. We are happy to have her join us. Welcome Rosemary!

"Privatizing Government: Does it Work?"

LWV West Metro Alliance hosted two guests to talk about this topic: Dennis Feller, Finance Director for the City of Lakeville, and Kevin Frazell, Director of Member Services at the League of Minnesota Cities. The moderator was League member and former Mayor of Golden Valley Linda Loomis. Recorded at St. Louis Park City Council Chambers by Park TV on March 31, 2012.

In case you missed the recent West Metro LWV presentation on privatization, attached is the link where you may view the presentation. The speakers presented a Case Study for successfully transitioning Ambulance service from ALF (Apple Valley, Lakeville and Farmington) to Allina and Kevin Frazell Director of Members Services for League of Minnesota Cities discussed contracting local services, trends, considerations and recommendations.

<http://vimeo.com/39717286>

The program was initiated by LWV US. If you would like to participate in a consensus, a number of members will be staying to address the questions after the Annual Meeting on the 21st. Please consider watching the program and participating in consensus.

To view the consensus questions, go to <http://lww.org/content/consensus-questions-introduction%C2%A0>



Minnesotans United for All Families

Have the Conversation. It's Worth It.

The Single Most Important Action you can take towards defeating this harmful amendment is to start a conversation about why marriage matters with your friends, family, and the people you see everyday.

It is important to remember that just because you're "out" as a gay person, you can't assume that people in your life know how you feel about marriage for gay and lesbian couples.

And, if you are straight and marriage for your gay and lesbian family members or friends is something you want them to share, it is important to talk with the people you see everyday about why this matters to you. Voters that are unsure – or even conflicted about marriage for committed gay & lesbian couples – consistently tell researchers:

"The gay people I know haven't said that marriage matters to them – so why should it matter to me?"

Wow! So despite all the media attention, this is an issue that many people really haven't had the chance to discuss or think about.

That is something we need to change – and something you can get started on today!

The good news is...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN EXPERT,

AND YOU DON'T NEED TO CHANGE ANYONE'S MIND RIGHT AWAY.

YOUR JOB IS SIMPLY TO

START THE CONVERSATION.

It's helpful to think of it as a conversational journey.

You probably won't reach the destination right away – just start down the path together.

We know that when starting any journey, it is helpful to have some tools to know what to expect, how to take the best route, and ways to navigate any rough spots. We have developed a toolkit for you to use, that includes a handy [tip sheet](#) and some terrific short [videos](#) for help in knowing what to expect.

Observer Reports

Observer Coordinator: Judith Cook 952-928-9846

City Council Meeting, March 5, 2012, Barb Person, Observer

All Council Members were present. The meeting began at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by St. Louis Park Girl Scout Troop 10586. Following the pledge Mayor Jeff Jacobs read a proclamation declaring March 12, 2012 as St. Louis Park Girl Scout Day. It is the 100th year anniversary of Girls Scouts. The girls posed for a photo op with the mayor.

The only other Council business took place under Resolutions, Ordinances, Motions and Discussion Items:

- Resolutions approving 2012-2013 Law Enforcement Labor Services Labor Agreement. Two resolutions were adopted to approve labor agreements between the Police Officers Local #206 and non-union employees for two years (1/1/12 – 12/31/13). The agreement includes the following:
 1. 2% increase in salary,
 2. Added long term disability (after 6 months) @ 60% of current wage replacement for \$150 per year per employee and
 3. Incentives for employee savings. If one saves \$50 per month, the City will add an additional \$10.

The resolutions were approved unanimously by the Council.

- “Recognition of Marriage” Constitutional Amendment. A motion was made to adopt a resolution opposing a proposed “Recognition of Marriage” Constitutional Amendment. Council Member Spano encouraged the City to take action on the proposed Amendment. A number of St. Louis Park residents spoke supporting the motion:

See the exact wording of the resolution - http://www.stlouispark.org/webfiles/file/agenda/12_03_05cm.pdf

1. A man and his partner who were the first to sign on to the domestic partner agreement supported the resolution.
2. A resident with a gay son stated that she does not want the status of her son to be lowered by the amendment, saying that as a Jew she feels religious freedom and tolerance is important.
3. A resident stated that Constitutional Amendments should not enshrine bigotry or hatred in the constitution and that it is wrong.
4. Several residents stating that they are proud to live in St. Louis Park and are very much in favor of the resolution.

All council members spoke eloquently in favor of the resolution.

- Communications
 1. The Remodeling Fair was a success, held at Eisenhower Community Center in Hopkins.
 2. Everyone is encouraged to support Empty Bowls at the Rec Center on March 8th which helps fund STEP.

Observer, continued

School Board Meeting, March 19th Dorothy Karlson Observer

Only one person spoke at open forum. She wanted to know about what was being done about the reroute of the railroad due to the plan for the Southwest Light Rail.

Superintendent Bowers reported that there is a new brochure available about the International Baccalaureate program. She also said that the district is in need of a HR person.

Sandy Salin, Director of Business Services, presented a recommendation that the Board approve the resolution authorizing the sale of Tax Anticipation Certificates for \$1,450,000. The district can borrow short term tax anticipation certificates to provide funding for the year's financial obligations. This proposal was passed. She also gave an update on the Finance Advisory Committee and this was also passed. The board members expressed appreciation for that committee's input and support. Salin showed graphs illustrating the budget for 2011 through 2013.

Her final report was in regard to the stadium improvement project. Artificial turf will be in place by August. Consultations are being made with the City Planning Commission and the City Council. Drainage and use of trucks during construction are being studied. Bids will go out soon and although construction will begin sooner, graduation plans will not be interrupted.

Thirty-three probationary non-renewals and proposed placement of unrequested leave of absences were addressed. Each year some employees are laid off, but many are hired back again as the need is established. The board approved this and also the employee contract for SPARKS, para and student support people who are not licensed but are serving students.

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Judy Cook is coordinating the 2011 – 2012 Observer Reports. If you can attend a City Council Meeting or School Board meeting and type up a brief review of the meeting, please contact Judy at the 952-928-9846. Remember to wear your pin at the meetings – our presence at the meetings is noted and appreciated.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Making Democracy Work®

Your source for voting information: <http://vote411.org/>

LWV SLP OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2011-2012**OFFICERS:**

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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

- First Year Introduction Special \$25.00**
 Voter Subscription Only \$10.00
 Single Active Attending Member \$45.00
 Supporting/Member-at-Large \$50.00
 Family Membership (household) \$70.00
(Dues and subscriptions are not tax deductible.)

Make checks payable to LWVSLP

and send check & this form to:
Judy Cook
4010 Highwood Lane
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
Jcook42@comcast.net
(952-928-9846)

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

4327 Alabama Avenue, South
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Aggie Leitheiser, President
(952) 938-6255
aggieleit@comcast.net

Judy Cook, Membership
(952-928-9846)
Jcook42@comcast.net

Deb Brinkman, Editor
(612) 803-6142
deb.brinkman@gmail.com

LWV Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, 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. <http://www.lwvmn.org/local/Leagues/SLP>