



Voter

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Gentle Reminder:

Please Register For The LWVSLP Annual Meeting By April 1.

The Annual Meeting registration form is on page 10.

Choose from a Mandarin Chicken Salad Or Sand Wedge Sandwich.

We are looking forward to seeing you 10 am on Saturday, April 16, at the Minneapolis Golf Club.

Meeting details on page 3
Registration on page 15



April Calendar

- April 5 7:00 pm LWVSLP Board Meeting
Host: Debbie Blake

- April 16 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
LWVSLP Annual Meeting
Minneapolis Golf Club

Upcoming Events

- May 3 7:00 pm LWVSLP Board Meeting
Host: tbd

- May 14 St. Louis Park City Tour
Topic: What’s been going on

Invitation

The Richfield, Bloomington, Edina, and Minnetonka/Eden Prairie/Hopkins Leagues of Women Voters and the City of Bloomington cordially invite you to a free community event on Homeless Youth in our suburbs.

Date: April 30th
Time: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

The event will share personal stories of homeless students; educators will share their needs; and professionals will suggest action that can be taken. A room full of exhibitors will provide the connection to information, volunteer opportunities and resources. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required: 952-563-4948 or send an email to reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

We hope you will come away more informed, connected and motivated to act.
More details on page 12.

President's Message

I hope to see you at our Annual Meeting on April 16. We'll be in a lovely setting to enjoy our Minnesota spring weather (or what passes for spring right now) and, along with some updates on issues and discussion of future topics, we'll hear a fascinating tale from one of our members. Carlota Medus, PhD, is a public health leader on tracking down the source of food-borne diseases. She traveled to Bangladesh to help set up a surveillance system in a developing country and has been involved in many food borne outbreaks in which Minnesota "solved the case" when others have been stumped.

We will also engage in a bit of Ranked Choice Voting to practice that technique on selecting some priority issues for next year. Our February speaker made it seem like an easy process so we'll jump in and find out.

This is certainly a challenging time in local, state, national, and international events. What are our priority services? Who should pay for them and with what system? When do we intervene militarily in other countries? How do we help another country recovering from tremendous disasters? What are the risks for our country and families from the Japan Nuclear plant problems? I hope you are learning about these issues and engaging in discussions with family and friends. However, don't stop there. There has never been a better time for all of us to be in touch with our elected officials about what we believe and value.

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

March Board Meeting Highlights

- Discussed the February meeting about Ranked Choice Voting and decided to try it at the annual meeting for choosing some priority discussion topics for the coming year. The Board brainstormed some initial ideas for consideration.
- Reviewed final details for the Annual Meeting and slate of nominated candidates
- Discussed means of doing a city tour of recent highlights and developments. Need to find a bus option if possible.
- Discussed attendance at the State Convention in Rochester, March 19 CMAL meeting on homelessness and March 26 West Metro meeting on Voter ID



Worth Noting

Happy Birthday, Affordable Care Act!

You're 1 year old and wow what a year it has been. Since last year:

- Children are no longer denied coverage due to pre-existing conditions
- Insurance companies can no longer impose lifetime limits on coverage
- Young adults can stay on their parents' health plans until age 26

Fun Fact: March 17, 1910 - Camp Fire Girls established as the first American interracial, non-sectarian organization for girls



**Convention
May 21 & 22, 2010
Rochester**

Leaders of Today and Tomorrow (LOTT)

The 16th Annual LOTT conference will be held in conjunction with LWV Minnesota's Convention in Rochester. Applications due April 21, 2011.

You can download a flyer to help in promoting this exciting event to the young women in your lives. Scholarships are available to help those who cannot afford to attend.

The flyer can be downloaded here:
<http://www.lwvmn.org/Document.Doc?id=107>

LWV SLP Annual Meeting

April 16, 2011 at the Minneapolis Golf Club
2001 Flag Ave. South

9:30 Coffee and Check In

10:00 Business Meeting

11:15 Program

The Foodborne Disease Epidemiologist's Survival Guide to Bangladesh. Carlota Medus, Epidemiologist Principal in the Foodborne, Vectorborne and Zoonotic Diseases unit of the Minnesota Department of Health

12:00 Lunch

Please join us for networking, selecting priorities and issues for the coming year, updates and highlights of League activities and a fascinating presentation on helping a developing country improve their public health efforts.

Find registration information on page 10.

Register Now: Webinar on How to Conduct a National Study, Thursday, April 21, 3:00 PM Eastern (NEW)

If you would like to learn more about the process surrounding a national study, we welcome you to [sign up for this webinar](#). Learn how to help your League get ready to participate in national studies directly from Education Study Committee chair Peg Hill and national Education Fund and Privatization Committee chair Janis McMillen.

CMAL Quarterly Meeting

Submitted By Dorothy Karlson

The March quarterly meeting of the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues met on March 19th with the subject of homelessness. Two speakers talked about the work being done by their organizations and a tour of the church enabled participants to see evidence of what they do to provide for those in need of shelter.

Large cardboard walls form temporary dividers between bedrooms for the homeless who will spend the night in a large room in Woodbury Lutheran Church. Seventeen people who have no other place to sleep have the opportunity to make use of the church's hospitality for nine nights. During that time, everything possible is done to help the family to get permanent housing. When they arrive at the church by bus they will find in addition to the far from private bedrooms, comfortable places to sit, some snacks to eat, and books and games for the children. Volunteers are on hand to help and keep watch. Behind this effort is the St Paul Area Council of Churches' Project Home Shelters.

Seeing this makes the plight of the homeless seem very real. The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless has reported that 13,100 people are homeless each night in Minnesota with an additional 10,000 people at risk of homelessness due to job loss, serious health issues, foreclosure, and related challenges.

Project Home Shelters help families who are in a temporary crisis and has few problems with mental illness and drug addiction among its guests. A program that helps single people with these issues is Simpson Housing. Started 29 years ago in a church, it now provides over night shelter for 44 men and 22 women each night. In 2010, 887 people spent at least one night at the shelter. Many more needed this help, but did not win the lottery to stay there.

LWV US

The League's Most Recent Actions

[League Applauds Senator's Efforts Regarding Budget Negotiations](#) –

Mar 24, 2011

The League sent letters to Senators Warner of Virginia and Chambliss of Georgia on their efforts to develop a consensus approach to solving our nation's fiscal problems.

[League Expresses Concern Over Length of Ethics Investigation](#) –

Mar 24, 2011

League Expresses Concern Over Stalled Ethics Investigation The League and coalition partners sent a letter to the leadership of the House Committee on Ethics asking when the inquiry into possible ethics violations by Representative Maxine Waters will be resumed and completed.

[League Urges Senate to Oppose Legislation to Strip EPA Authority](#) –

Mar 21, 2011

The League and coalition partners sent a letter to Senators urging them to oppose legislation that would dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to address life-threatening pollution.

[League Urges House to Oppose Gutting of Clean Air Act](#) - Mar 17, 2011

League President Elisabeth MacNamara sent a letter to the House of Representatives urging members to oppose legislation that would gut the Clean Air Act and overturn a Supreme Court decision by preventing EPA from regulating greenhouse gases.

Fun Fact: March 9, 1976 – West Point Military Academy accepts its first female cadet.



Rail Update

Submitted by Allyson Sheldrew

Lynne Carper spoke with unit 3 regarding the light rail transit project and freight rail relocation in St. Louis Park. He has been a part of a task force that was initially convened in 1997 to look at the issues surrounding freight rail transit in the community. He continues to serve as a neighborhood representative on the Project Management Team (PMT) for this project. PMT meetings are open to the public, and are also broadcasted on the St. Louis Park public access channel.

The Federal Government governs the railroads in the U.S. The state only has a small degree of control over the railroads, but ultimately those who operate the railroads have the authority to do what is in their best interest. The TC and W line is willing to relocate to the route described above, as long as it does not affect the economics of its operations. Other options were explored, but ultimately were not found feasible.

There are currently three railroads running through St. Louis Park: Twin City and Western (TC&W), Canadian Pacific (CP) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF). The main railroad that would be affected by the proposed light rail route would be the TC&W. In the current proposal, the TC&W would be re-routed to run next to the high school, while the light rail (LRT) would operate on the route where the TC&W currently operates. In St. Louis Park and the Kenilworth Corridor relocation is expected to cost approximately \$48 million.

The selected LRT route would be through Kenilworth on the east side of Cedar Lake. There is currently a freight train route here, as well as a walking and biking path. To avoid the re-route of freight rail through SLP, there would be two light rail trains (one in each direction) and the current freight train line, along with walking and biking paths. This proposal would cost between \$20 million to \$120 million. It is important to note that the costs for both of the above proposals will only cover the re-routing of the freight trains.

The goal of the Project Management Team in place is to determine what types of mitigation and betterment are necessary to facilitate routing the freight rail through St. Louis Park. The City's position on this matter stated in several resolutions is that the only way they will accept the freight train route through the community is if there are no other options.

Safety in the Park, another citizen group in St. Louis Park, has been very active in raising issues related to safety. They've helped to bring to light safety issues surrounding the high school students, neighborhoods and community in general, such as increased noise, vibration, safety at crossings, classroom disruption and the possibility of derailment of tank cars carrying flammables and/or toxic chemicals.

The city and Hennepin County are currently in the process of doing studies to determine what the best route is and what types of mitigation will be necessary. These studies would also help to narrow down the cost to a more accurate number.

The LRT is expected to be finished in 2017 and run from Eden Prairie through SLP ending at the transit hub by the Twins stadium. Lynne described how this project will be funded: 50% will be federal funding, 30% will come from the Met Council, 10% will be from Hennepin County Railroad Authority and the final 10% will come from a transportation sales tax (covering only the LRT portion of the total cost). The total cost of the LRT project is expected to be 1.25 billion.

You can learn more about this project by going to Safety in the Park's website, www.safeteyinthepark.com, Southwest Transit website, <http://www.swtransit.org/>, or the city's website, <http://www.stlouispark.org/>. The city's website can direct you to other sources of current information.

Facts about Ineligible Voting and Voter Fraud in Minnesota

Submitted by Barb Person

Based on data from Minnesota County Attorneys, November 2010.

Kathy Bonnifield, Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota (www.ceim.org) and Carol Johnson, Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance, Association of Universalist Women (MUUSJA)

In April of 2010, Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota and the Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance/Association of Universalist Women, with the support of a subcommittee of the Voting Rights Coalition, initiated a project to research documented cases of ineligible voting and voter fraud in the 2008 Minnesota election. We felt that facts were needed to provide insight into the conversation regarding changing voting requirements. Specifically, we wanted to determine if there was an election integrity issue that a photo identification requirement would prevent.

Because voter fraud is a felony, County Attorneys are responsible for the investigation of ineligible voting and the conviction of those who commit voter fraud. As such, we went directly to them for information on the types and outcomes of their investigations into voter fraud and ineligible voting. County Attorneys from 81.6 percent of Minnesota's 87 counties, representing 93.3 percent of Minnesota's registered voters, responded to our request for data. The survey gathered both quantitative and qualitative information.

Not one single government-issued identification confirms all the requirements to vote. In fact, in reviewing all types of government-issued identification (i.e. passports, military IDs, driver's licenses, state-issued IDs), the only type of election fraud a photo identification requirement would prevent is voter impersonation. In reviewing the survey results, we found neither an expression of concern about voter impersonation nor convictions of voter impersonation. In fact, less than *one half of one percent* of all investigations focused on voter impersonation. Another way of evaluating the survey results is to review the total number of

investigations of voter impersonation (7) and compare it to the total number of 2008 voters (2,921,498), which allows us to see that the **total percent of all voters who were investigated for voter impersonation was two ten-thousandths of one percent (0.0002%). There was not one single conviction of voter impersonation.**

The results of the survey did not indicate a photo identification requirement would improve election integrity. But, survey responses, both quantitatively and qualitatively, pointed to one common investigation and concern — felon voting. Of the 1,531 reported investigations, 77 percent of them focused on possible felons voting. Again, to look at this number as a total percent of 2008 voters as we did with voter impersonation we learned that 0.0404 percent of all voters were *investigated* as possible felons who voted.

An investigation does not indicate guilt. In fact, some County Attorneys independently reported that they had false positives. For example, Dakota County reported that 35 percent of the cases that were determined not to be chargeable were because the individual either had a gross misdemeanor or had successfully completed probation and had their civil rights restored prior to voting, while Anoka County reported 5 percent of the cases that were determined not to be chargeable for the same reason. Since we did not specifically ask counties to provide this level of detail in the survey, the average number of false positives of possible felons voting is unknown. But, we do know that false positives exist on some level.

Legally, there is a vast difference between ineligible voting and fraudulent voting, even though the action could be exactly the same. **Intent determines whether the action is fraudulent or not.** For example, if someone who has voted at the same precinct for 50 years moved down the street — to a location that is in another precinct — and, on Election Day goes to the same precinct he voted at for 50 years and voted there *without knowing* that he should have gone to another precinct, he did not commit

fraud. But, if he went to the same precinct he voted at for 50 years *knowing* it was the wrong precinct, he committed fraud. This example applies to all voter qualifications, which also includes but is not limited to, age, citizenship, and criminal status. The difference between ineligible voting and fraud is intentionality.

Based on the survey results, the only type of conviction was due to felons voting (26 convictions) or felons registering to vote (12 convictions). Because about a third of people convicted did not vote, we must use 26 (the number of people who voted who were convicted) to determine the percent of the total 2008 voting population who have been convicted of fraudulent voting. **Based on the survey, nine ten-thousandths of one percent (0.0009%) of 2008 voters were convicted of fraud.**

While the total number of voters convicted of fraud is low, there have been recent changes that may decrease that number. Starting in the spring of 2010, County Election Administrators can more accurately and efficiently review data from the Minnesota Department of Corrections. In the past, they were provided information from the Department of Corrections in a paper format once every one or two months. Now they are provided electronic data on a daily basis.

The intention of the survey was to learn about ineligible voting and voter fraud in Minnesota to determine if there was a need for photo identification. The results indicate two things — first, there is no need to change voting requirements and second, that questions and concerns should focus on voting eligibility, specifically, felons voting. Rather than accepting the law preventing felons from voting at face value, we began to examine the issue of felon disenfranchisement, and learned much.

For example:

- Studies have shown that there may be a correlation between recidivism rates and disenfranchisement. In a 2009 policy paper, it was reported that “probationers and parolees who exercise their right to vote have significantly lower recidivism rates than those who do not.

- There is a great racial disparity in disenfranchisement of the voting-age population in Minnesota. One out of 10 voting-age black Minnesotans cannot vote because of a felony conviction while one out of 100 voting-age white Minnesotans cannot vote for that same reason.
- Since 1974, the disenfranchisement rate for felons in Minnesota has increased over 700 percent.

One may argue that people who have felony convictions should not be able to vote because they have not shown sound judgment and should be penalized for their transgressions. But our research has led us to question the validity of the argument. **In Minnesota, someone whose crime is connected to elections may still be allowed to vote while someone whose crime is not connected to elections may not be allowed to vote.** For example, we learned that it is a gross misdemeanor for someone to “knowingly deceive another person regarding the time, place, or manner of conducting an election or the qualifications for or restrictions on voter eligibility for an election, with the intent to prevent the individual from voting in the election.” Again intentionality is key to determining if a crime has occurred or not. But, there is an important difference — it’s a felony to lie about *your* qualifications to vote, while to lie to any *one person or large groups of people* about voting qualifications, thus preventing them from voting, is merely a gross misdemeanor. A person with a gross misdemeanor retains his or her right to vote.

After thorough consideration of the survey results and safeguards that are currently in place, we have determined that **a government-issued photo identification requirement to vote will not improve the integrity of an election.** But, we leave with our own concerns regarding the disenfranchisement of felons. We hope that Minnesota’s lawmakers will consider allowing non-incarcerated felons the opportunity to vote and we hope they will consider revising *Minnesota Statute §204C.035 Deceptive Practices in Elections* from a gross misdemeanor to a felony with a requirement to serve time, thus disenfranchising those who intentionally deceive voters as that particular punishment applies to the crime

CONCLUSION

The intent of the survey was to determine if there was any credibility to the idea that a photo identification requirement to vote would improve election integrity. A survey, to all County Attorneys about the types of investigations into ineligible voting and voter fraud, provides indicators of possible election integrity issues. A specific indicator of an election integrity issue that a photo identification requirement would prevent would be claims of voter impersonation. The results are clear — there was not one single conviction for voter impersonation. In fact, while there were investigations, there were no felony convictions of double voting, non-citizens voting, under-age voting, or voting outside of the jurisdiction.

Most investigations and the only convictions were due to felons voting or registering to vote. As many as 35 percent of the investigations in Dakota County were dropped because of false positives, while as few as 5 percent of the investigations in Anoka County were dropped for the same reason. Thus, the total number of investigations may be high because of false positives. Based on our survey results, nine ten-thousandths of one percent (0.0009%) of all 2008 voters were convicted of voter fraud for one reason — felony convictions. And, not one single piece of government-issued identification provides information about criminal status. The results of our survey led us to review Minnesota's voting laws and the impact they have on people with felonies. We learned that:

- 1 out of 10 voting-age black Minnesotans cannot vote because of a felony conviction while 1 out of 100 voting-age white Minnesotans are disenfranchised for the same reason;
- studies show a link to a decrease in recidivism rates when individuals can participate in elections; and
- there is a disparity in Minnesota's laws — one Minnesota law allows people who knowingly deceive voters with the intent to prevent them from voting to continue to vote while other laws disenfranchise people whose crime is not related to elections or voting.

After thorough consideration of the survey results and safeguards, we have determined that the arguments for a photo identification requirement to vote do not have any merit. But, we leave with our own concerns regarding the disenfranchisement of felons. We hope that Minnesota's lawmakers will consider allowing non-incarcerated felons to vote and we hope they will consider revising *Minnesota Statute §204C.035 Deceptive Practices in Elections* from a gross misdemeanor to a felony with a requirement to serve time, thus disenfranchising those who intentionally deceive voters as that particular punishment applies to the crime.

To download the complete report, go to www.ceimn.org

There are three main reasons why LWV Minnesota opposes photo ID requirements.

1. Photo ID requirements will suppress the vote.
2. Photo ID requirements are not necessary for election integrity because no one in Minnesota has ever been convicted of voter impersonation.
3. Photo ID requirements create another layer of costly bureaucracy in our elections

Draw the Line Minnesota

www.drawthelineminnesota.org

Voters should pick their politicians, not the other way around.

CONTACTS:

Laura Fredrick Wang, League of Women Voters Minnesota, 612-224-5445

Mike Dean, Common Cause Minnesota, 612-770-6908

Minnesota Part of Midwest Campaign to Pull Back Curtain on 2011 Redistricting

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2011

SAINT PAUL—Civic engagement and community organizations in Minnesota today announce they are implementing a coordinated campaign to transform redistricting—the way electoral district lines are drawn—by shining an ongoing spotlight on the process, pushing for increased public participation and greater protection of minority voting rights in the creation of new political maps, and proposing alternatives to plans working their way through state legislatures.

Draw the Line Minnesota is part of Draw the Line Midwest, the nation's first regional redistricting reform campaign, which is a collaboration of the Midwest Democracy Network—an alliance of 25 groups advocating for political reform, civil rights, and other interests in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin, with technical support from the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School.

“Redistricting needs to focus on ensuring that voters get the fairest and best possible representation, not on preserving political majorities.” said Laura Fredrick Wang, interim Executive Director of the League of Women Voters Minnesota. “This is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to transform a system that lets lawmakers choose their voters, when it should be the other way around.”

As part of the campaign, Minnesota will be working with its Midwest partners, the Public Mapping Project, and Metro Chicago Information Center to launch District Builder, a unique web-based, open-source software. The tool will allow citizens and advocacy groups to draw their own district maps or map individual communities on the web and is a new and important component for getting people involved. It is expected to be available and free to use in each of the six states by April. In Minnesota, the tool will be available on a site hosted by Common Cause Minnesota at www.drawminnesota.org.

“This campaign is unique because, together, we are prying open doors that, in the past, have appeared to be locked. When lines are manipulated, voters are manipulated. Now is the time for voters to draw the line – both figuratively and literally,” said Mike Dean, Executive Director of Common Cause Minnesota.

While the state campaigns will serve as a public interest counterweight to legislative redistricting processes, organizations involved in the Draw the Line campaign are open to working collaboratively with legislatures on meaningful public participation in redistricting.

“By gathering input in a genuine way, legislative mapmakers have an opportunity to demonstrate they're serious when they talk about being more open and transparent about 2011 redistricting,” said Marcia Avner, Policy Fellow with the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. “But legislative invitations for public participation must be real, not illusory. Regardless, our Minnesota coalition will be there every step of the way on behalf of voters to pursue a government that fairly and honestly represents them.”

The Brennan Center for Justice created resources for the state coalitions and publishes tools for nationwide use, including a redistricting guide specifically designed for the news media. The media guide can be accessed at www.brennancenter.org/content/resource/a_media_guide_to_redistricting.

Initial funding for the campaign and for the Midwest Democracy Network has been provided by the Joyce Foundation. The redistricting campaign concept was developed by the late Larry Hansen, former vice president at Joyce and director of its Money and Politics Program.

For more information on the Minnesota coalition, go to www.drawthelineminnesota.org. For more information on the Midwest Democracy Network, please visit www.midwestdemocracynetwork.org.



Take Action Keep our Clean Air

Keep Our Air Clean

The House of Representatives is expected to consider legislation that would permanently block the EPA from regulating harmful carbon pollution. For decades, the EPA has protected the health of children, seniors and all the rest of us from dangerous pollutants through the Clean Air Act. In just the last twenty years carbon monoxide, which negatively affects those with heart and lung diseases has been cut by seventy percent.

But now, special interests and their congressional allies are pushing to undo the Clean Air Act.

Take action now to tell your Representative to oppose any legislation that would block or prevent action to clean up our air and protect the most vulnerable Americans by entering your zip code in the red box to the right.

Our health and environment are under attack by big polluters and their congressional supporters. We can't let them stop EPA's efforts to clean up life-threatening pollution.

TAKE ACTION

- 1. Contact your Representative now by calling 202-225-3121.**
- 2. Send this alert to other concerned citizens -- your grassroots network, your friends and coworkers. Encourage them to contact their elected leaders.**

SPONSORED BY THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON AND THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

FREE
COMMUNITY
EVENT

Homeless Youth in Suburbia: UNDERSTAND. CONNECT. ACT.

Saturday, April 30, 2011
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Bloomington Civic Plaza
1800 W Old Shakopee Rd.
Bloomington, MN 55431



Personal Stories
Panel of educators, volunteers
& professionals
Exhibitor Fair

Facilitated by Tim Reardon, CEO
The Reardon Group

In 2010, one Minneapolis youth shelter served 117 homeless youth from south and west suburban Hennepin County. This number does not include those who were turned away or helped by other agencies. Come learn about homeless youth from our communities, their struggle to complete their education, and what you can do to help.

Pre-registration is encouraged but not required: 952-563-4948, 952-563-4944 TTY • reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us

For more information contact Bloomington Human Services, 952-563-8733, www.ci.bloomington.mn.us



The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.

Observer Reports

Observer Coordinator: Judith Cook 952-928-9846

City Council – March 21, 2011 – Barb Person, Observer

All members, except for Sue Santa and Mayor Jeff Jacobs, were present. Leading the meeting was Mayor Pro-Tem Susan Sanger. The meeting began at 7:40 p.m.

Call to Order:

- SLP Girl Scout Brownie Troop 13193 led the Pledge of Allegiance. Individually, the girls asked the Council to support their efforts to promote water conservation by listing ways that residents can help. The Troop's presentation is on display at the SLP Library. Residents are asked to sign a pledge to conserve water.

Presentations:

- Resolutions were presented to three retiring employees:
 1. Paul Steinhilber for his 30 year career in the Fire Department. He was presented with a plaque thanking him for his dedication to St. Louis Park. Many members of the Fire Department attended the meeting in his honor.
 2. Jim Thompson for his 38 years working in the Park & Rec Department working with youth and as a Field Supervisor.
 3. John Altepeter for his 22 years working in the Facilities Division.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sanger thanked them all for their many years of dedicated service to the City and wished them well in their retirement.

- Congressman Keith Ellison attended the Council meeting to give an update from Washington. He stated that he is focused on highway projects in SLP (Hwy 7 & Dakota Ave. and Hwy 7 & Louisiana Ave.) and will help with financing, if possible. He said that the role of government is the current debate in Congress and that budgets for programs such as Pell grants, the Head Start Program and mortgage foreclosures are all under scrutiny. Light rail is a high priority for him, but its funding is also in jeopardy in the current session.

For good news he referred to the Congressional Arts Competition where finalist's artwork will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol Building and in the Congressman's office. Students are encouraged to apply by April 1st. Go to www.house.gov/house/ArtGuidelines.shtml to access application forms.

Council Member Mavity mentioned that funding for Community Development Block Grants is so important to our community. She asked for continued support for this program. The congressman asked that council members send him documentation outlining programs in St. Louis Park, stating local needs. He is very much in favor of funding these local programs.

Council Member Ross asked if a Cost of Living Adjustment would come to Social Security recipients, and the congressman said that a bill for an increase was not passed and that the current majority probably won't vote for it. Congressman Ellison asked for continued communication from the Council.

- Rotary members attended the meeting to present a giant symbolic check to the Council for \$15,000. The funds were donated from three local rotary groups in honor of the 25th anniversary of the SLP Sunrise Rotary. The money will fund two rock climbing features at the SLP Nature Center. A May installation is planned.

Council Member Finkelstein encourages residents interested in belonging to a service organization join a Rotary group. Sunrise Rotary meets on Fridays at Vescios Italian Restaurant at 7:30 a.m. and on Mondays at the Doubletree Hotel at 12:00 noon for lunch – www.rotaryslp.org.

Observer reports, continued

Communications:

- Council Member Finkelstein announced that a Rotary wine tasting fundraiser will be held at 5:00 p.m. on May 19th at Excelsior and Grand. He also announced the birth of his first grandchild.
- City Manager Harmoning announced that the State Demographer, Tom Gilaspy, will present "Minnesota and the New Normal". The presentation reflects results from the 2010 Census. Check the City's website or patch.com for meeting date and time.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

St Louis Park School Board Meeting – February 28, 2011, Dorothy Karlson, observer

St Louis Park has two nominees for Teacher of the Year. They are Michael Farrell from Susan Lindgren and Peter Redmond from the Senior High. They were honored during the Spotlight portion of the meeting.

Superintendent Bowers reported that with the help of a grant, there is enough money to make free all day kindergarten available at Aquila School next year. She also said that grants and donations are making it possible for all elementary schools to have \$2500 available for art activities in grades K-3.

Andrew Ewald, athletic director, asked and received permission to take 20 baseball players to San Diego during Spring break. The trip is paid for by the students and no school funds are used. It is an advantage to these players to have the opportunity to practice outside instead of indoors.

Sandy Salin, director of business, presented an update on the bond project. \$4,760,643.52 has been spent with 46,239,356.48 remaining. She said that the spending is on budget and the remaining funds will be spent this Spring. The projects include air handling, security, asbestos removal, classroom tech, and replacing of Senior High bleachers. She also presented the preliminary quarterly expenditure report. Most spending is about like last year. The biggest change was in the payments for health insurance.

Announcements were made in regard to the High School Musical, "Oklahoma" The Children First Annual Meeting and Empty Bowls.

School Board Meeting, March 21, 2011, Deb Brinkman, observer

All School Board Members except for Larry Shapiro were present.

During Open Forum, in support of Aquila students and teachers, there were several parents who requested a change in leadership, better communication, better conflict resolution. They cited a lack of supervision and problems with bullying. Debra Bowers responded that their concerns have been heard and the board appreciates hearing the pride and overall family participation in Aquila events. Additional listening sessions have been scheduled.

Frank Johnson reported on the transition for to K-grade 5. "New Everything" . There are some good statistics reflecting the learning this year.

Sandy Saline presented the budget update. The board approved the transportation savings which saves \$125,000 / year, adds GPS and Cameras. SLP will be used for regular service, MTI will be used for special ed service. It was noted that the Fund is currently about 6% which is the board recommendation.

Staffing Plan: There is no decrease in teach FTE this year. But there were several pink slips sent out due to teachers coming back from leaves and grants expiring. There were 35 teachers terminated and 5 teachers placed on proposed unrequested leaves of absence.

The board reminded everyone about the "Gratitude Foundation" that is set up for parents to donate to some of the best teachers. Remember, donations are tax deductible.

LWV SLP 2010 Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 16 - 10:00 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:

\$19.50 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)

\$16.50 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 BY APRIL 1st TO:
Barb Person
LWV St. Louis Park Treasurer
2049 Utah Ave. S.
St. Louis Park, MN 55426**

Green Partners Newsletter

Visit www.hennepin.us/greenpartners to subscribe and read more about:

- **Electronic media recycling now available at Hennepin County drop-off facilities**
- **Household hazardous waste collection events**
- **Medicine collection events**
- **Rain barrels and compost bins available for purchase through the Recycling Association of Minnesota**
- **Hennepin County launches Master Recycler/Composter program with course offered in April**
- **Protecting Our Water Resources – A Forum Series for Policymakers**

LWV SLP OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2010-2011

OFFICERS:

President: Aggie Leitheiser
Vice President: Debbie Blake
Secretary: Nancy Klaber
Treasurer/W.Metro: Barb Person

DIRECTORS:

Observer Coordinator: Judith Cook
Voter Service: Vacant
Membership: Ellen Hacker
At Large: Elaine White
CMAL: Dorothy Karlson
Voter Editor: Deb Brinkman



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Making **Democracy** Work®

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 (dues and subscriptions are not tax deductible):

- First Year Introduction \$25.00
- Voter Subscription Only \$10.00
- Single Active Attending Member \$45.00
- Supporting/Member-at-Large \$50.00
- Family Membership (2 or more in single household) \$70.00

Make checks payable to LWVSLP and send check & this form to:

Ellen Hacker, Membership Chair
3993 Brunswick Ave. South
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
(952-920-9549) ehacker@comcast.net



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

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

Ellen Hacker, Membership
(952) 920-9549
ehacker@comcast.net

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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.

www.lwvmn.org/localLeagues/SLP