LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® ST. LOUIS PARK

Voter

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

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January Calendar

January 5 7 pm
Board Meeting - Barbara Aslakson's Home

January 17 CMAL 10:00 to 12:00
Topic: Planning for Parks – How Cities and Counties Implement Met Council Proposals
Roseville Public Library 2180 N. Hamline Ave., Roseville

January 24 10:00 am to 1:00 pm
Topic: Legislative Interviews
Location: Union Congregational Church
This event includes a chili luncheon.

February Calendar

February 5 7 pm
Board Meeting - Judy's Home

February 18 Unit 2 Meeting
Time: 1 pm
Topic: Social Policy
Location: Tower Light

February 19 Unit 3 Meeting
Time: 7 pm
Topic: Social Policy
Location: City Hall

President's Message
January 2015

Happy New Year 2015! May the kindness you've given to others return many times to you!

A hearty thank you to Dorothy Karlson for coordinating the Barnes and Noble gift wrapping fund raiser and to all the busy hands of Dorothy Karlson, Eilseen Knisely, Barb Person, Deb Brinkman, Shelley Colvin and Judy Cook as they made bows, wrapped books and other gifts for the Barnes and Nobel customers. Of all the fundraisers I have participated in, this is easily one of my favorites. The smiles are always contagious.

The December Lively Issues discussion was well attended and it was great to hear so much interest – especially from new members Wendy Stageberg and Elaine Gross. The positions have an overwhelming amount of information and reviewing them in this manner is a great introduction.

Good news – Tower Light has agreed to continue hosting the Unit 2 meetings. They will continue to meet the third Wednesday at 1 pm at Tower Light. All Unit 1, Unit 2 or Unit 3 members are always welcome to attend. The meetings are also open to all Tower Light residents. Unit 2 will be learning more about Money in Politics in January.

Our Legislative Interviews meeting and chili lunch will surely warm you up. I hope you will all be able to join us. We will meet 10:00 Saturday morning, January 24 at Union Congregational Church. We encourage everyone in our SLP League to attend. Feel free to bring a friend!

Special condolences in remembrance of Elaine White's husband, William. Elaine was a very active League member until she had to move to be closer to her children. Ruth Licht's husband, also passed away. Ruth was also a very active League member. Please keep their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Deb Brinkman, President
LWV SLP

Highlights from the December 2014 LWV SLP Board Meeting:

- Reviewed the Kids Voting Presentation to the City Council and the West Metro meeting on Immigration.
- Tower Light has agreed to continue hosting the Unit 2 monthly meetings.
- Discussed speaker ideas for the Annual Meeting
- Reviewed details for the Barnes and Noble fundraiser
- Discussed details for the Legislative Interviews and Chili Lunch

Worth Noting

Welcome new member, Wendy Stageberg!

Wendy lives in the Mound area, but has been actively participating in several of the LWV St. Louis Park meetings with her sister, Deb Brinkman. Wendy has four children and is self-employed and has clients in many of the western suburbs, including St. Louis Park.

Wendy's past employment experience included taking care of terminally ill and hospice patients. Political issues she is passionate about are child protection and improving education. Wendy's other interests include reading, art, outdoor activities and going to the theater.

New Citizen Voter Registration

League members register 85 - 90 % of the new citizens to vote at their naturalization ceremonies, and that added up to over 6,500 new voters in 2014. THANK YOU for volunteering for this activity. The schedule for 2015 is now out...so check your new calendar and please let me know, jastuthman@aol.com if you will be able to help at any of the ceremonies below:

Tuesday, Jan. 20th	9:00 AM	St. Paul River Center
Wednesday, Jan 21st	1:00 PM	Duluth Courthouse
Thursday, Feb. 5th	10:30 AM	Minneapolis Convention Center
Tuesday, Feb. 17th	10 AM & 2 PM	Landmark Center, St. Paul
TBD		Hazel Park Prep Academy
Wednesday, March 4th	10 AM	St. Paul River Center
Tuesday, March 10th	2:30 PM	Pinewood Elementary School
Wednesday, March 25th	10:30 AM	U of St. Thomas Law School, Minneapolis

Council of Meropolitan Area Leagues(CMAL) Planning for Parks: How Counties and Cities Implement Met Council Proposals

We have a stellar group of experts ready to tell us all about the Metropolitan Council's plan for regional parks and how some local governments will be implementing it.

The meeting will take place on **Saturday, January 17th** at the Roseville Branch of the Ramsey County Public Libraries (2180 Hamline Ave. N., Roseville, MN). We'll start at 10:00am for sign-in and refreshments (provided by the Roseville/Maplewood/Falcon Heights LWV). The program itself will run from 10:30-12:00.

Presenters: Policy Analyst Jan Youngquist and Research Analyst Raintry Salk of the Met Council as well as Jonathan Vlaming of the Three Rivers Parks District and John VonDeLinde, the Division Manager of Anoka County Parks and Community Services. The Met Council's plan has drawn criticism from local bodies about aspects of the plan, about the cost of implementing the plan, and about the Met Council's role in shaping how the parks operate. This will be our opportunity to hear from both sides on this topic. We Minnesotans love our outdoor pursuits, so this promises to be a lively discussion. Invite your fellow LWV members and tell your friends.

Directions to Roseville library: The library is near Highway 36 and Hamline Ave. (see map). From the south and west: Take 35W north, then Highway 36 east. Take the exit for Hamline Ave. As you exit Highway 36, turn left onto Commerce St. then the next right onto Hamline Ave. The library will be on your left before you reach the intersection at County Rd. B.

Contact Aggie Leitheiser at aggieleit@comcast.net or 952-938-6255 if you would like to car pool.

St. Louis Park Children's First Assets
#22 School Engagement

Did you know 62% of St. Louis Park young people are actively engaged in learning? Talk with teens about what they are learning in school. Discuss how their studies relate to what's happening in the world.

Highlights and Updates

Kids Voting Update – League of Women Voters St. Louis Park

The next Steering Committee will be on Monday, January 12th at 2:30.

LWV SLP wraps gifts to raise funds for Scholarship

Members of LWV SLP wrapped books and other items at Barnes and Noble, Ridgedale this December. The effort raised $140 toward our goal of a $500 scholarship for a SLP Senior.

At left are Eilseen Knisely and Barb Person taking a short break between customers. Other "wrappers" were Dorothy Karlson, Shelley Colvin, Judy Cook and Deb Brinkman

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle have been joined by a new R word now: Repair. Especially as it pertains to appliances, they are urging us not to just discard but to consider repairing appliances, if possible. The county is offering many workshops to learn how to fix things. Put this in your mind for the next time something goes wrong. Go to www.rethinkrecycling.com for more info.

League of Women Voters United States Year in Review

LWVUS releases Year-end Video Highlighting 2014 Activities. Click on this link to watch the 3 minute overview (spoiler alert – there's a mention of Minnesota)
http://voice.adobe.com/v/LqdWBRDsjcz

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN ST LOUIS PARK

By Nancy Rose, new member of LWV SLP

If you are interested in working on environmental issues contact Barbara Aslakson at 952-545-3178 Harbara08@comcast.net or Nancy at 952-920-1249/nrose34021@aol.com.

Stormwater management in St. Louis Park reflects the programs and mandates promulgated by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and overseen in Minnesota by the Pollution Control Agency.

The Clean Water Act of 1972 gave regulatory and enforcement powers to the Federal Agency, which previously had mostly funded state projects and state standards. Public awareness and state actions had focused on "point pollution", from identifiable industrial firms, such as the dramatically burning Love Canal in Ohio, and from sewage treatment plants. In St. Louis Park, the Reilly Tar and Chemical site was closed and treated by EPA action and funding.

As EPA actions reduced point pollution, the Agency recognized a new source of pollution; that of spills from sanitary sewers flooded by storm runoff from impervious surfaces in highly developed urban areas. The EPA responded with the mandated MS4 program, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, in municipalities comprising large metropolitan areas.

The resulting MS4 systems of underground stormwater sewers typically emptied into existing or created ponds, lakes or streams, polluting them with street and parking lot runoff, plant material, animal feces, chemicals, salt and vehicle fluids. This pollution from widespread sources is described as "nonpoint pollution", and includes both urban runoff and rural pollution sources such as agricultural fertilizers, pesticides and animal wastes.

St. Louis Park complied with the MS4 requirement and has reduced local flooding significantly, but non-point pollution of the 20+ ponds receiving storm water was increased. In the mid-1990's, polluted water from Twin Lakes and Bass Lake was degrading Cedar Lake and Lake Calhoun, raising the possibility that they would not be safe for swimming. The Minnesota PCA and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District initiated the Chain of Lakes project to restore recreational quality to these lakes. Treatment included filtering ponds at Cedar and Calhoun, and a settling pond upstream from Twin Lakes. St. Louis Park was assessed about seven hundred thousand dollars for this project.

St. Louis Park has maintained compliance with MPCA mandates by submission of required reports and data, including the Storm Water Management Plan – 2009; the Non-degradation Plan, the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and annual activity reports to the PCA, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, and the Bureau of Water and Soil Resources. City policies to reduce street pollution include frequent street sweeping, reduced street salt use, and City vehicle maintenance to reduce fluid leaks.

Recently a new paradigm of stormwater management has emerged, expressed in the slogan, 'Keep It Where It Falls". Initially mandated by the EPA/PCA for new construction sites and redevelopment areas, it is being voluntarily extended to older areas also in some municipalities. Upstream retention

can be accomplished by a variety of techniques such as underground water storage, outlet control structures on ponds, more pond areas, systems of rain gardens – some in street rights of way, and by rainwater "harvesting" for irrigation use. Retention system designs typically are specific to sub watersheds, the areas within which rainfall converges to a specific destination, such as Bass Lake.

St. Louis Park has four main sub watersheds:

The **Minnehaha Creek Sub- watershed** includes the Aquila residential area, Knollwood and Target area, Meadowbrook Industrial area, Methodist Hospital, Meadowbrook Golf Course and Lake. Streets and parking lots drain directly into the Creek without filtration or treatment. Current redevelopment of Knollwood Shopping Center will include surface water diversion and treatment.

Westwood Lake and the north edges of the City drain into Golden Valley, to the **Bassett Creek Watershed.**

Twin Lakes Sub- watershed is more than two square miles in area and drains into Cedar Lake in Minneapolis.

Bass Lake Sub- watershed also is about two square miles in area and drains to Lake Calhoun in Minneapolis.

In February 2012, the City Council committed to provide ten million dollars funding to improve surface water quality in the City.

Bass Lake was selected as Priority # 1. During 2014, preliminary studies of water depths, silt accumulations, pollutant components, and surrounding vegetation have been completed. Removal of buckthorn and other undesirable vegetation, and replacement with native plants and shore grasses will begin early in 2015.

Conversations with regulatory agencies regarding dredging permits are ongoing.

State Office Resources

Have a question about who to talk to? Not sure where to start looking for information? LWV Minnesota's State Office Staff is here to help! Our office hours are Monday-Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm. Phone number: 651-224-5445 Email: info@lwvmn.org

Susan Sheridan Tucker

Executive Director
sstucker(at)lwvmn.org
651.224.5445 ext 231
Susan oversees all aspects of the organization. She is the main point of contact for LWV Minnesota Board of Director's members.

- **Board of Directors support**
- **Press Relations**
- **Staff management**

Katie Rodriguez

Business Manager
krodriguez(at)lwvmn.org
extension 222
Katie oversees the bookkeeping, accounts receivable and accounts payable. She supports the work of the Budget Committee.

Nicole Lehrke

Member Communications & Administrative Coordinator
nlehrke@lwvmn.org
extension 230
Nicole supports the work of LWV Minnesota's Member Communications and Administration. She serves on the Member Resources and Communication committee. See her complete bio.

- **Questions about LWV Minnesota's Local Leagues**
- **Questions about LWV Membership**
- **Member Resources Committee support**
- **Communications Committee support**
- **Website Support**
- **Roster Updates**

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT. . .

Is noncitizen voting the suffrage movement of our time? Think about it.

There are more than 22 million adults in the U.S. that are barred from voting because they lack citizenship. These people pay billions in taxes each year and make social and cultural contributions to their communities. They are subject to all of the laws that govern citizens, serve in the military and even die defending this country. However, they are not allowed to vote. This is ironic when you recall that the rallying cry for revolution was "no taxation without representation" and where the government rests "on the consent of the governed".

Such exclusion approximates the exclusion of women from the vote prior to 1920, African-Americans before 1965 and 18 year olds prior to 1971. Noncitizens suffer social and economic inequities because policymakers can ignore their interests. So, let them become citizens. The average time it takes for the naturalization process is eight years. That is a long time to go without a vote.

I've thought about it and noncitizen resident voting is the suffrage movement of our time. It is what America's past and future as an immigrant nation requires. What do you think?

(Condensed by Judith Cook from a Star Tribune, December 26, 2014, editorial, "Going forth as an immigration nation" written by Ron Hayduk, a professor of political science at Queens College, City University of New York, is the author of "Democracy for All: Restoring Immigrant Voting Rights in the United States.")

Observer Reports

St. Louis Park City Council December 1, 2014 Aggie Leitheiser, reporter
All members were present.

Public Hearing on the 2015 Budget, 21015 Preliminary Property Tax Levy, and other general tax and budgetary information. Brian Swanson, Controller reported the proposed budget is $26,990,000 for 2015, which is an increase of $1,407,000 or 1.4% increase over 2014. General government accounts for 25.4%; public safety 44.1%; operations and recreation 30% and non-department expenses .5%. 41% of residential properties will see a decrease and 93% of businesses will see a decrease. Locally, 37.8% of property taxes go to the city.

Public testimony included concerns about the increase in taxes with a recommendation to tie the budget to the economy; stay focused on community priorities; increased valuation so increased taxes; don't tie tax rate and budget together; consider cutting services/spending. The City Manager said there have been several years of decreases; consider what needs to be done vs. what's nice to do.

City Council discussion about aging infrastructure; demands from residents about services; need to stay viable for economic investments. The budget is scheduled to be acted on at the December 15 meeting.

Sale of 2014A G.O. Bonds for Sidewalks and Trails and Utilities. The city received 9 bids from across the country with rates from 1.74 to 1.96. This supports the Connect the Park project ($5.2 million) and stormwater projects ($4.8 million). Council approved sale of the General Obligation Bonds.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Looking to 2015: Many Challenges and a Few Opportunities for Voting Rights in the States

By: Tim O'Brien 01/02/2015

While most of the attention around last year's midterm elections was focused on who would control the U.S. Senate, here at the League of Women Voters' Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP) project, we were most interested in the results at the state level and the impact they could have on advancing election-related legislation. While we anticipate continued attacks to voting rights during the 2015 state legislative sessions, as we've seen in the last few years, the League also sees opportunities to advance pro-voter reforms to streamline voters' ability to weigh-in on the issues important to them.

Taking into consideration the incoming state governments, we analyzed all 50 states on their likelihood to advance either positive or negative election related reforms using the following criteria:

1. Voter suppression risks
2. Pro-voter reform opportunities
3. Likelihood that states will have close elections in 2016, which could influence partisan operatives' plans to try and make the voting process easier or more difficult depending on their desired outcome
4. Existing state election laws – i.e., do existing state elections laws assist voters in being able to cast their ballot or are there laws that limit access to the ballot that need to be addressed in the upcoming legislative session, and are there ways the League can assist voters now who need assistance to mitigate the impact of restrictive laws
5. Past legislative action that was unsuccessful in either suppressing or expanding the vote
6. Compliance with federal election laws

Through this process, the PAVP project identified nearly 20 states that will have a moderate to high chance of passing reforms that will suppress the vote next year. In these states, we anticipate continuing our work against efforts seeking to:

- Implement restrictive voter photo ID and proof-of-citizenship requirements when registering or voting;
- Decrease early voting;
- Eliminate election or same-day registration; and
- Place new restrictions on community-based voter registration drives, like those hosted by Leagues across the country.

These states will be the main focus of our PAVP project this year as we continue our fight against voter suppression by stopping anti-voter legislation and mitigating the impact of anti-voter laws in the states.

There is little doubt that the 2015-2016 state legislative sessions will be an ongoing challenge for voting rights across the country, but once again the League of Women Voters is ready to fight back against voter suppression and to advance pro-voter reforms in the states. It has become crystal clear that the struggle to ensure free, fair and accessible elections will require a long-term movement and the League is primed to once again lead the charge to protect and expand voting rights for all eligible voters across the country.

LWV SLP Calendar 2015

February	**95th Anniversary of LWV** **Black History Month**	
February 5	**Board Meeting** **Location: Judy' home**	**Judy Cook**
February 18	**Unit 2 Meeting** **Topic: Inclusion "We're All the Same"** **Location: Tower Light**	**Barbara Aslakson** **Debbie Blake** **Aggie Leitheiser**
February 19	**Unit 3 Meeting** **Topic Inclusion "We're All The Same"** **Location: City Hall**	**Aggie Leitheiser**
March	**Women's History Month**	
March 5	**Board Meeting** **Location: Eilseen's home**	**Eilseen Knisely**
March 18 **1 or 1:30 pm**	**Unit 2 Meeting** **Topic: Bees** **Location: Tower Light**	**Barbara Aslakson** **Debbie Blake** **Barb Person**
March 19 **7 pm**	**Unit 3 Meeting** **Topic: Bees** **Location: SLP City Hall**	**Barb Person**
March 21	**CMAL** **Topic:**	**Debbie Blake**
March	**West Metro** **Topic:**	**West Metro Rep: Barb Person**

	Location:	
April	LWVSLP Birthday 61	
April 2	Board Meeting Location: Debbie's Home	Debbie Blake
April	Empty Bowls Westwood Lutheran Church	
April 18	61st Annual Meeting Topic: Water or Campaign Finance / Citizens United Location: McCoys	LWV SLP BOARD
April	Career Day at the High School with Karen Waters	Eilseen
May	Celebrate St. Louis Park Kids May 19, 1919 Women's Right to Vote	19th Amendment
May 7 7 pm	Board Meeting Location: Aggie's Home	Aggie Leitheiser
May 20 1 or 1:30	Unit 2 Meeting Topic: Book Review Location: Tower Light	Barbara Aslakson Debbie Blake Dorothy Karlson
May 21 7 pm	Unit 3 Meeting Topic: Book Review Location: SLP City Hall	Dorothy Karlson
May 23 9:30 coffee 10:00 program	CMAL Annual Meeting Topic: Location:	Debbie Blake
May	Ice Cream Social – Children First Wolfe Park	Deb
May	Scholarship Program SLP High School	Deb
June	Parktacular June 10, 1963 Equal Pay for Women June 23, 1972 Equality in education and sports	Fair Labor Standards Act Title IX
June 4	Board Meeting Location:	
June 13 -14	LWV Minnesota Convention Location: Duluth	LWVMN
June	Parktacular	
July	July 1, 1971 – age to vote from 21 to 18 July 2, 1964 – Equal Rights Amendment	26th Amendment Title VII Employment Equality
July 9	Board Meeting Location:	
August	Getting Ready	
August 6 6 pm	Planning Meeting Location: Deb's Home	Deb Brinkman

LWV SLP OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2014-15

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

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

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

Name (Family Member #1):_____

Name (Family Member #2): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State:_____ Zip _____

Phone:_____Email: _____

Membership Dues
(a portion of dues are now tax deductible):

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

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

Barb Person, Membership Chair
2049 Utah Avenue South
St. Louis Park, MN 55426
952/546-3490
2persons@comcast.net

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

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