



LWVmpls VOTER

Volume 67, Issue 2

August/September 2009

Kicking Off the League Year

Start Your Engines...

Summer is nearly over and we have an election fast approaching. Time to organize units and catch up on current events in the city.

September Topic - Ranked Choice Voting

This fall voters in Minneapolis will be able to rank their choices for Mayor, City Council, Board of Estimate and Taxation and Park and Recreation Board. This new voting method called **Ranked Choice Voting** allows voters to rank multiple candidates in order of preference – up to three candidates for each office. We have looked at this topic several times before but now that it is being implemented, we need to become experts on the process.

No Primary This Year

The 2009 election will use Ranked Choice Voting and that means there is no Primary. All candidates appear on the November ballot. The offices on the 2009 ballot are Mayor, Council Members – 13 Wards, Board of Estimate and Taxation – 2 At-Large seats, Park and Recreation Board – 3 At-Large and 6 District seats. The General Election will be held Tuesday, November 3, 2009.

Ranked Choice Voting

Although commonly referred to as Instant Runoff Voting,(IRV), the City of Minneapolis will be referring to this method as “**Ranked Choice Voting.**” The term “Ranked Choice” more accurately reflects the process voters will use to rank candidates in single and multi-seat offices. Also “Ranked Choice” does not promise “instant” results from the process.

See <http://voteminneapolis.org/>, the official outreach and education website of the City of Minneapolis for more information on **Ranked Choice Voting.**

Plan your calendar

Other topics LWVmpls will focus on during the coming year are:

- ◆ October—Minneapolis Ballot changes. Prepare yourself for the election. Invite your neighbors.
- ◆ November—Education
- ◆ January—Program Planning
- ◆ February—State legislative issues of interest
- ◆ March—CMAL Affordable housing
- ◆ April—Climate Change
- ◆ May—Healthy Legacy II: Water

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From the President

Deborah Jindra



As many of you know, I am a second generation League of Women Voters member. I grew up with my mom reading policy articles at the breakfast table. (This, after she had completed the crossword puzzle. My usual greeting, after being grumpily aroused from deep teenage sleep, was something like “What’s the French word for a sheep? Six letters?”)

My mother’s colleagues in her local League were excited about all the changes that were happening for women in the ‘60s and ‘70s. They were on a mission to provide service to the community but also were stretching the boundaries for themselves by championing women candidates and encouraging leadership roles in all segments of society.

As we plan for our future, I think it is important to acknowledge those women who came before us and remind ourselves how much they accomplished. We have been laying the groundwork for our 90th Anniversary celebration over the last months and now we really need to get to work. The activists of the suffrage movement, after successfully amending the Constitution of the United States, took the brave step to form the League of Women Voters.

Now, we also need courage to change as we operate in a world that sometimes seems to be upside down. We need to assess where we are and how we should proceed. We’ve had great successes over the years. Our long-time members have amazing stories to tell of their roles in many of the major societal changes of the last 90 years, such as civil rights, women’s rights, and the environmental movement.

We need to tackle many of the same issues that businesses face in this challenging economy. What are our strengths and what do we do best? I see two outstanding assets - our 90-year reputation for fairness and dedication to the community and more important, our dedicated members. Women and men, who devote countless volunteer hours to make elections run smoother, present candidate debates and educate voters in myriad ways, are our foundation.

We need to build on these extraordinary assets and promote ourselves to funders and the public at large. We are a unique and valuable organization and need to remind everyone of that frequently, without feeling like we would rather stay in the background.

This summer, I volunteered to attend the kick off event of the National Civic Summit. I was impressed with the reception LWV members received by those attending the high-tech focused National Tweetup. Taking our story to new venues and new audiences will continue to be on our agenda as we celebrate our Anniversary, while we still provide the solid service to our community that we always have. We owe it to all those Leaguers who came before us.

Nineteenth Amendment

Passed by Congress June 4, 1919.
Ratified August 18, 1920.

Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Section 2: Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Not Bored Board



L-R: Don Hall, Marilyn Dean, Kristin Batson, Deborah Jindra, Julaine Heit, Jennifer Bennett, Janet Gendler.

Sharon Chapman and Carol Green also attended.

Unable to attend: Kate Donahue, Melissa Metzler, Kelsey Johnson, & Mary Katherine Johnson.

Urgent message from the Board

We are still seeking Voter Services and Voter Education volunteers. Now more than ever, we need people willing to work with other Leaguers to do what we do best. The LWV is a trusted source for non-partisan information and for conducting well-organized even-handed forums.

This fall we will get numerous requests for organizing candidate forums and providing moderators during the busy election season. There may be confusion over charter changes and the new voting system and we will be asked to help educate residents.

Now is the time to step up to help make democracy work. Thank you.

The 2009-2010 Board of Directors met for a retreat on July 25th in the beautiful offices of the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce. (Thanks, Chamber.)

The theme was **Tapping Our Creativity**. As you can see in the accompanying photo, directors wielded their crayons to come up with an image for our 90th Anniversary celebration. The ideas were great but we ultimately decided to bring in a professional to help. (See page 5.)

Creativity was the word of the day however, as we searched for new ways to tackle funding, special projects and membership. After getting acquainted with each other and completing the art project, the directors got down to business.

Serious issues were addressed. Staffing and office procedures were presented. Program planning and new ways of providing education on local issues to our members and the public were discussed.

Creativity comes in many forms. Some upcoming examples:

- ✓ A&W sponsorship of an event on the Nicollet Mall.
- ✓ Working with *Southwest Journal* to present city council and park board debates.
- ✓ Partnering with other organizations to get the word out about the Census.

Thanks go to these dedicated board members who gave up a summer Saturday to keep the LWVMpls on track. This Board has a colorful and exciting year ahead.

Healthy Legacy Part II: Water

Kay Kessel

Drip, Drip, Splash! This is the suggested theme for our new focus on Water Quality. We hope those drips of information become a waterfall for Minneapolis League members and citizens of Minneapolis.

The committee, which met three times over the summer, consists of LWVMpls members who indicated an interest in a second Healthy Legacy Forum and several organizations dedicated to sustainable environments and water quality. Other groups represented are: Healthy Legacy, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Freshwater Foundation, Clean Water Action, Women's Environmental Institute, City of Minneapolis Water Dept. and Sustainability Office.

Some of the ideas presented:

Lois Eberhardt, City of Minneapolis, told us the city is studying how much TMDL (total maximum daily load) a body of water can assimilate before it is polluted. National rules are in place and will gradually be enforced. Other ideas: Canines for Clean water, trees for storm water management and stenciling of catch basins. (LWVMpls was involved in the catch basin project several years ago.) The city will provide grants for 150 rain gardens in the city.

Ms. Eberhart and others want to make sure our efforts are multi-cultural, e.g., a Hmong elder speaking about quality of water. We hope to feature the Chalchitlicue Environmental Justice Summit Committee and dancers dedicated to pure water.

Peter Starzinsky, Healthy Legacy, urged us to study the origin of chemicals in water, such as pollutants due to endocrine disrupters.

Lonni McCauley, Cherie Wagner and Joan Nephew, Freshwater Foundation, are advocating for study and protection of groundwater quality and sustainability. Freshwater will soon announce events for 2010, Year of Water. They will invite national speakers and conduct training.

Kelsey Johnson, LWVMpls, attended the Clean Water Network meeting, which is concerned with agriculture and clean water issues. This caucus is focused on Mississippi River basin water pollution issues.

Margit Berg, LWVMpls, urges an incremental information campaign plus a forum or series of events. Groundwater is a problem, but surface water the most problematic. We could provide door-to-door information on pollution prevention tactics.

Emily Moore, Women's Environmental Institute, and our partner for the Healthy Legacy 1 forum on Toxic Chemicals has a great network with many organizations including EJAM and Chalchitlicue Environmental Justice organization. She urged us to "remember all actions have consequences. Consider the food, cosmetics and soap we purchase and their ultimate end in the water supply. Agriculture, lawns, and golf courses all play a role in water pollution."

There is a Nobel Prize conference at Gustavus Adolphus on October 5 and 6 focusing on water. Some of our committee organizations plan to be there.

We hope more members will join our committee to learn, to connect, to plan a big "splashy" event or several smaller ones. Our mission is to learn, to educate and to take action.

An Image for Our 90th Anniversary Campaign

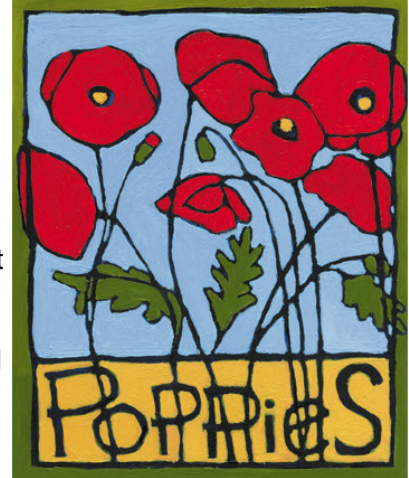
The 2009/10 Board of Directors is commissioning a work of art for our 90th Anniversary. This image is a gift to our members and will be used as a defining image as we celebrate our longevity and raise funds to keep us healthy into the next 90 years.

Megan Moore, a talented young artist, is currently looking at our history and mission for inspiration. In the next month, she will present several ideas to us and in good LWVMpls fashion, we will vote on the image that we think best presents us to the world.

Megan Moore is a local artist who grew up in Huntsville, AL. She studied at the Savannah College of Art and Design and moved to Minneapolis in 2002. Her work is inspired by nature and travel and she says it is a representation of "my personal experience of the beauty in the world around me." Her background in illustration lends a narrative nature to the compositions.

She is a member of Studiopolis, a nine-artist studio in the Northrup King Building in the Northeast Arts District. She shows her work in local galleries and many art fairs and does periodic freelance illustration. See more of her work on her website: <http://meganmoore.com/index.html>

Stay tuned for the exciting art unveiling...



A sample of Megan Moore's previous work.

Census Activities Coordinator Needed

LWVMpls is seeking a volunteer coordinator to work with LWVMN on the 2010 Census. The importance of a complete count cannot be overstated.

Why is the census so important?

To make sure **EVERYONE** counts. The census means business - dollars to our community from the state and the federal government as well as representation in Congress and in the Minnesota Legislature. It also ensures economic developers and others know just what our community is like. Local coordinators are key to reach all populations that reside in their area.

Census data are used to inform our community's decisions. It is like a snapshot that helps define who we are as a community. Data about changes in our community are crucial to many planning decisions, such as where to provide services for the elderly, where to build new roads and schools, or where to locate job training centers.

Please contact the LWVMpls office 612.333.6319 if you can help with this important project.

Looking for Lively Conversation?

If you are an at-large member or someone thinking about joining LWVMpls, consider visiting a unit meeting.

Unit 1

Chair: Lindsey Thomas, 612.824.4489
2nd Mondays, 7:15 pm Locations TBD

Unit 11

Co-Chairs: Jan Midtbo, 612.926.0954
Judy Walter, 612.927.5847
2nd Tuesdays, 7:15 pm Locations TBD

Unit 25/29

Co-Chairs: Harriet Johnson, 612.331.5669
Jane Starr, 612.378.2590
Tuesday, Sept. 8, 7:00 pm 126 Orlin Ave SE
Presentation on Ranked Choice Voting

Unit 48

Chair: Jennifer Johnson, 612.377.6084
3rd Wednesdays, 7:00 pm Locations TBD

Unit 49

Co-Chairs: Gerry Sell, 612.823.3248
Marilyn Kelly, 612.824.6404
Please call for information.

Unit 53

Co-Chairs: Elaine Lindstrom, 612.377.3262
Marilyn Dean, 612.377.4223
Please call for information.

LWVMpls Sponsoring Candidate Forums

With an opportunity this fall to rank candidates in order of preference (ranked choice voting), it is more important than ever to know the candidates.

LWVMpls will be sponsoring forums in various areas of the city, and moderating and timekeeping at those sponsored by others. We will need help with arrangements for those that we sponsor. If you're willing to help, please contact Margit Berg at 612.377.4776, or by email: margitkb@comcast.net.

For those who are on the list for moderating and timekeeping, there will be a refresher training session on Tuesday, Sept. 15th from 6:30-8:00 pm at the League office. Watch for an e-mail soon about this. This is basic work for the League of Women Voters and it's exciting to be involved.

Welcome New Members

Hadley Barrows
Kathie Cerra
Mary Dye
Sharon Emery
Ruby Hocker
Kartra Kohl
Kathryn Ringham
JoAnne Zachow

Many thanks for...

Office Help

Carol Green
Ann Jaede
Marilyn Dean

Goals for Good Government

Carol Greene
Ann Pugliese

Policies and Procedures Research

Alice Moormann

Development Corner

Thank you to the following members and friends of the League who have contributed since the last issue of the VOTER.

Virginia Craig
Katherine Constantine
Alyce Cranston
Karlynn Fronck
Paula Goldberg
Deborah Jindra
Jennifer Johnson
Shirley Kaplan
Naomi Lyon
Alice Moormann
Karen Ringsrud
Dr. Lindsey Thomas
Judy Walter
Laura Weinberger

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission

Kristin Batson

The City of Minneapolis is transforming the former Neighborhood Revitalization Program into a new entity, and six Minneapolis LWV volunteers played a critical role in the process. The Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) will be an essential part of the City's new department focused on community participation.

The NCEC will provide funding to neighborhood organizations to address both neighborhood-identified and City-identified goals. A high profile date in this transition was June 17, 2009 when neighborhood activists from around the city gathered at Van Cleve Park to elect eight district representatives to the new commission.

Six Minneapolis LWV volunteers: Kate Donahue, Alice Moorman, Kristin Batson, Ann Jaede, Hennepin County Commissioner Gail Dorfman, and Policy Aide Kerri Pearce Ruch facilitated and monitored the process. They registered electors and alternates, presented the voting rules, facilitated the candidate Q and A, conducted the election and counted the votes for each of the eight districts.

Even though the city used a new process and there were many questions and last minute changes, the elections went smoothly due to the skill and flexibility of this great group of volunteers.

Important Dates for the League of Women Voters

September 8, 1919

The Minnesota Legislature ratified the 19th Amendment (House 120 to 6 / Senate 60 to 5)

October 29, 1919

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota was organized. (The Minnesota Suffrage Association dissolved its corporation on October 7, 1919 to become LWVMN.)

February 14, 1920

The League of Women Voters was officially founded as "a mighty experiment," at the "Victory Convention" of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in Chicago, Illinois. By then 33 states had ratified the suffrage amendment, but final victory was still three states away.

August 18, 1920

Tennessee became the final state to ratify the 19th Amendment, after the governor yielded to appeals to call a special session of the legislature. A young state legislator cast the deciding vote after being admonished to do so by his mother.

August 26, 1920 (Women's Equality Day)

Notice of the final ratification was received by the Secretary of State in Washington at 4:00 a.m., and the Nineteenth Amendment was proclaimed part of the Constitution. Up to that time, no other amendment had taken so long to secure. Minnesota can claim the first women voters in the nation as a stalwart group of women in South St. Paul organized a local referendum in the wee hours of the morning of August 27, 1920.

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MISSION

The League of Women Voters,
a nonpartisan political organization,
encourages informed and active
participation in government, works to
increase understanding of major policy
issues, and influences public policy through
education and advocacy.

Deborah Jindra, President

Visit us on the Web!
www.lwvmpls.org

Upcoming Events Save the Dates!

CMAL Orientation

Saturday, September 12
9:00 am - 12:00 noon
Shoreview City Hall
City Council Chamber
4600 Victoria Avenue

Moderating and Timekeeping Training Session

Tuesday, September 15
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm
LWVMpls Office

Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, September 16
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
LWVMpls Office



Tapping Our Creativity
See inside....