



LWV Mpls VOTER

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Ranked Choice Voting Minneapolis City Elections Approved

The November Minneapolis election will be held in the format of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) (a.k.a. "Instant Runoff Voting"). On June 11 the Minnesota Supreme Court, in a much-awaited decision, rejected the challenge to RCV's constitutionality, and on June 12 the Minneapolis City Council voted to go ahead with RCV.

Under RCV, there will be no primary, and voters will employ RCV in November to elect the Mayor,

City Council, Board of Estimate and Taxation, and Park Board.

A successful RCV election will demand a concerted program of public education, and League members will want to participate. Fair Vote Minnesota is working on public education, compiling an extensive list of events where volunteers can distribute literature and explain RCV to the public. We hope that League members will want to participate in that and other opportunities at FairVote.

Minneapolis Elections has appointed Ona Keller and Mike Dean (both of Common Cause) as outreach coordinators. They are forming a Ranked Choice Voting Issues Group to assist in public education, with monthly meetings and, of course, much in-between work. To get involved, contact Ona Keller at 612.210.1056.

To keep updated on RCV, League members can follow coverage in the Star Tribune. FairVote Minnesota is a key source of information. You can go to www.fairvotemn.org for updates, background, and history and to get on their e-mail newsletter distribution list.

~Claire Olson

Voter Services: Gearing Up for the November Election

Voter Service Committee members have recommended establishing a temporary subcommittee to deal with the issues of training moderators, increasing participation of members in training, improving the system of contacting newly-trained facilitators, and developing a template of facilitator responsibilities that can be e-mailed by the Candidate Forum or Community Elections coordinator to volunteer moderators, timekeepers, etc.

Any LWV Mpls member is welcome to participate on this subcommittee. We are especially seeking experienced forum moderators and those who have *trained* moderators. The subcommittee will be responsible for planning and facilitating one or two moderator trainings by late summer/early fall.

The Committee also is seeking a member who would like to share, and then take over, the coordinator responsibilities for Election Night Services. We are very grateful that Janet Midtbo has skillfully overseen these revenue-generating services for many years and is willing to train in her replacement.

To learn more please contact Lynn Pepple at lmpepple@yahoo.com or 612.789.3021.

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From the President

Deborah Jindra

LWV is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.



Deborah Jindra
Newly-elected President

The gavel has been passed. After two years serving as President, Janet Gendler handed over the reins of this organization to me at the City Convention.

During the last two years we hosted Russian delegates, worked with the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless and presented forums on

Healthy Legacy, the selection of judges, Sunshine Week and the 2010 Census.

We also faced serious funding and staffing issues. Janet attended more meetings than any one per-

son should and kept our organization on track. Her leadership will be a hard act to follow, but I hope to keep us on good financial footing and maintain the extraordinary service to the community that we have provided over the last 90 years. Luckily, Janet will stay on as Past-President, Marilyn Dean has accepted the President-elect role and our new and returning board members bring enthusiasm and numerous skills to assist me.

In a letter from LWVUS president Mary G. Wilson, read at our convention, LWVMpls is saluted for activities that help make democracy work. Ms. Wilson thanked us for helping maintain a high level of trust in the League of Women Voters as a source of fair, open, unbiased and genuinely nonpartisan information. Thank you for entrusting me with the Presidency of such a respected, active and thoughtful organization.

LWVMpls Local Government Committee Considering Options in Light of City Charter Change on Ballot in November

Since January the Local Government Committee has been taking action related to three proposed charter amendments for Minneapolis. The Minneapolis Charter Commission has selected one of the proposals—to eliminate the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET)—to be on the ballot in November. Since LWVMpls has a clear position in support of eliminating BET, the Committee is now considering options for further action that might include: unit discussion in September or October; one or more public forums; reprints of relevant sections of the League's 2005 and 2006 studies, and other efforts.

The Committee will continue to monitor the Charter Commission meetings and will observe activities of a proposed Blue Ribbon Commission to examine efficiency in City government, if it is created. The Blue Ribbon Commission was suggested by Council President Johnson, Mayor Rybak, and Park Board Chair Nordyke in response to other proposed Charter Amendments

that would have created a City Administrator position in Minneapolis and placed the Park Board responsibilities under the City Council. The goal of the Commission would be to look at the issue of efficiency in administering the city and park system, not necessarily to change the structure, as proposed in Charter Commission discussions this spring. Some members of the Charter Commission have indicated that further amendments should be considered following the Blue Ribbon study.

If you're interested in joining the Committee, new members are always welcome. Contact Committee Chair, Joan Niemiec, joan4239@att.net, or call the office

Find copies of the 2005 and 2006 studies on the LWVMpls web site:

www.lwvmpls.org/Current_Reports.html

~Jeanne Andre
~ Pat Kovel Jarboe

LWVMinneapolis Annual Report 2007-08

From Janet Gendler, President

Dear Friends,

Since its inception in 1919, the League of Women Voters of Minneapolis (LWVMpls) has supported democracy by promoting informed, objective and non-partisan community engagement. LWVMpls is an affiliate of the League of Women Voters, a grassroots organization working at the national, state, and local levels. We accomplish our mission of encouraging participation in the community and government through education and advocacy with activities such as:



Janet Gendler

- ✓ Voter registration drives
- ✓ Candidate forums
- ✓ Voter guides
- ✓ Election hotlines
- ✓ New voter education
- ✓ Directory of elected officials
- ✓ Support for neighborhood elections
- ✓ Moderator/facilitator training
- ✓ Study of local policy issues
- ✓ Public forums on current issues
- ✓ Speakers bureau
- ✓ Citizen education classes in the community

I am proud that LWVMpls serves the residents of Minneapolis as a trusted, reliable resource for non-partisan voter education and information on public policy issues. This fiscal year, when no elections were held in the fall, served as a time to build organization resources and establish community connections in preparation for the 2008 elections and an anticipated increased demand on our services.

Mission Statement

LWVMpls is a nonpartisan, political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Board of Advisors

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Robert Greenberg
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Jeff Hamiel
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Michael Henley
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Joan Higinbotham
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Herman Milligan, Jr.
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Tracey O'Neill Ruzicka
Target Corporation
Kay Schimke
LWVMpls Member

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Programs Focused on LWVMpls Mission

Non-partisan voter information

A core accomplishment of LWVMpls is building civic participation in the democratic process by registering voters, hosting numerous candidate debates and presenting educational forums on important election issues.

We planned for election hotlines to answer election-related questions for thousands of citizens and prepared non-partisan, written election information in five languages. Our targets for information were new citizens and low voter turnout neighborhoods.

Trusts and Endowments

Ann Duff Leadership Fund

Assets from this fund support leadership training.

Florrie Gray Fund

Assets from this fund support activities to increase membership

Minneapolis Foundation Endowment - \$154,400
Interest assets from this endowment provide \$5,000 for operating costs annually.

Staff

Lonni McCauley, Executive Director
Chris Madsen and Carol Green, Office Managers
Melissa Metzler, Outreach and Website coordinator
Dennis Albrecht, Accountant

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FAX 612.333.6310

vote@lwvmpls.org

www.lwvmpls.org

LWVMpls is a 501(c)3 organization.

This year, the Outreach Coordinator began working in targeted low-income, low-voting precincts in Minneapolis to encourage civic engagement, registration, and future increased voting. We partnered with Somali, Spanish, Lao, and Hmong immigrant groups. This project was aided by a memo of understanding with the Pillsbury United Communities and its six community centers.

LWVMpls unveiled a unique, user-friendly web application, available for the general public to enter home address and receive information on their currently elected official and precinct and polling locations. This voter service has proven to be invaluable to Minneapolis residents (and subsequently used at other public web sites). Thanks to in-kind services provided by Urban Planet.

Improving Public Policy

LWVMpls provides citizen education to improve public policy. We research balanced, in-depth reports on pressing local issues. Our reports are used by community organizations to promote systemic changes for community improvement. Topics covered this year included school board reform, excess levy referendum, emergency preparedness, national immigration reform, selection of Minnesota judges, the public libraries, and housing the homeless.

Homeless Initiative: LWVMpls partnered with 19 other organizations to present a public forum, "The 10-year Plan to End Homelessness, Be a Part of the Solution." This forum showcased efforts to find housing and support for homeless residents through Heading Home Hennepin and offered the 325 attendees concrete opportunities for engagement. Project Connect, a day of hands-on support held semi-annually to help homeless people access resources, was one program highlighted by LWVMpls volunteers.

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Russian Visitors

LWVMpls hosted four delegates and a facilitator from Russia through the Open World Program. Key components were home stays with LWV member families and a week-long program with the theme of Accountable Government and a special focus on elections. Activities included witnessing election preparations and voting, meeting with state and city officials, touring City Hall and the state Capitol, and visiting several human service agencies.

Member and Community Education

Partnering with Community Groups: LWVMpls again facilitated several neighborhood organization elections, providing moderators, timekeepers, and ballot counters. LWVMpls provided management and implementation of candidate forums and elections to the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) Policy Board.

Somali Student Ambassadors: A partnership with Somali Family Services, involved training a group

of Somali students at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College in voter education and civic engagement based on LWV programs. The Student Ambassadors spent several months in class, shared lessons in civic engagement fundamentals with the Somali community, worked as voter registration volunteers, and addressed the LWVMpls City Convention.

Awareness and Advocacy

Immigration Issues: LWVMpls members worked with national LWV materials to discuss immigration issues and contributed to a LWV-member consensus on policy for immigration reform at the federal level.

Instant Runoff Voting: LWVMpls supported this new voting process for Minneapolis. Members now serve on the Secretary of State's task force charged with advising and assisting in implementation.

Below: Somali Student Ambassadors



LWVMinneapolis Annual Report 2007-08

Donations for Fiscal Year July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008

\$1000 and up

Ann Duff Fund of the Minneapolis
Foundation
Susan Greenberg
Marion Hall
Mary Lou Loud
Joan Niemiec

\$500 - \$999

Janet Gendler
Julaine Heit
Carolyn Hendrixson
Joan Higinbotham
Deborah Jindra
Patricia Kovel-Jarboe
Susan Reinhart
Pamela Telleen

\$250 - \$499

Kristin Batson
Anita Duckor
Karlynn Fronck
Susan Gray
F. Bruce Lewis
Alice Moormann
Claire Olson
Judy Walter
Ruth Waterbury
Steven Webster

\$100 - \$249

Jeanne Andre
Jean Beccone
Carolyn Chalmers
Ginny Craig
Mary Eichinger
Kent Eklund
Barbara Flanigan
Carol Green

George Harding
Mary Lou Hill
Martha Head
Harriet Johnson
Mary Katherine Johnson
Manuel Kaplan
Polly Keppel
Barbara Kimer
Dot Lilja
Naomi Lyons
Richard Mammen
Mary McEvoy
Mary McGee
Gwen Meyers
Peggy Pluimer
Paula Prah
Elizabeth Reichert
John Rudesill
Sally Sawyer
Patricia Scott
Sue Shepard
Bonnie Sipkins
Norman Sterrie
G. Rolf Svendsen
David Wyatz

\$50 - \$99

Margaret Bracken
Irene Cass
Harriet Conkey
Katherine Constantine
Caroline Dale
Judy Duffy
Katie Fournier
Keesha Gaskins
Cecilie Gaziano
Kathy Graves
Paula Goldberg
Zelia Goldberg

Jean Greener
Dorothy Guilford
Catherine Hegg
Michael Henley
Elizabeth Hinz
Diane Hofstede
Patricia Kelly
Velma Kimsal
William Lubov
Peggy Lucas
Ann Luther
Mary McGee
Karen Michael
Patricia Moberg
Carol Moller
Gwen Myers
Laurel Paller-Rzepka
Jane Papageorgiou
Ann Phillips
Ann Pugliese
Sally Pundt
Julia Rau
Jennifer Schaefer
Susan Simmonds
Jane Starr
Helen Wolk

Support from Grants

General Mills Foundation	\$10,000
Harold Sweatt Foundation	200
Jewish Community Foundation	2,000
LWVUS	3,500
LWV Minnesota	1,000
Minneapolis Foundation	7,500
Otto Bremer Foundation	9,150

Income and Expenses Fiscal Year July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008

Total Income	\$105,360	Total Expenses	\$133,661
Grants and contributions	\$98,112	Program	\$65,629
Grants	24,000	Non-partisan voter information	12,422
Membership dues	15,400	Citizen education to improve public policy	24,411
Donations	46,500	Member and community education through workshops and forums	28,735
Other	2,212	Advocacy for reasonable solutions to community problems	61
Interest and dividends	7,248	Payment to affiliates	10,370
		Fundraising	38,300

Roll the Credits!

The LWVMpls spring fundraiser, *Lights, Camera, Take Action*, was held May 7th. The film theme extended to the crowd of red-carpet-worthy guests. It was a fun event with a photographer from Black Tie capturing the attendees for posterity. Photos at https://www.blacktie-minnesota.com/premiere_events/thumbnails.cfm?numStartPicOrder=1&id=42

WCCO -TV personality Angela Davis was the gracious celebrity host for the evening, along with our own superstar, Janet Gendler.

Thanks go to Barb Kimer and Karlynn Fronek and their amazing silent auction committee for procuring all the wonderful donations.



(l to r) Outgoing President Janet Gendler, Incoming President Deborah Jindra, and President-Elect Marilyn Dean

Sue Verrett used her highly-developed food management skills to make sure the buffet was top-drawer. Thank you to Karen Harder, too, for securing the jazz musicians, KVT Trio, who played through the night. Executive Director Lonni McCauley put in many hours, using her creativity and persuasive skills to make sure everything ran smoothly. Administrative Manager Sharon Chapman managed the crazy patchwork of messages and donations and worked the evening of the event.

Thank you to all who attended and those who donated/purchased auction items to make the event a success. The final tally is still out but we count it as a blockbuster during these hard economic times because so many people joined us. That's a wrap.

~Deborah Jindra

Karen and Scott Harder with one of the event committee's wonderful evocations of the Women's Suffrage era, a costume rented from the Guthrie.



(l to r) Benefit Committee Member-Melissa Metzler, Amanda Grimm, Tracey Ruzicka, and Kelsey Johnson.

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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
Ginny Craig, VOTER Editor

We're on the Web!
www.lwvmpls.org

Kay Schimke is 2009 Bess Mlnarik Award Recipient

The 2009 Bess Mlnarik Award was presented to Kay Schimke at the June 1 annual City Convention. Other nominees were Margit Berg, Julaine Heit and Joan Higinbotham.

Kay joined LWVMpls in 1994, serving on the Board of Directors as Communications Director. In this capacity she brought LWVMpls to a new level of visibility with public relations expertise and hard work that involved nearly monthly citywide events, including multiple forums. Kay developed new lists of organizations and individuals to be notified of the events that she then helped revise once her board term was over. She attended many meetings to ensure that planning included a public relations component. Not only was she willing to be a source of advice and support for those responsible for communications, but also she just completed another term as Director of Communications.

When Unit 1 had planning responsibilities for City Convention, Kay provided many hours of volunteer time. Her tenacity and spirit are reflected in her leadership of the unit. She stepped up when no one else volunteered to coordinate the unit and didn't flinch when asked to take on the convention.

Kay exemplifies the best of League volunteerism. She is willing to tackle jobs big and small, rarely says "no," and brings to each task enthusiasm and a highly professional approach. She never cuts corners to get the job done right.

Our congratulations and thanks to Kay and nominees Margit, Julaine and Joan.

~Carol Green