



# THE VOTER

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

News Briefs	2
From the President	2
Counting MN Snowbirds	2
West Metro Redistricting Forum	3
January/February Calendar	4

## Participate in Program Planning on January 9

This year we will be reviewing LWVUS positions and deciding whether, for each issue, we will recommend to: leave as is; update; or study. This is the grass roots of our organization at work! Plan to attend

and be a part of this important process.

While this is a good meeting for potential new members to attend and learn about LWV's positions, only LWV members are allowed to vote on the issues.

**Saturday,  
January 9, 2010  
9:00 a.m.  
New Hope City Hall  
brunch & coffee**



## Council of Metro Area Leagues to Host Discussion about Homelessness

Beginning at 10:00 am on Saturday, January 16, 2010, at the Augsburg Park Library (7100 Nicollet Avenue in Richfield), the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues (CMAL) will host a panel discussion on the topic 'Housing is a Human Right?' Panelists will include Mikkel Beckmen, Monica Nilsson and Elizabeth Hinz.

Mikkel Beckmen, is Executive Director at St. Stephen's Human Services whose mission is to end homelessness. Believing that housing is a human right, he has worked with those experiencing homelessness and extreme poverty by developing and managing housing and support programs for the past 20 years. Since 2005 he has been responsible for leading all programming and development activities at St. Stephen's Human Services.

Monica Nilsson, Director of Street Outreach for St. Stephen's Human Services has worked in direct service with homeless adults and youth since 1993. She works with those who are sleeping outside or in a substandard setting. She believes there is one reason we have homelessness: It is the public's will.

Elizabeth Hinz, Liaison for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students for the Minneapolis Public Schools, will speak on the impact of homelessness on children and youth in general and specifically to Minneapolis Public Schools.

10:00-10:30	Coffee, treats and social time
10:30-noon	Panel Discussion

## BOARD MEETINGS

Wed, Jan 6, 2010, 6pm  
at the home of Sara Utt  
8316 29th Avenue N.  
New Hope (763.545.5390)  
Bring a sandwich.

Wednesday, Feb 3, 2010, 6pm  
at the home of Sherry Tyrrell  
3344 Wisconsin Avenue N.  
Crystal (763. 546.8449)  
Bring a sandwich.

Wednesday, Mar 3, 2010, 6pm  
at the home of Joann Brown  
8240 39th Avenue N.  
New Hope (763.545.7369)  
Bring a sandwich.

## NEWS BRIEFS

**LWVMN  
PROGRAM FOR  
ACTION  
2009-2011**

A summary of positions of the League of Women Voters Minnesota is ready for each member. Get your copy at any of our meetings.

**LOCAL ACTIVITY  
AND  
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CNHEP raised more than \$1000 total** at its 2009 holiday party. Funds went to PRISM, NEAR, our local Ed Fund and our general operating fund.

**The CNHEP Census Committee** is planning numerous activities through March and **will need your help** to carry them out. LWVMN has recognized and applauded CNHEP on our Census activities to date.

**CNHEP's Bylaws Committee is reviewing and updating our Bylaws.** If members have suggestions or would like a copy of the Bylaws, contact Jo Bogdan, Gini Hickman, Heather Koshiol or Sherry Tyrrell.

In preparation for our upcoming annual meeting, CNHEP's Nominating Committee will be asking members to fill officer and board member positions. **Contact MaryJane Lee if you're interested in serving on the board.**



## From the President

Happy New Year!

2010 has seemed so far away and now it is here. This is a big year for LWV, we celebrate the labors of a committed group of women who 90 years ago campaigned, were jailed, and continued to fight for their right, and our right, to vote. When they achieved success they did not stop, they formed the League of Women Voters to continue to educate voters and established a grassroots network to discuss issues of concern, form consensus, and lobby on the positions derived from those efforts. LWV celebrates its 90<sup>th</sup> year

this February 14<sup>th</sup>, and we continue to do the work they started and adhere to the stringent standards of fairness they set for us so many years ago.

That grassroots effort will be out in force on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> when we meet to review the national platform at the program planning meeting. I hope you are planning to join us. It will still be frigid out, but the board will be serving a breakfast buffet to reward your effort!

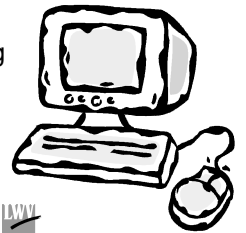
It was great to see so many of you last year at our holiday party. Good

friends, good food, and good company. We were joined by Keesha Gaskins, the executive director for LWVMN who spoke about some of the changes being implemented and reminded us of the great work the league does. Her passion and dedication came through loud and clear.

We are working to schedule the February meeting and will let you all know as soon as possible. Until then, have a happy, healthy new year.

Sherry Tyrrell 

**The "League Geeks"** are LWV member volunteers who will help other members with technical computer problems (e.g., registering or logging into [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org); locating information on [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org); or subscribing, unsubscribing or receiving LWVUS discussion list email). You may contact the League Geeks via email: [Geeks@lwv.org](mailto:Geeks@lwv.org). You may also use the "Contact Us" link in the top line of every page of [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org). A volunteer will email or call you back within a day or so.



## Counting MN Snowbirds in the 2010 Census

(ST. PAUL) –The Minnesota State Demographic Center (SDC) encourages Minnesota residents who reside out of state for the winter months ("snowbirds") answer only the 2010 Census form they receive at their Minnesota address.

The SDC estimates that fewer than 3,000 people are needed for Minnesota to retain its eight congressional districts. Minnesotans should also be aware of the following:

Usual address

- The Census Bureau counts residents at their 'usual' address.
- Residents decide their 'usual' address.
- By using their Minnesota address, Minnesotans benefit their home state.

Questionnaires will be delivered to ALL addresses nationwide

- The Census Bureau will mail questionnaires in mid-March to regular mailing addresses.
- Minnesota snowbirds will receive a 2010 Census questionnaire at both their Minnesota and snowbird addresses.
- The United States Post Office will NOT forward Census 2010 questionnaires.



## West Metro Alliance Redistricting Forum by Joann Brown

What do you get when you combine a political science professor, a lawyer with an encyclopedic grasp of legislative history and an erudite demographer, all of whom brought their crystal balls to a fascinating forum? (a long report?) Well, let's just have a little Q & A . . .

### **What are the pulls and tugs of redistricting?**

asked **Larry Jacobs**, Director for the Study of Politics & Government, HHH Institute of Public Affairs. Legislators want to draw the redistricting maps and keep their own favorable demographic because folks in power always want to keep control.

### **Who favors an independent commission to redistrict?**

Gov. Arne Carlson, V.P. Walter Mondale, Gov. Al Quie, Roger Moe, Tim Penny, Norm Ornstein, Mitch Pearlstein. They want a process not controlled by the political parties.

**Why?** The process is broken. It ends in the Courts, and Courts are to review, not make electoral maps. Federal Court had to decide in '70s, '80s and '90s. (US Supreme Court reversed '90s decision.) Divided government means conflict in Legislature and the possibility that the Governor's will veto plans.

### **Where are we now?**

Sen. Larry Pogemiller pushed a redistricting reform bill through the Senate in May 2009.

Republicans are against it.

### **What is our most realistic hope for reform?**

The new map should create 10-15% more districts that are not "safe." That would result in more moderate legislators and take a step toward less anger and division. "Safe

seats are not in the best interest of the public; competition for votes is healthy," said Jacobs.

Time for the history and civics perspective from **Peter S. Wattson**, Senate Counsel and Sec. of the MN Senate

### **When did Minnesota have 10 Congressional seats? 9 seats, 8 seats? 1910, 1930, 1960**

### **What is the Minnesota Commission Bill SF 182?**

The Commission to redistrict would consist of 5 retired appellate judges. It would hold public hearings. By April 30, the first plans would be voted upon. If rejected, second plans would be voted on within two weeks. If rejected, third plans would be voted on within two weeks and thereafter could be modified. There is no House author, but probably will be in the 2010 session. Some big unknowns will affect redistricting: Who will be our new Governor in 2010? Who will be the Chief Justice in 2011?

### **What are the Minnesota Districting Principles?**

MN Constitution, Article IV

- Equal population.
- Convenient, continuous territory.
- Single-member Senate districts.
- House districts nested within senate districts.
- Numbered in a regular series.
- Not divide counties, cities, or townships unless necessary to achieve equal population.
- Equal population (Congressional districts: mathematically equal; Legislative districts, plus or minus 2%);
- Preserve communities of interest;
- Increase minority representation when possible;
- Not protect or defeat incumbents.

**Tom Gillaspay**, MN State Demographer, spoke about what might happen after 2010 Census.

### **How is apportionment done?**

The size of the House is fixed by Congress at 435. Each state receives one seat and the rest are apportioned according to a 1941 formula. Twelve seats are in play.

According to population, gainers are Arizona (2), Florida, Georgia, Nevada, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas (4), Utah. Losers include Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa. Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio (2), Pennsylvania. Utah will surely gain a seat, Iowa will surely lose a seat. In 2000, Wisconsin lost a seat. Since interstate mobility is the lowest in 50 years, some "gainers" may not still be as strong in that category.

### **How about Minnesota's existing 8 districts?**

They are very out of balance. Second and Sixth Districts will have to become smaller, giving up to Fourth, Fifth, Seventh and Eighth. If we lose a district, going from 8 to 7, there will be big changes.

Professor Jacobs asked us to think about the "small population state" disadvantage. For every \$1 we send to the Federal Government, we get 73 cents back. That translates to healthcare dollars, for one thing. Another big issue is water, for all the Great Lakes states are losing population and therefore a strong voice in Congress to protect our fresh water resource.



*"The Census is important to our community because we count. It's not only our vote that counts, but our actions and our plans for the future that count. Be a part of the future; be a part of the census."*

—V.J. Smith  
Community Organizer

## 2010 CENSUS BE COUNTED CENTERS

At press time, the Census Bureau had not yet posted its list of Be Counted and/or Questionnaire Assistance Centers online. In the meantime, many of our Minnesotan friends and family members are already south for the winter. (See also *Counting MN Snowbirds*, page 2.) Watch the CNHEP Voter for more information on finding a Be Counted Center near you. Help spread the word to Be Counted in Minnesota!



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## LWVCNHEP Calendar

### January

- 6 Board Meeting – Sara Utt’s home – 6 pm
- 9 LWVUS Program Planning – location TBA – 9 am
- 16 CMAL meeting – homelessness – Augsburg Park Library, Richfield – 10 am
- 31 January Membership Count Deadline (LWVUS Roster must be accurate)

### February

- 3 Board Meeting – location TBD – 6 pm
- 14 Susan B. Anthony's birthday / LWV 90<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 15 Bill of Rights Day
- 23 State of the City (New Hope)

*Additional meeting date & details to be announced. Watch your e-mail inbox.*



**First Class  
Time Dated  
Material**

**The League of Women Voters of  
Crystal/New Hope/East Plymouth**  
5401 Rhode Island Ave North  
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