



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

***Voter***

## LWVSLP ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, April 17, 2010  
Parkshore Assisted Living Community Room  
3633 Park Center Blvd., St. Louis Park

10:00 a.m.	Business Meeting
11:15	Speaker: Vivian Jenkins Nelson, LWVMN Co-President
12 to 1:00 p.m.	Lunch

- Menu: Rollup sandwiches of turkey, roast beef or ham, with chips, tomato dill soup, birthday cake and coffee, lemonade or hot tea.
- Cost: \$10.00 – Payment for lunch will be collected at the meeting.
- Please register **by April 14** – Call or email Aggie Leitheiser at [aggieL@mninter.net](mailto:aggieL@mninter.net) or 952-938-6255.
- You can also attend the business meeting and the speaker presentation without staying for the meal.

Come to the annual meeting a help celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of LWVUS and our 56<sup>th</sup> Year in St. Louis Park!



### April Calendar

Apr. 6 7:00 PM, LWVSLP April Board meeting at Eilseen Knisely's.

Apr. 10 West Metro Alliance meeting: Budget & Bonding, details page 5.

Apr. 17 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Annual Meeting & Luncheon at Parkshore, details page 1.

#### UPCOMING:

May 1 8:30-3:30, LWVMN Council at Arboretum, details page 4.

## Message from the President

Spring is finally here and that means it's time for our annual meeting on April 17 (see related article on page 1). We hope you are able to attend and help celebrate a busy year and look ahead to next year. We'll start with a business meeting and end with lunch. In between, we're very pleased that Vivian Jenkins Nelson will join us for our meeting to talk about activities of the LWVMN and to tell her inspirational story. Our proposed budget is included in this month's *Voter* for your review prior to the meeting.

We have many things to celebrate this year, from the New Neighbor Handbook, to multiple Voter Service events, to the Census 2010 awareness activities, to the briefing papers that increased our knowledge of critical issues. It's a good chance to catch up on local issues, renew connections, and celebrate our 56<sup>th</sup> year. Hope to see you there.

The LWVUS has been very active in supporting the healthcare reform bill and LWVMN has been watching many issues at the state capitol. If you are not currently signed up to get the capitol newsletter, now is a good time to stay current with issues and analysis. You can find the current and past issues on the LWVMN website at: [http://www.lwvmn.org/CapitolLetter2010\\_03.asp](http://www.lwvmn.org/CapitolLetter2010_03.asp)

—Aggie Leitheiser, LWVSLP President, 952-938-6255

## LWVSLP March Board Highlights

- Reviewed February Census meetings – good attendance at both Unit meeting and the community meeting. Several non-LWV members in attendance to learn about Census issues and the importance of everyone participating.
- Finalized plans for March meetings - Unit 2 meeting program was Julie Westerlund, community outreach for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, who explained the projects along the creek that affect St. Louis Park. Unit 3 attended the City Council meeting and heard reports from the County Attorney and County Sheriff (for details, see observer report for March 15) and after the presentation watched the Green Cities DVD.
- Discussed annual meeting issues, selected menu and made assignments. Elaine White finalized arrangements with the speaker, Vivian Jenkins Nelsen, LWVMN Co-President.
- Reviewed upcoming meetings, including LWVMN Council on May 1.



## SLP City Council Recognizes League Anniversary with Proclamation

Mayor Jeff Jacobs and the City Council recognized the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the LWVUS and 56 years of LWVSLP at their meeting on March 15. The Mayor noted the importance of League attendance at their meetings and thanked members for their contributions to good government. Barb Person highlighted the recent project to increase awareness about the importance of the census for City residents. Ellen Hacker created a poster with highlights from women's history in gaining the right to vote and the Leagues' involvement in many issues in the past.



L to R: Mayor Jacobs, Louise Ross, Aggie Leitheiser, Bonnie Skelton, Barb Person, Shirley Bierman, Betty Hardacker, Ellen Hacker, Elaine White, Deb Brinkman, Eleanor Sachs (partially hidden), Dorothy Karlson.

## MEMBERSHIP

Our League was one of only three local leagues in the state of Minnesota to gain new members this past year. We gained eight new members and the other two Leagues each gained seven. Talk to your neighbors and friends and invite them to our activities!

## EMPTY BOWLS

Empty Bowls was held on March 4 and was well attended. League members contributed \$270 to the event for the purchase of food for STEP. Thanks to those who donated money and to Ellen Hacker, Elaine White, Eilseen Knisely, Deb Brinkman, Louise Ross and Dorothy Karlson who offered their time to work at the donation table.

## CMAL LOOKS AT HOUSING

CMAL has been taking an in-depth look at housing issues this year. In order to discover the housing situation in the seven county metropolitan area, a series of questions was developed. Dorothy Karlson and Barbara Aslakson interviewed Michele Schnitker, St. Louis Park's housing supervisor, to find out about housing in our city.

Michele said that there are three strategies used to address the issue of affordable housing: remodeling and expanding move-up, single family, owner-occupied homes; property maintenance to foster quality housing and community aesthetics; and working toward affordable single-family home ownership throughout the city.

There are 5,328 affordable houses and 2,210 affordable condos and townhouses within St. Louis Park, making 33% of the total housing affordable. There are also 862 subsidized apartments or 4% of total housing within the city. Even though there are many affordable housing opportunities here, there is a waiting list of 1,000 names for Section 8 housing.

## LWVMN COUNCIL – MAY 1st at MINNESOTA ARBORETUM

LWVMN Council, held in even numbered years, is a time to transact any business that cannot wait until the biennial Convention. It is also a time for local LWVs and members-at-large to get together, to find out what has been happening in LWVs across Minnesota and around the nation during the past year, and to discuss what's ahead for 2010-2011. It is an opportunity to just make contact with one another!

This year's Council will be held on **Saturday, May 1, 2010, at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chaska, MN**. It will begin at 9:00 a.m. with the business meeting and will include reports from the LWVMN Presidents, **LWV Leadership Challenges**, and a panel discussion on **Issue Campaigns**. We have a new website which we can't wait to show you! There will be workshops on the LWVUS Convention, Voter Service, Action, Membership, and much more. Lunch will give everyone an opportunity to mingle and enjoy the Arboretum. Let's hope for nice weather this time!

Council will adjourn by 3:30 p.m. Every local LWV is entitled to two voting delegates at Council. **It's not just for presidents** - we encourage **everyone** who would like to network with other Leaguers and/or learn more about LWV activities, to attend. We always have a great time seeing old friends, meeting new ones, and hearing what others are doing in their local Leagues. The cost for attending Council is \$30 per person, which includes lunch and all materials.

The Arboretum is a real attraction in the Metro Area - the gate fee (\$7.) is included in your registration fee. We'll make the Council just long enough to conduct the business of LWVMN with plenty of time to explore the Arboretum.

Any questions should be directed to **Barb Person** at the LWVMN office (651) 224-5445 or (800) 663-9328.



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## West Metro Alliance Quarterly Meeting Budget and Bonding: Are There Any Solutions?

Saturday, April 10, 2010  
Minnetonka City Hall Council Chambers  
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

9:00 a.m. Coffee & Connecting  
9:30 – 11:30 Budget and Bonding: Are There Any Solutions?

Speaker: JOHN GUNYOU

- Distinguished 40-year career in government
- Currently City Manager of Minnetonka
- Served as first finance director for the city of Minneapolis
- MN Finance Commissioner in the Carlson Administration.
- Degrees in Finance and Economics from the US Air Force Academy, UCLA and University of Colorado.

Minnesota's budget woes continue this year due to fewer jobs and lower wages. Our revenues have dropped below previously forecasted levels, leaving us with a current deficit of \$1.2 billion. These deficits are estimated to grow to \$5.4 billion over the next biennium.

The 2010 Legislative Session is a bonding year. Along with the deficit, Minnesota has an empty reserve fund and there are constitutional challenges to the governor's unallotments. The legislators will be forced to make difficult decisions on balancing the budget.

The current proposal is roughly \$1 billion, and Gov. Pawlenty has indicated he will veto anything over his proposed amount of \$685 million. So....

How do we get back to balance?

How does the state finance system work?

What can we do to improve consistency of forecasts and improve our ability to drive positive results?

We will explore these topics at our April 10<sup>th</sup> West Metro Program.

For continued coverage of the 2010 Session of the Minnesota Legislature:  
Capitol Letter <http://www.lwvmn.org>

*Sponsored by the West Metro Alliance  
League of Women Voters from Brooklyn Park/Osseo/Maple Grove, Crystal/New Hope/E. Plymouth,  
Golden Valley, Minnetonka/Eden Prairie/Hopkins, St. Louis Park, South Tonka and  
Wayzata/Plymouth*

## **Observer Reports**

### **Observer Coordinator: Judith Cook 952-928-9846**

#### **SLP School Board, February 22, 2010 – Elaine White, observer**

Dr. Debra Bowers recognized and saluted the School Board for National School Board Week.

There was a discussion of bus schedules for the various levels of schools. There was a discussion of school boundaries and adjustments that were made at the request of residents.

The Superintendent talked about grade level teams and new changes taking place in the schools. There was also a discussion of Policy 545 which addresses the question of making PSI more reflective of the demographic characteristics of the other elementary buildings. Sibling preference will continue for residents of St. Louis Park, but not for residents who live outside the city.

The educational rationale for the new policies was explained. These policies are developed in order to benefit all children by helping them to live and work in a more diverse world. This policy will be reviewed by legal experts.

There was a discussion of the early entrance policy and moving the early entrance date to October 31. It was mentioned that this policy is for gifted students, and that the decision will be made by a team of relevant school personnel and that decision cannot be appealed.

A budget description was made. It predicted that the enrollment of the schools would be stable; there would be 0% General Revenue increase; and that spending patterns would remain the same as last year. There was a talk about school operations. Moving from four buildings to three buildings for elementary K through 5th grade is one of the changes proposed. 2/3 of the teachers will be moving to different buildings.

The Board voted to close Elliot and Cedar Manor Schools. It was emphasized that this was a decision about buildings and not a reflection of the outstanding staff. The vote was 7 to 0. The change will happen by ending school for K to 5 on June 4th so that new teams can meet and get organized and also to prepare to move.

The School Board recognized Linda Saveraid's contribution to the St. Louis Park's schools on her upcoming retirement.

#### **SLP City Council, March 1, 2010 – Dorothy Karlson, observer**

After approving minutes of previous meetings, the agenda and the consent calendar, two presentations were given for recommended action. The first was in regard to granting final approval for renovation expansion at the Parkshore Campus. The presenter stated that the improvements would be on the swimming pool area and the dining area. Impact of the expansions on parking and landscaping was explained. The additions would enable Parkshore to offer more amenities to the community as well as residents. Parkshore has three properties including one with plans for a 12 story condominium to be constructed in the future. The recommended action was approved.

The second presentation was in regard to improvements to streets in the Brookside and Elmwood neighborhoods. The proposal was that repairs be made to the ground base, curbs and gutters, and fire hydrants. Communication with households affected will be a part of the plan. The work will be done from June to August and will cost \$1,391,615. In spite of problems with road construction also happening on Highway Seven and Excelsior Boulevard, the plan was approved.

#### **SLP City Council, March 15, 2010 – Ellen Hacker, observer**

**Presentations** – The meeting was convened at 7:30 p.m. with all members present. Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman presented an update to the council on activities of his office. He also talked about the recent shootings in Minneapolis and the importance of DNA evidence. There was a question on a recent Supreme Court case regarding an individual gun owner's right to own a gun versus the city's ability to regulate guns and the impact this would have on our cities here. County Attorney Freeman talked about the issue. He thought it was possible that the city's ban may be overruled as a result of a ruling on this issue but was hoping this would not occur.

Hennepin County Sheriff Rich Stanek presented an update to the council and talked about the ways in which the Sheriff's office works with the St. Louis Park Police Department. He talked about the different areas of his

department, such as the Communications Division, the 11 K-9 units, the state-of-the-art crime lab, and other areas. Sheriff Stanek also talked about collaborative programs such as the Hennepin County Violent Crime Investigation unit. The investigations chief presented an update and said their detectives work collaboratively with St. Louis Park's Police Department when their assistance is needed.

Next there was a proclamation recognizing the League of Women Voters' 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 56 year history of LWVSLP. March 15, 2010 was proclaimed as "LWV Making Democracy Work Day". After Mayor Jacobs read the proclamation, LWVSLP President Aggie Leitheiser said a few words and accepted the honor on behalf of the many League members present.

After the minutes from previous meetings were approved, the consent agenda passed unanimously. Four new members were appointed as citizen representatives to fill vacancies on the Police Advisory Commission.

### **Public Hearings**

Liquor License for Ringo Restaurants at 5331 16<sup>th</sup> St. – no one appeared and the motion passed unanimously with no discussion.

Revise Compost Ordinance – after discussion, passed unanimously. Staff will look into composting for condos and townhouses and will have information for the second hearing.

Marriott Hotel: Vacation, Termination of Special Permit, Final PUD and Plat, for property located at 400 Highway 169 South, 435 Ford Road, and 600 Highway 169 South – Staff presented to the council and explained the purpose of the vacation and termination of special permit. The motion to approve passed unanimously as amended and after much discussion and second reading set for April 5. Many council members were concerned that one of the walkways/roadways is not safe for pedestrians because of no formal sidewalk and no curbs. Staff and development representatives answered questions. Council members asked for clear delineation for pedestrians and the flow of traffic.

Gambling Premises Permit for Minneapolis Northeast Lions Club at Texa-Tonka Lanes located at 8200 Minnetonka Blvd. – There were many questions and much discussion on this issue. Many council members expressed concern about granting many different pull tab charities licenses. When granted the licenses are perpetual. The motion to continue passed with a vote of 4 to 3 and there was discussion on holding a study session on April 12 with possible council action on April 19. The owner of Texa-Tonka Lanes said his current pull tab contract, with a vendor already licensed in St. Louis Park, is expiring on March 31.

Panera Bread: Major Amendment to PUD for Additional Signage – After presentation by staff, questions by council members and discussion about the sign being turned off at 10:00 p.m. and that it will only be lit during Panera's hours of operation, the proposal was adopted unanimously and the second reading will take place on April 5.

Highway 7 & Louisiana Ave. Interchange Project: Contract Amendment – After discussion and comments by council members, the proposal passed unanimously. This is for Phase III of the project and provides additional engineering consulting services. Phase II is nearing completion. The question was raised regarding the possibility of not receiving funding from the state for this project. Total cost of the project is \$30 million and St. Louis Park would not have the resources to complete the project with state funding. Staff said that the extension of this contract does not commit St. Louis Park to completing the project.

### **Communications**

Community Outreach Director Linda Saveraid is retiring in March and will be recognized for her years of services to the City of St. Louis Park at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

**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 subscription are not tax deductible):**

- Single Active Attending Member \$45.00
- Supporting/Member-at-Large (Publications Only) \$50.00
- Family Membership (2 or more in single household) \$70.00

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

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**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.*

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**