



A look ahead...

GUESTS are always welcome at League meetings!

Friday, Sept. 8 (second Friday) noon—1 p.m.

Lunch available beginning at 11:30 AM
Sons of Norway, 722 2nd Ave N, Fargo

Topic: Alternative Transportation

Speaker: Butch Newman, Lunde Motors-Hybrid Vehicles and Belinda Forknell, Global Electric Motors-Electric Cars

First Friday, Oct. 6, noon— 1 p.m.

Lunch available beginning at 11:30 a.m.
Sons of Norway, 722 2nd Ave N, Fargo

Topic: Behind the Scenes at the Polling Place

Wednesday, Oct. 11, noon—1 p.m.

(Brown Bag) - NDSU (room TBA) -see page 2

Topic: The Importance of Civic Engagement

First Friday, Nov. 3 6, 12:00 noon

Lunch available beginning at 11:30 a.m.
Sons of Norway, 722 2nd Ave N, Fargo

Topic: Women in Corrections

Tuesday, Nov. 7, 7 a.m.—8 p.m.

ELECTION DAY

CANDIDATE FORUMS

Thursday, Oct. 19, 6:30 —8 p.m.

- Cass County Sheriff
- ND District 13 Legislative Candidates

West Fargo City Commission chamber
800 4th Ave. E., West Fargo

Sponsors: LWVRRV & West Fargo Chamber of Commerce

Saturday, Oct. 21, 9 a.m. —noon

- ND Districts 11,21,27, 41 & 45

- Cass County Recorder

Fargo City Commission chamber, 200 3rd St. N., Fargo

Sponsors: LWVRRV & FM Chamber of Commerce

Tuesday, Oct. 24, 5:30—8:30 p.m.

- MN Senate, District 9; House 9A & 9B
- Clay Co. Dist. 3 Commissioner, Auditor & Attorney

Hjemkomst Center, Moorhead

Sponsors: LWVRRV, FM Chamber of Commerce, Moorhead-Clay AARP & Moorhead Senior Connections

President's letter

Dear League Members,

This summer the 47th biannual National League of Women Voters convention was held in Minneapolis, MN. I was able to attend the four-day program and take in the excitement of Convention. As a novice conference goer I was inundated with practice and procedure tips. There was definitely a common concern that ran through out the entire conference and that was the problem of continual membership loss. Year after year, the League, both locally and nationally, is losing members. The attitude was not one of defeatism but instead the energy was high and creative ideas were discussed as to how to change the tide. This is the energy I would like to bring back to our local Red River Valley chapter. We have very strong name recognition and branding. Unfortunately many community members are still unaware of what our work consists of.

I look forward to working this year on increasing media and community attention/participation in our programs. Each of you can also help in several ways: remember to renew your annual membership if it has lapsed, sponsor a younger family member or friend to a one year membership, show your support through attendance at First Fridays at the Sons of Norway and at candidate forums, and finally feel free to contact me if you have suggestion for growing our League.

I look forward to working together with you to multiply our base and further our missions.

Sincerely,

*Amy Jacobson, President
League of Women Voters of the
Red River Valley*

701-261-4858

Volunteers needed for candidates' forums

Volunteers are needed to help the Voter Service committee conduct Candidates' Forums on October 19, 21 and 24 (*see A Look Ahead above for details*).

If you would like to participate in this important League activity, at any one of these forums, please contact Amy Jacobsen at 701-261-4858 or ajacobson@ppmns.org

New editor needed for the Voter newsletter

Having served as the Editor of this newsletter, the Voter, for the past five years, I have decided it is time for me to step aside after May 2007 and allow other interested LWVRRV members a chance to take on that role.

As Editor, I have been able to be involved and informed at all levels of the League, from setting up and promoting local Voter Service activities in the Red River Valley, all the way to researching national LWVUS positions for inclusion in the Voter. It has been a wonderful experience and I have learned a great deal.

The time commitment has been quite modest, about 3-4 hours every other month. The next Editor will have the benefit, as did I, of an expert layout professional, Donna Chalimonczyk. And, as soon as the next Editor is chosen, she or he may "intern" with me through the rest of the issues until next spring. If you think that you might be interested in serving the League in this way, please get in touch with me. Thank you,

*Carol Sawicki, 701-232-5676 or
csawicki@corpcomm.net*

October 11—NDSU Brown Bag: The Importance of Civic Engagement

Past and present League members will discuss the importance of civic engagement. Each will share with students and community members their personal stories of political, social or policy changes they were key in creating. The event is free and open to the public. Please attend and be inspired by the rich local history the LWV has to share.

For more information contact Amy Jacobson at 701-261-4858 or at ajacobson@ppmns.org

League joins new alliance with Overseas Vote Foundation

Overseas Citizen and Military Voter Outreach Broadens, Santa Fe, NM -July 11, 2006

Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF) today announced a sweeping list of new Alliance Partners including the League of Women Voters, the National Campus Voter Registration Project, the National Defense Committee, the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas and the Election Administration Research Center, University of California, Berkeley. The new OVF Alliance Partners join the National Association of Secretaries of State to establish a broad spectrum of support for Overseas Vote Foundation. Each OVF Alliance Partner furthers OVF's outreach efforts toward a new community of voters or voter-oriented organizations. All OVF Alliance Partners plan to run the VOTERTOOLSTM* Platform, targeted for release in August 2006.

"We are encouraged by the level of engagement our Alliance Partners exhibit, including their participation on the OVF Advisory Board. Together our Alliance Partners represent a strong and diverse underpinning of support for the mission of Overseas Vote Foundation," stated Susan Dzieduszycka-Suinat, OVF Executive Director. "This action from our Alliance Partners is evidence that more organizations recognize that working with OVF they can effectively reach overseas and military voters who were often inadvertently left out of core voter registration and GOTV efforts," continued Ms. Dzieduszycka-Suinat.

Join the League!

Send your check to:

*League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley
PO Box 295, Fargo, ND 58107*

Individual	\$45.00
Household	\$67.50
Student	\$15.00

***Include your name, address,
telephone number and e-mail address.***

News from the LWVUS

Pushing for Passage of the Meehan-Shays Presidential Public Financing Legislation

The LWVUS joined with other organizations in a letter (*see below*) to U.S. Representatives urging them to co-sponsor and support the Meehan-Shays bill that would make a series of important reforms to the presidential public financing system.

July 26, 2006

Dear Representative,

Our groups strongly support a voluntary system of public financing and spending limits for all federal elections. This system is essential to prevent corruption and the appearance of corruption, to give candidates the opportunity to run competitive races, and to stop the arms race money chase that results from unlimited spending in campaigns.

The groups include the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, the League of Women Voters, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG.

The presidential public financing system was created in 1974 in the wake of the Watergate scandals and served the nation well for most of its existence. The system, however, is now broken and in need of repair.

Representatives Marty Meehan (D-MA) and Christopher Shays (R-CT) are introducing legislation today to fix the presidential public financing system. We strongly urge you to co-sponsor and support this important legislation.

Every president elected since 1976 has used the public financing system to pay for his general election campaign. This includes Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. All of these presidents, except the current President Bush, also used the system to pay for their primary elections.

In three of the six presidential races run under the presidential public financing system that involved incumbents and challengers, challengers won the presidency.

In addition to all presidential winners, since 1976, all of the major party opponents they faced in the general election also used the public financing system to pay for their campaigns. And in the presidential primaries, almost all of the presidential candidates from both major parties since 1976 have used the public financing system to pay for their races.

In the 2004 presidential election, the public financing system failed to function properly, in large part because there had been no adjustments made in the system since its enactment in 1974.

This led to a number of problems with the system, including spending limits in the presidential primary elections that are too low, and it resulted in presidential candidates opting out of the primary financing system in 2004 for strategic and competitive reasons, including the eventual nominees for both major parties.

We are now facing a presidential election in 2008, where the two major party nominees may well opt out of both the primary and general election public funding system and end up spending a combined \$1 billion in private funds on their races.

If this happens, big-money fundraisers will play a dominant role in the election, with individuals each raising six-and seven-figure total amounts for the presidential candidates, and the presidency placed back on the auction block that the public financing system had taken it off.

The absence of an effective presidential public financing system also will provide well-known frontrunners with an enormous financial advantage, while others candidates will have a very difficult time raising sufficient funds to be competitive.

The legislation introduced by Representatives Meehan and Shays would make a series of important reforms to the presidential public financing system and again provide participating candidates the opportunity to run competitive races. The legislation would:

- Raise the spending limits for the primary and general elections and increase the amount of public funds available to presidential candidates for these races;

- Make public funds available to primary candidates earlier in the process;

- Provide additional public funds for a publicly-financed candidate where a privately-financed candidate has significantly outspent the spending limits applicable to the publicly-financed candidate;

- Increase the public funds available to pay for the presidential system; and

- Prohibit the national parties and their agents and officers, and federal officeholders, from raising or spending soft money to pay for the party nominating conventions.

At a time when corruption scandals continue to unfold in Washington and deeply concern the American people, it makes no sense to abandon a presidential financing system that has played a major role in protecting the integrity of the presidency and that can be repaired to play the same critical role in the future.

We strongly urge you to co-sponsor and support the Meehan-Shays bill to fix the presidential public financing system.

Campaign Legal Center
Common Cause, Democracy 21
League of Women Voters
Public Citizen, U.S. PIRG

2005-2006 LWVRRV Officers

President: Amy Jacobson
First Vice President Carol Sawicki
Second Vice President Mary Tintes
Secretary Alberta Dobry
Treasurer Diane Briggs

Board of Directors

Margaret Blue, Barb Headrick, Lynne Olson, Sherri Seeba and Carol Zielinski.

The League of Women Voters values diversity in its members. In principle and in practice, the League knows no barriers on the basis of age, creed, disability, gender, national origin, race or sexual orientation, and encourages full participation in and contribution to the organization by all its members.

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

League Vision, Beliefs and Intentions:

The goal of the League of Women Voters is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political membership organization which:

Acts after study and member agreement to achieve solutions in the public interest on key community issues at all government levels.

Builds citizen participation in the democratic process.

Engages communities in promoting positive solutions to public policy issues through education and advocacy.

The League of Women Voters Education Fund is a nonpartisan public policy educational organization which:

Builds citizen participation in the democratic process.

Studies key community issues at all governmental levels in an unbiased manner.

Enables people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management.

We believe in:

Respect for individuals.

The value of diversity.

The empowerment of the grassroots, both within the League and in communities.

We will:

Act with trust, integrity and professionalism.

Operate in an open and effective manner to meet the needs of those we serve, both members and the public.

Take the initiative in seeking diversity in membership.

Acknowledge our heritage as we seek our path to the future.