



# Red River Voter

Published in Fargo, ND • P.O. Box 295, Fargo, ND 58107-0295  
LWV Web Sites: [www.lwvnd.org](http://www.lwvnd.org) & [www.lwvnmn.org](http://www.lwvnmn.org)



## A look ahead...

### GUESTS are always welcome at League meetings!

\*First Friday meetings are held at the Sons of Norway Lodge, 722 2nd Ave. N., Fargo. Buffet lunch is available beginning at 11:30 a.m.

**Sept. 11, "First" Friday (actually 2nd Friday due to Labor Day)**  
Sons of Norway-Lounge area **12 noon-1 p.m.**  
(Lunch available beginning at 11:30 a.m.)

**Topic: Building New Schools - Where, When & How?**

**Sunday, September 13** **3-7 p.m.**  
Buffalo City Grille, Jamestown, ND  
**ND League of Women Voters State Convention**

**Wednesday, September 23** **11:30 a.m.**  
Marriott Convention Center, 1080 28<sup>th</sup> Ave S, Moorhead  
**LWVRRV Lunch with Leaders Event**  
(More information about this event is on page 4 of this Voter)

**Friday, October 2** **12 noon- 1 p.m.**  
(Lunch available beginning at 11:30 AM)  
**Topic: Facilitating Community Resilience - Responses to Floods & Other Disasters**

**Tuesday, November 3** **7 a.m.-8 p.m.**  
**Election Day in Minnesota**

**Friday, November 6** **12 noon- 1 p.m.**  
(Lunch available beginning at 11:30 AM)  
**Topic: Minnesota State Budget, A Local Perspective**

## President's letter

The LWVRRV and the LWVND were very active this summer with numerous projects and are planning for even more exciting programs this fall.

The LWVND will hold its convention in Jamestown on September 13<sup>th</sup>. At our last convention we adopted redistricting as our study topic. Redistricting happens during the legislative session following the federal census. Most citizens react to redistricting after it has been accomplished. By adopting redistricting as a study topic, we plan to give ND citizens an opportunity to have advance input. We are fortunate to be hosting two experts on redistricting, Lloyd Omdahl and Representative Cory Mock. In addition, we were pleased to be able to invite the LWVUS national president, Mary Wilson, to speak at our convention. Among other topics, she will address the national perspective on redistricting.

The LWVND is involved in projects which affect the entire state. We have been fortunate to hire lobbyists in recent years who have kept us well informed on issues related to our LWV platforms. We have not been a very active presence at the legislative sessions recently. However, we were very involved in lobbying during the ratification of the ERA in 1973 and 1975. Following the ERA ratification we worked to obtain the passage of important women's rights legislation. We helped with the creation of voter's rights legislation. The work of the LWV impacted numerous energy, environment and water bills which were introduced in the ND legislature in the 1980's.

Every member of the LWV is invited to attend the LWVND convention. This will be a splendid opportunity to talk with other LWV members from all over ND and our national president. Please plan to fill your car with LWV members and guests and meet us in Jamestown at the Buffalo City Grille at 3:00 PM, Sunday September 13<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see you there.

—Lois Ivers Altenburg, Co-President, LWVRRV  
and President, LWVND

## More information on First Friday topics and speakers

On Friday September 11, the topic will be: **Building New Schools, Where, When & How?** Our speakers will be Jane Rupprecht, a former teacher from Velva, ND who is now with NDEA and Roger Olson, a former Economics teacher at Fargo South High - a Moorhead resident who has done a great deal of research on school finance in Minnesota.

On Friday, October 2, the topic will be: **Facilitating Community Resilience.** Our speaker will be Jackie Crawford, a volunteer with the American Red Cross- Minn-Kota Chapter and a member of the Emotional and Spiritual Subcommittee of the Red River Recovery Group. This group was formed to help the community respond to this spring's flooding.

On Friday, November 6, we will be discussing the current **Minnesota budget.** We hope to have local legislators present to help us understand some of the complexities.

**■ Candidate Forums**

In October we will be hosting candidate forums for the Minnesota elections in this area that will be held on November 3. If you are interested in helping with these forums, please contact Sue at 701-297-6815 or LWVND@q.com.

More details will be on the web page as information is available.

**■ Feminist Calendar**

The Women’s Network of the Red River Valley has published its 2010 Feminist Calendar featuring feminists of the FM area.

The LWVRRV was selected as one of the “feminists.” The month of August features the LWVRRV board in all its resplendent glory!

May and October also feature two other LWVRRV board members on those pages as area feminists.

Calendars are \$15 each and will be for sale at the state convention in Jamestown and at the September 11 LWVRRV monthly meeting at the Sons of Norway.

Calendar proceeds go to the WNRRV to help with their mission of advocating for women’s health issues, working to eliminate wage discrimination based on sex, pay equity for all women, and their projects to engage women in the political process by increasing the number of women who run for office and hold positions, mobilizing women to vote, and engaging women and girls to become leaders.

It’s a good thing!

— Donna Chalimonczyk



*LWVND Voter-* League of Women Voters-North Dakota has chosen Redistricting in our State as a study topic. Our goal is to reach a consensus on a position on this topic in time for the decisions that will be made when the 2010 Census results become available.

On this subject, LWVUS has affirmed these three goals that are consistent with League positions and that local Leagues should work to achieve.

1. Congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population (“one person, one vote”)
2. Redistricting should not dilute the effective representation of minority citizens
3. Efforts that attempt or result in partisan gerrymandering should be opposed.

The current system for redistricting in North Dakota charges the Legislature with the task of redrawing district lines every 10 years. Does this practice allow for the best and most democratic possible results? If not, can a better system be put into place, and how can these changes be made with the best chance of success?

The first step will be to determine if gerrymandering has been in evidence in the past when the State was being divided up into legislative districts. Looking over a map of the current North Dakota boundaries will show some quite oddly shaped districts.

Does it appear that these boundaries were drawn to decrease the number of competitive elections? If that is the case, the result might be that one political party would end up with significantly higher percentage of seats in the Legislature than the percentage of actual votes cast for that party.

If we determine that the current system has resulted in significant gerrymandering in North Dakota, then we will look at how other states have tried to deal with the problem. If we arrive at consensus on a solution that may be workable here, we will adopt a position and work to have that solution implemented.

—Carol Sawicki

**Reapportionment**

*LWVND Voter*—In 2011, the North Dakota legislature will once again draw new boundaries for legislative districts. Legislators have a vested interest in the results and the process will be fraught with conflicts of interests. The Legislature admits conflicts exist, however the Legislature has been unwilling to change the process. A more objective system should be initiated, giving more power to the people. The people have a right to a fair, equitable system of representation.

As North Dakota approaches reapportionment, new answers should be sought to achieve greater fairness. The last apportionment ended up in gerrymandering which caused interparty and intraparty bitterness. What innovations can we find in other states? What should be the standards for fair representation? Who should actually draw the boundaries – a committee of impartial citizens or a committee of legislators? What options do citizens have for genuine input? Is this the time for an initiated measure taking charge of the process? Legal action? Input through the Governor? These are all questions worth discussing before reapportionment begins.

—Lloyd Omdahl



## Public Option is Essential to Health Reform

*League Urges Congress and President to Continue Support for Public Option*

Washington, DC, August 19, 2009— "The public option in health care reform may not be essential to bureaucrats or insurance companies but it absolutely is essential to the almost 47 million uninsured Americans who live day to day without health care coverage," said League of Women Voters National President Mary G. Wilson. Calling on Congress and the President not to succumb to the bullying tactics being used by special interest groups, Wilson urged Congress and the President not to waver in their support of the public option included in H.R. 3200, America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009, recently passed by three House committees.

America is facing a health care crisis caused by a combination of skyrocketing costs and an insurance system that leaves millions of Americans without any coverage. "The current health care system is endangering our economy, our health, and our national security," Wilson said. "Last fall, voters elected a Congress and President that promised to reform our health care system. Voters made it clear that they want a change in our health care system, a change that puts the brakes on the excesses created by a system dominated by large insurance companies," she continued.

"It is universal coverage that will

determine the humanity of our system and a public option will make that possible for Americans who cannot obtain coverage through the traditional employer-sponsored plans," noted Wilson. "We believe that health care reform legislation must guarantee access to comprehensive and essential benefits to all U.S. residents."

"But the possibility of universal coverage is not the only advantage of the public option," warned Wilson. "We must control costs and the public option is the best chance to bring costs into line with reality. As a nation, we are spending \$1 out of every \$6 we earn on health care. Over the last three decades, increases in the amount we spend on health care have consistently risen faster than wages and inflation. Health care reform must provide effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and allow for efficient and economical delivery of care. Offering everyone the choice of a government administered health insurance plan like Medicare that would compete with private health insurance plans is key to lowering costs."

"The public option is critical to health care reform," Wilson concluded. "Now is not the time for politicians to get cold feet just because a handful of special-interest-backed protesters spread lies and make noise at public forums. Congress and the President need to demonstrate real leadership and move forward with true health care reform."

## The 2010 Census and LWVMN

The purpose of the local League Census Leadership Project is to educate the public, especially hard to count populations, about the census. The role of LWVMN is to forward the goal of a complete count of all Minnesotans.

The census affects 4 primary areas fundamental to essential governance; Community Funding, Congressional Apportionment (*Minnesota is in danger of losing a congressional seat*), State and Federal Redistricting, and Community Demographics.

In Minnesota only 74% participated in the 2000 Census. The undercount was focused particularly in rural communities, communities of color, the impoverished community, undocumented immigrants and the homeless. LWV can help address those issues.

We have a couple of people who are interested in applying for a small grant to help with expenses. If you are interested in helping let Patti Kratky (218-233-8382) or Sue Altenburg (701-297-6815) know. We need to draft a Census Plan, submit the plan for the grant, implement that plan and evaluate it. The plan should provide information to community gathering spots, such as churches, food shelves, homeless shelters, schools, employee newsletters, and youth groups on how to become a member of the Complete Count Committee in the area.

### JOIN THE LEAGUE!

Individual: \$50, students: \$15

Send your check to:

LWV RRV

PO Box 295

Fargo, ND 58107-0295

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



#### 2009-2010 LWVRRV Officers

Co-Presidents:

*Lois Altenburg, Patti Kratky*

First Vice President: *Barbara Headrick*

Second Vice President: *Mary Tintes*

Secretary: *Amy Jacobson*

Treasurer: *Carol Sawicki*

#### 2009-2010 Board of Directors:

*Sharon Benzal, Donna Chalimonczyk, Portia Danielson, Alice Hauan, Nancy Jardine, Frank Kratky,*

**Please consider attending this event. The LWVRRV will be providing numerous scholarships for local university students to attend. Funds raised go toward sponsorship of candidate forums, the Freedom Lecture and leadership development.**

**Kathy Hawken, ( R )  
House of Representative,  
District 46, North Dakota**



Representative Hawken has served her community for many years in a wide variety of endeavors.

She started her political career when elected to the Fargo Board of Education. She took on the responsibilities of many advisory committees including Kids Count and Region V Child Care. She served on the boards of Fargo Public School Foundation, Union State Bank, YMCA-NDSU, Women in Government, Women's Legislative Lobby and on the ND Judicial Standards Committee.

Her path to leadership, while quite different from Speaker Kelliher's, has been filled with challenges and accomplishments.

**Wednesday, September 23**

**11 a.m.—2 p.m.**

**Marriot Convention Center  
Moorhead, Minnesota**

11:00 a.m. Registration

11:30 a.m. Buffet Lunch

Noon

**ND Representative Kathy  
Hawken and Speaker Margaret  
Anderson Kelliher, MN**

House of Representatives

1:15 p.m. Audience Questions/  
Comments

1:45 p.m. Wrap-up

**RSVP: LWV RRV**

**\$25 — by September 17**

Mail checks to: LWVRRV  
508 4th St. N., Fargo, ND 58102

Phone: 701-297-6815

E-mail: lwvrrv@q.com



**Margaret Anderson  
Kelliher (D), Speaker,  
House Representatives,  
Minnesota**

Throughout her life, Speaker Kelliher has been recognized by her peers for her leadership.

She serves on the National Conference of State Legislatures Executive Committee and received a fellowship in leadership from the Bush Foundation. As a teenager, she served as state 4-H president.

Speaker Kelliher will share the inside story of her journey to the legislature and as the Speaker of the House. The road was not simple and full of challenges.

Hear how one woman worked her way through the maze and broke through the glass ceiling.

**T**he League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages an 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.

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.