



Red River Voter

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LWV Web Sites: www.lwvnd.org & www.lwvnmn.org • (701) 484-1920

OCTOBER—NOVEMBER 2013

A look ahead...

GUESTS are always welcome at League meetings!

- Friday, September 20**
Absentee ballots available in Clay Co., MN
Contact the Clay Co. Auditor, (218) 299-5006 or
lori.johnson@co.clay.mn.us
- First Friday -October 4** **12:00 noon- 1:00 PM**
Sons of Norway, 722 2nd Ave .N., Fargo
(Buffet lunch available beginning at 11:30 AM)
Program: *The Moorhead Study on Problems with Low
Income Housing and Hunger in Moorhead*
Presenters: Patti Kratky and Del Rae Williams
- Tuesday, October 15** **6:30-9:00 PM**
Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Ave. N., Moorhead
Moorhead Candidate Forums:
Mayor and City Council
(See article below.)
- Wednesday, October 16** **Noon**
Speakeasy Restaurant, 1001 30th Ave S, Moorhead
Moorhead Area LWVRRV meeting,
Topic: *Restorative Justice Program for Youth
Offenders in Clay County*

- Thursday, October 17,** **6:00-7:30 PM**
Red Raven Espresso Parlor, 916 Main Ave., Fargo
LWV After Dark
- First Friday, November 1** **12:00 noon- 1:00 PM**
Sons of Norway, 722 2nd Ave .N., Fargo
(Buffet lunch available beginning at 11:30 AM)
Speaker: *Representative Kathy Hawken, District 46,
South Fargo*
- Tuesday, November 5,** **7:00 AM-8:00 PM**
Election Day in Moorhead
- Wednesday, November 20** **Noon**
Speakeasy Restaurant, 1001 30th Ave S, Moorhead
Moorhead Area LWVRRV meeting
Topic: *The future of Human Rights issues in Moorhead*
- Thursday, November 21** **6:00-7:30 PM**
Red Raven Espresso Parlor, 916 Main Ave., Fargo
LWV After Dark

Moorhead Candidate Forums: Tuesday, October 15

Forums will be held at the Hjemkomst Center, 202 First Ave N in Moorhead and will be co-sponsored by Senior Connections.

Three forums are scheduled that evening:

- ◆ 6:00-6:45 PM – Candidates for Wards 1 and 2
- ◆ 7:00-7:45 PM – Candidates for Mayor
- ◆ 8:00-8:45 PM - Candidates for Wards 3 and 4

Questions will be submitted by members of the audience and read by the moderator. Questions that are very specific toward an individual candidate will not be read.

Each candidate will be allowed 2 minutes for an opening statement, 2 minutes to respond to individual questions, and 2 minutes for a closing statement.

Here is a list of the candidates for all of the offices:

- Mayor**
Mark Hintermeyer; Milke Hulett; DelRae Williams;
Kevin Shores
- Ward 1**
David Hallman; Mari Dailey; Alexander Huseby
- Ward 2**
Mark Altenburg; Jim Haney
- Ward 3**
Brenda Elmer; Julian Dahlquist
- Ward 4**
Newzad Brifki; Ben Anderson; Cassandra Lougheed;
Chris Floberg; Chuck Hendrickson

President's letter

Recently I received a booklet from LWVUS entitled, "A Guide to Public Policy Positions, 2012 -2014." In it are the official positions for the national League on dozens of issues. Its stated purpose "to help League Leaders use LWVUS public policy positions effectively at the state and local level." I personally see it as a source of information to guide our local League on more national issues.

It has expected positions on voting rights, campaign finance, health care, and the environment. Others, such as positions related to the United Nations, were a bit surprising to see. I never knew the League's positions included how the UN operates.

Many of these issues are beyond what the LWV of the Red River Valley sees at its focus. We seek to keep our attention on issues that apply to Minnesota and North Dakota. Sometimes, national issues, such as voting rights, are also issues for us here. We held multiple programs looking at Voter ID requirements when Minnesota was voting on such a requirement. More often we try to translate the values of the League of Women Voters to local issues. Last spring, we held several First Friday programs aimed at providing more transparency to the parts of government that are often neglected, such county commissions and the Fargo and Moorhead school boards. This provided the opportunity for citizens and elected officials to inform and question outside of election season. We did something similar at the Sept. 6th First Friday program when members of the Flood Diversion Board discussed what they do and how they do it.

Sometimes it is easy to decide on which issues should garner our attention and effort. The flood diversion is an obvious example. However, issues can slip the attention of those of us who serve as officers and board members. We are always looking for areas of interest to our members. For example, we have chosen tax fairness as our area of study for 2013-2014. This is clearly a very broad topic that could involve numerous issues. We could cover how property taxes work; the differences between taxation on the east and west sides of the Red River; or how the tax revenue is used at a local or state level. Your board members and officers can come up with ideas. What we don't know is what you would be interested in having us pursue.

I, therefore, humbly ask for your input. Please send ideas on tax fairness or other issues that you believe fits within the scope of the LWV of the Red River Valley and would be advantageous to League members and the general public to know more about. You can send them to our email: lwvrrv@gmail.com or leave a message at (701) 484-1920. Heck, we'd love a postcard sent to PO Box 295, Fargo, ND 58107. We don't get postcards very often.

I hope to see many of you at Fargo First Fridays, Moorhead Third Wednesdays, candidate forums in Moorhead or at any other LWV of the Red River Valley event over the

rest of 2013 or into 2014.

Also, feel free to send me questions or anything else to my email: redbarbh@hotmail.com.

—*Barb Headrick*
LWVRRV President

Members and member events

■ LWVRRV Board Member

Adam Altenburg is one of the newest members to the LWVRRV Board of Directors. He became involved in the LWV because of the League's commitment to equal rights, health care, public participation and environmental protection.

Adam is a lifelong resident of the FM area and a 2004 graduate of the NDSU architecture program. After graduation, he served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Albania where he taught English and technical drawing at a local high school. In addition to teaching, he worked with local government in the development of environmental remediation policies and coordinated activities for a youth camp catering to the underserved Roma community.

In 2007, he returned to Fargo where he worked in architectural design for a local firm. In 2010, he returned to school where he earned his Master of Urban Planning degree from the University of Auckland in New Zealand. He also worked as a graduate teaching assistant where he taught urban design and planning policy writing.

Adam currently works for the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments where he works on transportation and land-use policies. His interests include sustainable design and development, climate change, and national and international politics.

■ League After Dark

Can't make it to our First Friday events at noon? The LWV After Dark meets the third Thursday of each month at 6:00-7:30PM for an informal discussion stemming from the topic from that month's First Friday. Everyone is invited to attend this relaxed event created for dialog and discussion. Updates and announcement for LWV After Dark events can also be found on our Facebook page. Unless otherwise noted, please join us at The Red Raven Espresso Parlor at (916 Main Avenue Fargo at 6 pm on the following dates:

October 17

November 21

News from the LWVUS

■ League submits statement to Presidential Commission on Election Administration

The League submitted a statement to the Presidential Commission on Election Administration outlining the five key suggestions the League proposes for improving the polling place experience for voters. These suggestions include Secure Online Voter Registration, Permanent and Portable Statewide Voter Registration, Expanded Early Voting, Improved Polling Place Management and Electronic Streamlining. The League believes these five important steps would accomplish major improvements in election administration that would let voters know that they are the central actors in our nation's democratic system, just as customers are central to any business enterprise.

■ League lobbies U.S. Senate on the Voting Rights Act

To: Members of the U.S. Senate
From: Elisabeth MacNamara,
President-LWVUS
Re: Repair and Restore the Voting Rights Act

The League of Women Voters believes that Congress must act to repair and restore the Voting Rights Act to its full effectiveness following the recent Supreme Court decision in Shelby v. Holder. This decision erased fundamental protections against racial discrimina-

tion in voting that have been critical in protecting our democracy. The League was very disappointed in the Shelby decision and we believe that Congress needs to move swiftly to overcome this decision and repair and restore the full effectiveness of the Voting Rights Act.

The League has long supported the Voting Rights Act (VRA). As an organization whose mission encourages informed and active participation in government, we believe that we need to keep our elections free, fair and accessible. League members worked closely with members of Congress to reauthorize the VRA in 1982 and as recently as 2006. We believe that the Voting Rights Act and its enforcement over the past four decades is largely responsible for the progress we have made eliminating discrimination in voting.

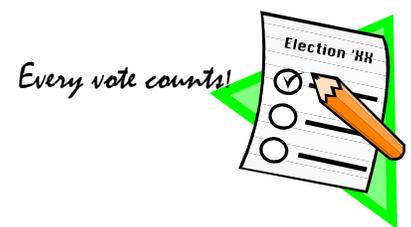
Therefore, we are concerned that the Shelby decision weakened the Voting Rights Act as a mechanism to fight discrimination by striking down Section 4, which determines the states and jurisdictions that must secure federal approval before changing election laws. The League believes that the Supreme Court decision is ill founded. While we have made progress in voting rights, the fact that the Department of Justice blocked over 700 voting changes they found to be discriminatory from 1982 through the VRA's 2006 reauthorization speaks for itself.

The League believes that we need the VRA to combat these 'second-generation barriers' and the pernicious discrimination that is less visible than what occurred decades ago but no less harmful to the right to vote. We ask you to fix this issue and restore the Voting Rights Act to its full effectiveness.

We are encouraged that both chambers of Congress have already held hearings on the Voting Rights Act and that legislators from both sides of the aisle recognized that discrimination in our elections remains a problem. The Voting Rights Act is a critical component to stopping this discrimination.

The League will continue to pursue all avenues to fight for voters' rights, but we need strong action by Congress now to repair and restore the Voting Rights Act protections that have helped us prevent racial and language discrimination in our elections for decades. Solutions for voters are required on an issue as fundamental as the voting rights of all Americans.

Thank you for your leadership and we ask you to act quickly to repair and restore the Voting Rights Act to ensure our elections are free, fair and accessible to all citizens.



The Membership Committee needs your help!

The Membership Committee is responsible for welcoming new members, promoting membership growth, and developing ideas that bring our members together.

If you have ideas on how we can improve the membership experience for our chapter or ideas on fun events or initiatives to foster member development, please contact Jolene at jolene@garty@hotmail.com.

The membership committee meets once a month.



2013-2014 LWVRRV Officers

President: *Barbara Headrick*
Vice President: *DelRae Williams*
Secretary: *Ashley Ladbury*
Treasurer: *Carol Sawicki*

2013-2014 Board of Directors:

*Adam Altenburg, Les Bakke,
Jolene Garty, Rachel Hoffman,
Beverly Lake, and Mary Tintes*

League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley
P.O. Box 295
Fargo, ND 58107-0295

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TIME TO JOIN THE LEAGUE!

Membership Dues (April 1-March 31): Individual: \$50, students: \$15

Send your check to: LWV RRV, PO Box 295, Fargo, ND 58107-0295 or (701)484-1920



LWVRRV loses long-time member

Lois Casavant, long-time league member, passed away April 20 of this year. She was 89.

She was an instrumental figure in working on issues such as voter's service, the ND Constitutional Convention, the successful ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in North Dakota, water rights and the Garrison Diversion, women's issues and rights. She worked tirelessly on Fargo education issues as well.

Lois was treasurer and chief fund-raiser of the North Dakota and the Red River LWV. Whenever there was a need for funds—Lois was the woman to “go to.” She would curl up on

her sofa with a good cup of coffee and her clip board and “go to work.” She was always successful whether it was operating funds, money for voter guides, a regional public workshop on foreign trade or a tour.

LWVRRV presented Lois with her 75 year membership pin in 2007.

She had been a resident at Bethany Homes for many years. She is survived by a son and daughter. Her husband Don passed away several years ago.

A small group of league members attended her funeral, thanking her for work well done.

◆ This issue of the Voter, along with archived issues dating back to 2000, is available online on the lwvnd.org/rrv.html website

The 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.