

	<b>Red River Valley</b> <b>May - June 2000</b>
<b>A Look Ahead...</b>	<b>President's Message</b>
<p>LWV public meetings are held in the Sons of Norway Lodge, 722 2nd Avenue North, Fargo, meeting room behind the cafeteria. Members and guests who wish to go through the buffet line and eat together (in the lodge meeting room) may do so at 11:30 a.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>May 5 12-1:00 p.m.</b>  <b>First Friday at Sons of Norway</b>  <i>The Richness of Our Community: Celebrating Cultural Diversity</i></p> <p>Heritage Dancers and Roots of Mexico. This is our entry in the City of Fargo's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. It is the last First Friday meeting until September.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>May 12 1:00 p.m.</b>  <b>Fargo South High School</b>  <i>Dedication and open house for the public</i></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>May 18 4-8:00 p.m.</b>  <b>Fargo Public Library *on-the-green</b>  <i>Library Centennial Party</i></p> <p>Booths, giveaways, games for children with Ann Dolence, entertainment, and food.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Just for Voters</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>May 9</b>  <i>Commission Run-off City of Fargo election</i></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>May 23 7:00 p.m.</b>  <b>Fargo City Commission Room</b>  <i>Library Planning meeting</i></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>June 1 6:30-9:00 p.m.</b>  <b>West Fargo City Commission Chamber</b>  <i>Forum: Cass County, West Fargo Commission candidates &amp; E9-J-J measure</i></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>June 6 6:30-8:30 p.m.</b>  <b>West Fargo City Commission Chamber</b>  <i>Forum: West Fargo School Board candidates &amp; Library measure</i></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>June 13</b>  <i>West Fargo City Election</i></p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>June 13</b>  <i>North Dakota State Primary Election</i></p> <p>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, marital origin, race or sexual orientation, and encourages full participation in and contribution to the organization by all its members.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Leadership is getting someone to do what they don't want to do in order to achieve what they want to achieve.</i>  <i>-Tom Landry</i></p> <p>We are leaders of the League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley—Informing Voters of West Fargo, Fargo, Moorhead, and Dilworth. April 25, 2000 brought a new spirit, a new name, a new League. I'm honored to be your League President under this new configuration and have been honored to be your League President for the last year.</p> <p>With all this newness in our midst, we need to know who are the responsible parties. This is my message of many thanks. My leadership in this esteemed organization has taught me that it is even easier to achieve what we want to achieve when indeed a group <i>does</i> want to do what needs to be done to grow and succeed in our mission.</p> <p>I must thank the 1999-2000 board for their constant support and ever-present enthusiasm—you made my experience an enjoyable one. A special thank you goes to Audrey Richmond and Donna Chalimonczyk for publishing this fine newsletter you hold in your hands. I am grateful to Sue Petry and Andrea Johnson for leading the Voter Education/Service team—you have set a standard of professionalism and excellence in the numerous forums you have provided this community. Thank you, Alice Hatan and Susan Helgehand for your advice in my first year of League Leadership—your words of encouragement truly validated my efforts. Gini Duval and the League observers have kept the whole group informed and continue to represent the League with credibility and class.</p> <p>Thanks to Julia Jones for providing our community with a stellar year of First Friday programs. Suzanne Dobbins and Sherbanoo Aziz continue to lead the membership team—I appreciate their innovative thoughts and hard work in increasing and diversifying our membership ranks.</p> <p>Speaking of membership, I thank you for your willingness to embrace positive change and volunteer your time and energy to the goals of the League. I also thank our contributors—your financial support has enhanced our endeavors of education and advocacy.</p> <p>The 2000-2001 year will be one of new challenges and successes for the League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley. Keep up the great work on behalf of the League—with your leadership we will achieve what we want to achieve.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>-Billi Jo Zielinski, President</i></p>
<b>Observer Corps</b>	<b>Editor's Corner</b>
<p>This has been a year of change for our area League. It has been gratifying as an older member to see new young members become so active and enthusiastic about our work of stimulating voters to participate in democracy. Coming activities, especially the D-net and local website, have tremendous potential for voter education. We can change our way of doing things, but we need more members involved. Contact Andrea today!—<i>Audrey Richmond, 235-3904</i></p>	<p>This has been a year of change for our area League. It has been gratifying as an older member to see new young members become so active and enthusiastic about our work of stimulating voters to participate in democracy. Coming activities, especially the D-net and local website, have tremendous potential for voter education. We can change our way of doing things, but we need more members involved. Contact Andrea today!—<i>Audrey Richmond, 235-3904</i></p>

<b>Fargo City Commission</b>	<b>Moorhead City Council and Clay County Board of Commissioners</b>
<p>An area of land mostly along 24th and 25th streets, just south of Main Avenue, has been zoned commercial even though there are many single family homes and one apartment building in the area. There was an attempt to zone each lot as to what sort of building was on it. This would allow homeowners to get loans for home improvement at lower than commercial rates. The owner of Quality Auto Body came to the March 20th meeting to complain that the rezoning would prevent his business from expanding. The lots that he was concerned with were left commercial. Other people had protested the rezoning but they did not come to the meeting. It was suggested that changing the zoning to residential was not really in their best interest, since the area is in transition to commercial and they probably would not be able to sell as residential property in the future.</p> <p>Besides the various aspects of the proposed new arena, commissioners discussed how to fund dome roof repair at the April 4th meeting. These repairs will be funded by a bank loan, to be paid back when and if the city wins the lawsuit against the builders and architects of the dome.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Carol Sawicki, Observer</i></p>	<p>On February 24, 2000, Moorhead City Council and staff discussed changes in the ordinance governing parking vehicles in yards. The observer noted that the council and city attorney listened to public input.</p> <p>In March, the Clay County Board of Commissioners heard the following reports: Clay County Adult Mental Health Local Advisory Council; County Engineer Jack Cousins on equipment purchases; and security being put in place in a court room. Updates were given by County Coordinator Vijay Sethi and on juvenile detention by Barry Steen.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Bea Arett Observer</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Moorhead School Board</b></p> <p>On March 27, the board awarded contracts for building a football stadium. They also terminated/reduced teaching staff for 2000-01 because of the budget shortfall.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Naomi Rice, Observer •</i></p>
<b>Fargo School Board</b>	<b>People Notes</b>
<p>School board candidates not already serving were present at the April 11 meeting and all spoke in favor of a third high school during the audience recognition segment of the meeting.</p> <p>Later in the meeting, there was a presentation of data related to construction of a new high school. A handout was circulated detailing construction costs totaling between \$30-32 million depending upon the students to be served (800-1,200). This material was dated December, 1998. Lowell Wolff distributed tables indicating 1999 district enrollment projections. The table listing the difference between this year's projections for the future of South High School's enrollment and previous ones indicate a declining enrollment. Board candidate, Dr. Lamb, in his pre-remarks had stated his disbelief that the enrollment at SHS was declining. He tried unsuccessfully to be recognized during Wolff's presentation.</p> <p>The trigger for beginning construction of a new high school will be student enrolls at SHS of 1,780, North High of 900 and 50% of the new high school or 450.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Audrey Richmond, Observer</i></p>	<p>This election year, four Fargo League members have filed their candidacy for election to the N.D. Legislature: Gini Duval and Dorothy Haugen for District 46 House, Diane Briggs for District 46 Senate and Joanne Ellingson for District 44 House.</p> <p>•League members are invited to submit their writing to a new literary journal called <i>Siren Song</i>. It will be devoted to women's writing and is being funded by Moorhead State University. Deadline for the first issue was April 21, but interested parties can contact Kama Jensen at 271-9259 or 810 4th Avenue South, Suite 204, Moorhead, about future issues.</p> <p>•Thanks are due to member Carol Sawicki who, in her campaign for Fargo City Commission, stressed the importance of advertising governmental appointment openings when they come up so as to give interested citizens an opportunity to apply.</p> <p>•Suzanne Dobbins, Andrea Johnson and Alice Hatan were presented the first awards for notable service to the League at our annual meeting. Billi JO would like to see this become a tradition at annual meetings.</p> <p>•Laurie Bokke, LWVMN field worker, was a guest at our annual meeting. She has been very helpful in the extension of our membership into two states. We received 100 new membership brochures from her recently adding our own information to the back, and they are almost gone!</p>

<b>DNet—An Exciting Voter Education Tool</b>	<b>LWV Board Notes</b>
<p>In March, Andrea Johnson, Voter Service-Education Co-chair of the LWVRRV, attended a 3-day seminar sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) in Chicago, Illinois. The meetings focused on the Democracy Network (DNet)—an interactive voter information system.</p> <p>Several years ago, as the Internet was in its infancy, LWV leaders from California and Washington state recognized its new communication possibilities and began thinking of ways to experiment with the Internet as a tool for publishing election information. It is in large part, thanks to their pioneering work, that the League as a national organization undertook the Voters Online Project in 1998.</p> <p>For the November 1998 elections, the LWV tested two innovative software programs offering in-depth local, state and national voter information in 14 pilot areas across the country. This project helped lay the groundwork for coverage of national, state and local elections in these communities and expansion of the system to cover all 50 states by the year 2000.</p> <p>The pilot project tested two voter education systems. The one ultimately selected was the Democracy Network or DNet. The system allows citizens to browse through an "issue grid" to compare candidates' statements on issues, candidates biographical and endorsement information, and e-mail candidates with comments or requests for their statement on a particular issue.</p> <p>In 1999, a partnership agreement was signed by the Center for Governmental Studies, the creator of DNet, and the LWVUS to expand and promote DNet. Development of DNet as a voter education tool for online election and candidate information became part of the League's national platform. Currently 19 states have used DNet.</p> <p>This year the LWVUS/LWV Education Fund boards approved a three-way agreement which allows DNet technology and personnel to be acquired by Grassroots.com, a new Internet corporation founded with the mission of <i>reconnecting Americans with their political system in an open nonpartisan online community</i>. The management team is committed to a public service mission. The Grassroots.com site will offer a variety of activist tools to organizations, informal groups and individuals. Leagues, of course will have access to all these tools and aid can make use of any that seem appropriate for local voter education.</p> <p>Because DNet is entirely volunteer driven, in order for our local League to be involved, WE NEED VOLUNTEERS! DNet may be a perfect partner with the Voter Guide project. Anyone who is interested in learning more about DNet or volunteering to help with the local project can visit the DNet website at: <a href="http://www.dnet.org">www.dnet.org</a> or contact Andrea Johnson at (701) 232-6956. Her e-mail address is: <a href="mailto:andrgal@johnson@_ndscaps.ncd">andrgal@johnson@_ndscaps.ncd</a></p>	<p>The April 12 board meeting, the first with new member Marlene Batter-bury, was a busy one. Three people will be going to the National Convention in Washington, D.C., June 17-20. The board voted to increase the amount budgeted for conventions to cover more of their expenses. Our membership has increased to 114 members with 33 added to the current mailing list. This can be attributed to the hard work of Suzanne Dobbins and her committee in making contact with potential members—a truly successful campaign.</p> <p>Mary mentioned that she would like to see Health Care Reform become a part of our program this year. We might be able to access LWVMN funds for speakers and study aids.</p> <p>We discussed a Concordia-based collegiate LWV chapter. Colleen Hermann, a student member, might be enlisted to help start the chapter.</p> <p>Sue Petry described the annual meeting as "the best meeting ever." Members enjoyed Jane Ahlin's talk and the VIP Room brunch. It may be necessary to secure a larger space in the future. The name change and slate of officers published in the last Voter were approved.</p> <p>Six additional directors can be appointed to the board. Audrey Richmond, Gini Duval and Colleen Hermann will be asked to serve. Billi JO will coordinate a group to look at our weaknesses and try to choose persons who could help us in these areas.</p> <p>Two well-run forums were held on April 7 and 10th and repeated on Cable One on April 15. A thank you card is being sent to David Martin of the Chamber of Commerce who was a wonderful help. In June, West Fargo will hold elections for school board, city commission, park board and city bond issue. Forums will be held.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Edited from minutes</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>by Suzanne Dobbins Secretary</i></p>

<b>Legendary Leaguer Genevieve Durben</b>	<b>Library Process</b>
<p>"Gen" Durben joined the League of Women Voters in Jamestown, ND in 1956 but subsequently moved to Fargo the following year and did not affiliate here until 1976. Her favorite League activity has always been voters service and education. She especially remembers the studies of city government, health care and the environment.</p> <p>Elected as first Vice President of LWVND in 1988, Gen moved on to become President of the state League in 1990. Her first activity in this role was attendance at the 70th convention of LWVUS in Washington, DC. She recalls the wonderful agenda of workshops, tours of congressional buildings, the White House, memorials etc. It was a national election year and the U.S. Census and reapportionment were taking place. Focus then was on campaign finance reform, delivery and financing of health care and gun control—an ongoing process.</p> <p>During Gen's term as state President, LWVND partnered with Cable-Coin and the ND Dept. of Public Instruction to sponsor a "Promoting Voting" contest involving ND elementary school children in 23 counties—a successful and satisfying project.</p> <p>When the League joined with other women's organizations in the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of women's right to vote in North Dakota, Gen enjoyed participating in historical reenactments at Bonanzaville on August 26, 1995.</p> <p>She has enjoyed the knowledge, the friendships, and the opportunities the League has afforded her during her membership. With more young women—and men—joining again, Gen Durben is confident the League will continue to be a vital and wonderful organization. ...</p>	<p>What's Going on at the Fargo Public Library besides staff dissatisfaction and a lawsuit? Planning! Why planning? Consider that the Fargo Public Library has 1.58 volumes per capita (Bismarck has 2.90; Minot, 3.20; Grand Forks 3.28). Clearly, we need an increased city budget for operating costs and acquisitions as well as monies for increased staff salaries.</p> <p>A comprehensive planning process is underway headed by Meyer, Scherer and Rockcastle, LTD Design Firm, Stroth Architects, LTD. and George Lawson, Library Planner. This planning team has 6 members. The Planning Steering Committee's 12 community members are: Ery Inniger, Cindy Gray, Larry Boulger, Edie Discher, Janet Geston, Beth Hamerlink, Lowell Wolff, Roger Gress, C. Warner Litton, Gale Chapman, Billi JO Zielinski, and Reid Messerschmidt.</p> <p>Also involved are members of the Library Board: Larry Boulger, Virginia Dambach, David Martin, Ryn Pitts and Katherine Walstad. Mike Jaugslett, State Librarian, is also on board as well as local librarians, including Beth Postema. These folks have had several meetings. The public has been invited to public information meetings. Discussion has centered around parking space issues and the need for a "nerve" center for students. Need for a downtown presence was stressed by many. People want library access close to their home as well as up-to-date computer services. The last public meeting is Tuesday, May 23, 7:00 p.m. in the Fargo City Commission room. The Library Service Model will be presented at this time.</p> <p>What will be in this report? Ideas include a downtown library that is a computer/community center with a free full service library in south Fargo; remodeling the present space; cooperation with other area libraries; two branches; and a low budget choice might be kiosks in shopping centers and more bookmobiles. The issues considered are: customer, capital cost, operational management and community.</p> <p>What can you do now if you have missed the public meetings? You can express your opinion, call one of the steering committee members, attend the last public meeting on May 23, or e-mail the chairs: Larry Boulger at <a href="mailto:lboulger@worldnet.att.net">lboulger@worldnet.att.net</a> or Gale Chapman at <a href="mailto:gchapman@ewmail@nodak.edu">gchapman@ewmail@nodak.edu</a>.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>--Gini Duval, LWV Observer and Chair Friends of the Library</i></p>