



## A look ahead...

**GUESTS are always welcome at League meetings!**

**First Friday, Nov. 7** **12 noon-1 PM**

*(Lunch available beginning at 11:30 AM)*

*Sons of Norway, 722 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N, Fargo*

**Topic: Youth and Homelessness in Fargo-Moorhead**

**Speaker:** Michael Carbone, Executive Director  
FM Coalition for Homeless Persons

**Saturday, Nov. 15** **9 a.m. to noon**

**ALL Leaguers welcome!**

**What: Strategic Planning for the LWVRRV**

**Where:** Faith United Methodist Church  
909 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. N., Fargo, ND

**First Friday, Dec. 5** **12 noon- 1 PM**

*(Lunch available beginning at 11:30 AM)*

*Sons of Norway, 722 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. N., Fargo*

**Topic: Voting in Cass County's General Election**

**Speaker::** Michael Montplaisir  
Cass County Aucitor

## Join the League!

Individual — \$50.00 - Student— \$15.00

◆ **Send your check to:**

*League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley*

*PO Box 295, Fargo, ND 58107*

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

## President's letter

This season some LWVRRV members worked diligently and faithfully to construct our own Voter Guide for the campaigns in Minnesota. Our gratitude to Voter Service chair Amy Jacobson, to Sue Altenburg whose efforts in the League office were tireless and to Donna Chalimonczyk whose copy writing seemed to flow from her key board. Without your tireless efforts getting the responses from the Minnesota House Districts 9A and 9B candidates Clay County District 1 and 5 Commissioner Candidates, the Moorhead IDS 152 candidates would never have happened. We got 11 out of 13 candidates to respond. All of this information was entered on the [vote.lwvnmn.org](http://vote.lwvnmn.org) web site (a first for us and a real milestone). It was also distributed at candidates forums, to the Lake Agassiz libraries in Moorhead and Barnesville and in the FM Extra newspaper. We hope to reach as many voters as possible with this balanced information. If you received an electronic version please send it to as many people as possible.

Amy and her husband Todd, worked tirelessly on the Child Care Issue Forum which was attended by the intended audience of legislative candidates, consumers and providers of child care. The speakers were very informative and reassured us that the needs for child care were recognized by some legislators. We will have another Forum in April to learn how the sessions addressed those needs. In the meantime, Amy and the LWVRRV will be forming a coalition to study the legislation needed.

We also owe thanks to Jessi Clark, who was editor of The Voter of the Red River Valley. Jessi is being deployed to United Arab Emirate at the end of November. We wish her the best of times in her service to the country.

Lois Altenburg spoke at many sites besides moderating the ND House Districts 44 and 46 Candidates Forum and District Judge Candidates Forums.

LWVRRV is noted for its candidate forums. After election, action is the LWV byword. We will be lobbying our elected officials on our positions. Who is interested in being a League lobbyist? Or Observer of the county commissions, the school boards, the Minnesota and North Dakota House of Representatives? We need your help in doing this. Training is available. Try it, you'll really like it.!

*Patti Kratky, co-president with Lois Altenburg*



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## More on immigration

We are in the midst of our study on immigration and will be taking our second consensus sometime in 2009. As part of our obligation in this area, we are also to keep an eye on what is happening and keep in touch with our congressional delegation regarding immigration issues. Following is an article from the current issue of the NATION magazine by Dannielle Douglas concerning immigrants from Haiti and the problems they are dealing with now, added on to all they have gone through. The immigration bill before the U.S. House and Senate will be taken up before the end of this session. Letters to our delegation will help precipitate action on the Haitian Protection Act of 2007.

A little-known bill languishing in the House Judiciary Committee could spare some 20,000 undocumented Haitian immigrants the ordeal of returning to a country crippled by storms and food shortages. The Haitian Protection Act of 2007 would allow Haitians currently residing in the United States to apply for "temporary protection status" (TPS) - a quasi amnesty for immigrants from politically or environmentally unstable countries. When Congressman Alcee Hastings introduced the legislation in January 2007, he cited the country's ongoing political unrest and devastation from tropical storm Jeanne in 2004.

The recent barrage of storms have further ravaged Haiti's already fragile infrastructure. Flash flooding has washed out roads and bridges, drowned crops and displaced as many as 1 million people. The country is in no shape to absorb deportees.

Last month, Hastings testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee's hearing on disaster relief for Haiti, insisting that TPS was a necessary part of the package. Shortly after, the Congressman, backed by thirty-one of his colleagues, sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff requesting TPS for

Haitians. For now, immigration and Customs Enforcements has temporarily suspended deporting Haitians. The agency did the same thing after Jeanne and then recommenced expatriations a year later. Haiti was unstable then, as it will likely be in the coming year.

—Alice Hauan

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## First Friday

Our First Friday meeting is November 7, 11:30 AM at the Sons of Norway.

Speaking at 12:00 is Michael Carbone, Executive Director of the F-M Coalition for Homeless Persons.

His topic will be "Youth and Homelessness in Fargo-Moorhead."

In a 2006 survey by Wilder Research, Fargo had 32 homeless parents who had children with them. Eight parents reported having a child with an emotional, behavioral problem. Of the 17 parents with school-age children, seven reported that at least one of their children had some type of learning or school-related problem and three parents reported having a child that had to repeat a grade in school.

In Moorhead, 17 homeless parents had children with them. Four reported having a child with emotional or behavioral problems. Of the 13 parents with school-age children, two reported that at least one of their school-age children had some type of learning or school-related problem and one parent reported having a child that had to repeat a grade in school.

Fifteen of the Fargo families and 8 of the Moorhead families reported they were unable to obtain needed child care.

Four Fargo parents and three Moorhead parents reported their children had to skip meals in the last month because there was not enough money to buy food.

Obtaining health care and dental

services is also a problem for these families.

December's First Friday will feature an update on Cass County's new voting process. Mike Montplaisir, Cass County Auditor will be our speaker.

Both Friday sessions should provide new information for lively discussions.

Bring a guest—they will probably enjoy a Sons of Norway lunch and great company!

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## 2008 Voter Service a success!

Thanks to the LWVRRV members who worked at the Candidates Forums. Without their support the Forums wouldn't have gone so smoothly.

Thanks most of all to Amy Jacobson, who was Voter Service chair. Also to: Lois Altenburg, Bea Arett, Sharon Benzel, Mary Alice Bergan, Donna Chalimonczyk, Jessi Clark, Gini Duval, Phyllis Emmel, Barb Headrick, Alice Hauan, Patti Kratky, Naomi Rice, Mary Tintes Janet Van Amburg, and Diane Wray Williams.

Thanks to everyone who came, including the candidates.

— Patti Kratky

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### 2008-2009 LWVRRV Officers

Co-Presidents:

Lois Altenburg  
Patti Kratky

First Vice President

Carol Sawicki

Second Vice President

Mary Tintes

Secretary

Amy Jacobson

Treasurer

Carol Sawicki

### Board of Directors:

Sharon Benzel, Donna Chalimonczyk, Jessica Clark, Phyllis Emmel, Alice Hauan, Barbara Headrick, Amanda Noce.



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## The League is planning its future – and you're invited

**Strategic planning:** determines where an organization is going over the next year or more, how it's going to get there and how it'll know if it got there or not.

LWVRRV has received a grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation to engage in strategic planning to assess organizational structure, and identify and implement new income possibilities. The League has contracted with Cheryl Bergian to facilitate the planning process.

Eight League members gathered on October 25<sup>th</sup> to start the strategic planning process, and, two members provided information online. The group gathered information on the history of the LWVRRV, its current state, its core values and beliefs, and events, trends and developments affecting the League.

We'll build on the information collected at the first meeting to develop a strategic plan at the second meeting. All League members are invited to come to the second meeting – you'll be part of creating a plan for continuing the League's contribution to our communities in the past fifty years.

**Saturday, November 15**

**9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**Faith United Methodist Church**

**909 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. N., Fargo, ND**

Questions? Call Cheryl Bergian at (701) 793-2002 or e-mail her at [cherylbergian@cherylbergian.com](mailto:cherylbergian@cherylbergian.com)



Planning session: L-R Alice Hauan, Mary Tintes, Patti Kratky, Lois Altenburg, Cheryl Bergian, Audrey Richmond and Sharon Benzel

## Child Care Issues forum

The Otto Bremer Foundation awarded the LWVRRV grant money to bring an emerging community issue to a public discussion.

The League chose to seize this opportunity to highlight a growing array of problems facing parents needing child care services and of child care providers.

The first in a series of two formal public discussions was held in mid-October. About 25 people attended representing parents, child care providers, educators, legislators, legislative candidates. The ND Department of Public Instruction director also attended.

There was no end to the myriad of issues facing those involved in child care. This is no small problem. And, it involves many of our citizens that are outside the formal child care network: family members (including grandparents), neighbors, and "latch key" children. The issue has an economic impact on everyone as well as a social and law enforcement component.

The League will hold its second formal public meeting during the ND and MN legislative sessions.

Legislators will be asked to attend to help keep the public informed and up-to-date on their work on this issue.

**Are you looking for a way to impact the Child Care issues in Cass and Clay counties?**

**LWVRRV wants to start a coalition to address legislative issues in both states.**

**Call or e mail Patti Kratky if you are interested.**

**Phone: 233-8382, E-mail: [patti4st04@aol.com](mailto:patti4st04@aol.com)**



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*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.*

*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.*

***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.*