

	MAY-JUNE 2001
A Look Ahead...	President's Message
<p>LWV public meetings are held in:</p> <p>The Sons of Norway Lodge 722 2nd Avenue North Fargo, ND 58102</p> <p>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> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday, April 28, 2001 10 AM. Noah Coffee Co., 420 8th St. S., Moorhead LWVND Board Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">May 4, 2001 Noon-1 :00 First Friday, Sons of Norway New To America and Fargo: What is the Experience? Presenters: Recent new residents from Bosnia and Somalia</p> <p style="text-align: center;">May 4 and 5, 2001 Holiday Inn, New Ulm, MN LWV Minnesota State Convention Second Saturday - Meetings have concluded.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">May 16, 2001 5:15- 6:30 PM. United Way Office, 219 7th St. S., Fargo LWVRR Board Meeting</p> <hr/> <p>2001-2002 LWVRR Board President: Andrea Sather 1st Vice President :Barbara Headrick 2nd Vice President: Julia Jones Secretary: Mary Davies Treasurer: Suzanne Dobbins</p> <p>2001-2002 Directors Continuing: Sherbanoo Aziz, Marlene Batterberry New: Carolyn Bowe, Carol Sawicki, Janet VanAmberg, Helen Rudie</p> <p>Nominating Committee Patricia Johnson: Sharon Benzel, Jackie Brodshaug</p> <p>Thanks go to retiring/resigning board members: Betsy Vinz, Kathie Kvalvog, Janet Sandvig, and Susan Petrie</p>	<p>With spring just around the corner (I promise, it's coming), I'm so thrilled to be elected president of the League of Women Voters of the Red River Valley. For those who "did not make it to the annual meeting, it was a wonderful morning! Thanks again to Dina Butcher for a grand address on the North Dakota Human Rights Division.</p> <p>The next year for LWVRR promises to be an exciting one! We have great opportunity to take advantage of the momentum created by former President Billi Jo Zielinski and carried forward by co-presidents Mary Davies and Julia Jones.</p> <p>As president, my primary goals for LWVRRV include forging a close working relationship with the newly energized League of Women Voters of North Dakota to help create and duplicate the success of our League in other cities. This will include journeys into unit studies, DNet, and a state elections systems study, as well as other exciting projects.</p> <p>I also look forward to garnering even more positive publicity for the awesome work that our League volunteers perform on a regular basis to help voters make informed decisions.</p> <p>There is much work to do during the next twelve months to take the League to the next level. I look forward to working with the new board and the entire membership to make it happen! Cheers!</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Andrea Sather, President</i></p> <hr/>

Observer Corps

FARGO CITY COMMISSION

Fargo City Commission meetings of March 5 and March 19, 2001. Items discussed other than those reported in The Forum:

- Rezoning of older areas of the city is on-going. In some places, there are small individual lots that will continue to be zoned for industrial or commercial use, even though they are surrounded by residential zoning. The Fargo Planning Department has not changed the zoning on these lots since there are already businesses operating there. If one of these businesses closes in the future, there is no regulation by which the city can prevent a new similar use of the lot, even if it would probably be desirable in the neighborhood for the lot to contain a residential unit .
- The efforts for inner city revitalization are continuing, including a new \$1 million fund to help improve homes in the Horace Mann and Hawthorne school neighborhoods and possibly enable lower income families to buy houses there. This city-financed initiative is going to be added to by some of the local lending institutions as well. There has been an on- going Action Plan in place for the past several years that has provided Community Development Block Grant money to help fund many sorts of housing-related projects in depressed areas of the city .
- The somewhat controversial plan to give money to the Fargo School Board over the next three years was passed as long as no neighborhood schools are closed. This is actually an early distribution of tax income that the schools were due to receive within the next few years, so the city is not losing any revenue by this arrangement. Commissioner Bromenschenkel stated that he felt that the schools should have to work out their budget without expecting any extra funds from the city.

-Carol Sawicki, Observer

FARGO SCHOOL PUBLIC MEETINGS

There has been a great deal of public dialogue and media coverage about the budget shortfall problems of the Fargo Public Schools in the past months. Citizens, school board members, and district administration have spent many extra hours dealing with the issues. At times there were negative features in the exchanges between factions. We should all feel grateful that nine persons chose to come forward to file as candidates in the Fargo School Board election this spring. Vying for the three seats were incumbents Roger Kerns and Paul Meyers, and newcomers Kyle Davison, Don Faulkner, Richard D. Knutson, Fred Krueger, Meg Spielman-Peldo, and David Steen. One candidate, Byrum Cartwright, had to drop out due to illness.

As usual, the League of Women Voters held a candidates' forum in which all participated. In addition, Friends of Horace Mann sponsored another forum a week earlier. Voters could watch live broadcasts of the forums on Channel 2 as well as repeat broadcasts on Saturdays.

Candidates demonstrated different backgrounds and alternative positions primarily on the issues of school closings, priorities for the school district's budget, and disposition of the district's reserve fund.

On election day, there was a rather poor turnout of voters in terms of the importance of the issues. Results gave seats on the board to Spielman-Peldo and Faulkner and enabled incumbent Meyers to continue in his position. He was appointed to the board last fall and lives in the Longfellow district. Spielman-Peldo and Faulkner reside in the Hawthorne and Horace Mann districts respectively. All three candidates support the neighborhood school concept. Unfortunately, there are still many difficult decisions ahead.

Many thanks are due Roger Kerns and Karen Schenk, as they step down, for their years of service to the community.

-Audrey Richmond, Observer

UNITED NATIONS UPDATE

The United Nations Wrap Up for Year 2000 from the LWVUS UN Observer, Doris Schapira, states that the United States and Somalia are the only two countries that have not ratified the convention (treaty) on the Right of the Child. There is a special session of the General Assembly on Children coming up September 19-21, 2001.

Our country has not ratified the treaty on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. A new provision of this treaty allows women to bring complaints to the treaty's committee when national remedies have been exhausted. As of October, 2000, 166 countries had ratified the treaty.

Fortunately, a compromise was worked out that allows the Senate to release back payments owed to the United Nations for dues and peacekeeping. The United States had been in arrears for some time. The national League's position on the United Nations states that it "strongly supports U.S. participation in the UN system and favors U. S. policies that strengthen the UN's capacity to solve problems of global interdependence." (LWVUS Impact on Issues 2000-2002, p. 18)

HARVESTING THE WIND

According to Ben Larson of SEED and Chris Reed of Moorhead Public Service, speaking at the April First Friday meeting, North Dakota has the best wind resource in the United States. North Dakota SEED or Sustainable Energy for Economical Development, is an organization formed for the purpose of harvesting this wonderful wind resource. It is a joint project of Dakota Resource Council (DRC) and Clean Water Fund (CWF).

While showing slides of the installation of Moorhead's first wind energy turbine, Reed explained that Moorhead Public Service provides wind-generated power to 7% of its customers, the highest proportion in the nation, making up 0.75% of the company's total electric product. Consumers can purchase all or a minimum of their electric service from the turbine-generated supply. Should the turbine not be producing, the customer goes on regular power so there is no interruption of service. Reed stated that turbines are running at 95+% dependability. The current capacity for service is 1,000 residences and 1,500 commercial units. Subscriptions for the available power were filled in a short time. Additional turbine construction is in progress. Wind power can be used with other sources of energy, is readily renewable and its production is supportive of the environment. Each turbine takes only 1/4 acre of farm land. A farmer can lease the land to the power developer at a profit \$2,000-\$4,000 per year without responsibility himself--a good source of extra income.

Larson, speaking about North Dakota, mentioned that legislation has been passed in the N.D. legislature providing tax incentives for private development of turbines. Rural Electric cooperatives have been very cooperative and farmers are enthusiastic about the economic potential. Larson stated that the vision of SEED is to promote cooperation with electric plants on the Missouri River which produce electricity using hyrdo and coal in securing adequate lines to transmit power generated from all sources to the various markets. Ideally, North Dakota's wind power could supply other states.

A pamphlet outlining Cass County Electric's Infinity Wind Energy Project was available at the meeting. Two 750-kilowatt wind turbines are scheduled to operate by the fall of 2001. The power will be sold in 100 kilowatt blocks at \$3 per month.

One of the best attended First Friday meetings this year, the many guests indicated much interest in wind energy. More information can be obtained on SEED's website at www.ndseed.org

-Audrey Richmond, Observer

ANNUAL MEETING BUTCHER ADDRESSES LWVRRV

Dina Butcher, Deputy Commissioner and Director of the Division of Human Rights in the North Dakota Department of Labor, addressed attendees at the LWVRRV Annual Meeting on March 31. She outlined what she has been doing in the three months since her appointment as the director. Initially she has been looking at and attempting contacts with groups who advocate for specific citizens such as the disabled, the mentally ill, those in rehabilitation. Native Americans, women, the aging etc. She hopes to use agencies in the advocacy coalition to "funnel up" the concerns of individuals toward the Human Rights Division in the Labor office. She mentioned that other states have developed a process for handling complaints even though they may not have a separate Human Rights Commission.

Butcher stated that there may be a dysfunctional attitude existing in North Dakota legislators which makes them fear creation of a free-standing Human Rights Commission. North Dakotans, in general, seem to have made "being from here" a requisite for acceptance of others. We want new leadership but not different looking faces, backgrounds or attitudes. Those moving into the state, who fit those criteria, feel threatened. Butcher suggested that the state must use people of diverse cultures to increase economic development. There is a need for workers and population. She will be reaching out, doing surveys and gathering data with the ultimate goal of creating a climate of tolerance in North Dakota.

(Note: North Dakotans for a Human Rights Commission (NDHRC), a coalition of over 65 agencies, will continue to press for a free-standing North Dakota Human Rights Commission.)
--Audrey Richmond

2001-2002 PROGRAM

1. A study of local boards and commissions in Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo; their purpose, meeting times, and membership with emphasis on the appointment process.
2. A continuing study of area schools with emphasis on planning.

Bylaw Changes

Article III. Section 2:
b) Student members shall be those currently enrolled in post-secondary schools.
Article Vi. Section 2.
Annual dues as set in the budget shall be payable April 1 and shall be delinquent October 1.

LEAGUE NEWS

Suzanne Dobbins will continue as Membership Chair in 2001-02. She is happy to report that our membership now stands at 115. New or renewing members include: Jennifer Paulsrud, Donald Ommodt, Helen Jane Walstad, Kris Sheridan, Jan Gabriel, Bruce Maul and Margaret Blue. Welcome.

Watch the next issue of the National Voter for an article by Suzanne on the success of combined membership in the Red River Valley league. She also will participate in a panel presentation on membership at the League of Women Voters Minnesota convention on May 4-5, in New Ulm, MN. Also representing LWVRR at the convention are Mary Davies and Jan VanAmberg

In Appreciation o 2000--2001 Financial Contributors to LWVRRV

Presidential (\$100 and up): Service Oil , Suzanne Dobbins , State Bank of Fargo , Creative Kitchen , DC Publishing--matching grant , Blue Cross Blue Shield ND , US Bank , Gate City Savings Bank

Gubernatorial (\$50-\$99): Korsmo Funeral Home , Dakota Monument , Douglas Sillers , Judy Lee , Moorhead Drug , Carolyn Bowe , Wold Johnson PC , Barbara Headrick , Warner and Co. , Sue Petry, Mary Davies , James and Beth Postema , Maintenance Engineering

Mayoral (up to \$49): Marlene Batterberry, Frank Knox , Judith Strong , Joan C. Miller , Betsy Vinz, Mary Jenkins , Kathie Kvalvog , Gini Duval , Janet VanAmberg , Patty Corwin , Helen Shirey , Boulger Funeral Home , Jocelyn Burdick

Legendary Leaguer--Katherine Rogne

Katherine Rogne says she "couldn't be more pleased to see how the Fargo-Moorhead group (LWVRRV) developed." Let's all hope that the reactivation of the ND State League is gratifying to her as well. One of Katherine's projects as an early 1950s leaguer was to travel almost. Door-to-door recruiting new members in her capacity as membership chairman on the Fargo LWV board of directors. She soon moved on to the position of organization chairman of the State League when it was established. She proceeded to travel all over the state in order to encourage and advise new, tentative leagues in Minot, Williston, Valley City, Jamestown, and Bismarck. She also attempted to organize Ellendale and Wahpeton chapters. Her memories of this time include: Ellendale's choice of a local topic "Getting the Dogs off the School grounds" and a Wahpeton minister addressing her as "you communist!" and demanding she get off his porch. When asked what the League could do as a local project, the Mayor of Minot answered, " We always need people to set up chairs for the commission meetings." Times have indeed changed during Katherine's association with the LWV. Although she has long resided on a farm near Kindred, Katherine became a librarian at the Fargo Public Library in 1962. Known to many area children as the Bookmobile Lady, she retired in 1978. She has served in appointive advisory positions related to health care, enjoyed world travel with her husband Leslie, knitted mittens for children by the hundreds and is a wonderful divinity fudge maker.

Legendary Leaguers honored

A group of Legendary leaguers were honored at the LWVRRV Annual meeting and Brunch. They were: Bea Arett and Sharon Benzel of Moorhead, and Jocelyn Burdick, Lois Casavant, Ruth Landfield, Katherine Rogne, Betty Specht, Millie Treumann, and Lois Vogel of Fargo.

PEOPLE NOTES

Kathie Kvalvog

Kathie gave birth to 8 lb. 9 oz. baby boy on February 22. His name is Connor. Although Kathie, who has run a very successful finance drive this year has resigned her board position because of the increased responsibility at home, she has agreed to continue as finance chair in 2001-02. Hurrah!

Vernette Nelson

Many were surprised and saddened by the sudden illness and death of Vernette Nelson on April 12, following brain surgery. Retiring from the Fargo Public Library last fall, Vernette had resumed her active participation in League this year. We'll miss her presence and thoughtful comments at First Fridays.
