



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS - RoMaFH
ROSEVILLE, MAPLEWOOD, FALCON HEIGHTS

Also serving the communities of Little Canada and Lauderdale

VOTER

November 2007

www.romafh.org

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November Unit Meetings: Immigration Study Continued

This month we will finish the LWWUS discussion and consensus on US immigration policy begun in October. Note that unit meetings are a week earlier than usual this time, to avoid conflict with Thanksgiving plans. The questions to be considered this month (2, 3, 4) are in the October RoMaFH *Voter*, so bring it with you to the meeting. If you have already misplaced it, download another copy from the October *Voter* from our Web site, <www.romafh.org>. You may also get the questions at the national League Web site, <www.lww.org>.

We look forward to lively discussions and a national position.
The RoMaFH Diversity Committee & Judy Rosenblatt

November 13—Majors Restaurant
Social Hour 5:30 p.m.
Meeting 7 p.m.

CALL STEPHANIE DeBenedet at 651-483-1006 for
RESERVATIONS not later than noon on Monday, November 12.

November 14—Prince of Peace Lutheran Church 9:30 a.m. Bring your own beverage. (Also bring possible questions to ask State legislators and Metro Council at VIP meeting on January 15, 2008.

VIP

Save the Date:

January 15 may sound like it is the far distant future, but it will be here before you know it. Mark your calendar for the January 15, 2008 LWV RoMaFH annual VIP Conversations with Constituents. This is your chance to speak to your officials in a small group setting. Our Metropolitan Council Representatives and Minnesota Senators and Representatives will be invited to join us for desert and discussion of current issues and the upcoming legislative agenda.

Many thanks to all who have already volunteered to help out. We still need everyone's input on hot topics and most of all, your presence and participation on January 15th. You can share your question suggestions or offers of help with Florence Sprague (651) 779-0349 or Lila Reckseidler (651) 484-7782. Detailed time and place information will be in your January Voter. See you there!



Co-Presidents' Letter

Three of League's most important functions are to 1) encourage voting and engagement in the civic process, 2) help the public have information to make informed voting decisions and 3) form positions on major issues and advocate for those positions.

In the course of just a few weeks, you can participate in all of these important functions! Voter Services committee has just finished conducting four candidate forums. Election day for city councils and school board races is Nov. 6. In October many League members came together to begin helping formulate the League position on immigration. A lively process was conducted in the October unit meetings and it will continue through the November unit meetings. Please come and learn about this important complex issue.

We are a volunteer organization and it takes all of you to help us carry out the important League functions described here. If you are new to League and would like to get involved, contact us and we will help connect you to the group working in your interest area.

Remember to vote on Nov. 6!

Co-Presidents
Barb Yates
Teri Kysylyczyn

2006-7 Board of Directors

Teri Kysylyczyn
Barbara Yates
Co-Presidents

Anne Haugan
Secretary
Joan Stark
Treasurer

Ann Berry, Georgeann Hall, Diane Nystrom, Judith Rosenblatt, Florence Sprague
Lorraine Fischer CMAL
Program Division

Ann Cleland
Public Relations

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Michael Garelick (Roseville)
Lorraine Fischer (Maplewood),
Barbara Lehn (Little Canada)
Jill Lund (623 School Board)
Observer Program

Patricia DeFrancis
Sandi Lutz, Linda McLoon
Voter Service

Karen Schaffer
Gale Pederson
Membership

Georgiana Sobola
Units/ Admin. Asst

Laura French, Diane Nystrom
Newsletter

Joan Stark
Betty Harper
Finance Committee

Judicial Consensus

At the 2007 LWVMN convention, delegates voted to re-examine the League's 1999 position on the selection of judges, given the momentous U.S. Supreme Court and 8th Circuit Court of Appeals decisions that opened the way to politicizing judicial elections. This re-examination would be completed in a short time, in order that any new position would be ready by the time the legislature reconvened in February 2008. A committee was formed to undertake the study.

There was a lot of information at the committee's disposal, including the League's 1998 study and the March 2007 report of the Quie Commission, among other information. The committee conducted 11 interviews and reviewed written materials. The committee agreed to proceed by concurrence. The LWVMN board approved the concurrence statement, which appears below.

Our local league will consider whether to concur with the concurrence statement or not, at meetings on Dec. 5 (evening holiday party) and on Dec. 12 at 9:30 in the morning at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. Our response is due to the LWVMN by February 1, 2008.

Each member will receive a mailing from LWVMN by mid-November. Considerable information is also available on the LWVMN website as well. There was an article in our September 2007 local newsletter on the judicial decisions mentioned above.

The study committee agreed that League membership does not favor politicizing judicial elections and found that the merit selection/retention election system provides the benefits of appointment while keeping the public's right to vote.

Questions? Contact Karen Schaffer at 651-636-7359. Be ready to vote on the concurrence in December.

The following position would replace LWVMN's current position regarding the selection and retention of judges:

LWVMN affirms that the judiciary is a co-equal branch of government under the Constitution that must operate in accordance with the principles of independence, impartiality and fairness. A judge's first duty is to the rule of law.

LWVMN supports a process of judicial selection and retention that produces judges who

- are independent and not beholden to any special interest, moneyed interest, or partisan interest.
- are accountable to the Constitution and to the rule of law.

Decision on concurrence:

December 5 at the Holiday Party (see p. 7)

December 12 9:30 a.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

- afford fair treatment to all participants.

LWVMN supports a system of judicial selection and retention that

- provides for a role for the public.
- is as free from political influence as possible.

LWVMN supports a system of selection and retention of district court and appellate court judges that includes

- initial appointment to judgeship by the governor, who is required to choose from a list of candidates forwarded by a nominating commission;
- evaluation of the judge's performance by an evaluation commission;
- retention election where voters choose to retain or not retain the judge.

The nominating and evaluation commissions should be broadly based and nonpartisan.

LWVMN strongly favors retaining the incumbency designation on judicial ballots, as long as the current system prevails.

I Need an iPod

By Florence Sprague

Windows and Mirrors



I have decided that I want an iPod. What has inspired this desire to leap across the generational-technological divide? Not a yearning to wrap a cocoon of music around myself or to dance wildly to my own personal beat. No, it is the realization that I would be able to listen to radio programs I value more often if I could sign up for podcasts.

Podcasts are basically radio programs which are sent to your computer to be transferred onto your mp3 player (such as an ipod.) You can then listen to the programs at your convenience. These may be regular radio programs, or they may be programs created specifically for podcasting. (Not having done this yet, my understanding of podcasts may be incomplete.)

I am enough a child of the era of television that I find it difficult to just sit and listen to the radio with nothing to look at, but when the radio program involves serious conversation and benefits from attentive, concentrated listening, there are only a few supplemental activities which are neither too absorbing nor too brief to serve as an appropriate foil, and I just don't do dishes or take walks right on schedule, and consequently I also don't listen carefully to my favorites nearly often enough.

One of those too often missed favorites is "Speaking of Faith," hosted by Krista Tippett, produced by American Public Radio and broadcast on Minnesota Public Radio. It is one of the best places I have found for consistently interesting and challenging discussions.

The place of religion in a modern, multicultural community is a question with which we all, regular churchgoers and atheists alike, need to grapple. What role is organized religion playing in local politics? In foreign affairs? In community development? Why does/can it take on that role? How does the spiritual life of the individual fit into the equation? These are challenging topics, ones into which it can be difficult to find an entry point. We all need resources to help with this and one such resource is “Speaking of Faith”.

In the Twin Cities “Speaking of Faith” can be heard on KNOW 91.1 FM at 10:00 a.m. or 7 p.m. on Sundays. Visit the website at <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/about/index.shtml> Sample the program by reading the eponymous book, Speaking of Faith, by Krista Tippett.

“Speaking of Faith” describes itself as “public radio's conversation about religion, meaning, ethics, and ideas.” It is indeed a remarkable arena for the exploration faith and its interaction with any and every other aspect of human endeavor and community. Recent programs have examined the spiritual aspects of autism, the mind-body connection found in yoga by a paraplegic, the Jewish high holy days, a contribution by conscientious objectors to WW II, evolution and faith, the work of Sister Joan Chittester, the path of a young Muslim to a better understanding of Islam through the Catholic Worker movement and so much more. The topics are incredibly diverse and the interconnections they highlight are intriguing. Host Krista Tippett engages thoughtful people in truly interesting conversation and dialogue. It is always engaging and stimulating and frequently totally unexpected., and even when the topics touch upon the political, the guests calmly offer remarkably lucid explication of complex and perhaps controversial views of the world, sharing the depth of their insight and conviction with the listener.

So, why this lengthy commercial for a (fortunately, noncommercial) program?

I grew up in a church-going household. We said grace before dinner, I went to MYF and sang in the choir. Religion was not something that was talked about much, it was just lived, with service as an important part of our faith life. Today I use Sunday worship as a time to center and refocus on the community and not myself. Religion provides a moral construct within which I try to be a better person and a structure within which one can consider the larger issues of the world. However, I have a lot of doubts. For me religion is as much about questions as it is about answers. Consequently, I am intrigued by discussions of ideas and beliefs and how they help or hinder individuals, communities and the world. “Speaking of Faith” always offers new food for thought.

Some of the kindest, warmest and most grounded people I know are people of deep faith. Unfortunately, some of the most narrow-minded and rigidly didactic people I know are also people of deep faith. Throughout history religion and faith, which are not synonymous, have been the foundation of numerous individual and corporate acts of generosity, service and selflessness and also for numerous acts of brutality, discrimination, inhumanity and warfare. At their best most

religions seem to have the power to not only make people feel better, but to make them behave better. Individuals do act upon their faith, however, strongly influenced by both their societies and their moment in history. So where does the truth of religion lie? What do we want that truth to be in our own time? What can we do to shape that truth? Obviously those questions cannot be resolved in this venue. All I can do is urge each of us to take these questions seriously.

Our challenging task in a pluralistic society, whether we are individuals of deep faith, questioning faith, agnosticism, or atheism, is to examine our personal beliefs carefully and learn about the beliefs of others, seeking commonalities and modalities for working together. This is not a simple undertaking. Programs like “Speaking of Faith” can trigger new thoughts, new perspectives, new insights, new awareness, and new openness. Check it out some time, and find other thought-provoking media, and begin your own journey.

Treasurer’s Report



Previous Checking Balance - September 26, 2007 \$1,124.73

Income:

Dues 3 @ \$50 \$150.00,
3 @ \$40 120.00

In Kind Program Supplies (Ann Berry) 7.58

Total Income: \$277.58

Expenses:

#4159 - (Teri Kysylyczyn) LWVMN Workshop \$120.00

#4160 - (Gale Pederson) Membership Comm. Postage
12.03

#4161 - (Diane Nystrom) Voter Printing and Postage 113.46

#4162 - (Betty Harper) Finance Comm. Mailing Postage 32.80

#4163 - (Office Depot) Voter Printing and Mailing 95.17

#4164 - Void - (Office Depot) 00.00

#4165 - LWVUS 2nd Qtr. PMP 596.80

In Kind Program Supplies (Ann Berry) 7.58

Total Expenses: \$977.84

Checking Account Balance October 24, 2007
\$424.47

Savings Account Balance September 28, 2007 \$3,863.63

Education Fund Balance October 2, 2007 \$5,175.95



HOLIDAY PARTY
Wednesday, Dec. 5,
5:30PM,
Chianti Grill
1611 Larpenteur Ave.



Currently, Women's Advocates' most urgent needs are :

- Bathroom linens, NEW white bath and handtowels
- Bedding for twin beds: sheets, comforters and blankets(new)
- Children's coats (new or next to new)
- Women's coats (new or next to new)
- Hats, mittens, gloves and scarves for children and adults(new)
- Winter pajamas (new)
- Used cell phones

Dinners will be individual choice, with separate checks, with 18% gratuity added. \$9 and up for dinner, \$6 and up for wine, \$3.25 and up for tap beer.

FOR RESERVATIONS, call STEPHANIE DEBENEDET by Monday, December 3!!!! 651-483-1006

Karen Schaffer, who has served on the LWVMN Judicial Study Committee will give us an update on that study and give us an opportunity to provide concurrence on the recommendations of the committee.

JOIN US FOR A PLEASANT EVENING

of League conversation on an important topic which can affect a opportunity to provide some support to women and families who are in need.

The charity chosen by the board this year is WOMEN'S ADVOCATES. The agency's goals are to assist women through shelter, support, information, advocacy and education to successfully leave violent relationships: teach children and youth to use non-violent alternatives when relating to others; and change community attitudes about domestic violence through information and education. You can learn more at the web site: www.wadvocates.org

League of Women Voters of Roseville,
Maplewood and Falcon Heights
Diane Nystrom
VOTER Mailing Coordinator
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