



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

# Voter Newsletter

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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The busy election season is underway, and our members have been volunteering, registering voters at libraries and other locations around St. Paul. Our ever diligent Voter Service Chair Sig Johnson and Candidate Forum Coordinator Amy Perna have been busy working on the mayoral forums, as the pool of candidates expanded to 10. Saint Paul Neighborhood Network (SPNN) will be filming two of the four forums – see page 2 for future forum dates.

Quite a few members responded to the August survey regarding LWVSP program efforts surrounding the book club and other member events. We're planning upcoming events on voter suppression based around the feedback from the survey – see page 2 for details. We're also doing a better job of sharing events and activities of LWV Minnesota and the UMRRO (LWV Upper Mississippi River Region), of which the St. Paul League is a member. We hope to plan some co-sponsored activities with other leagues. We are already working on a panel discussion on January 10 on human sex trafficking with LWV Minneapolis, in advance of the Super Bowl coming to Minneapolis in February. This program will also be filmed by SPNN and held at their studio off of Vandalia Street.

Our program committee is quite amazing and busy doing a lot of hard work, making contacts and figuring out details for the upcoming programs. Many thanks to Vice President Vicki Barnes and the other members of the committee for their hard work! Thank you, too, to all of our members who have volunteered this fall. There are still opportunities to volunteer! Check the website, [www.lwvsp.org](http://www.lwvsp.org), for upcoming opportunities.

The League stands for voter empowerment and fair and open election processes. We need only look to our neighbor Wisconsin and its congressional district gerrymandering fiasco to know how important our work is. I look forward to exploring this issue, along with the other topics, with our members new and old and welcoming all to join the discussion.

Best wishes—  
Amy Mino



*A City Councilmember, league members and the public chat at our February Citizenship Tools event.*

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## MAYORAL CANDIDATE FORUMS

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All ten Saint Paul City Mayoral Candidates are attending each of our forums this fall. Our first forum was a great success. We hope that you will join a forum in the next month to get to know the candidates better.

### **Candidate Meet & Greet | October 10, 2017 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

Join us at the Wellstone Center for conversations with all of the mayoral candidates.

### **Candidate Forum | October 11, 2017 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

Join us for a forum at Highland High School in which all of the candidates will answer written questions from the audience via a trained moderator.

### **Candidate Meet & Greet | October 17, 2017 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

Join us at Centennial Methodist Church to talk with all of the mayoral candidates.

## VOTER SUPPRESSION TACTICS D3 SERIES

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This fall we've coordinated a series of Democracy, Discussion and Drinks (D3) events on various forms of voter suppression tactics. Our Democracy Discussion and Drinks (D3) events are open to anyone interested in respectful, engaging and low-key conversations about politics and policies. Guests are responsible for the purchase of their food and drinks. If you joined us last Wednesday, we hope you enjoyed the talk and got to know fellow Leaguers and friends better. Please join us in the coming weeks for our next two events:

### **Felony Disenfranchisement | October 9, 2017 5:30-7:00 p.m.**

Join us at Bad Weather Brewing for a discussion of felony disenfranchisement with Benjamin Feist, Legislative Director for the ACLU.

### **Electoral Integrity | November 14, 2017 5:30-7:00 p.m.**

Join us at Blackstack Brewing for a discussion of electoral integrity and voting machines with Joseph Mansky from Ramsey County.

## SAVE THE DATES!

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Our December Luncheon planning is underway for our annual event that will take place on December 2 at 11:00 a.m. The location and speaker should be confirmed shortly. Check our website for more details and to register when the event is posted. We will also include more information in our next newsletter.

On January 10 at 5 p.m., we will be cohosting a panel on sex trafficking with the League of Women Voters—Minneapolis. The event will be hosted at the SPNN studio and people will be able to tune into SPNN to watch from their homes.

The League of Women Voters—US will hold its annual convention in Chicago next June. This will be a wonderful chance to take in the national event without traveling across the country. LWV—Minnesota is gauging interest in a joint form of transportation for Minnesota league members—such as a bus or train. We'll keep you posted as planning commences.

## JOIN OUR BOOK CLUB

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Our book club meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The club always welcomes new visitors, even if they haven't read the book.

### **Where**

3M Room of the Sun Ray Library  
2105 Wilson Ave., St. Paul, MN 55119

### **Wednesday, Oct. 11 at 10:15 a.m.**

In October we will discuss *The Broken Ladder* by Keith Payne.

### **Wednesday, Nov. 8 at 10:15 a.m.**

In November we're meeting to discuss *Countdown to Pearl Harbor* by Steve Twormey.

### **Wednesday, Dec. 13 at 10:15 a.m.**

In December we will discuss *The Healing of America* by T.R. Reid.

We had a number of people indicate interest in a book club at a different time. This interest was above and beyond those who are already in the Wednesday morning book club. If you have any interest in coordinating a night or weekend book club for other members to join, please email [info@lwvsp.org](mailto:info@lwvsp.org). Our current book club would be happy to help you get started, and to share their book list—though there is no requirement to mirror the current club's structure.

## JOINING FORCES ON MN SINGLE-SUBJECT CLAUSE

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The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota filed an amicus brief in the Minnesota Supreme Court on behalf of itself and 17 other individuals and organizations, including the League of Women Voters Minnesota. The brief argues that the lower courts erred in refusing to enforce the single-subject clause of the Minnesota Constitution. The amici include an array of organizations and individuals from across the political spectrum.

Minnesota State Auditor Rebecca Otto sued in February 2016, claiming that the Legislature had no authority to allow Minnesota's 87 counties to hire private auditing firms rather than using her office. One of her claims—the one supported by the amici—focuses on the process used to pass the measure. That process included tacking the provision that reduces the auditor's authority onto a completely unrelated bill. In their brief, the ACLU-MN, the Civic Caucus and the other amici argue this tactic violated the Minnesota Constitution.

The Minnesota Constitution's Single-Subject-and-Title Clause has two parts: (1) no law may include more than one subject; and (2) that subject must be expressed in the title. More than 40 state constitutions have similar provisions. The Minnesota Supreme Court has warned the Legislature repeatedly over the years against violating this part of the Constitution, but has been lax about enforcing it, according to the amicus brief.

"The single-subject clause is important to protect government transparency and accountability," stated Teresa Nelson, interim executive director of the ACLU-MN. "The public should be able to trust that what is stated in the title and description of a bill clearly aligns with what the Legislature passes and the governor signs. And legislators should be able to vote for policies they favor and against policies they oppose, without logrolling that coerces votes for unpopular measures. The Minnesota Legislature violated this rule in 2015, when it snuck a provision governing auditing into an 'omnibus' bill that had nothing to do with auditing."

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A warm welcome to our new members: Jennifer Haselberg, Eileen Lewis, and Susan Schmidt. Also, a warm welcome back to our past member, Trudy Dunham, who moved back to the area and this League.

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"The Civic Caucus is dedicated to fostering a culture of innovation in public policy in Minnesota," added Civic Caucus Chair Paul Ostrow. "The single-subject rule in our Constitution is critical to restoring a legislative process that can generate and welcome the creative ideas we need to keep our state competitive. The Civic Caucus is pleased to join with the other amici coming together in a nonpartisan fashion to promote change that will benefit all of Minnesota."

No date has been set for the Minnesota Supreme Court arguments.

[The complete amicus brief is available online.](#)

The amici on the brief are American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota; Center for Popular Democracy; Center of the American Experiment; Civic Caucus; Gender Justice; Growth & Justice; Honorable Jack Davies; Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota; Indian Land Tenure Foundation; Jewish Community Action; Key Investment; League of Women Voters Minnesota; Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers; Minnesota Coalition on Government Information; Minnesota Hispanic Bar Association; David Schultz; Warren Spannaus; and TCF Financial Corporation.

## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

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Our sincerest thanks to those of you who have donated to the League of Women Voters—Saint Paul since June:

Marge and Roger Anderson (in memory of Marilyn Lundberg)  
Jessica Hackner (in honor of LWVSP member Wendy Jones)  
Colleen Hartmon Bollom  
Joanne Englund  
Ruby Hunt  
Roberta Megard

Amy Mino  
Joan and Richard Newmark  
Patricia Peterson  
Peter Thiel and Mary Ellen Skan  
Jean West