



The Bear Facts

The League of Women Voters of the
White Bear Lake Area

March Bear Facts

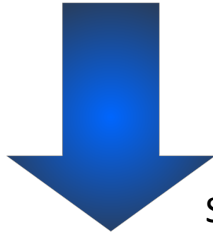
President's Letter

March is the month when we start thinking that maybe, just maybe, winter may come to an end. We feel a stirring inside of us to get started on something. We look around for a way to get involved, or for a project to work on. And with the League, there are always projects to work on and ways to get involved. In this issue of the Bear Facts, you will find opportunities to be trained as a Moderator or as an Event Planner, volunteer to help at the forum on redistricting, attend Minnesota Council or National Convention, be part of the Day at the Capitol, join the Police Study Committee, or serve on one of our other committees. Your interests and talents and enthusiasm are a much-needed boost to our community, so I hope you will all find something that draws you out of your winter hibernation and gets you engaging with our neighbors.

Liz Lauder – President, White Bear Lake Area LWV



Want to get informed about State or National level League of Women Voter's Decision Making? How about being a more effective League member? Or becoming a delegate to the National LWV Convention? Here are some ways to do all or one of the above!



Minnesota Council and

In alternating years, every State LWV and the LWVUS offer an all-member get-together to conduct business, to learn new tools and ideas, and to socialize. This year in Minnesota, the LWV Minnesota is putting on Council. It will be held at the Courtyard by Marriot in St. Cloud on Saturday, April 28th, with a kick-off social event hosted by the LWV Minnesota Board of Directors on Friday evening, the 27th.

Council gives members an opportunity to get updates on what the state office and the Minnesota Board of Directors has been working on, and, this year, to participate in workshops and trainings. There are ***nine workshops being offered***; a full list can be found on the state website: <https://lwvmn.org/local-leagues/lwv-minnesota-council-2018>. Many of these workshops are brand new, and offer some timely and important information and training. Some of the offerings include ways to bring in different points of view to discussion topics and forums, starting or increasing your local League's advocacy level, and a briefing of the legislative priorities that the League will be focusing on this year. Council is a fun way to find out more about how the LWV works, to get involved, and to meet other members from around the state. Sign up begins March 12th. There will be an early bird discount available.



National Convention:

State LWV and

With Council happening at the state level, that means that this is the year for the **LWVUS National Convention**. This year it will be held at the Hilton hotel in Chicago from June 28th thru July 1st. Full details can be found on the National website: <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/council-and-convention/convention-2018>.

The title of this convention is:

Creating a More Perfect Democracy.

The National Convention provides delegates and attendees from local Leagues around the country a time to convene in support of state and national positions on issues, to vote to select officers to serve at the national level, to approve the budget for the LWVUS, to hear from some amazing speakers, and to get to know each other. Since the convention is taking place here in the Midwest, we expect a great turnout from our Minnesota members. You can join many other state members who will be taking the Amtrak train together. Contact WBLA President, Liz Lauder, for more details.

Welcome to new member Sheri Mitchell

Shari Mitchell spent the first part of her life, living in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. After high school, she attended Northern Michigan U in Marquette, MI where she received a degree in Physical Education. Shari taught 3 years in Midland, MI, then moved with her husband, Alan, first to Oregon and then to MN. She began working in the White Bear Lake School District as a substitute teacher at the High School and at the two Middle Schools. After her 3 children were born, Shari became a stay at home mom. Thirteen years later, she returned to teaching, this time just at Central Middle School. After some extra training, she became a special ed intervention teacher and along with two para-professionals, helped struggling students who needed extra assistance to catch up with the other students. It was a very rewarding experience because the students became motivated and improved greatly. The last 10 years of her career, Shari enjoyed teaching Phy Ed at Sunrise Middle School.

Shari's husband, Alan was an environmental attorney who worked for the state attorney general. Along with their 3 children, Megan, Jeff, and Allison, they now have 5 granddaughters. Shari and Alan have recently enjoyed traveling extensively throughout the world. Shari still keeps in shape by often walking an hour at a time and by golfing in the summer. As for League topics, she would like to learn more about redistricting and the Electoral College system.

.....

Welcome to new member Joan Neumiller

Joan Neumiller is originally from Janesville, WI. After high school, she went to college at Lawrence University in Appleton, WI. where she majored in Political Science, and met her husband, John. After they graduated from college they moved to MN where Joan worked at a law firm and began a PhD program. Joan and John then moved to the New York Area where they lived for 10 years. In 2003 they returned to MN and moved to Mahtomedi with their two children. A few years later, Joan renewed her studies for her PhD in Political Science, specializing in European Politics at the U. of MN. For her dissertation, Joan studied, about the radical right in Italy. Joan's husband, John, has a M.B.A. degree and works for Cap Gemini. Joan and John have a son, Tom, who just graduated from Pomona College, and is now working on a Ph. D. degree in Mechanical Engineering at the U. of MN. Their daughter, Grace is a freshman at Colby College in Maine.

Some of Joan's favorite activities are cross-country skiing, swimming, and knitting. She became interested in LWV, partly because she has heard a lot about LWV from her mother-in-law who is a League member. Some of Joan's strong interests are women's suffrage movements, redistricting, voter access, and civil rights.

From Molly Anthony: A note regarding Voter's Service Committee:

Hello All!

It's time to start planning our voter registration events in area high schools. The month of May has worked well and it's a great opportunity to reach graduating seniors.

I've planned a committee meeting for 6:00pm on Tuesday, March 13th at the Wildwood Public Library, 763 Mahtomedi Ave., Mahtomedi, MN in the conference room. I'm hoping to have a coordinator for each high school event, which includes White Bear Lake, Mahtomedi, Stillwater Area and Forest Lake. I'll be exploring the option of offering voter registration at the Century College Career and Tech program as well.

Please let me know if you'll be able to make the meeting!

Eleanor Troxel

We are saddened to report the passing of another WBLA member. Eleanor Troxel was a member of the North Oaks unit who lived in Shoreview. Her intelligence and passion for justice were wonderful additions to the discussions in that unit. She was a retired physical education teacher, who was very active in her church and supported environmental causes. We will miss her liveliness and her delightful sense of humor. Funeral services will be held at the United Church of Christ in New Brighton on Saturday, March 3rd at 11:00 am.

Focus on Redistricting

Please see flyer below showing our free forum on redistricting Monday, March 19, 2018 at 7:00 PM. Plan to attend and bring friends and neighbors



***Drawing 2020 Election Maps:
Fair Representation***

Free Public Forum on Redistricting

Monday, March 19, 2018, 7:00 PM

**White Bear Lake Senior High School
So. Campus Auditorium,
East end of bldg
3551 McKnight Road@ Cty. Road E
White Bear Lake, MN 55110**

Panelists will include:

- Susan Brower, MN State Demographer
- Nick Harper, Civic Engagement Mgr., LWVMN
- Tom Horner, 2010 Independent Party Candidate for Governor & Board Member, Common Cause MN
- Steve Kelley, Humphrey School of Public Affairs Sr. Fellow
- Prof David Schultz, Hamline University and Univ. of MN

www.lwv-wbla.org or 651-493-0686

**Policy and Pasta Report 2018
From
Mary Santi**

21 people participated in Policy and Pasta Program Planning January 27, 2018 at Donatelli's.

Lisa Larson and Mary Santi introduced a proposed amendment to our local positions under Education.

Emphasize civics education knowledge and skill development along with reading, writing, mathematics, science and technology, speaking and listening as the primary goals of K-12 schools.

Members approved new wording. The board recommended the proposed change at their Feb. 14 meeting and the proposal will now go to the Annual Meeting April 19 for a member vote on the change.

Judy Duffy suggested bringing this suggestion ahead as an amendment to LWVUS program positions. Duffy is part of a LWVUS committee revising LWVUS program positions. She reported the committee plans to add civics education to national positions.

Other ideas for program: (These ideas will go to the Program Committee for 2018-19 programs.)

- Study our school districts as to Technical Education within the High Schools. Holding up alternatives to a 4-year degree ok. H S diploma as the terminal degree. What is going on with vocational education? Are they working with Century College or others?
- Civics Education for Adults. Help inform and educate current voters and ourselves. Community-wide education program, community ed. Class, etc. Ensure its non-partisan. Duffy – we could do articles in paper, community forums on how to participate.
- Improving education of dyslectic students.
- Are educational standards getting in the way of true education? (paper work)
- Preparing citizens for effective advocacy with elected officials.
- PACS – with unidentified donors; misleading titles; undisclosed amounts of \$ taken offshore, and split/divided. Recommended book **Dark Money** by Jane Mayer
- Implications and realities of rich-poor discrepancy in USA.
- Public school's local foundations that do not support poor districts – Should funds raised by wealthy districts be shared with poor districts? By % - 5%?
- Recruit journalists in our area eager for a purpose to write on behalf of the LWV.
- Support a well-rounded education with emphasis on civics and all those listed above in the proposed amendment as well as the arts
- Arrange for Town Halls or legislator listening sessions.
- Become more active. It is hard to make a difference if we are too timid. Liz – a committee could come up with follow-up activities. If you have people own topic we will have solid membership. Are we activist/advocates or more passive? How can we engage members, especially new ones?
- Single subject law vs. omnibus. Auditor sued Wright County on city ability to hire own auditor. LWV filed Amicus.
- Redistricting – take a month or more to “deep dive” into redistricting topic.
- Find a way to have transparency with local government. Make access to local government meetings available beyond cable TV. Cities do stream meetings live and on Youtube.
- Recognize role of Local News, Press Publications
- Add Washington County Government to position #6. St. Croix Valley members will come up with language.

March Units

The Status of Civics Education in our High Schools

Educated citizens are fundamental to a democracy because democracy depends on citizens who actively and effectively participate in political life. Citizens must understand how democracy works, why democracy is important, and what people personally can do and accomplish through political action. Few issues are more critical in strengthening American democracy than improving high school civics education. And few issues are a more appropriate concern for the League of Women Voters.



Ample evidence shows high school civics education must improve. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reported in its latest assessment that only 28% of Grade 12 students performed at proficient or above in civics. With finite budgets, making STEM courses so prominent in our schools comes at the expense of other academic areas—like social studies. Like civics!

Our committee of two researched Minnesota's current requirements for high school civics education, interviewed principals and social studies teachers at six local high schools and spoke to others involved in civics education. Come to March Unit Meetings to find out what we learned.

Please see attachment to this Bear Facts and information for discussion on page 9 of the Bear Facts

Unit Meetings are:

Thurs., March 8	White Bear Lake Unit	7 pm	White Bear Lake City Hall
Fri., March 9	St. Croix Valley Unit	10:30 am	Stillwater Public Library
Mon., March 12	Mahtomedi Unit	7 pm	WBL Unitarian Universalist Church
Wed., March 14	North Oaks Unit	12:30 pm	Incarnation Lutheran Church

Police Study

In February members heard (SCV unit will hear this in March) about key ideas in our local study of Police training in the areas of racial bias, domestic violence and treatment of the mentally ill. The study will continue for the next year. The committee will invite a speaker to come to our Annual Meeting.

It is not too late to become involved in this study. The committee will continue to develop information and prepare questions for member consensus in 2019. The committee meets Saturday mornings. Contact Ruth Jones, 651275-3700, ruthcmjones@gmail.com to be informed of the next meeting.



**League of Women Voters White Bear Lake Area
2018 High School Civics Education Report
Background for Unit Meetings, March 2018**

Included separately with this Bear Facts is the full report (WBL High School Civics Report) of all research and interviews done as background for this topic. It includes interview summaries of all meetings with high school principals and social studies teachers and others. Reading through this report will give you background and insight into some of the topics we will cover at the meeting. Topics include:

- Overview of Minnesota's high school government and citizenship (civics) requirements
- How the standards are developed, adopted and revised
- New popularity of STEM subjects
- Competition among social studies areas
- What our local high schools offer for civics
- Current accountability measures and issues
- Proposed changes to local and LWVUS policy positions

Discussion questions:

1. Given the fact that according to a national study only 28% of Grade 12 students are performing at proficient or above in civics, what would you suggest could be done to bring up that number?
2. What could be done to ensure greater accountability for civics learning?
3. What things could LWV do to facilitate more applied (hands-on) civics learning in our community?

Please bring the above and the informational attachment to the Bear Facts to your unit meetings.



Check out our Facebook page!

You will find it if you search on Google for LWV White Bear Lake area. It is set up as an organization page. That means we don't know who has liked it unless they post something. If you are on Facebook, check out our page, "like" it and post something on it at least once a month. Whenever you don't have your Program Calendar handy, you can check details on times and places on our Facebook Page. Search for Facebook League of Women Voters White Bear Lake Area.

Treasurer's Report
February 14, 2018
Elizabeth Nordling, Treasurer

		Current	YTD
Income:	Dues	\$180.00	\$4010.00
	Donations	\$	\$916.00 (includes \$350 from NOHOA)
	Memorials	\$	\$150.00
	Meetings (socials)	\$39.00	\$954.00
	Service	\$	
	In-kind donation	\$	
	Voters Service	\$150.00	\$512.00 (includes return of \$200 deposit for forum)
	Calendars	\$	\$426.00
	Bank interest	\$	\$0.35
Total:		\$369.00	\$6968.25

Expenses:	Meetings (socials)	\$138.87	\$902.59
	2016 National convention	\$	\$100.00
	LWVMN PMP	\$	\$1587.50
	LWVUS PMP	\$	\$2032.00
	Meeting site	\$	
	Voters Service	\$	\$656.57
	Program (includes publicity)	\$	\$490.32
	Bear Facts copying/printing	\$	
	Calendars	\$	\$304.67
	Membership (communication, recruiting & recognition)	\$	\$48.06
	Total:	\$138.87	\$6121.71

Opening balance from Jan 10, 2018:	\$5185.32
Income	+ \$ 369.00
Expenses:	- \$ 138.87

Current balance: **\$5415.45**

Ed fund CD: **\$5035.20**

2017-18 Paid Members: 55 @ \$60 10@ \$75
Total: 78 (including our 3 lifetime members)