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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

MEPH

Minnetonka Eden Prairie Hopkins

Jan. 2011

The Voter

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters
Minnetonka / Eden Prairie / Hopkins

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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LWV MEPH Jan. 22: Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework

“Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework”

Presented by Dr. Deborah Swackhamer

Comments by Minnetonka Mayor Terry Schneider

Saturday, Jan. 22, 2011

Minnetonka City Hall, Council Chambers, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Mtna, MN 55345

9:30 a.m. Coffee & Connecting

10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Presentation & Discussion

How will Minnesota’s lakes, rivers and ground water be used and sustained for future generations? Many say freshwater will be the oil of the 21st century, a resource with rising demand and increasingly limited availability. The Clean Water, Land and Legacy Act funded the development of the Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework to answer our question. This set of recommendations will be presented to the Minnesota Legislature in January, 2011. The Headwaters Council project leader, Deborah Swackhamer, will present the Framework at this LWV meeting, followed by Minnetonka Mayor and Headwaters Council member Terry Schneider commenting on the Framework process and the plan’s impact on local government.

Deborah Swackhamer is an environmental chemist and is Professor of Environmental Health Sciences in the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, as well as Co-director of the UM Water Resources Center. She is Chair of the Chartered Science Advisory Board of the US Environmental Protection Agency. In 2009 Dr. Swackhamer led the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan which was a roadmap for environmental sustainability in Minnesota.

A Question & Answer period will follow the presentation. The public is invited. Refreshments will be served.

CMAL Quarterly Meeting: Jan. 15, 2011 by Geneva MacMillan, CMAL Board

"Heading Home Hennepin" by Cathy ten Broeke on Saturday January 15, 2011

Augsburg Park Library, 7100 Nicolet Avenue, Richfield, MN 55423

Cathy ten Broeke is Project Coordinator for the Office to end Homelessness in Minneapolis and Hennepin County.

The Heading Home Hennepin Plan was developed by business and civic leaders, advocates, community members and individuals who have experienced homelessness with the goal of ending homelessness in Minneapolis and Hennepin County by 2016. This program is expected to change the paradigm from managing to ending homelessness.

The Plan is in the 4th year of the Heading Home Hennepin Initiative and has helped many people with significant cost savings. They have seen more people come into the program which has been a challenge. They will be publishing an interim public report in November 2010 which will show their progress on the 10 Year plan to End Homelessness.

Come and hear of a government program that is showing success four years into the ten year span.

Correction to LWV CMAL Meeting Report: Affordable Housing, 10/16

Julie Wischnack from the City of Minnetonka sends a clarification of the following statement in the LWV CMAL meeting report on Affordable Housing:

"Speaking of the SW transit corridor, Eden Prairie is the only community considering density around the light rail transit stations."

The city of Minnetonka, as well as the other communities along the SW Light Rail corridor, feel affordable housing near transit is very important and is part of our planning for station areas at future light rail locations. In specific, the two stations near/in Minnetonka, Shady Oak and Opus, both would present opportunities for affordable housing.

I appreciate your willingness to consider a correction. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Julie Wischnack, AICP, City of Minnetonka Community Development Director, 952-939-8282

The Gulf Oil Spill by Mary Tambornino

I am sure that you, like me, have read more than enough to make you good and angry about this spill. But, did you know that:

I. BP resulted from a takeover of Amoco and ARCO (both gas and oil companies) and when the takeover occurred thousands of older and experienced oil field workers were forced into early retirement making the company reliant on contactors for engineering expertise. I think that because they were contract employees, they did not have a stake in the company (I do not intend to diminish their expertise and I could be wrong); at the time of the spill only 126 crew members worked directly for BP. Robert Bea, University of CA, Berkley, an expert in Technological Disasters and in Offshore Engineering called this a key ingredient in the "recipe for disaster". (National Geographic, October, 2010; New York Times, Jan 26, 2010)

II. The BP manual for what to do in case of an oil spill declared that a "worst case" spill would do minimal harm/damage to fisheries and wildlife, such as walrus, sea otters or sea lions (there are none in the Gulf) and it quoted a marine biologist who had been dead for five years. In all fairness, this and other spill response plans had been cut and pasted from older plans prepared for the Arctic. One manual urged rapid action but cautioned against overreaction (mixed messages?). Suffice it to say that crew members were expert to the usual range of well problems, but were unprepared for major blowouts followed by explosions, fires and a total loss of power. The truth of the matter, is that all over the rig that men and women helped each other to live, even when faced with hellish circumstances. (National Geographic, October, 2010; New York times, January 26, 2010)

III. There is real concern (to put it mildly) about the effects of this oil spill on future marine life. What is its effect on reproduction? and future availability of livelihoods? Louisiana was a Regional leader in fishing before the spill and normally harvested a third of the shrimp and oyster catch. (National Geographic, October 2010; New York Times, January 26, 2010)

IV. While Oil dominates revenues for the Gulf, tourism is the employment giant. (National Geographic, October, 2010)

By Mary Tambornino

Water, Our Thirsty World reviewed by Mary Tambornino

WATER, OUR THIRSTY WORLD (National Geographic, Special Issue, April 2010)

I have not read this issue as closely as it warrants. However, when I was a County Commissioner, I served on the Minnesota River Basin Joint Powers Board (34 counties agreeing to work together to affect/clean up the River). I have a mantra that I kept repeating "Water is the Oil of the 21st Century", and I still believe that. But, some facts:

1. 70% of the World's freshwater is locked in ice, and those ice floes are melting. Americans use about 100 gallons of water at home each day; many of the worlds poorist subsist on fewer than 5 gallons. Women in developing countries walk an average of 3.7 miles per day to get water. In 15 years, 1.8 billion people will live in regions of severe water scarcity.

"We wake up every morning fighting over water" says Kamal Rhate of Nehru Camp in Delhi. Recently a young boy in a nearby slum was beaten to death for cutting in line (for water).

2. Most of the rest of the water is underground in natural aquifers that we're draining more quickly than the natural recharge rate.

3. The population of the earth will grow by about 83 million people per year and water demand will keep growing unless we change how we use it. (e.g. recreation commands a growing share of water use).

4. Many waters are considered sacred. Waters, religious historian Miraca Eliade explained, are the "spring and origin, the reservoirs of all the possibilities of existence; they precede every form and support every creation." Genesis says that the world was brought to life by a God who created a "firmament in the midst of the waters." Babylonians believe in a world made of a commingling of salt and fresh water. Pima Indians have said that Mother Earth was impregnated by a drop of water. A cataclysmic flood that destroys a civilization is a part of Hebrew, Greek and Aztec cultures. Carl Jung said that "without water, nobody could live at all.

CMAL Program Planning 2011

The LWV Council of Metropolitan Leagues (CMAL) is an inter-league organization consisting of representatives from the local leagues in the seven-county metropolitan area. CMAL holds four meetings per year; the most recent one was held in Minnetonka on the topic of Affordable Housing. Below is the CMAL 2011 List of Proposed Topics:

Local LWVs will have the option to keep, drop, update, hold a single meeting, or focus on for the year on each of the following current CMAL positions:

- Metropolitan Council as region's decision making body
- An appointed Metropolitan Council
- Fiscal Disparities (concept not formula)
- Regional systems and services funded by a mix of funding sources specific to each
- Metro Council review of local environmental protection ordinances
- Metropolitan Council as the Metro HRA (Housing and Redevelopment Authority)
- Housing/Health Care for the Aging
- Regional planning to preserve and enhance the natural environment
- Metro Council as planning/coordinating agency for regional transportation needs
- Metro Council establish system for control of flow of solid waste
- Metro Council as planning/coordinating agency for water supply
- Accountability and visibility of County
- School Integration/Desegregation

Local LWVs will have the option to study, hold a single meeting, or focus on for the year on any of the following suggested topics:

- Natural Resources in the Region
- Urban Growth
- Needs of the Aging and Disabled
- Organization of Regional Government
- Tax Reform
- Shared Services
- Other - specify and include scope:

CMAL is now taking nominations for the 2011-2012 board. Please send any recommendations or inquiries to Ady Wickstrom, CMAL President, cmal.lwv@gmail.com. CMAL's website is <https://sites.google.com/site/lwvcmal>.

Looking Ahead

Th, 1/6, 6:30PM	LWV MEPH Board Meeting, Sue Scribner, 5826 Oakview Circle, Mtka, MN 55345
Sa, 1/15, 9:30AM	LWV CMAL: Homelessness , Augsburg Park Library, 7100 Nicollet Ave., Richfield, MN 55423
Sa, 1/22, 9:30AM	LWV MEPH: MN Water , Minnetonka City Council Chambers, 14600 Mtka Blvd, Mtka 55345
Th, 2/3, 6:30PM	LWV MEPH Board Meeting, LuAnn Tolliver, 14801 Wychewood Rd, Mtka, MN 55345
Sa, 2/12, 9:30AM	LWV MEPH program: Immigration
Sa, 3/12, 9:30AM	LWV W. Metro program
Sa, 3/12 1:15PM	LWV MN Voter Service Training , MN Women's Bldg, St. Paul & online. Register: amoen@lwvmn.org
Sa, 3/19, 9:30AM	LWV CMAL Quarterly Meeting
Th, 3/3, 6:30PM	LWV MEPH Board Meeting, Geneva MacMillan, 7386 Howard Ln, Eden Prairie, MN 55346
Th, 4/7, 6:30PM	LWV MEPH Board Meeting, Dorothy Boen, 101 Wayside Rd. E., Hopkins, MN 55343
Sa, 4/16, 9:30AM	LWV MEPH program: Education
Th, 5/5, 6:30PM	LWV MEPH Board Meeting, Cathy Parry, 2 ½ Webster Place, Hopkins, MN 55305
Th, 5/12, 5:30PM	LWV MEPH Annual Dinner Meeting: Healthcare . Eden Wood Center, Eden Prairie, MN
Sa-Su, May 21-22	LWV MN State Convention , Kahler Hotel, Rochester, MN
Th, 6/2, 5:30PM	LWV MEPH Board Potluck Dinner Meeting, Mary Tambornino, 3851 Susan Ln, Mtka 55345



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