



League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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SITE 2

PROJECTS

VOTER SERVICE

This is a sample of the LWVMN nonpartisan Policy. You may adapt the statement for your own use.

LWVMN POLITICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

6/94

The nonpartisanship of the League of Women Voters is the basis of our public credibility and must be carefully maintained. All members bear responsibility for maintaining the League's reputation for fairness and objectivity. The discussion of nonpartisan policy should be a part of new board orientation.

The mission of the LWV is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League is political and takes action on selected governmental issues after membership study and agreement. It encourages members to be informed participants in political activity, but as a nonpartisan organization, it does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

All members are encouraged to seek elective or appointive office in government as well as responsible positions in the private sector. To avoid any perceived or actual conflict with the nonpartisan integrity of League, the following restrictions are accepted:

LEAGUE ACTION

A Board member may not speak publicly or work against a League position.

PARTISAN ACTIVITY

Directors in *highly visible positions* such as president, voter service chair and action chair may not undertake any action which would publicly identify them with partisan activity. They may not run for public or party office or publicly support campaigns at the regional, state or national levels.

Directors may not run for *national or state* elective office. Should they choose to run for local office, they will first consult with the State Board and notify the local Leagues affected.

Directors may not be *highly visible* in the campaign of any candidate running for US Senate, Congress, or for MN executive or legislative office. They may make contributions to candidates and work on local campaigns. Directors not in highly visible positions may hold positions in a political party at any level with Board approval, after consideration of possible conflicts of interest.

The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member are to be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member.

APPOINTED OFFICE

Directors may accept appointment to commissions, boards, or committees where such service would not be in conflict with League program. If a member is acting as a LWVMN representative, the appointment must be approved by the LWVMN Board of Directors. It must be clear to all whether the member is acting as a League representative or as an individual.

The Board shall review this policy annually and update it as necessary.

A CANDIDATE MEETING CHECKLIST

Once you have made the decision to sponsor a candidates meeting give yourself as much time as possible for planning. A good place to start can be with the determination of the date that candidate filing closes and the date of the election. Criteria for candidate participation should be in place before the filing deadline and your event should be held at least one week before the election. If you will be co-sponsoring the event with other Leagues or organizations, you will probably need to begin planning earlier. If you plan to use Education Fund money, remember to apply well before you begin the project.

- _____ 1. Determine what election(s) to cover.
- _____ 2. Appoint a coordinator. One person who will keep track of what has been done and serve as the contact person for the candidates.
- _____ 3. Review your League's nonpartisan policy.
- _____ 4. Develop criteria for candidate participation before filing closes. Have the Board formally adopt them.
- _____ 5. Select a preliminary format based on the kind of election and number of candidates.
- _____ 6. Develop ground rules by which the forum will be run.
- _____ 7. Investigate possible dates for the forum. Check for conflicts in school, church, political or athletic events. Select a date. (Having an alternate date, if possible, can be useful if one or more candidates cannot attend on your first choice.)
- _____ 8. Investigate sites. Check for appropriate size, wheelchair accessibility, location and parking. Ask if the building has liability insurance to cover such events.
- _____ 9. Announce your League's intent to hold a candidates event to all candidates for that office. Include statement of purpose, criteria, date, time, place and the name of your contact person. (See page 10B)

- _____ 10. Mail invitations to candidates who meet your criteria as soon as possible after filing closes. Invitations need to give both the method and deadline for response. Include ground rules, format, a consent form if your event will be broadcast, your policy on empty chair debates for this event and the name and number of the contact person. (If you will be inviting all the candidates to appear, steps 9 and 10 may be combined.)
- _____ 11. Find a moderator
- _____ 12. Arrange for broadcasting if that is your intent. Review FCC guidelines.
- _____ 13. Invite any panelists as soon as you know the date and format.
- _____ 14. Develop and implement a publicity plan. Publicity needs to include information about the provision of an American Sign Language/English interpreter upon request in accordance with the Federal Disabilities Act. (See page 10a.)
- _____ 15. Determine how you will develop questions for the forum and write some extra ones in case you run out! A useful forum depends on good questions designed to elicit thoughtful responses not political rhetoric.
- _____ 16. Refine the format and prepare a script for timers, broadcasters, moderator and any panelists.
- _____ 17. Prepare a program for the audience.
- _____ 18. Recruit timers, ushers to gather questions from the audience if needed, greeters for the candidates and someone to oversee the physical setup for the event. Prepare name tags or nameplates for participants.
- _____ 19. A week before the event check with the candidates, moderator, broadcaster and site to confirm all plans.
- _____ 20. On the day of the forum the coordinator, moderator and all other helpers should arrive early to cope with any glitches. Start and run on time.
- _____ 21. Send thank you notes as needed. Remember to thank yourselves for your own hard work on behalf of the voters!
- _____ 22. Evaluate the event and file all relevant material.

VOTER SERVICE RESOURCES

Some Voter Service Resources

LWVMN: (651-224-5445)

- "The Road to Election Day", a 14 minute video outlining the election Process in Minnesota.
- *Guidelines for League of Women Voters Candidate Debates*, available from LWVMN for \$7.50.
- *Public Candidate Forums - A Checklist for Sponsors* is available for \$2.50.
- List of League Moderators
- *Voter Information Packets* - may be updated for 2000.

LWVUS: (LWVUS; 1730 M Street, Washington, DC 20036 or 202/429-1965).

- Making a Difference: A Voter Service Citizen Information Handbook LWVUS #330, \$2.00.
- How to Watch a Debate #819 for \$.50 and
- Pick a Candidate #259. LWVUS, 1730 M Street, Washington, DC 20036 or 202/429-1965.
- Get Out the Vote #1051 (One copy available for loan from LWVMN)

Political Yet Nonpartisan

"In the League of Women Voters we have an anomaly; we are going to be a semi-political body. We want political things; we want legislation; we are going to educate for citizenship. In that body we have got to be non-partisan and all-partisan. Democrats from Alabama and Republicans from New Hampshire must work for the same things."

Carrie Chapman Catt at the League's founding in Chicago, 1920

The choice made in 1920 to neither support nor oppose any political party or candidate for public office continues today to ensure that the League's voice is heard above the tumult of party politics. The nonpartisan policy has added strength to the League's position on issues. It has made possible wide acceptance of League voters service and other educational activities.

At the same time, the League is a political organization and encourages member to participate fully in the party of their choice. It is an advantage to the League to have politically active members and, equally important, it can be a personally satisfying experience. The same is true for members' paid employment, which also might give rise to conflicts of interest.

Each League's board of directors is responsible for drafting and carrying out the League's nonpartisan political policy in its community, keeping in mind that everything the League does should be measured against the yardstick of nonpartisanship (see Appendix A for samples). The board also is responsible for seeing that both its members and the public understand the League's nonpartisan policy. The goal, of course, is to ensure the credibility of the League as a nonpartisan organization. Establishing and maintaining a nonpartisan policy is one of the six basic requirements for League recognition. (See Chapter 4.)

Controversy

The League's nonpartisan stance doesn't mean that the League should not get involved in controversy on issues it has chosen for study, consensus and action. A League will be a strong and effective political force to the degree that it can deal with and accept controversy, live with uncertainty and avoid using its nonpartisan political policy as a shield for not getting involved. Sometimes, the public accuses the League of violating its nonpartisan policy because of what is viewed as a partisan stance on a controversial political topic. You can deal with this by explaining that the League takes stands on issues but not on candidates.

Coalitions

Joining a coalition is an effective use of resources to work on an issue, yet Leagues are sometimes concerned that coalitions to which they belong may eventually endorse candidates. This need not always keep you out of a coalition the League might otherwise join, but it is important to think through the ramifications for the League's policy of not supporting or opposing candidates for political office. If a coalition that the League belongs to or is considering joining will concentrate its activities on supporting or opposing candidates, then the League should not participate.

Applying the Nonpartisan Political Policy in Your Community

To avoid public confusion, Leagues should formulate a nonpartisan political policy that includes specific guidelines to govern the political activities of their board and off-board members. And keep in mind, too, that conflict of interest may arise between a board members' paid employment and her or his role in the League; potential conflicts of this kind should be brought to the attention of the board (see below). To help Leagues that want to update their current policies or write new ones, samples of nonpartisan political policy statements developed by Leagues are included in Appendix A.

In keeping with the League's grassroots philosophy, each board determines a policy that best reflects existing conditions in its League, as well as the political climate and traditions in its community. These are key points to consider in this process:

- b The sensitivity or visibility of specific board assignments or functions;
- b The extent to which the public identifies a board or off-board member's activities with those of the League;
- b An overall assessment of the League's credibility as an effective nonpartisan political organization in the community;
- b The visibility associated with a specific activity (ranging from participation in partisan social affairs to signing petitions or serving as a campaign manager).

Of course, a general policy can never cover every situation and the board will need to deal with specific cases as they arise.

Since times and conditions change, it is essential that boards discuss their nonpartisan political policy annually and update it as necessary. The ideal time to review your League's implementation of the nonpartisan policy is soon after the new board is selected, rather than when a crisis has arisen. Clarify the policy-making role of the board as a whole, as well as individual responsibilities. Even if no changes are necessary, the review is important, both to educate board members and to clarify areas that might cause conflict or confusion later.

Developing a Nonpartisan Political Policy

In drafting or reviewing your League's nonpartisan political policy, keep in mind that guidelines should be positive in approach, emphasizing what board members may do rather than what they may not do. This is the philosophy underlying the decision of delegates to Convention '72 who determined that the political activities of a spouse or relative of a board member should be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the board member.

Party Affiliation

Board members usually have party affiliations and should certainly carry out the responsibilities of every voter in exercising the franchise, including the responsibility to become informed about candidates.

Elective (Public) Office

While board members generally may not run for elective office, the definition of what constitutes an "elective" office varies in our grassroots organization. For example, New England town meetings consist of elected representatives, but League board members sometimes run for these offices. Members of charter commissions and delegates to state constitutional conventions are often elected, yet many Leagues allow board members to run in these elections. Here again, it is extremely difficult to make a blanket statement to cover all situations, especially since running for office is a natural outgrowth of League training. Each League, therefore, will have to decide on its policy and judge each situation as it occurs.

If a board member declares for an elective office other than one determined permissible by the League, the board decides when the member should resign from the board. The wording of the public notice of the resignation should, if possible, include the name of the person succeeding to the board position and should avoid the appearance of endorsing the resigning board member's candidacy. Resigning from the board doesn't mean resigning from the League. Nor does it mean that the board member cannot serve on the board later on; the board decides when that is appropriate.

Public Commissions and Committees

The League sometimes takes the initiative in recommending people to serve on appointed public commissions and committees. Board members are often asked to serve on such committees, either as individuals or as representatives of the League. Such service enables League leaders to further League program goals. However, even if a League member represents the League on a commission, the board is not bound to support that commission's recommendations. If the recommendations differ from or cover more points than the League's positions, the board should clarify the League stance and what it does and does not endorse in the commission's report. If the commission's conclusions are unacceptable to the League, this can also be noted and explained.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Keep in mind that conflict of interest issues may arise that affect the League's overall image and credibility in the community. Your board may want to establish a conflict of interest policy that applies to board members' paid employment, service on other boards, personal lobbying, and so on. As with a nonpartisan political policy, the approach should be positive, while safeguarding the League's interest.

Notes About Non-Partisanship

Registration and get-out-the-vote drives are conducted by many different groups, both partisan and nonpartisan. While the political parties and campaign organizations supporting candidates obviously take great care to keep their drives nonpartisan, either because it is required by law, or because it enhances the public credibility of the drive -- or both.

The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, as amended, requires that any registration drive conducted or sponsored by a corporation, labor union or trade association must be nonpartisan (or held in conjunction with a nonpartisan organization). The Internal Revenue Code mandates the strict nonpartisanship of all registration and get-out-the-vote activities by organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions under Section 501(c)(3) of the code. Under federal law, many materials produced for use in connection with a registration or get-out-the-vote drive aimed at the general public (as opposed to an organization's employees or members) must contain the names of all sponsors of that drive.

A nonpartisan organization does not support, oppose or provide aid to any candidate for public office or any political party. Nonpartisan registration and get-out-the-vote drives may be aimed either at the general public or at a generally defined population group such as young adults or minority citizens. In a nonpartisan drive, registration and voting assistance, information and materials must be offered and made available to all. Such a drive may not be aimed only at those known to support one candidate or political party.

Nonpartisan organizations that take stands on issues (even though they do not support or oppose candidates or parties) should take care to separate their advocacy activities from their registration and get-out-the-vote efforts. They should not, for example, distribute information about their positions on issues at the same time and place where they are registering voters. The separation of these activities becomes increasingly important as the election approaches and candidates become identified with certain stands on issues.

With special care, issues can be used effectively and in a nonpartisan way to motivate citizens to register and vote. A voter education effort that alerts citizens to the importance of taking part in government decisions directly affecting their lives gives voters a personal stake in voting. For example:

- ☐ If you are registering voters in a food stamp line, you might point to the federal government's responsibility for providing or withholding funds for social services.
- ☐ Efforts aimed at senior citizens would stress the importance of issues such as Social Security and health care benefits.
- ☐ Voter education drives targeting young people could discuss government funding for student financial aid.

To preserve nonpartisanship, however, these issues must not be identified with the policies or positions of any parties or candidates, including incumbents. In addition, special sensitivity is required when you are working with a coalition. Groups working together should be aware of the constraints on organizations that wish to or must remain nonpartisan. Coalition leaders should not be personally or publicly identified with any candidate or political party. Organizations should issue clear directives and guidelines to guard against overzealous or misguided efforts by local groups or individuals -- activities that may cross the line between nonpartisan activities and many be embarrassing or illegal.

Volunteers should be instructed that they must not wear campaign buttons or make their personal views about candidates, parties and issues known in any way while they are engaged in nonpartisan registration or get-out-the-vote activities. Any campaign materials or literature should be removed from an area where nonpartisan registration is taking place. Similarly, volunteers providing transportation or child-care services for voters during a nonpartisan get-out-the-vote drive should refrain from indicating their views on any candidate or party. If voters request information about candidates, you can offer them nonpartisan voters guides or official sample ballots issued by election officials, or you can refer them to campaign or party headquarters.

In addition, registration and get-out-the-vote drives that are funded by private, tax-deductible foundations must meet certain conditions under the Internal Revenue Code. *It is recommended that you seek legal advice if you have any questions about your status and special requirements that might apply to your get-out-the-vote efforts.*

Remember: Rules about nonpartisanship should be seen not as impediments to any effective drive but as an opportunity to reinforce the message that voting is good for all Americans -- and good for democracy.

Sponsoring Public Meetings

- Local League responsibilities:
 - Identify topic of interest for public meeting-
 - Will this be an education fund project?
 - Identify target audience.
 - Consider forming coalition to sponsor event-
 - What are the benefits?
 - Identify potential coalition members, including media co-sponsor.
 - Review Guidelines for working in coalitions.
 - Get Board approval for sponsoring public meeting, forming coalition.
 - Form coalition-
 - Invite organizations, confirm their participation in writing, including the purpose of the public meeting.
 - Review any limitations on distribution of materials by coalition's members on the day of the event.
- Responsibilities of the working committee:
 - Initial planning-
 - Set meeting date, place, beginning and ending times.
 - Make certain location is accessible.
 - Identify meeting sub-topics for presentations, panels, breakout groups, etc.
 - Design meeting format-
 - Agree on lengths of segments and any limits on individual speakers' prepared remarks and responses to panelist statements or audience questions.
 - Will questions from audience be allowed? Determine format.
 - What are the facility requirements - lecture hall, breakout rooms, etc.
 - Identify speakers to invite. Ensure appropriate balance in speakers' perspectives.
 - Set admission fee, if any. Determine if advance registration will be required.
- Working out the details-
 - Confirm all arrangements with speakers-
 - Confirm logistics, topic each speaker is requested to address.
 - Specify time limit for prepared remarks.
 - Request biographical information.
 - Have speakers arrive early - consider holding reception for speakers, committee representatives, etc. prior to meeting to ensure early arrival.
 - Confirm whether the speaker plans to make available a written copy of his/her prepared remarks for handout table.

Make facility arrangements-

- Tour facility - determine physical arrangement on stage, location of podium, etc.
- Confirm sound, lighting arrangements.
- Arrange for refreshments, meals, etc. - What are deadlines for head counts?
- Consider renting plants, etc. for stage.

Publicity - Determine best approaches for reaching target audience.

- Press release.
- Media - newspaper, television, radio
 - Interviews on radio, etc. regarding upcoming meeting?
- Meeting flyer. Set up time line for completing brochure.
- Coalition members' newsletters to members.
- Personal invitations to key legislators, other state/local officials?

Try to get in-kind contributions to cover as many of these costs as possible.

Make arrangements to videotape the meeting.

Line up helpers to assist with tasks on the day of the meeting: registering attendees, disseminating handouts, screening questions, collecting questions, photographing meeting, serving refreshments, collecting evaluations at conclusion of meeting, etc.

Prepare and copy meeting handouts.

Obtain name tags for committee members, speakers.

- Day of meeting:
 - Arrive early.
 - Tour facility to verify setup.
 - Set up handout table - Speakers prepared remarks, meeting evaluations, etc.
 - Greet speakers, committee members as they arrive.
 - Name tags for committee members, speakers.
 - Consider appropriateness of selling League publications, etc.
- Follow up activities:
 - Broadcast video on public access channels, make available to wider community in other ways, etc.
 - Consider other follow up activities. Was the purpose of the meeting to provide a forum for information to be conveyed on the chosen topic or was it to serve as the spring board to making changes or taking action in a particular area?
- Send thank you's to all speakers, coalition members, etc.
- Review evaluations to learn about how to improve in the future!

Please send me a copy of *We The People: Skills for Democracy* elementary citizenship curriculum. (Call for bulk copy prices.)

Name _____

School/Organization _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

#copies

	We The People (86 pp, loose-leaf, punched) \$25 (\$20 LWV members)	
	3-ring notebook — \$3	
	U.S. Constitution parchment replica (13x20) — \$3	
	In Minnesota add 6.5% sales tax (7% in St. Paul)	
	Postage and handling —\$3	
Total		

- ☐ Enclosed is my check.
☐ Please bill my Visa/MasterCard:

Expiration date _____

Please return this card with your payment to:

League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund
550 Rice Street, Saint Paul, MN 55103

fax: 1-612-292-9417

or call **1-612-224-5445**
to order using your Visa or MasterCard

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We the People

We the People

Skills for Democracy

Teachable, learnable,
complete, and relevant,
We the People is a powerful
citizenship curriculum for
grades K through 6.

Bring the Constitution directly into today's classroom...

The seven lessons of *We the People* are fundamentally based on the preamble to the U. S. Constitution:

We the People of the United States...
Who "we" are as a people, and how we are different.
...in order to form a more perfect Union...
What it is to be part of a group.

...establish Justice...
What is "fairness."

...insure domestic Tranquility...
What is personal and community stability and safety.

...provide for the common Defence...
What is defense, and what we defend.

...promote the general Welfare...
What is community welfare and well-being.

...and secure the Blessings of Liberty...
What meaning liberty has for us.

Designed by and for busy elementary teachers.

Each lesson includes:

■ To The Teacher

- Lower Elementary ■ Upper Elementary
 - Activities for each lesson ■ Literature Connection
 - National Civics Standards Addressed
- The appendices include Constitutional Amendments and Dates to Remember.

...and prepare our children to be informed, involved, and effective citizens.

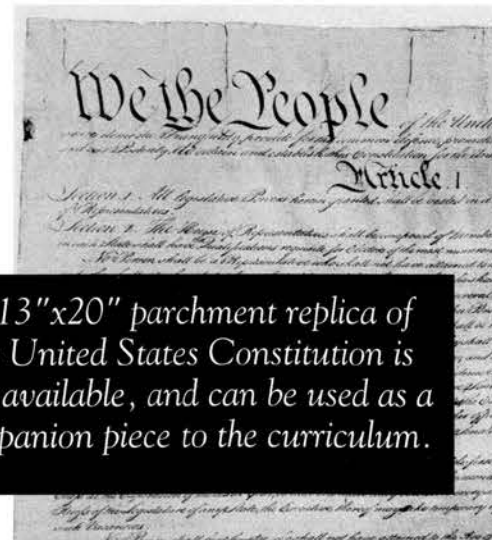
The structure for this elementary civics curriculum is provided by the Preamble to the United States Constitution. These words are as powerful now as when they were first written.

But if the Preamble is to be meaningful to children today, these concepts must be lifted out of the realm of "rhetoric" into the world of "real." This curriculum, and its associated activities, helps teachers translate the ideology of democracy into a classroom experience through which children recognize democracy at work in their own lives.

This curriculum is made possible by a major grant to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund by the General Mills Foundation.

Additional contributing grants were received from the Medtronic Foundation; U S WEST Foundation; the Gannett Foundation, as recommended by KARE-11; the Jostens Foundation; the Lillian Wright and C. Emil Berglund Foundation; and the H. B. Fuller Company Foundation.

A 13"x20" parchment replica of the United States Constitution is also available, and can be used as a companion piece to the curriculum.



Call 1-612-224-5445
to order your copy
using your credit card,
or use the form on the
other side to order by mail.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund provides non-partisan information on issues and candidates to the public and encourages the active and informed participation of citizens in their government.

We offer this curriculum for the voters of tomorrow because we believe that democracy must be reaffirmed by each generation.

For more information, contact our website at <http://freenet.msp.mn.us/pol/lwvmn/>

Call to order your copy using your credit card, or use the form on the other side to order by mail.

Llámenos para obtener su copia utilizando una tarjeta de crédito, o utilice el formulario de pedido que se encuentra en el dorso para pedirla por correo.

*This curriculum is made possible by lead funding from:
Este programa de estudios ha sido hecho posible por una contribución principal de:
The General Mills Foundation*

*and a major grant from / y por una donación significativa de:
The Blandin Foundation*

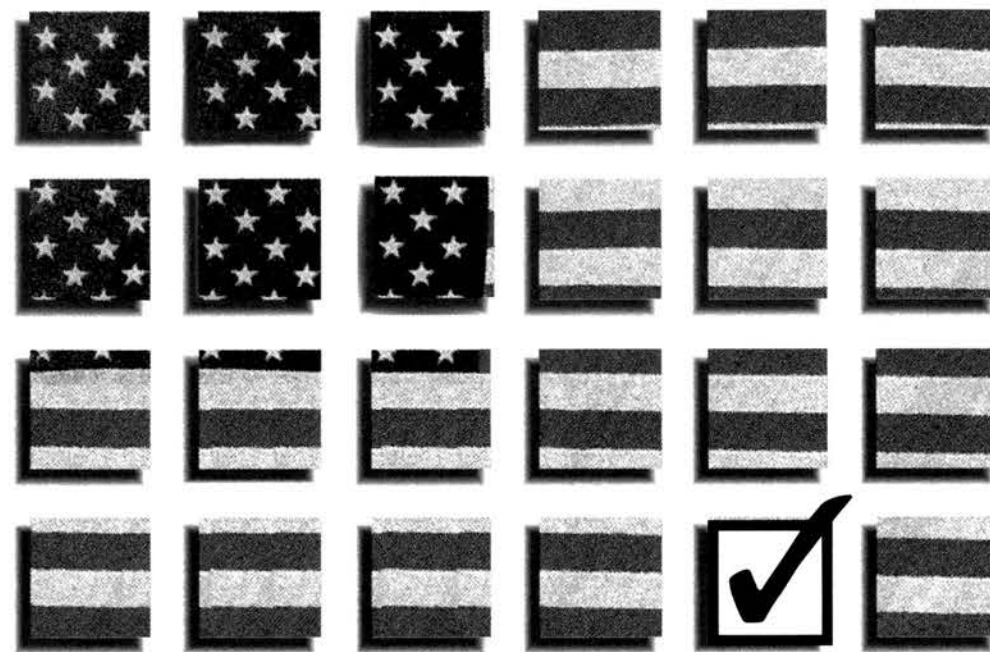
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The League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund provides non-partisan information on issues and candidates to the public and encourages the active and informed participation of citizens in their government. We offer this curriculum for the voters of tomorrow because we believe that democracy must be reaffirmed by each generation. For more information, contact our website.
<http://freenet.msp.mn.us/ip/pol/lwvmm/>
El Fondo para la Educación de la Liga de Mujeres Votantes de Minnesota provee información no partidista al público en general sobre temas y candidatos políticos y fomenta la participación activa e informada de los ciudadanos en sus gobiernos. Ofrecemos este plan de estudios a los votantes del futuro porque creemos que la democracia debe ser reafirmada por cada generación. Para más información, sírvase ponerse en contacto a través de nuestro website.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota
Education Fund
550 Rice Street
Saint Paul, MN 55103

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We've Got The Power

A curriculum for
empowerment for
students in grades 7-12

Tenemos Poder

Un programa de estudios
para el apoderamiento
de los alumnos en
los grados 7 a 12

“...the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in...the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.”*

In a democracy, it is essential that students have the skills and knowledge necessary to be an active citizen. Whether within the school and neighborhood, in government, or in local, national or international organizations, what is important is **the choice to be involved** and the attitude that “I will make a difference.” This curriculum strives to promote, encourage, and facilitate exactly that choice.

En una democracia, es esencial que los alumnos tengan las habilidades y los conocimientos necesarios para convertirse en ciudadanos activos. Ya sea en la escuela o en el vecindario, en el gobierno o en organizaciones locales, nacionales e internacionales, lo que es importante es **el optar por participar** y la actitud de que “yo haré la diferencia.” Este programa de estudios se esmera en fomentar, alentar y facilitar el hacer precisamente esa elección.

“...el niño debe estar plenamente preparado para vivir una vida independiente dentro de la sociedad, y ser educado en...el espíritu de paz, dignidad, tolerancia, libertad, y solidaridad.”*

We've Got The Power: Skills for Democracy is a curriculum designed to empower young people. It consists of 15 activity-based lessons focusing on the areas of:

- empowerment
- exploring leadership for change
- voting ■ current issues
- acting as an empowered citizen

The activities encourage students to learn the skills of participation and the consequences of choices. It is ideal for civics, government, political science and citizenship/law-related education classes, as well as training for youth service. The curriculum is adaptable for grades 7-12.

Tenemos Poder: Habilidades para la Democracia es un programa de estudios diseñado para apoderar a personas jóvenes. Se compone de 15 lecciones basadas en actividades que se enfocan en las áreas de:

- apoderamiento
- exploración del liderazgo para el cambio
- la votación ■ temas de actualidad
- actuar como un ciudadano con poder

Las actividades animan a los alumnos a aprender habilidades de participación y las consecuencias de tomar decisiones. Es ideal para el estudio de la cívica, el gobierno, las ciencias políticas y para clases relacionadas con la ciudadanía y la ley. También sirve para capacitar en el área de servicio juvenil. El programa de estudios se puede adaptar para los grados 7 a 12.

To order / pedidos

Name / Nombre

School or Organization / Escuela o Programa

Address / Dirección

City State Zip / Ciudad Estado Zip

#		
	<i>We've Got The Power</i> \$25 (\$20 LWV members)	
	<i>Tenemos Poder</i> \$25 (\$20 miembros de LWV)	
	1 each English and Spanish 1 en inglés y 1 en español \$40	
	Notebook binding Libreta encuadernada \$3	
	In MN add 6.5% sales tax En MN añadan 6.5% de impuesto sobre ventas (7% St. Paul)	
	Postage / Gastos de correo: 1 - \$3; 2 - \$5; 3 - \$7 Over/más 3 - to be billed / a cobrar	
	Total	

Call for quantity discounts.
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☐ Please bill my / Cargar a la tarjeta / Visa/MasterCard:

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Exp.:

Return with payment to / Enviar pago a:
League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund
550 Rice Street, Saint Paul, MN 55103
fax: 1-612-292-9417

Call to order / para pedidos, llamar al
1-612-224-3666

* The Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations / Convención de la O.N.U. sobre los Derechos del Niño, 1989, from Activity 4 of We've Got The Power

League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund
550 Rice Street, St. Paul, MN 55103, 651-224-5445, fax 651-290-2145
April 1999

HOW TO USE
YOUR LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA EDUCATION FUND

INTRODUCTION

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund (LWVMNEF) was established in 1983 as an educational arm of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. It qualifies under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization that may accept contributions that are considered to be tax deductible for the donor. Under the Local League Accounts Program, local Leagues solicit local contributions to their account in the LWVMNEF and obtain grants from the LWVMNEF for approved educational projects in their communities.

LWVMNEF monies may only be used to provide objective information and education to the public about citizenship and issues of concern to citizens.

Each local League account is kept separate and is never commingled with the state LWVMNEF account.

The following guidelines for local Leagues outline steps to follow in soliciting contributions and in applying for and administering LWVMNEF grants. They include specifics on procedures required by the Internal Revenue Service to protect donors and the LWVMNEF.

Approval is not needed to solicit money for the LWVMNEF, but approval of an appropriate project is required before a grant can be made to your League.

Please reproduce and use the forms attached to this Guide:

- Form A-1 Deposit slip
- Form A-2 Local League Application for Approval to do a Project
- Form A-3 Financial Report for Education Fund Grant
- Form A-4 Project Request to Purchase LWVMNEF Publications

HOW TO OPEN AND MAKE DEPOSITS IN YOUR LEAGUE ACCOUNT

Send a donor's check made payable to the LWVMNEF directly to the state office:

League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund
550 Rice Street
St. Paul, MN 55103

Enclose a deposit slip, *Form A-1*, for proper credit to your League's account. The check may be from your League, a corporation, a foundation, a member or an individual. The check may be for any amount. There is no minimum deposit required and no service fee charged. However, interest on local League and state League accounts is kept by LWVMNEF to go towards administrative costs incurred by the Fund.

A check made out to LWVMNEF must never be deposited in your local League account in your community, but must be sent directly to your LWVMNEF account. If a check from a donor is incorrectly made out to your local League, your Treasurer must endorse the check over to LWVMNEF.

You will receive a notice of your League's account balance in the LWVMNEF after every deposit or withdrawal.

It is up to each League to thank its contributors for donations.

PROJECT APPROVAL - SOME GENERAL RULES

There are two routes you may take:

Solicit tax-deductible funds and send them to the LWVMNEF before you have a project in mind. OR Request approval for a project first, and then solicit tax-deductible funds for the specific project.

1. To obtain some or all of the funds being held on deposit for your League you must complete and submit *Form A-2 Local League Application for Approval to do a Project*.
2. **Prior LWVMNEF approval is required** before a project is undertaken. This means that before a publication is printed or a public meeting is held, you must have submitted a project request and obtained permission to fund the project from your LWVMNEF account. This step is necessary to assure that any expenditure involving tax-deductible monies meets IRS requirements. Approval cannot be granted for a project already completed.
3. A one-time project must be completed within a year of approval, unless special permission is obtained for a longer period.
4. Approval must be obtained yearly for continuing projects.

CRITERIA FOR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE PROJECTS

1. The project must be educational in nature, designed to serve the general public and not exclusively League members.
2. The project should provide objective information and analysis.
3. There should not be any advocacy of League position or action.
4. The project cannot attempt to influence the outcome of legislation.
5. The project cannot contain any information which appears to take sides in a currently controversial issue.
6. The project must not be for membership recruitment or retention.
7. The project must be approved before it is funded with tax-deductible money.

LWVMNEF Board approval is not a value judgment of a project but an assessment as to whether the project meets 501(c)(3) IRS requirements.

Fill out *Form A-2 Local League Application for Approval to do a Project* and mail it to the state office at least three weeks before you plan to begin the project. When doing the Project Budget, remember it is a guide to the costs and income of the project. Final costs may be higher or lower than anticipated in the project budget.

TOTAL BOARD PLANNING

1. Plan your educational activities with your board at the time you are considering your regular League annual budget or doing calendar planning.
2. Define, develop and describe the project(s).
3. Several board members should be involved in the planning and project execution. But assign one person the responsibility for submitting the request, accepting and accounting for grant monies and making the financial report.
4. Get estimates for expenses.
5. Approach potential contributors with the project proposal. You may obtain funding from one source or several.

SOME IDEAS FOR PROJECTS

1. a Voters service/citizen information projects: voter guides, booths, candidates meetings, badges and posters citizen information services such as an answering machine or telephone information service.
2. Publications: *Know Your Community, Your Elected Officials, Facts and Issues* (with no mention of League position) or other information of interest to citizens.
3. Public meetings, such as seminars, conferences or workshops
4. Radio or TV programs
5. Publication purchase and distribution: purchase of national League publications for distribution to schools, libraries, members and the general public; purchase and distribution of state League educational publications such voter guides, research publications, *How To Make A Difference, Indians in Minnesota* etc.
6. Percentage of material in local League bulletin which is devoted to voter service or citizen information.

If your project is for your bulletin, use *Form A-2 Local League Application for a Project*. Check the "publication" box. Under "Details of project" include:

- The % of bulletin space you plan to devote to voter service or citizen information.
- The number of issues of the bulletin to contain such information.
- Description of contents.

Use *Form A-3 Financial Report for Education Fund (How To Get Your \$ Back)* for reimbursement of these expenses for the bulletin. You must attach a copy of each issue with all voter service and citizen information highlighted. Figure the percentage that information is of the total bulletin. List entire cost for publishing and distributing the bulletin. Request reimbursement of EF money for the figured percentage of that total amount.

GETTING YOUR MONEY BACK

The money for project expenses - money you solicited and deposited - is returned to your League after the project has been approved and the necessary funds are on deposit.

1. Use *Form A-3 Financial Report for Education Fund Grant (How To Get Your \$ Back)* to request the funds. State the amount required since it might be different from your original estimate. If you do a publication with your project, send two copies of the publication to LWVMNEF. You will receive a check about two to three weeks after your written request is sent.

2. You pay your local bills with the grant. They are not paid by the LWVMNEF. It is not necessary to send copies of invoices to the LWVMNEF, but keep them for your records.
3. Money cannot be advanced. The grant money will be sent when requested if sufficient funds are in your account.
4. Funds can be withdrawn before completion of the project by submitting *Form A-3* periodically during the project. Simply note on the form that the project is on-going and delete "Final" from the title.
5. If more funds are withdrawn than are spent on the project or a profit is made, the balance must be returned to your local League LWVMNEF account for use on another project.
6. In the case that a local League is disbanded, the balance of that League's LWVMNEF account will revert to the state LWVMNEF account.

LWVMNEF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As you carry out the project, remember to include a credit line on the publication or in meeting notices acknowledging the participation of LWVMNEF. You may also wish to give credit to the donor. On a publication you could state "Prepared by the League of Women Voters of _____, published by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund and (partially, if this is the case) financed by contributions from _____." A program could say, "This seminar is conducted by the League of Women Voters of _____ and has been made possible by a contribution from _____ to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Education Fund." If the project is a service, acknowledgment may be made in a publicity release or other announcement. If the project is only partially funded through the LWVMNEF, then this may be noted in the acknowledgment as indicated above.

CHECKLIST

1. Send in *Form A-2, Local League Application for Approval to do a Project* at least three weeks in advance of starting date of the project.
2. LWVMNEF Board approves project, if it meets criteria, and notifies you.
3. Upon notification of approval, raise "restricted" money and begin project.
4. Acknowledge LWVMNEF where appropriate.
5. Send in *Form A-Final Report of Local League Project (How to Get Your \$ Back)* with two copies of publication when project is completed.
6. Pay bills, keeping all financial records.
7. Send any profits back to your local League LWVMNEF account for this or another of your projects through the LWVMNEF.

HOW TO BUY PUBLICATIONS WITH LWVMNEF MONEY

For LWVMNEF Publications: Publications published by LWVMNEF may be purchased with money in your local League account. Fill out *Form A-4 Project Request to Purchase LWVMNEF Publications*, all three sections, in order to request the purchase, order the publications and receive a cash advance. You will receive a check from your LWVMNEF account (cash advance) in order to pay the invoice received with the publications. You then send a check from your treasurer to LWVMNEF. This exchange of funds is necessary on the advice of our accountant. A bookkeeping transfer from one account to the other is not satisfactory.

For Publications of Other Organizations: Publications published by another organization, including other levels of League, must meet the same IRS criteria as for Projects. Prior approval of LWVMNEF is necessary before purchase. Fill out *Form A-2, Local League Application for Approval to do a Project* and send it to LWVMNEF prior to purchase.

PARTIAL PAYMENT OF PMP WITH TAX-DEDUCTIBLE MONEY

Each local League has the **OPTION** to raise up to 25% of its per member payment (PMP) in the form of tax-deductible contributions to the LWVMNEF. LWVMNEF will establish a separate LWVMNEF PMP Account for each local League that requests to use a tax-deductible contribution to pay PMP.

Funds that have been raised for designated educational projects and deposited in your LWVMNEF account cannot be used to pay your PMP obligation. Specifically designated funds must be used: Your League must explain to donors that their contribution will be used for "general unrestricted purposes, including payment of PMP."

Steps for making Partial Payment of PMP with Tax-Deductible Money:

1. Ask your donors to make their checks payable to LWVMNEF. Explain that their contribution will be used for general unrestricted purposes, including per member payments to the state League.
2. Each year, send LWVMNEF, attn. Jean Tews, a copy of your current fundraising letter which states that part of the contribution may be used for PMP.
3. Use *Form A-1 Deposit Slip* to send donors' unrestricted contributions to the LWVMNEF. **BE SURE TO CLEARLY INDICATE THAT THE DEPOSIT IS INTENDED FOR YOUR LWVMNEF PMP ACCOUNT.**
4. To withdraw funds from your PMP account to make a payment: Send LWVMNEF a request to transfer \$_____ (up to 25% of the PMP obligation) from your local League's PMP Education Fund account to LWVMNEF unrestricted funds for partial payment of PMP.

LWVMNEF SHARING POLICY WITH LOCAL LEAGUES

Corporate Contributions:

Unless otherwise specified by the donor, your local League will receive 10% of an "unrestricted" contribution of \$500 or more raised by the state League for the LWVMNEF from a corporation in your community or the equivalent of what it received before, whichever is greater.

Annual Appeal Individual Contributions

For the LWVMNEF Annual Appeal, your local League will receive 25% of an "unrestricted" contribution of \$50 or more if so requested by the donor.

SITE 3

CREW

USING THE STATE BOARD AND STAFF

Whether you are new to the League, new to your position on the local board, or an experienced Leaguer in need of information or support, the members of the LWVMN State Board and the staff of the state office will be happy to listen to your questions and concerns and to answer them if we can. We are also local League members and are united in our concern for the health and strength of all local Leagues. No question is too basic. We've all been there. Just ask.

Written Material from LWVMN:

Every local League president and co-president or local contact person has or will receive a copy of the *President's Notebook*, the *Portfolio Updates*, the LWVMN Board Mailings and *Capitol Letter*. They contain information about the plans, the portfolios, and the resources available from the state League.

- The *President's Notebook* contains information on basic League procedures, policies, and calendar planning. Feel free to organize it as you prefer, but please look it over carefully and use the information as you need it.
- The *Portfolio Updates* will arrive shortly after the new State Board is elected. It contains information from each of the board members on the plans for their portfolios, how those plans may affect your local League, and information that may be useful to those holding similar positions on the local level.
- The LWVMN Board Mailing is sent to local presidents following each State Board meeting - seven or eight times a year. The *Board Memo* contains information about state board decisions and actions, updated information from board members on their portfolios, and an updated calendar. It is one of the most important ways we keep you informed about what is going on at the state level. (A second copy for division among local board members is included.)
The packet may also include information on voter service events, action workshops and alerts, project director opportunities, the state study, workshops, conventions and meetings, or material that local Leagues would like to have all of us know about. *Please open promptly because some of the material is time sensitive and distribute the information to those who need it.* Once you have looked it over and taken what applies to your League, throw the rest away. No one needs or wants a big pile of stuff that collects guilt or dust!
- *Capitol Letter* is written by the Action Committee to keep you up to date on advocacy at the Legislature.

How to Ask for Information, Advice or a Visit:

Phone : 1-800-663-9328 or 1-651-224-5445

Fax: 1 651-290-2145

Email: lwvmn@mtn.org

- All state board members are available to answer questions in the area of their portfolios or to visit your League. Each league has a list of state board addresses and phone numbers if you would like to call directly. The state office staff will also take and refer messages
- The Field Service staff and board member are available for visits to your League for board training or problem solving. Please call Laurie Boche at the state office to arrange a visit.
- The staff is willing to help you in any way they can. Sally Sawyer, Executive Director, is a gold mine of information and a sympathetic voice in time of doubt or concern. Andrea Lex, Development Director, is the enthusiastic voice of the Education Fund. Call her with questions about using yours. Laurie Boche, Field service, is the font of local League information. Ask her about anything to do with the mechanics and processes of running a League. Kerri Kleven is the first person you will usually reach by phone or Email. She will take messages for the board, take orders for materials, and refer you to other sources of information.

Serving on State Committees:

One of the best ways to gain an overview of the League, to acquire new knowledge and skills, and to work with other great League members is to participate at another level. All are welcome to join any of the following:

- If you are interested in Twin City metropolitan area issues, the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues would love to have your participation.
- If you are interested in the topic of the state study, consider joining the Study Committee.
- If action is your thing, the State Action Committee always needs members who will follow an issue at the state legislature. Internships give you a chance to learn the ropes before you testify on your own.
- The Voter Service Committee always needs local League members. This committee plans, sets policy and implements all voter service projects for statewide candidates.
- The Member Resources Committee is concerned with the vitality of all aspects of local Leagues. More local input would be great.
- The Development Committee plans for the fiscal health of the League by raising corporate and foundation funds as well as individual contributions. They welcome your ideas and presence.
- The Fundraiser Committee plans the annual fundraiser event. If you enjoy planning and implementing big events, it can be a lot of fun.
- The Long-range Planning Task Force has been directing the process for a statewide look at the League's future.
- The Technology Committee reviews policies and processes for LWVMN Web site and advises office on computer hardware and software.
- The Communications Committee will oversee marketing, public relations, Voter and other publications.

BOARD TRAINING/TOTAL BOARD RESPONSIBILITY

Not many of us had to campaign, or even compete, for a position as director on a League Board. Indeed, most of us became a director by virtue of our willingness to fill a needed role. But, nevertheless, each of us technically was elected by our members (no matter how informal or casual the process may have been) to a position which carries with it certain specific responsibilities.

The primary job of each individual director, as well as the Board of Directors as a whole, is to preserve, protect and enhance the assets of the organization. The term, "assets", however, covers much more than financial well-being. For the League, it also means membership and program. And perhaps most important of all, it means our history and our name.

The League's reputation, or "good name", could be called our most precious and valuable asset. It is the reputation, built on more than 75 years of League history, that enables the League to pursue its mission in a credible and effective way. As a director, then, you assume responsibility for protecting the League's image and reputation. You become a steward of the League.

How can you do this? Here are some suggestions to guide you.

- Make sure that your League adheres to its non-partisan policy.
- Make sure that your membership participates fully in consensus - the grass roots is our strength.
- Make sure that your League "speaks with one voice" when making public statements (based on consensus and adopted positions).

Our public image is a reflection of how well we take care of our internal workings.

Remember that your job as a director (responsible for the welfare of the whole organization) comes first - then followed by your job as a portfolio or committee chair. You must not assume that because you are, say, Budget Committee Chair that you have no responsibility for membership. The title of director requires you to look at all the pieces of the big picture.

The following are specific areas of responsibility - pieces of the big picture - that you (individually as a director and collectively as a board) are accountable for:

1. **GIVE DIRECTION TO YOUR LEAGUE THROUGH GOAL-SETTING.**
Know what your goals are (program, membership, financial, etc.) and communicate them to your membership.
2. **SET AND FOLLOW POLICIES.** Bylaws are the "laws" that govern the organization and are approved by the membership. Policies are directions to the officers and directors on how to carry out the bylaws and "work" of the League. Policies are written and adopted by the Board and should be reviewed annually.

3. **FUND THE LEAGUE.** Approve finance drives and assist in the campaign. Collect membership dues. Be alert for prospective donors.
4. **MANAGE THE FUNDS OF THE LEAGUE.** Approve the budget prior to its presentation and adoption by the membership. Thoroughly review the treasurer's monthly report, ensure that appropriate financial forms are filed in a timely manner, and see that Per Member Payments are made.
5. **PROMOTE MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP.** Assist in recruiting new members, provide opportunities for participation, and promote leadership development.
6. **DETERMINE CONSENSUS.** Appoint study chairs, adopt consensus questions for local study, determine areas of consensus, and adopt local position statement.
7. **EVALUATE THE LEAGUE.** Look back at the goals formulated at the beginning of the year. Develop strategies to overcome weaknesses.

(Thanks to the Texas LWV for this list.)

To be a good director is to be a good steward. Stewardship is the "umbrella" that covers all the various responsibilities of a director. Your League is counting on you to be a good steward.

MEMBERSHIP: DEVELOPING & IMPLEMENTING A PLAN FOR GROWTH

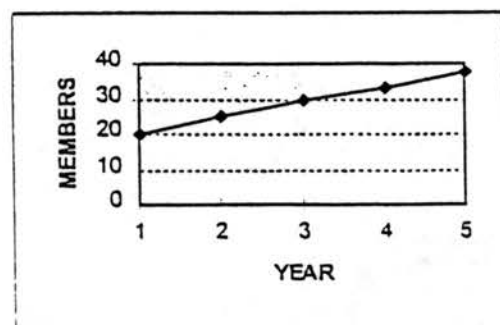
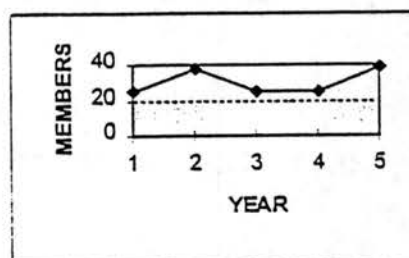
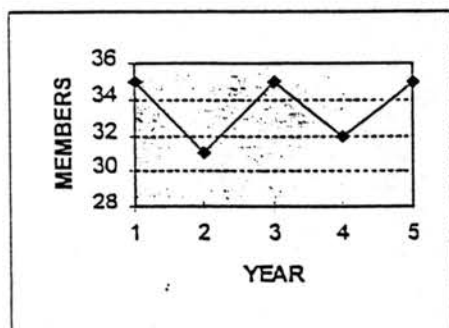
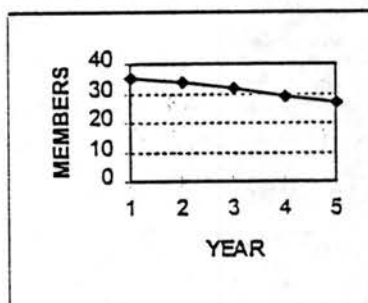
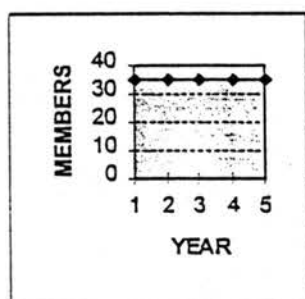
OUTLINE

Goal: Renew commitment to membership recruitment and retention as a critical responsibility of League leadership.

Objectives: League leaders:

- ⇒ view membership as a top priority.
- ⇒ view membership as an ongoing process - not a one shot per year event/campaign & not just the responsibility of the membership chair.
- ⇒ commit to rejuvenating their local league by creating and implementing a plan for membership growth.

? *What's the membership trend in your League?*



Key Point: Growing your league is not just a once a year project or event. Success requires a sustained effort throughout the year. It's about developing and implementing a plan and a process.

ESSENTIALS:

- ✓ Set a goal - review progress at board meetings & share with all members
- ✓ Committee chair & membership committee
- ✓ All members involved - Adopt an approach that makes it easy.
- ✓ Develop plan for recruitment and retention, include at a minimum:
 - ✓ plan to incorporate recruitment at league sponsored events
 - ✓ process for developing new member leads
 - ✓ process to tracking & following-up new member leads
 - ✓ plan for new member training, inclusion & involvement
 - ✓ plan for leadership development

(don't forget to include recent members & less active long-term members too!)
- ✓ Adopt key success measures and review status as an agenda item at all board meetings.
 - examples of success measures:
 - ✓ Members attending unit and general meetings
 - ✓ Members serving on committees or projects
 - ✓ Members moving into leadership roles
 - ✓ Survey membership regularly - are they getting what they want?
 - ✓ Interview non-renewing members
- ✓ Interesting programs, action & well-run meetings & projects (use evaluation form)
 - need to make League membership worthwhile.

TOOLS, TECHNIQUES & RESOURCES:

- ✚ LWVMN membership packet - full of ideas & techniques
- ✚ League membership orientation materials
- ✚ State board members
- ✚ Brainstorm new ideas with membership committee members
- ✚ Network with other leagues - gain new ideas & energy

KEY POINT: Create the plan! Work the plan! Look for continuous improvement - understand what's working & what's not!

CELEBRATE SUCCESS!

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAST AND EFFICIENT MEETINGS

▲ START ON TIME

Start meetings on time. If it is a meeting requiring a quorum which is not yet present, minutes, correspondence, reports that require no decision can be dealt with until quorum is present. Ask participants to call if they will knowingly be late. Starting on time will signal your "professionalism" and your intention to follow the schedule.

▲ FOLLOW A WRITTEN AGENDA AND/OR SCHEDULE

Mail the agenda to participants prior to the meeting if at all possible. Have copies available at the meeting, especially if there are changes or updates.

▲ HAVE NECESSARY BACKGROUND/REFERENCE MATERIAL AVAILABLE

Provide materials prior to starting the meeting, if possible. This prevents the time-consuming distraction of passing out materials while trying to continue the meeting. If material can be read later (not needed for action in the meeting), make it available as people leave.

▲ FOLLOW GENERAL PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Even the most basic attempts will aid in maintaining order, hearing discussion and reaching appropriate decisions.

▲ SET TIME LIMITS

Agenda items should have designated time limits and the chair should make every attempt to follow these.

▲ MOVE THROUGH THE AGENDA

A lengthy discussion can be postponed until later in the meeting, following necessary business. If there are routine committee reports, they can be placed at the end of the meeting and, if necessary, held over if time runs out.

▲ END ON TIME

The duty of the chair is to keep the meeting within the stated time limits, unless those in attendance agree to extend the duration of the meeting or table items until a future meeting.

TIPS

The opportunity for socializing or informal discussion is very important to any organization, but plan for it ahead or after the scheduled meeting time so that those who must leave on time may do so.

Pre-planning by committee chairs is important, so that reports are concise. Submitting a written motion ahead of time may be helpful. If can be amended as necessary.

Listen carefully to be sure you understand the issues and options.

Ask questions directly of the person giving the report, not your neighbor, and don't carry on a private conversation.

Outside speakers should be given a specific amount of time and, if possible, be scheduled on a meeting day when the agenda is not lengthy.

If some reports have to be skipped one month because of time, the chair should try to start the reports with them the next month so that the same ones aren't always left out.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AT A GLANCE

<u>To Do This:¹</u>	<u>You Say This:</u>	<u>May You Interrupt Speaker?</u>	<u>Must It Be Seconded?</u>	<u>Is The Motion Debatable?</u>	<u>Is The Motion Amendable?</u>	<u>What Vote Is Required?</u>
Adjourn Meeting.	"I move that we adjourn."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority vote
Recess the Meeting.	"I move that we recess until . . ."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority vote
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege."	Yes	No	No ²	No	No vote ³
Suspend temporary consideration of something.	"I move we table it."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority vote
End Debate.	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds vote
Postpone consideration of something.	"I move we postpone this matter until . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority vote
Having something studied further.	"I move we refer this matter to a committee."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority vote
Amend a Motion.	"I move that this motion be amended by . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority vote
Introduce Business (an original main motion).	"I move that . . ."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority vote

¹ The motions above are listed in established order of precedence.² In this case, any resulting motion is debatable.³ Chair decides.

To Do This: ¹	You Say This:	May You Interrupt Speaker?	Must It Be Seconded?	Is The Motion Debatable?	Is The Motion Amendable?	What Vote Is Required?
Object to procedures or violation of rules.	"Point of Order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote; Chair decides.
Request information.	"Point of Information"	Yes, if urgent.	No	No	No	No vote. Answering or acknowledging a question.
Ask for another vote to verify a voice vote.	"I call for a division of the house" or just "Division"	No ²	No	No	No	None
Object to considering undiplomatic or improper matter.	"I object to consideration of the question."	No	No	No	No	2/3 vote (in the negative) to prevent consideration
Take up a matter previously tabled.	"I move we take from the table . . ."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority vote
Reconsider something already disposed of.	"I move we reconsider to vote on . . ."	No ³	Yes	Yes ⁴	No	Majority vote
Consider something out of its scheduled order.	"I move we suspend the rules and consider . . ."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3 vote
Vote on a ruling by the chair.	"I appeal the chair's decision."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority vote
Nominate for an officer delegate position.	"I nominate . . ."	No	No	No	No	Usually fixed in bylaws.

1. The motions, points and proposals listed above have no established order of precedence. Any of them may be introduced at any time - except when the meeting is considering one of the top three matters on the other side.

2. But divisions must be called for before another motion is started.

3. Must be made by one who voted on prevailing side.

4. If the motion to which it is applied is debatable.

Simplified Parliamentary Procedure

Based on
Robert's Rules of Order
Newly Revised

League of Women Voters

The application of parliamentary law is the best method yet devised to enable assemblies of any size, with due regard for every member's opinion, to arrive at the general will on a maximum number of questions of varying complexity in a minimum time and under all kinds of internal climate ranging from total harmony to hardened or impassioned division of opinion.

From the Introduction to
*Robert's Rules of Order
Newly Revised.**

**Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, the most commonly used parliamentary manual, is published by Scott, Foresman and Company, Glenview, Illinois, and can be obtained through most bookstores.

Organizations

An organization and the way it functions are governed by its charter (if it is incorporated), its bylaws, and parliamentary rules or rules of order. Nothing in the bylaws may conflict with the corporate charter; the bylaws, in turn, supersede the rules of order. Bylaws are considered so important that special requirements are set for changing them. These usually include advance notice and a larger-than-majority vote for the adoption of amendments.

Most organizations use as their parliamentary authority a published manual, such as *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, which they may modify to meet their particular needs by adopting special rules of order.

Governing an organization

In any organization, final authority rests with the members assembled in regular or annual meetings or conventions, though they may not, of course, take any action that conflicts with the charter or bylaws.

The business of most organizations is managed by a board of directors that is responsible to the membership and acts under its general instructions and guidance. The officers and members of the board are usually elected at an annual meeting, although the board is sometimes empowered to choose some of its own members. Other members may serve *ex officio* because of another position they hold. *Ex officio* members have all privileges, including the right to vote and make motions.

Work is often carried on by committees that are either provided for in the bylaws (**standing committees**) or appointed for a special purpose (**ad hoc committees**). Their powers are limited to those specifically given them by the bylaws or by direction of the board or the members. Usually they report to the

board or to the membership meeting and are not authorized to act on their own in the name of the organization.

Officers

The president

- ☐ supervises the conduct of the organization's business and activities;
- ☐ serves, *ex officio*, on all but the nominating committee; and
- ☐ presides at meetings.

The vice-president

- ☐ acts in place of the president when necessary and presides at meetings when the president temporarily vacates the chair. In the absence of the president, the vice-president should not change rules, cannot fill vacancies required to be filled by the president and does not serve as an *ex officio* member of committees;
- ☐ upon the death or retirement of the president, assumes all the duties and privileges of the president, unless the bylaws provide another method of filling the vacancy.

In organizations with more than one vice-president, these duties and responsibilities are assumed by the first vice-president.

The secretary

- ☐ is the recording officer;
- ☐ handles correspondence;
- ☐ issues notices of meetings;
- ☐ informs those elected or appointed to office or committees;
- ☐ receives and files committee reports; and
- ☐ keeps the minutes of meetings.

At each meeting the secretary should have the minute book, a copy of the bylaws, a book on parliamentary procedure and a list of the unfinished business from the previous meeting.

The treasurer

- ☐ receives funds;

Minutes should reflect what was *done*, not what was *said*, at a meeting. The common tendency is to report in too much detail. Minutes should contain:

- the date, place, time and type of meeting (regular, special);
- the names of the presiding officer, the secretary and, in boards and committees, the names of those present;
- action taken on the minutes of the previous meeting and corrections, if any;
- exact wording of each motion, the name of the maker and the disposition;
- the name and topic of guest speakers (their speeches need not be summarized);
- time of adjournment.

- ☐ deposits them in banks approved by the board; and
- ☐ pays bills for expenses that have been authorized.

If any appreciable sums of money are involved, the treasurer should be bonded to protect the organization from loss. It is customary for the treasurer to report to the board at each of its meetings and to make a full financial report to the annual meeting or convention. (In larger organizations this report should be reviewed by an independent auditor. If the auditor's report is available at the time of the annual meeting or convention, it should be presented immediately after the treasurer's report. Adoption of the auditor's report, on motion, signifies acceptance of the treasurer's report.)

Meetings

At all meetings (referred to in *Robert's Rules* as "assemblies") it is up to the presiding officer to use the rules of parliamentary procedure appropriately so that good order and reasonable decorum are maintained and the business of the meeting goes forward. At times, the technical rules of parliamentary

procedure may be relaxed as long as the meeting accomplishes its purpose and the rights of absentees and minorities are protected. Conventions and large meetings are conducted more formally than the meetings of small boards and committees.

The role of the presiding officer

The presiding officer (chair) should:

- ☐ Be ready to call the meeting to order at the time set.
- ☐ Follow the agenda and clarify what is happening and what is being voted on at all times.
- ☐ Deal firmly with whispering, commotion and frivolous or delaying debate and motions.
- ☐ See that debate is confined to the merits of the question and that personal comments are avoided. No one should speak more than twice on a subject, and no one should speak a second time until all who wish to speak have had a chance to do so.
- ☐ Talk no more than necessary. Except in small boards and committees, the presiding officer should not enter the debate without giving up the chair to a substitute until the motion under debate has been voted on.
- ☐ Remain calm and deal fairly with all sides regardless of personal opinion. To preserve this impartiality, the presiding officer abstains from voting except by ballot or to cast the deciding vote on an issue.

Order of business

A minimum number (*quorum*), as prescribed in the bylaws, must be present before business can be legally transacted. The presiding officer should determine that there is a quorum before beginning the meeting. Every organization is free to decide the order in which its business will be conducted, but most agendas follow a standard pattern:

1. Call to order.

2. **Minutes** are read by the secretary and corrections requested. The presiding officer says: *If there are no corrections the minutes stand approved as read.*

3. **Treasurer's Report** is given and questions called for: *The Treasurer's Report will be filed.*

4. **Reports of officers, the board and standing committees.** Recommendations in reports should be dealt with as motions at this point.

5. **Reports of special committees.**

6. **Unfinished business.** Items left over from the previous meeting are brought up in turn by the presiding officer.

7. **New business:** *Is there any new business?*

8. **Program.** The program chairperson is called upon to introduce a speaker, film or other presentation.

9. **Announcements.**

10. **Adjournment:** *Is there any further business? (Pause) The meeting is adjourned.*

Motions

Business is conducted by acting on motions. A subject is introduced by a **main motion**. Once this has been seconded and stated by the presiding officer, nothing else should be taken up until it is disposed of. Long and involved motions should be submitted in writing. Once a motion has been stated, the mover may not withdraw it without the consent of the meeting. Most motions must be seconded.

While a main motion is being considered, other **parliamentary motions**, which affect either the main motion or the general conduct of the meeting, may be made. The ones most frequently used are described in general below, but it should be noted that there are exceptions and modifications that cannot be included in this brief text.

1. **Amend.** **Debatable; majority vote**
Used when the intention is to change, add or

omit words in the main motion.

Amend the amendment: Used to change, add or omit words in the first amendment. This motion *cannot* itself be amended.

Method: The *first* vote is on the amendment to the amendment. The *second* vote is on the first amendment either as changed or as originally proposed, depending on the first vote. The *third* vote is on the main motion either as introduced or as amended.

2. Refer. **Debatable; majority vote**
If a motion becomes too complicated through amendments or if more information is needed, a motion may be made to refer it to a committee for study or redrafting. This committee must report back or act as instructed.

3. Postpone. **Debatable; majority vote**
Consideration of a motion can be delayed until a more suitable time, until other decisions have been made or until more information is available by a motion to postpone to a stated future time.

4. Lay on the table. **Not debatable;
majority vote**
I move that we table this motion. This postpones consideration in such a way that the motion can be taken up again in the near future if a majority decides to "take it from the table."

5. The previous question. **Not debatable;
two-thirds vote**
I move the previous question. This motion is used to end debate that has become lengthy or repetitious. When it is seconded, the presiding officer immediately puts the question on closing debate. If this receives a two-thirds vote, the pending motion is voted on at once without further discussion.

6. Reconsider. **Usually debatable;
majority vote**
A vote may be reconsidered through this

motion, which must be made on the same day or the day following the vote by someone who voted on the prevailing side. A motion can be reconsidered only once. The *first* vote is on whether the motion should be reconsidered. If this passes, the *second* vote is on the motion itself.

7. Point of order and appeal.

A member who feels the rules are not being followed may call attention to the breach by rising and saying: *Point of order.* The chair says: *State your point of order.* Upon hearing it, the chair may say: *Your point is well taken,* or *Your point is not well taken.*

One dissatisfied with the ruling may appeal to the meeting for a final decision: *Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?* This appeal is debatable, and the presiding officer may enter the debate without giving up the chair. A majority of *no* votes is necessary to reverse the ruling; a tie sustains it.

8. Questions and inquiries.

Whenever necessary, advice may be asked as to correct procedures (**parliamentary inquiry**), facts may be requested (**point of information**), or a change may be sought for comfort or convenience (**question of privilege**). The presiding officer responds to the question or refers it to the proper person.

9. Adjourn. **Usually not debatable; majority vote**

If the time set for adjournment has arrived or there is no further business, the presiding officer declares the meeting adjourned without waiting for a formal motion. A member may move to adjourn at any time except when a speaker has the floor or a vote is in process. If the motion carries, the meeting is immediately adjourned.

Voting

The vote needed to pass a motion or elect an official is based on the votes actually cast,

unless the bylaws or rules provide otherwise. Thus, a majority is more than half of those voting; abstentions and blank ballots are disregarded.

☐ By using **general consent**, a formal vote can be avoided on routine matters where there is no opposition. The presiding officer says: *If there is no objection* (pause) . . . and declares the decision made.

☐ A **voice vote** (aye and no) is common practice but should not be used where more than a majority is needed.

☐ A **show of hands** is a good alternative in small groups.

☐ If unsure of the result, the presiding officer should order a **rising vote** or an actual count. If this is not done, a member can insist upon a rising vote by calling out "**division**"; a count can be forced only by a motion made, seconded and approved by a majority vote.

☐ A motion for a **ballot** (secret written vote) can be made if the bylaws do not already require one. This motion is not debatable and requires a majority vote.

Nominations and elections

Normally, a nominating process is used for elections, although any eligible member may be elected whether nominated or not. Most organizations use a **nominating committee** to prepare a slate of nominees for the offices to be filled. Service on a nominating committee does not prevent a member from becoming a nominee.

After presentation of the nominating committee's report to the assembly, the presiding officer calls for nominations from the floor. Many organizations require that the consent of the nominee be obtained in advance to avoid a futile election. Seconds are not necessary for either committee nominations or nominations from the floor.

When all nominations appear to have been made, the presiding officer declares that nominations are closed—or a motion to this effect may be made. It is not debatable and requires a two-thirds vote. A motion to reopen nominations requires a majority vote.

The method of voting is usually fixed in the bylaws. A ballot is the normal procedure if there is more than one nominee for an office. If there are several nominees and the bylaws do not provide for election by a plurality vote (that is, the largest number, but not necessarily more than half of the votes cast), several ballots or votes may be needed before one candidate achieves a majority.

Where election is by ballot, the presiding officer appoints tellers (or an election committee) to collect and count the votes. The tellers' report, giving the number of votes cast for each nominee, is read aloud and handed to the presiding officer. The presiding officer rereads the report and declares the election of each official separately.

A postscript to the presiding officer:

The rules of parliamentary procedure are meant to help, not hinder. Applied with common sense, they should not frustrate the meeting or entangle it in red tape. Retain control at all times, give clear explanations, and keep things as simple as possible. Good advice from the chair as to the wording of motions and the best way to proceed will avoid needless complications. When in doubt, your rule should be: Respect the wishes of the majority, protect the minority and do what seems fair and equitable.

Order from League of Women Voters of the United States, 1730 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Pub #138,\$1.00(50¢ for members).

SITE 4

TOOLS

LWV MN

Publications Style Guide

February 1997

Logo Usage

League materials that will be distributed to the "outside world" should consistently use the League logo and name on the front cover. The box should be gray (black and red print jobs), or reflex blue (blue and red print jobs) and the slash should be red (except on photocopied internal documents). *Note: there may be occasions when for special design reasons this may be varied, but they should be infrequent and thoroughly considered.*

The logo should be surrounded by enough space to set it off from the rest of the page.

Colors

Brochures and promotional materials should use black, reflex blue, and Pantone Red 032 unless there is a specific design reason to do otherwise.

Text oriented materials, such as the Voter, do not need to incorporate blue. Retain the red and black.

By using the same colors, League can develop and/or reinforce a consistent, memorable image. (The golden arches are never teal.)

Paper

Unless there is a specific design reason, use white paper.

Text Layout

Do not underline. This is generally considered to make things less readable and it looks old fashioned, as in the days of typewriters it was the only way to set off important text. Instead, use a larger type, bold, italics, or a reverse block to set off important items.

Avoid capitalizing headers. Again, this is a typewriter technique that can be replaced more effectively by using bold or larger type sizes.

Keep paragraphs short, not more than ten lines. Long paragraphs are visually intimidating and tend to discourage readers.

Avoid running text from margin to margin across an 8 1/2 page. Use wide margins on business letters, at least 1" on right and left sides. For other publications use columns.

Use columns, see above.

Left justify text, avoid full justify unless there is a specific design reason (when shape of the text block is important to the design). Full justification is harder to read. Left justify, or ragged right is easier to read.

Use 10-point type for text unless the document is intended for young readers or the elderly in which case a larger size is acceptable.

Use space under headings and subheadings to set them off, at least a fraction of a line space.

Bullets should be used only for short lists. For more than 3 or 4 items they give the page a heavy look which is not reader-friendly. Long lists can be accommodated by indenting the text block of the item and leaving space between the items. Numbering may be appropriate for long lists. When numbering, the last numbers of each item should form a straight line. ("9" should be above the "0" in "10.")

Word Usage

Refer to the Chicago or AP style guide.

League Abbreviations

Avoid using "LWVMN" and "LWVMNEF" repeatedly throughout body copy. If the piece is clearly identified with the name and logo on the cover it is unnecessary and long acronyms slow the reader's eye. The full legal name should be used in the introductory paragraph. Other references should be shortened to "the League" and "the Education Fund."

Design

Use white space. It encourages readers to read and to make notes.

Photographs should be of high contrast and show action wherever possible. A good photo tells more about the story than words do.

Lines around photographs should be .5 pt.

Charts, tables and maps are also recommended to clarify points where possible.

Boxes should be used around text *only* for highlighting purposes. If a document contains many boxes it, in effect, highlights nothing and makes the task of reading harder.

Be sure there are margins between text and text boxes.

Cartoons and clip art should be used sparingly. Over use, and use of poor quality or old-fashioned art, cheapens the look of the document. Clip art should be used to enhance the message, not to "decorate" the page or substitute for bullets. Blocks of color, original art, fresh drawings or photos are preferable to clip art in most cases.

Quality

Use paper, bindings and covers that are of high quality. This does not have to mean high cost. Paper should be heavy enough to keep the art on one side from being visible on the other. Covers should be heavy enough to protect the document for the wear it is likely to receive.

When the document is distributed, Leaguers should not have to apologize for it. The piece should say, "we are modern, thoughtful, dignified, with-it people." It should reflect the pride Leaguers take in their organization.

Public Relations

1. **Always think in terms of readers, listeners and newsworthiness for everything your League does.** How does what you are doing add something new or follow on things that a newspaper or radio station has been covering in your community? How does it fill a gap where a newspaper or radio station hasn't been covering something? Why is it important to the community as a whole?
2. **Be persistent, but not annoying. To get coverage for an event, it is not enough to send out a press release.** News organizations literally get hundreds of press releases a day. You must follow up phone calls and be able to make arguments as to why a newsroom with limited resources should cover your event and not something else. Why does the public need to know about this or why would people want to know about it?
3. **If you don't get coverage on one event, don't get frustrated. Try with the next event.** The aim over time should be to build up relations with reporters and editors as a source of interesting, reliable news so that when you call, they will want to cover your events.
4. **Be helpful. Provide not only basic background information, but names and phone numbers of people a reporter could call to get a variety of viewpoints and a multifaceted picture for a story.** News organizations are not in the business of boosting the agendas of particular civic organizations. They want the larger view of how something will have an impact on the larger community. Make it easy for them to get that larger picture.
5. **Make use of opinion page and radio commentary opportunities.** If issues come up in your community on which League has a stand, make it known. Write a letter to the editor; prepare a two-minute commentary piece for radio. If a local League is doing a study, write a longer opinion piece for the Op-Ed page of the local paper including the importance to the community and what action people should take.
6. **In short, don't think in terms of "promoting" your League or any particular agenda. Think in terms of building community -- making your community aware of important issues and building leadership capacity for addressing them.**

USING THE INTERNET FOR LWV RESEARCH

The Internet is one of the fastest growing, most dynamic information/communication systems in the world. In November 1996, a Harris poll found 35 million Americans currently use the Internet. It is becoming a common part of our lives.

Like it or not, the Internet has become one of your research tools. The following entries provide a sampling of the most current "tools."

Search Engines

Search engines can be likened to a "Table of Contents" or index to the World Wide Web (Bolles, 1996). Search engines allow you to search for current and up-to-date information instead of relying on URLs, which may change or be discontinued regularly.

Searching Tips

- **Keywords:** Type in more than one keyword if you want to narrow a search. Example: family violence in MN
- **Quotation Marks:** Placing quotes around a phrase will ensure that sites found will include the entire phrase. Example: "Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing"
- **Lower and Upper Case Letters:** Typing in lower case ensures that the word will be selected in both upper and lower case form. Example: "apple" = apple and Apple Typing in upper case ensures that only upper case form will be selected. Example: "Apple" = Apple
- **A Plus Sign (+) in front of Keywords:** Placing a plus sign in front of a word ensures that the word will be included in all sites found during the search. Example: +violence in Minnesota (all sites found will include the word, "violence", however, all found sites may not include the words "in" or "Minnesota")
- **A Minus Sign (-) in Front of Keywords:** Placing a minus sign in front of a word will remove that word from sites found during a search. Example: +violence -family in Minnesota (all sites found will include the word "violence," however, any sites with both "violence" and "family" will not be included in the search.)

Try these search engines:

HotBot	http://www.hotbot.com/
Alta Vista	http://www.altavista.digital.com/
Lycos	http://www.lycos.com
Yahoo	http://www.yahoo.com
WebCrawler	http://webcrawler.com

And don't forget this site for a web glossary. Find out what URL means, for example.
<http://www.sdsc.edu/projects/hbook/hbook/glossary.index.html>

WEB SITES, NEWSLETTERS AND LISTS OF INTEREST TO LEAGUERS

The Technology Committee is always looking for good websites of interest to Leaguers. If you have one, please share with us all via LWVMN-Share.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

LWVUS The home page where you should start your investigations on the web.
<http://www.lwv.org/~lwvus/>

LWVMN The home page for our state League.
<http://www.freenet.msp.mn.us/ip/pol/lwvmn>

LWV CyberVoter A newsletter for on-line members of the League.
Subscription information: To subscribe, send e-mail to:
listserv@thecity.sfsu.edu
In message area: subscribe lwvcybervoter yourfirstname yourlastname

LWVMN-Share A forum for all MN League members to share ideas, request information, etc. To subscribe, send e-mail to: listproc@mtn.org
In message area: subscribe lwvmn-share yourfirstname yourlastname

FINDING GOVERNMENT and POLITICAL INFORMATION

Podesta's Government Research Links A very comprehensive site to find things such as all Congressional e-mail, fax, phone and addresses, committee assignments, Federal sites, Statistics & Databases (such as Census Bureau) and Federal agency press releases, Thomas Register, The White House, etc. <http://www.podesta.com/links.html>

FedWorld Information Network A one-stop source of US Government documents and information. <http://www.fedworld.gov>

Congressional Quarterly Provides comprehensive, nonpartial news and information on government and politics. <http://www.cq.com/>

North Star - Minnesota Connection A selection of resources that will help you discover our state. <http://www.state.mn.us/index.html> Check this site for Secretary of State, Ethical Practices, etc. Clicking on Government Offices will get you to anything to do with the legislature, including text of bills introduced.

Minnesota E-Democracy A non-partisan citizen-based project to improve participation in democracy through the use of information networks. <http://www.e-democracy.org/>

Minnesota Planning A state agency providing information on critical issues to policy-makers and the public. <http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us>

Government & Politics What's New A site that keeps you up-to-date with MN events. <http://www.freenet.msp.mn.us/govt/new.html>

Access Minnesota Project An ongoing project that provides communities with improved access to the Internet through the use of public information terminals.
<http://www.mes.umn.edu/accessmn/>

County & City Government Links to all counties/cities in the state with web sites.
<http://www.state.mn.us/local.index.html>

Metropolitan Council <http://www.metrocouncil.org/>

Women Leaders OnLine A Women's History Library among other offerings. <http://wlo.org/>

FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE MEDIA WEB SITES

Frontline The PBS program site. <http://www2.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline>
Washington Post <http://www.washingtonpost.com>
Tribune <http://www1.trib.com/>
USA Today <http://www.usatoday.com/>
CSPAN <http://www.cspan.org>
Pathfinder <http://www.pathfinder.com>
CNN <http://www.cnn.com/>
NBC <http://www.nbc.com/>
Minneapolis Star-Tribune <http://www.startribune.com>
St. Paul Pioneer Press Check out link to lawandpolitics. <http://pioneerplanet.com>
WCCO <http://wcco.com>
KTCA <http://www.ktca.org>

ENVIRONMENT

EarthShare Has a list of conservation charities and organizations. <http://www.earthshare.org/>
RainForest Action Network Information, action alerts, more. <http://www.ran.org>
Discovery Conservation/environmental information. <http://www.discovery.com>
Eisenhower National Clearinghouse A Department of Education site for math & science education. <http://www.enc.org>

EDUCATION

US Department of Education <http://www.ed.gov>

SOCIAL POLICY

Michigan State University College of Social Science Find papers on this issue.
<http://www.ssc.msu.edu/~pohg/>
Social Policy Magazine Read selected articles. <http://www.socialpolicy.org>
Democratic Leadership Council & Progressive Policy Institute Read texts of selected articles. <http://www.dlcppi.org/texts/social/>
Social Policy Links Site <http://library.aph.gov.au/libwww/socpol.htm>

MONEY AS A TOOL

FUNDRAISING BASICS

All fundraising is personal

People don't give to causes. People give to people with causes.

Fundraising is

- believing in what your organization does and internalizing it, and
- offering someone else an opportunity to invest in what you are doing.

Statistics

In 1995, Americans gave \$143.85 billion to charity
80.8% of all philanthropic contributions are from individuals
6.8% are from bequests
6.8% are from corporations
7.3% are from foundations

Uses of contributions

44.1% - religion
12.5% - education
8.8% - health
8.1% - human services
6.9% - arts
5.2% - foundations
2.8% - environment
11.6% - other

People give:

- because individuals, corporations and foundations have money to give
 - out of a sincere desire to help others
 - to belong to or be identified with a group or organization they admire
 - for recognition
 - to "repay" an organization for the services or benefits they've received
 - because they "get something" out of giving
 - for estate and tax benefits
 - because they were asked by the right person at the right time and in the right circumstances
 - because they need to give
- (From *Tested Ways to Successful Fundraising*, by George A. Brakeley, Jr.)

Best source of individual contributions
is those who know the organization best

- the board and other leaders
- the members
- former members
- family, neighbors, friends who are aware League activities
- the community

Development means having a plan

- know your organization and your purpose
- know why you are raising money - define the need

Three good reasons to conduct a finance drive:

1. to have the resources to do what you want to do - to carry out League programs and projects
2. to let the community know what your League does to serve its citizens
3. to build relationships with business, leaders and citizens. A finance drive can be the start of an ongoing relationship. Ask your community for advice, contributions and participation.

CHECKLIST FOR A FINANCE DRIVE

(See *In League* pgs. 8-4 to 8-8 for more suggestions and details.)

1. Recruit a committee

- More fun, more creative, more successful
- Important to have more than one person thinking about and doing fundraising
- Find an enthusiastic, positive chair

2. Develop a plan

- Define the need
 - why are you raising money
 - what is your goal
- Decide the fundraising method you will use
 - letters
 - phone calls
 - both of the above
 - personal calls (most effective)
- Target your approach
 - match League goals and business goals
 - use people who know people whenever possible
- Set a timeline and budget
- Determine how you will thank and acknowledge donors
- Plan how you will stay in contact with donors throughout the year, not just when you are asking for contributions (critical to maintaining your donor base)
 - send annual reports, updates
 - send invitations to special events

3. Get the commitment of the board

- Present the plan
- Get the board's approval
- Ask for their help and support
 - the first people to give are those who are doing the asking
 - ask them for suggestions of names and to write notes, make calls

4. Carry out the project

- Letters (make the case for why you need funding)

- enclose a response form that suggests an amount
- include a reply envelope to increase the response rate
- personalize with penned notes; stamp envelopes of higher givers

- Phone calls
 - a letter can precede or follow a phone call
 - follow up with a response form and self addressed reply envelope
 - have a training session for callers
 - develop a script for callers to use (call LWVMNEF for samples and tips)

- Personal calls
 - send letter
 - call for appointment
 - do homework
 - find out as much as possible about potential donor
 - match your needs with donor's interests
 - use team approach - two people are more effective than one
 - make your visit brief
 - don't forget to ask for a contribution
 - send thank you letter soon after visit

- Thank you's and acknowledgments
 - **thank you's are critical (Recognize that donors are partners in what you are doing. Cultivation is an ongoing process.)**
 - donors must be thanked and thanked again and
 - must be thanked in a timely and appropriate manner
 - acknowledgments can run the gamut
 - personalized letter from the president (can add handwritten note)
 - acknowledgment in newsletter
 - ask companies for permission to publish their names
 - list names and what contributions have allowed you to accomplish ("with the contributions of our donors we were able to....")
 - invitation to special event
 - certificates & plaques

5. Follow-up

- Report to the board
 - compile statistics (number of contributions, donors, etc)
 - what worked, what didn't, compare with previous years

- Make recommendations for next year
- Pat yourself on the back for a job well done

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

32 EAST FIRST STREET
DULUTH, MINNESOTA 55802

EXAMPLE

Someone who knows the person you're soliciting could add a penned note to personalize the letter.

*I hope you'll consider giving to the League this year
Jane*

PRESIDENTS

Jeannette Lang
Catherine Severin

VICE PRESIDENTS

Joan Peterson
Gail Schoenfelder

SECRETARY

Julie Johnson

TREASURER

Sally Burns

DIRECTORS

Nancy Anderson
Joyce Benson
Jane Gilley
Rosemary Guttormsson
Marlene Johnson
Triss Harwood

Mary
Dear Friend,

January 13, 1997

The League of Women Voters of Duluth is committed to promoting the informed and active participation of citizens in government. We respond to this challenge to the best of our abilities and resources. The League is a nonpartisan, political organization. We take action on selected governmental issues but do not support or oppose political parties or candidates. The League of Women Voters is one of America's unique and venerable political institutions. Throughout our seventy-seven year history our members have helped shape American political life. Our message has been clear: Get involved in the political process, go to the polls, and go to the polls informed.

Body of letter makes a compelling case for giving.

This fall our theme was "For your family, for your community — Vote!" This theme reflects activities of Leagues all over the United States, which have committed to a two year program "Making Democracy Work." In Duluth, the League worked to build relationships and partnerships with other organizations to put together a non-partisan voter guide and co-sponsor violence prevention activities. We printed inserts for gas bills and distributed lawn signs urging people to vote. Working with local radio and television stations, we produced a debate that featured all three major Senate candidates. We registered voters at malls and in schools and responded to many questions on our phone line.

This winter we will co-sponsor with the YWCA a political skills workshop for women. League members serve on local and regional boards and commissions either as League representatives or because they know the value of citizen involvement in government.

Our many local activities cost more money than what our members pay in dues and give in contributions. Your financial contribution remains in Duluth and helps us maintain our involvement in the community.

Note the required statement about non-deductibility of contributions.

PATRON
\$150 and up
DONOR
\$75 to \$149
CONTRIBUTOR
\$50 to \$74
FRIEND
\$25 to \$49

Contributions to the League of Women Voters are not deductible as charitable contributions for tax purposes but may be deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense. Please join other community leaders in making a contribution and help us to make a difference.

Think about including a simple response card that suggests an amount to contribute and a self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Guttormsson
Rosemary Guttormsson
Finance Chair

EXAMPLE

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS — RoMaFH

ROSEVILLE, MAPLEWOOD, FALCON HEIGHTS



December 1996

1996 Board of Directors

Le Matts
Florence Sprague
Co-Presidents

Georgiana Sobola
Secretary

Mildred Hottman Roesch
Treasurer

Jean Brown
Lois Ann Smith
Pat Johnson
Study Program Coordinators

Lorraine Fischer
Representative to Council of
Metro Area Leagues (CMAL)

Betty Harper
Action Chair

Ann Berry
Observer Chair

Suzanne Jenkins
Public Relations

Judy Fletcher
Finance Chair

Ann Cleland
Sara Schaefer
Voter Service

Joyce Blomquist
Meredith Stockford
Membership

Shirley Bradway
Administrative Ass't
Unit Chair

Carolyn Cushing
Newsletter Editor

Norma Signorelli
Georgeann Hall
Nominating Committee

Sally Simundson
Mary Ann Palmer
Precinct Reporting

Dear Friend:

What an exciting year we've had: voter registration, candidate forums, election monitoring, community meetings and publications to provide information on governmental issues, our forum to interview elected officials, and lots more. You have probably been involved with one or more of these activities, and your participation enriched you while providing a real service to our communities.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, multi-issue, grassroots organization whose members volunteer their time to motivate people to become involved and informed participants in the democratic process. And we have been particularly active this election year to really make democracy work.

As much as your participation is vital, so are your dollars! Most of the annual dues we receive supports the League at the national and state levels. We have to raise additional money to pay for our local programs and services. We need community support to continue to provide these services.

Please take a moment now to make a generous contribution to your local League by using the enclosed form and envelope. Indicate whether you want your donation to be used for education purposes only (tax deductible) or for general expenses of the organization.

Thank you for your support! Your contribution helps democracy work in your community.

Sincerely,

Judy Fletcher
Finance Chair

EXAMPLE

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ROSEVILLE, MAPLEWOOD, FALCON HEIGHTS AND SURROUNDING AREA (ROMAFH)



1995 Board of Directors

Le Matts
President

Florence Sprague
Vice President

Judy Fletcher
Secretary

Mildred Roesch
Treasurer

Joanne Cushman
Lila Recksiedler
Lois Ann Smith
Study Program Coordinators

Lorraine Fischer
Representative to Council of
Metro Area Leagues

Ann Berry
Action Chair

Suzanne Jenkins
Public Relations

Judith Rosenblatt
Finance Chair

Kathy Ciernia
Voters Service

Joyce Blomquist
Membership

Georgiana Sobola
Administrative Asst.

Carolyn Cushing
Newsletter Editor

Meredith Stockford
Unit Organization

Norma Signorelli
Nominating Comm. Chair

July 1995

Dear League Member or Former Member:

The state and national levels of our organization are well into celebrations of 75 years since passage of the Nineteenth Amendment (women's suffrage) and the formation of the LWV. And we are right in the thick of the celebrations (as usual, having fun while we go about our serious service to our communities)!

From the League's first efforts to improve the health and safety of women and babies in 1920 through the most recent consensus and action, the organization continues to educate and advocate for a better society. And think of all the personal rewards of involvement with this unique nonpartisan, grassroots group: friends, information on important community issues, leadership skills, and a chance to make a difference.

For our activities to continue and grow, we need your money. It's as simple as that. You know that most of the dues money collected locally supports the state and national levels through our per member payments. Fundraisers help; but we want to save most of our energy for our education and action agenda. So we count on contributions from members and the community to help pay for our local activities.

Please give as much as you can to support your local League, which helps democracy work in our communities while providing many personal satisfactions to members. Fill out the enclosed card and return it with your check or checks in the envelope provided. Your dollars will be put to work efficiently to make a difference.

Thank you for your commitment to the LWV.

Sincerely,

Le Matts
President

Judith Rosenblatt,
Finance Chair



EXAMPLE

THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS

CRYSTAL NEW HOPE EAST PLYMOUTH

March, 1996

Dear League Member,

Your membership and support of our League has never been more important than it is right now. Having celebrated our 75th Anniversary, we need to renew our purpose and look for opportunities to strengthen our League.

In the past year, we have

- provided voters with nonpartisan information on the political process and on candidates for office. We planned, arranged and moderated candidates' meetings for local and state political offices and for local school board for the communities of Crystal, New Hope and East Plymouth.
- studied diligently and worked actively for political reforms and social and economic policies serving the public interest. The League has studied issues such as campaign finance, early intervention for children at risk, juvenile issues, violence prevention and fiscal disparities.
- participated in exploring a new league organization, the West Metro League of Women Voters. We are hoping this will bring a new depth to state, national and CMAL studies, and create greater visibility for all Leagues.
- celebrated this historic League anniversary with our local members, guests and other friends of League.

Please assist us in this work with your contribution to League's multi-issue study and activism. Your contribution to the LWVMN Education Fund will qualify as a portion of our League's per-member payment, helping both state and local organizations. We appreciate your interest and support.

Sincerely,

Joann Brown
Crystal-New Hope-East Plymouth
League of Women Voters

EXAMPLE

Mailed to previous year supporters

24 October, 1994

FIELD(Name)

Dear FIELD(Salutation),

In this election season, have you wondered what the candidates *really* stand for? Is it possible to see through the rhetoric and the mud-slinging and get at the *truth*?

The Robbinsdale League of Women Voters believes that it is not only possible but essential. The League of Women Voters (LWV), a non-partisan political organization, was founded to encourage the *informed and active* participation of citizens in government. To that end, the Robbinsdale LWV:

- ▶ provides easy and accessible opportunities for Voter Registration;
- ▶ sponsors **Candidates' Forums** for all elective offices;
- ▶ sponsors **forums on other vital issues** of interest and concern;
- ▶ **answers questions about voting** and elections in a variety of venues; and
- ▶ **distributes Voter Guides** to local business and schools.

At a time of pervasive discontent among the voters of America, the members of the Robbinsdale LWV contribute generously of their talents, time and money--precisely so the citizens of our community will become *active and informed* in creating a better government. We believe this work is an **investment in democracy**.

We invite you to *continue* to invest in the important work of the Robbinsdale League of Women Voters. We are conducting our annual fund drive, and **we very much need your ongoing support to continue our work**. Last year, your contributed \$FIELD(Last Gift) during our drive. This year, would you consider a gift of \$FIELD(Sugg. Gift)? (Gifts to the Robbinsdale LWV are not tax deductible as a charitable contribution, but can be deducted as an "ordinary and necessary business expense.")

An envelope addressed to the Robbinsdale LWV is enclosed. Please respond with your generous gift by **Friday, November 18, 1994**.

Sincerely,

Helaine Freeman
Finance Chair
533-8015

Mary Hawkins
President
535-1836

P.S. Your gift will be acknowledged in a press release and in our League newsletter, the Robbinsdale *Voter*. Your gift of \$50 or more entitles you to a **free advertisement** in the *Voter*. Please give today!

EXAMPLE

Mailed to past supporters

24 October, 1994

FIELD(Name)

Dear FIELD(Salutation),

In this election season, have you wondered what the candidates *really* stand for? Is it possible to see through the rhetoric and the mud-slinging and get at the *truth*?

The Robbinsdale League of Women Voters believes that it is not only possible but **essential**. The League of Women Voters (LWV), a non-partisan political organization, was founded to encourage the *informed and active* participation of citizens in government. To that end, the Robbinsdale LWV:

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At a time of pervasive discontent among the voters of America, the members of the Robbinsdale LWV contribute generously of their talents, time and money--precisely so the citizens of our community will become *active and informed* in creating a better government. We believe this work is an investment in democracy.

We invite you to renew your investment in the important work of the Robbinsdale League of Women Voters. We are conducting our annual fund drive, and we **very much need your renewed support to continue our work**. Your last contribution to the Robbinsdale League was \$FIELD(Last Gift) in FIELD(Year). This year, would you consider a gift of \$FIELD(Sugg. Gift)? (Gifts to the Robbinsdale LWV are not tax deductible as a charitable contribution, but can be deducted as an "ordinary and necessary business expense.")

An envelope addressed to the Robbinsdale LWV is enclosed. Please respond with your generous gift by **Friday, November 18, 1994**.

Sincerely,

Helaine Freeman
Finance Chair
533-8015

Mary Hawkins
President
535-1836

P.S. Your gift will be acknowledged in a press release and in our League newsletter, the Robbinsdale *Voter*. Your gift of \$50 or more entitles you to a **free advertisement** in the *Voter*. Please give today!

EXAMPLE
Mailed to new contacts

24 October, 1994

FIELD(Name)
FIELD(Address 1)
FIELD(Address 2)

Dear FIELD(Salutation),

In this election season, have you wondered what the candidates *really* stand for? Is it possible to see through the rhetoric and the mud-slinging and get at the *truth*?

The Robbinsdale League of Women Voters believes that it is not only possible but **essential**. The League of Women Voters (LWV), a non-partisan political organization, was founded to encourage the *informed and active* participation of citizens in government. To that end, the Robbinsdale LWV:

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- ▶ **answers questions about voting** and elections in a variety of venues; and
- ▶ **distributes Voter Guides** to local business and schools.

At a time of pervasive discontent among the voters of America, the members of the Robbinsdale LWV contribute generously of their talents, time and money--precisely so the citizens of our community will become *active and informed* in creating a better government. We believe this work is an **investment in democracy**.

We invite **you** to invest in the important work of the Robbinsdale League of Women Voters. We are conducting our annual fund drive, and we **very much** need **your support to continue our work**. We urge you to consider a gift of \$50, although we will gratefully acknowledge your gift of any amount. (Gifts to the Robbinsdale LWV are not tax deductible as a charitable contribution, but can be deducted as an "ordinary and necessary business expense.")

An envelope addressed to the Robbinsdale LWV is enclosed. Please respond with your generous gift by **Friday, November 18, 1994**.

Sincerely,

Helaine Freeman
Finance Chair
533-8015

Mary Hawkins
President
535-1836

P.S. Your gift will be acknowledged in a press release and in our League newsletter, the *Robbinsdale Voter*. Your gift of \$50 or more entitles you to a **free advertisement** in the *Voter*. Please give today!

EXAMPLE
Mailed to former Leaguers

24 October, 1994

FIELD(Name)
FIELD(Address 1)
FIELD(Address 2)

Dear FIELD(Salutation),

In this election season, have you wondered what the candidates *really* stand for? Is it possible to see through the rhetoric and the mud-slinging and get at the *truth*?

The Robbinsdale League of Women Voters believes that it is not only possible but **essential**. The League of Women Voters (LWV), a non-partisan political organization, was founded to encourage the *informed and active* participation of citizens in government. To that end, the Robbinsdale LWV:

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- ▶ sponsors **Candidates' Forums** for all elective offices;
- ▶ sponsors **forums on other vital issues** of interest and concern;
- ▶ **answers questions about voting** and elections in a variety of venues; and
- ▶ **distributes Voter Guides** to local business and schools.

At a time of pervasive discontent among the voters of America, the members of the Robbinsdale LWV contribute generously of their talents, time and money--precisely so the citizens of our community will become *active and informed* in creating a better government. We believe this work is an **investment in democracy**.

We invite **you** to renew your investment in the important work of the Robbinsdale League of Women Voters. We are conducting our annual fund drive. As a former Leaguer, you understand how very much we need your renewed support, and we will gratefully acknowledge your gift of any amount.

An envelope addressed to the Robbinsdale LWV is enclosed. Please respond with your generous gift by **Friday, November 18, 1994**.

Sincerely,

Helaine Freeman
Finance Chair
533-8015

Mary Hawkins
President
535-1836

P.S. Your gift will be acknowledged in a press release and in our League newsletter, the Robbinsdale *Voter*. Please give today!

IRS Rules Regarding Non-deductibility of Contributions

Any solicitation for contributions not going to the Education Fund must contain a conspicuous and easily recognizable statement that contributions to the organization are not tax-deductible. This includes contributions, **membership dues**, gifts, voluntary assessments, stock, securities, property or voluntary services. In soliciting these funds you must state their non-deductibility clearly and in a place where it will be noticed by the recipient.

Wording on solicitations to businesses can be slightly different because a business may choose to deduct a contribution as an ordinary and necessary business expense, e.g., public relations.

Sample wording for solicitations to businesses might be:

"Contributions to the LWV of _____ are not deductible as charitable contributions for tax purposes but may be deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense."

Sample wording for solicitations to individuals might be:

"Contributions to the LWV of _____ (or dues for membership in the LWV of _____) are not deductible as charitable contributions for tax purposes."

Sample wording from a recent LWVUS solicitation:

"Contributions to the League of Women Voters of the United States are used in aggressive and effective lobbying and are not tax-deductible."

IRS Rules on Deductibility of Payments by Patrons of Fundraising Events

Local Leagues can use fundraising events to solicit deductible gifts for the Education Fund if they follow certain soliciting and receipting practices:

> To be tax deductible, a payment must be an outright gift without tangible compensation. When a person buys an item, no gift has been made because the payment is the purchase price. To qualify as a gift, it must be shown that the payment exceeds the fair market value of whatever is received and that amount may be deducted.

> An admission price is not tax deductible because the payment is not considered a gift. If the price is intended to be in part a gift and in part the purchase price of admission, you must state how much is fair market value and how much is a gift. This must appear on the solicitation and on any ticket or receipt.

> Where the event is reasonably comparable to events for which there are established charges for admission, such as theatrical or athletic performances, the established charges should be treated as fixing the fair market value of the admission. If the amount paid is the same as the standard admission charge, there is no deductible contribution.

- > The amount of a payment exceeding the value of an event or article received is tax deductible. Even if the event and/or articles are donated they cannot be deducted if the rate charged equals their fair market value. If the price is higher than the fair market value, and this is made clear, then the difference is tax deductible.
- > To claim a deduction, the donor must be able to show a gift was made in excess of the fair market value of the goods or services received. The charity must disclose fair market value for each item and include it in a brochure or catalog if one is printed.
- > The price of a raffle ticket is not deductible, and the prizes are subject to income tax.

Requirements Concerning Acknowledgements

These requirements apply to contributions received on or after Jan. 1994:

- > A charity must provide a donor with a written acknowledgement for a contribution of \$250 or more to include with the individual's 1040 tax return. The acknowledgement must state the amount of any cash contribution, a description of any property contributed and whether the charity provided any goods or services in exchange for the contribution. If there was an exchange, the charity must also provide a good faith estimate of the value of those goods or services.
- > If a charity receives more than \$75 from a contributor and the sum is partly a contribution and partly a payment for goods and services provided by the charity, the charity must give the donor a written statement that includes a good faith estimate of the value of the goods or services and informs the donor of the actual amount which may be considered a charitable deduction.

Soliciting Contributions from Candidates

Minnesota law generally prohibits a religious, charitable or educational organization from soliciting a contribution from a candidate or committee. It does not apply to certain business advertisements or regular payments by a candidate to an organization to which s/he was a member or contributor for more than six months before candidacy.

SITE 1

BLUEPRINTS

(This should be done ASAP after the annual meeting)

CALENDAR/PROGRAM PLANNING

League of Women Voters of [your League]

[Date] [Time]

[Place]

We're looking forward to collecting all our great ideas and getting them down on our 1999-2000 calendar.

Please join us and come prepared to discuss:

- *what* our monthly program topics will be;
- *how* we can continue to provide interesting, interactive programs for our members; and
- *what* programs we'll provide for the general public.

[Describe refreshment/meal provision]

Thank you and we're looking forward to your participation.

Please RSVP to [Contact Name].

LWV [Your League] CALENDAR PLANNING 1999-2000

NATIONAL – “Making Democracy Work”

STATE STUDY – to be adopted

LOCAL STUDY – [Your Local League's study]

[local study leader] will chair the study

UPDATES

CMAL – [Metro Leagues]

Direction to the Board

- 1.
- 2.

Unit Meeting Topic Suggestions

Lively Issues

Special Events

1. Annual Meeting
2. Membership Event?
3. Candidates Forums?
4. Other:

Calendar Planning Considerations

1. Board Meeting Dates and Time: [i.e. 3rd Thursday at 6:00 p.m.]

[Date?]	[Date?]
[Date?]	[Date?]
[Date?]	[Date?]
[Date?]	[Date?]
[Date?]	[Date?]
[Date?]	[Date?]

2. Newsletter Deadlines
3. Finance Drive [Dates]
4. LWVMN Annual Appeal Phonathon (Sept. – November)
5. Calendar Sales (Sept. – November)
6. UN Day (October)
7. Membership Directory [Dates]
8. New Members Meeting
9. Candidates Meetings – General and Local Elections
10. Legislative Interviews
11. Legislative Intern Training – January
12. Budget, by-laws, Nominating Committees (January – February)
13. Citizens in Action Conference – January
14. CMAL quarterly meetings
15. Women Come to the Capitol
16. State Fundraiser - March

1999-2000 Calendar Planning Worksheet

LWV

July	August	September	October	November	December
January	February	March	April	May	June

Managing Program

Where Does League Program Originate?

The short answer is with League members. Some ideas spring from the particular interests of individual members. Some grow out of previous League work. Still others come from a review of a League's community survey or from interviews with key leaders.

Once members have been stimulated to think about the widest possible range of choices, Leagues collect ideas and winnow them down. For national program, this is done by a process closely akin to that used during a national study; Leagues submit report forms, which are tabulated and analyzed for board consideration. Local Leagues use a variety of methods to compile a list: discussion meetings, telephone surveys, in-person polls, bulletin tear-offs. As the results come in, member preferences become clear. In fundamental terms, the process outlined in the bylaws for selecting program, whether local, regional, state or national, is designed to insure member participation in the choices made.

Board Consideration

After reviewing and discussing a winnowed list, the board decides what to recommend to the annual meeting or convention as proposed program. In evaluating member suggestions, the board asks questions such as these:

- Does it fall within League Principles?
- Does the League already have positions that can be applied to the proposal?
- Is government action needed? Possible?
- How much member interest has been expressed for the issue?
- Is this the crucial time for the issue?
- Do the political realities permit effective action?
- Is this the appropriate level of the League to address the issue?
- Will the League's involvement make a unique impact? Increase the League's influence and credibility?
- What are the prospects for funding anticipated educational activities and/or action strategies?
- Will the League be able to draw on allies?

Once the board decides which issues to recommend, it words them as succinctly as possible, identifying the program to be addressed and the scope of the study.

Program Adoption

The board reports (usually in the local bulletin) its proposed or recommended program, which consists of existing statements of positions and any proposed studies, to the members by the deadline specified in the bylaws. Many Leagues also include information on not-recommended issues (issues suggested during the program-planning process but not included in the board's proposed or recommended program). The board should be prepared to explain its proposals and the reasons for its choices.

The wording of a proposed issue may be amended at the annual meeting or convention, provided the intent is not changed. Only program issues submitted by the deadline may be considered. Since each issue on a League program must be adopted by vote at the annual meeting or convention, issues or statements of positions previously on the program must be readopted in the same or amended form to continue to be part of the League's program.

A local League's program is determined by members at its annual meeting; state and national programs are voted on by delegates at state and national League conventions. In the course of the program adoption discussion, members often direct the board on scope of inquiry, timing, emphasis and ways to handle the study and/or action phases. The board takes this into account in planning for the year.

Guidelines for a Resource Committee

- Agree on overall goals and be aware of **time, money and resources** available to accomplish these goals.
- **Pinpoint and coordinate sources of information** on the issue, such as publications, "experts," and other organizations and groups, and carry out plans for **additional research** on the issue if necessary.
- Devise ways to **get information to members and the public** and design programs and activities for the League and the community that **build and sustain interest in the issue**.
- **Formulate questions** for member agreement or consensus and outline possible decision-making methods.
- **Suggest action approaches and take part in action** on an issue once a position is reached.
- **Evaluate** the success and effectiveness of the committee's efforts.

Regardless of the specific assignment, each committee should devise an outline of all projected activities for board approval. Once plans have been approved, the committee continues its work, reporting to the board for guidance and further decisions as needed.

Committee Organization

Leagues plan and coordinate program in various ways. Often the vice-president (or one of the vice presidents, if your League has two) takes on this assignment; sometimes a board member or a committee plays this role. The assignment includes overall responsibilities for:

- Planning a program of study and action for the League year (in conjunction with the action coordinator, if your League has one).
- Conducting the program planning meetings where members decide what items will be recommended for state and national program.
- Overseeing the work of board members responsible for program issues and chairing resource committees.

Once program is adopted, the task of forming program resource committees usually is the next step. *Meaningful Meetings* (LWWUS Pub. #319) is a valuable tool at this point, as it details the role of the chair and resource committee in undertaking research and producing successful discussion meetings on program issues.

The board member who chairs a resource committee and the committee as a whole are responsible for pulling information together and planning its use; examining all sides of an issue so that the information presented to members will be balanced as well as objective; arranging for meetings, TV and radio shows, go-see tours, and other activities designed to spark member and community interest in the issue. Once a position is reached, the committee takes part in developing and implementing action strategies to implement the position.

No program resource committee ever needs to start from scratch. On any issue important enough to be chosen for League program, information already exists in the form of books, magazine articles, videos, radio or television programs. Build on what has already been done, supplementing existing material as needed. Adapt material developed by other Leagues. Clearly, more in-depth research and writing will be done by a local League on a local issue, whereas with state or national issues its task is more one of choosing and coordinating information prepared at the state or national level.

While the members of resource committees often become expert on issues, they should remember that materials prepared for League members should focus on the information they need to make decisions as **informed citizens**, not as experts or specialists in the field. Sometimes a bibliography, accompanied by a factsheet with provocative questions, may all that's needed.

The committee also should be alert to ways to involve the community. Consult with community leaders, exchange views with elected and appointed public officials, hold forums and roundtables of experts, debate the issue on radio and television. Supplement the written word with other techniques. Cassettes, films, cable television, debates – all are ways to present information and to offer mem-

bers and the community opportunities to take part in activities, not just to be passive recipients of information. Two of the creative techniques used by Leagues are (1) case histories to present information, alternating one side's view with the opposing view to illustrate differences, and (2) a lively game to illustrate a point.

Sharing Resources

The most obvious way to share resources is to participate in a joint resource committee with neighboring Leagues or to work through an ILO. In some state Leagues the state board asks on- and off-board members to form a traveling team to bring information on state and national items to local Leagues, thereby sharing expertise and leadership resources. All of these approaches can save Leagues from duplicating efforts.

Reaching Member Agreement/Consensus

Before the League can take action, members must agree to broad terms on what they think about various aspects of a program issue. The board chooses from a number of methods—group discussion, concurrence, questionnaires, telephone polls—to reach a League decision about a program issue. Regardless of the process used, the important point is that it's essential that members have an opportunity to become informed before being asked to make decisions on the issue under discussion. The board chooses the approach to be used, recognizing that the nature of an issue will affect how it is studied and how decisions are reached.

Study makes action possible. It brings to members the knowledge that makes League action uniquely credible and respected. During the study phase, members have an opportunity to examine the facts and key pro and con points. They are encouraged to discuss the political realities of action and to contribute ideas for the board to consider when it formulates an action strategy after a position is reached.

Whatever study and member agreement procedures are used, the board sets ground rules at the beginning so that members will understand the process and the board will collect the information needed to formulate the position based on member input and agreement. For example, if the discussion group method (see below) is combined with a member questionnaire (e.g., a bulletin tear-off), how will the replies of one or the other be weighted? If a questionnaire alone is used, must a minimum number of members reply for the results to be valid?

Consensus/group discussion is the technique most often used in the League for reaching member agreement. It is a process whereby members participate in a group discussion of an issue. The "consensus" reached by members through group discussion is not a simple majority, nor is it unanimity; rather it is the over-all "sense of the group" as expressed through the exchange of ideas and opinions, whether in a membership meeting or a series of membership or unit meetings.

A Few Words about "Consensus"

The American Heritage Dictionary defines consensus as "collective opinion or accord; general agreement or accord." In the League "consensus" is used:

- Interchangeably with "member agreement" to refer to the **overall decision-making process** (including various methods such as questionnaires, polls, and so forth) by which a League board determines that there is substantial agreement among members on an issue.
- To refer to a **specific technique** used traditionally in the League to discuss and arrive at conclusions on issues.

The resource committee frames questions for the board to review and approve. During the study these questions form the framework for member discussion; they help guide the study and focus members on the points that will ultimately be a part of the League's position. Member agreement emerges from the give-and-take of group interaction and exchange of views.

Questionnaires and other direct member agreement techniques are another option. The board may decide to send a questionnaire to the entire membership to solicit the views of each member directly. This can be sent to a special mailing or enclosed in the bulleting as a tear-off. It can be of the "yes/no/but" variety and it may or may not invite comments.

A telephone poll is also a way to discover member attitudes on issues. If telephone polling is used either for the total membership or for a representative sampling, be sure members know the dates the calls will be made and the questions they will be asked so they will be prepared to answer.

Concurrence is the act of agreeing with—or concurring with—a statement or position. A decision-making technique used by the League for some time, concurrence can work in several ways. Groups of League members or League boards can concur with (1) recommendations of resource committee or a unit group; (2) decision statements formulated by League boards; or (3) positions reached by another League or Leagues.

As a general rule, background material presenting the pros and cons on the issue being considered are provided to League and members in the concurrence process. In area Leagues, an issue relating to one jurisdiction is often studied by members living in that jurisdiction, and, after member agreement has been reached by those members, the other members are asked to concur with the results.

WHO COMPILES CONSENSUS RESULTS? HOW?

In many Leagues, bulk of the compiling is done by the study committee, although efforts should be made to include a representative from each unit at some point. This helps insure that the units' answers are fairly represented in the compilation. This may be impossible in very large Leagues, but some additional unit representation should be encouraged.

It's helpful for committees to determine early in the study what criteria they will use in combining answers. Consensus, in the League of Women Voters, is generally considered to be more than a simple majority—at least 2/3 to 3/4.* When applying this definition to specific situations, committees often ask,

"Should we have each member vote or just consider the sense of the meeting at each unit?"

It is usually necessary to know how many members are participating at each unit. Voting, however, except on

individual ballots, can be very time-consuming and awkward. Many Leagues simply record the number of participants, list areas of strong agreement (consensus), and record comments and minority opinions, indicating their strength. When the study committee compiles the results of all units, they consider the number of participants at each unit, look for issues on which there is strong agreement, check for comments and minority opinions to see if they are significant. If a League or committee is more comfortable knowing actual percentages, it would probably be wise for them to use a written ballot.

*August 10, 1982 Board Meeting: Consensus requires at least a 2/3 vote of both local members participating and 2/3 of total numbers of LLs participating. However, the consensus must contain an equitable combination of Metro and greater Minnesota Leagues.

From: LWVMN's *Guide to Local Program*, 1981

Formulating League Positions

Determining member agreement/consensus of members within a local League is the responsibility of the local board. It is an interpretive process whereby the board evaluates the reports of member thinking in discussion units or in general membership meetings where discussion has taken place—or the results of a questionnaire or poll—and then determines the broad areas of agreement and disagreement that emerge among its members. In the case of a **local issue**, the board then formulates a position that expresses the League's views on that issue and forms the basis for League action. ILO, state and national boards perform the same function for regional, state and national issues. In formulating positions, all boards keep in mind the importance of wording positions in terms broad enough to enable the League to initiate, support or oppose a variety of legislative and executive proposals over a period of time.

Once the local League board has formulated the position on a local issue, it is announced to members and the community. This statement of position then becomes part of the local League's program, and the board can begin taking action on it immediately. Like all statements of position, it must be readopted by League members at the annual meeting in order to remain on the program.

A local League's consensus or member agreement on a regional, state or national issue does not constitute a final LWV position and should not be publicized. In these cases each local board's responsibility is to report the consensus—areas of agreement, areas where no agreement emerged, level of member participation, etc.—to the regional, state or national board. In turn, the appropriate board analyzes the consensus/member agreement reports from local Leagues, develops a position statement that reflects member thinking and announces the position to members and the public.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA ACTION GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL LEAGUES

These guidelines are designed to ensure that the League speaks with one voice. The Board of Directors of LWVMN is the final authority in action policy when resolving conflicts if more than one local League is involved or when state LWV policy is involved. Remember that when taking action it should be made clear that all League action is nonpartisan. Action addresses issues rather than candidates or political parties.

I. ACTION ALERTS

From time to time local Leagues receive calls to action from the LWVMN and the LWVUS. These may be in the form of an Action Alert from the state or national League, giving background information on an issue together with action strategies and instructions. Action suggestions also appear in the *Capitol Letter*, *MN Voter*, *Report from the Hill*, and in other communications from the state or national League. **All Leagues are strongly requested to carry out the suggested action.**

II. LOCALLY INITIATED ACTION: Local Leagues may want to initiate action. Local action by Leagues is vital and is encouraged.

- A. **The decision to take action which will affect only your community rests with your local board if certain requirements are met:** In deciding to take action based on a local position, the Board must consider whether the contemplated action falls within the relevant position and whether the local position is consistent with the position of other levels of LWV. The Board will also want to consider whether members understand and support the action and whether the action would be effective in the community.

Local Leagues may take positions in their communities based on positions from other levels of League, and consultation with a Board member from that level may be helpful in planning action strategy. If action affects other area Leagues, and there is an inter-league organization such as Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues, that level of League must be consulted before any action is taken.

- B. **Action that would affect more than one League requires consultation with the Boards of the other Leagues involved.** The procedure to be followed will depend on the complexity of the issue and the number of Leagues involved. If only two or three Leagues are affected, all should agree (or have no objection) to the plan of action. If more than three Leagues are involved the LWVMN legislative coordinator or Action Committee should be consulted. A substantial majority of the Leagues involved must agree to the contemplated action. This consultative arrangement is necessary to ensure agreement on the interpretation of positions, to coordinate activities of the different levels of League, and to enhance the effectiveness of League action campaigns.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA COALITION GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL LEAGUES

A coalition is a temporary alliance for a specific purpose.

1. When should LWV join a coalition?

A coalition membership is most useful to the LWV when it is a temporary alliance for some specific issue. It is best if the LWV serves as a founding member of a coalition so that LWV principles will be a basis for the structure. Membership in any coalition must be approved by the action chair(s) or committee and LWV Board of Directors.

Special attention should be paid to any potential coalition's funding, decision-making, apparatus, nonpartisanship and communications within and without. It is particularly important that we determine that we are not lending the credibility of the LWV to a questionable coalition. At the time of joining a coalition the structure for formal withdrawal should be in place.

As a condition of joining a coalition, LWV reserves the right to withdraw the use of our name if we are not in agreement with a proposed statement of action.

It is possible for LWV to take part in loose networking arrangements with other organizations that allow us to act on an ad hoc basis and do not use the LWV name as an agreeing participant. While League members may attend networks or organizational meetings of many kinds, no endorsement of the group or its objectives is possible or may be inferred without approval by the appropriate level of LWV. (See Action Guidelines) It is necessary for the action chair(s) and the LWV president to review and approve. League delegates to networks may speak not as individuals but only as members of LWV.

2. How should we function within a coalition?

LWV should never join a coalition unless a LWV delegate is in regular attendance at all decision-making meetings of the coalition and decisions must reflect LWV principles. When attending coalition meetings the LWV delegate must not speak as a individual but with the voice of the LWV. Communications within the coalition and with the LWV through the delegate are of paramount importance.

Any spoken or written testimony issued by the coalition must be seen and approved by the appropriate action chair and LWV president. (Even with prior approval it should be noted that press conferences are innately dangerous since words can be taken out of context and the press sets the agenda.)

It is important to keep LWV priorities first in the mind of the representative to the coalition. It is easy to become impassioned with the topic or cause and oversubscribe the League's resources and/or limits of commitment. The LWV is a multipurpose organization with finite finances and personnel and bound by member consensus.

3. When should LWV leave a coalition?

Coalitions should be evaluated as a matter of course each time dues are requested and approved by the appropriate LWV Board of Directors. If the specific purpose desired by the League has been achieved, if the coalition is expanding to new issues and achieving an independent identity of its own or if the LWV no longer has the time or resources to monitor the coalition by active and continued personal participation it is time to withdraw.

Withdrawal from a coalition should always be done in writing and the reasons should be stated explicitly. Withdrawal should be done on positive terms so that future communication and cooperation are possible. State that a coalition is moving beyond permitted bounds of LWV participation as determined by our grassroots consensus or that it is not possible for us to take part in partisan activities or that we cannot afford the resources to continue. It should never be done as a criticism of the coalition but only as a statement of our limitations. We do not want to foster rumors about our withdrawal or nonparticipation in a coalition. The same contacts that were made to announce the taking part in the coalition should be used to announce the withdrawal and the reasons for doing so.

CAPITOL LETTER

VOL. XXVI, No. 4
March 29, 1999

Judy Duffy, President
Carol Frisch, Action V. P.

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<http://tcfreenet/ip/pol/lwvmn>

Legislation undergoes many changes as it moves through committee to the floors of the House and Senate. The content of this Capitol Letter is based on information gathered as of March 10, 1999. For more current information, call House Index (651/296-6646) Senate Information (651/296-0504) or check the website at <http://www.leg.state.mn.us>

AND THE BEAT GOES ON.....the days at the Capitol are lengthening both literally and figuratively. Early morning and late afternoon meetings are becoming the rule and the effort to keep up is intensifying. Part of our effort in tracking legislation this year is devoted to last minute agenda changes in committee. A word to the wise—if you want to be fully informed on the legislature a little detective training would not be wasted.

Distress over the budget cuts of \$60 million in grants to nonprofits brought out a sizeable crowd to Nonprofit Action Day at the Capitol on March 18. Three hundred and twenty-five organizations will see cuts in programs that address self-sufficiency, job training and development, crime prevention, child welfare and health. Nonprofit representatives visited legislators and heard Wendy Wustenberg, Governor Ventura's Governmental Relations Director, and Michael O'Keefe, Commissioner of the Dept. of Human Services. Both speakers encouraged continued dialogue on the cuts, but did not hold out hope for the Governor

to change his position during this session. Visit www.mnncn.org or call the MN Council of Nonprofits for a list of the cuts and further rationale in opposition to them. The legislature will be debating these issues right up until the end of the session so immediate and continued lobbying is timely.

INITIATIVE & REFERENDUM:

LWVMN Position: Opposition to most forms of voter initiative and referendum on statutes; support of the continuation of legislative initiative and compulsory voter referendum on constitutional amendments.

LWVMN testified in opposition to HF484 which would place a constitutional amendment on the ballot in 2000 that would establish initiative and referendum for both statutes and constitutional amendments in Minnesota. The bill passed Government Operations and was referred to Ways and Means. There was no public testimony at this committee but we distributed our written opposition to the bill. On Monday, March 22, it was heard on the floor of the House and passed. Our statement in opposition was distributed to all House members with the assistance of Rep. Margaret Kelliher (DFL-Mpls.).

The companion bill SF678 authored by Sen. Terwilliger (R-Edina) is expected to be heard in the Senate Election Laws Committee the week of March 29. Local Leagues who are represented on the

committee have been asked to contact their respective senators to register opposition.

LWVMN has joined in coalition with several other groups who also oppose this proposed amendment. Included are: MN Chamber of Commerce, AFL-CIO, Education Minnesota, MN Retail Grocers Assn. and several others. A draft statement from this group will be distributed.

We understand that many issues that we support could be passed through the initiative amendment. Many issues we oppose would pass too. It is because we believe that the process of initiative is flawed that we oppose it. We reject the passage of legislation with a simple yes and no. Compromise and research are the answers to competent lawmaking.

All members of the League are urged to contact legislators and oppose this proposed amendment.

FIREARMS: Lynne Westphal, lobbyist (612/941-8493), Mary Lewis Grow, lobbyist (507/645-5378), Mary Mantis, intern (651/644-1156)

LWVUS Position: Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons.

LWVMN Position: Action to support restrictions on the sale, use and possession of firearms by private parties in the State of Minnesota.

It appears that HF 897, the bill that would have weakened the laws concerning the carrying of concealed weapons by citizens in public will NOT be pursued this session. Many thanks to the many voters who contacted their legislators on this important public safety issue.

A new bill, SF1135 authored by Sen. Doug Johnson (DFL-Cook) popped up unpublicized on Saturday morning, March 13. This bill would deny cities and towns in Minnesota the power to sue gun manufacturers. Cities in the U.S. have recently met with success suing gun manufacturers in an attempt to make them more responsible for their products. No entity in Minnesota is suing any gun manufacturer at present. On March 16, gun manufacturers in Minnesota testified that they don't have the money that the tobacco industry has to fight these suits. They would be driven out of business and jobs might be lost. (Testimony re Magnum Research)

SF1135 would also prohibit towns and cities in Minnesota from zoning gun shops, gun shows and gun sales. **LWVMN believes that local government control would not be well served by this prohibition.**

EDUCATION: Susan Reinhart, lobbyist (612/827-6490), Jean Egbert, intern (612/388-7997)

LWVMN Position: All Minnesota children should have equal access to a good public education. State funding for education should be at a level that makes programs of comparable substance and quality available to all.

The following was contributed by Sylvia Roman White Bear/North Oaks League:

"Don't abandon the Grad Standards and the Profile of Learning...

What does it mean when you receive a diploma from a high school in Minnesota? What knowledge and skill level does that diploma confer on its recipients? Can you read, write and do math? Do you have problem solving skills? Can you work successfully with other people? Have you had the same opportunities for a good

education that other children in the state have had?

"After ten years of research and input from teachers, administrators, education experts, government officials and the business community, the State of Minnesota has an opportunity to consistently raise the bottom line learning level of every student it educates and to thoughtfully put into practice some major education reforms. These education reforms are currently supported by at least twelve state education associations representing thousands of educators and school board members.

"What can the Grad Standard and the Profile of Learning do for all our students? First, the Profile of Learning Rule requires students to show what they know through an extended and balanced set of performance assessments. Performance assessments require students to do things with their knowledge-to analyze, to create and to explain.

"Second, the Profile of Learning Rule with its ten Learning Areas provides a vision that promises a comprehensive education for all students. The Rule clearly states that these standards are for all students, not just for the best and brightest, or the school districts with the most dollars to spend and the best teachers available.

"And third, the Profile of Learning and the Grad Standard are valuable because they provide a consistent framework for school and student accountability that extends throughout the state.

"So if the Grad Standard and the Profile are so great, what is happening at the legislature? Why all the controversy over something which is so well supported by educators?

"Unfortunately, our legislators have been hearing from a vocal group of highly organized people who oppose the Graduation Rule. Especially problematical to them is the cost of educating every child equally in Minnesota. They have indicated at several district hearings on the subject, that we've spent thousands of tax dollars in attempting to educate all children and everybody knows it doesn't work. We need to just give in and educate the top 20% who deserve to be educated and forget the rest. They are also adamantly opposed to having their children exposed to diversity teaching and multiculturalism. In their limited view of current Minnesota social structure, recognizing other religions and cultures is not an acceptable curriculum program.

"While the League of Women Voters of Minnesota has not taken a position on the new Minnesota Grad Standards, these objections to the Standards are not in line with the current League position on the need to educate all our children no matter what their race, creed or economic circumstances and for providing adequate funding for education in Minnesota.

"Legislators need to hear your concerns on these issues in both the Senate and the House."

MENTAL HEALTH: Pat Bugenstein, lobbyist (612/888-5309)

LWVMN Position: Support of a comprehensive and coordinated system of programs and services for mentally ill adults and emotionally disturbed children and adolescents. Priority should be given to persons with serious and persistent mental illness and/or acute mental illness.

Last week was the great flurry. Everyone was racing to get all the necessary bills heard by the March 19 deadline—at which

time a bill would be considered dead if it had not received a hearing in a policy committee. Needless to say our bills made the deadline. The Employment Options Bill HF649 was heard in the House Jobs and Economic Development Committee and received a favorable hearing. The Senate File is 545 authored by David Johnson. The major concern is whether the program will receive the dollars that it needs and that will be determined later. To our knowledge the legislature has not received its targets. This is an agreement made by finance chairs of the various committees and the leadership to determine how much money each finance chair will get when the spending is divided by category.

The Bridges bill HF1280 received a favorable hearing. We had called upon the Mental Health Division Director from Blue Earth County to testify along with the Mental Health Program Director from Hennepin County. The bill was passed on to Jobs and Economic Development Finance where it was accepted into the Omnibus Bill, but again the appropriation will not be announced until later. Sen. Linda Higgins (DFL-Mpls.) will serve as chief author of SF568 the companion bill.

There are several other bills we are following:

HF223 would create a medical education and research endowment fund, a children's endowment fund and a tobacco prevention fund. We think this is important for mental health because the supply of physicians and psychiatrists is important to the mental health community as well as research on mental illness. The bill has been heard in House Health and Human Services Policy and is still alive although we do not know when it will be heard in Finance. Its companion SF253 was heard in Health and Family Security and passed to Finance. This

bill will be very controversial because it used the tobacco settlement money. Expect no decision until late in the session.

HF724 and SF737 would increase the reimbursement rate for vocational rehabilitation agencies. It has passed the policy committees. This fund has not been increased in several years and is long overdue.

The following are also still alive:

- Crisis housing assistance for persons in the hospital with mental illness;
- Persons on SSI or SSDI will not lose medical assistance by working and will be allowed an increase in assets;
- Establishment of a grant program to counties for upgrading mental health facilities;
- Cut from \$12.50 to 50 cents the cost of MN I.D. card for persons with mental illness.

The following provisions were included in the Department of Human Services Bill HF1688:

- Upgrade credentialling for case workers but allow for aides who speak other languages;
- Funding saved by cutbacks in the Regional Treatment Centers to become dedicated to mental health programs rather than returning to the General Fund.

The companion SF1714 will be heard shortly.

ACTION

10 MINUTE ACTIVIST



**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS**
MINNESOTA

550 Rice Street • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103
Phone 651-224-5445 • Fax 651-290-2145
lwvmn@mtn.org
<http://tcfreenet.org/ip/pol/lwvmn>

Make your voice heard on League issues that matter to you! Join Leaguers around the state as a Ten Minute Activist during the 1999 Legislative session. Fill out and return this form and we will notify you when action is needed on those issues you select. You may be contacted 0-6 times per year. You can respond with a postcard or a phone call. This is an important part of our advocacy!

4/2/99

_____ **YES! I WANT TO BE A TEN-MINUTE ACTIVIST**

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Congressional District: _____ Legislative District: _____

Phone: (____) _____ e-mail address: _____

Issues I will take action on:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financing Gov't/Taxes | <input type="checkbox"/> Prevention of Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Election/Campaign Reform | <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family and Children's Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equity Issues/Civil Rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reproductive Rights/Teen Pregnancy | <input type="checkbox"/> Term Limits | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

Mail to: LWVMN Rice Street, St. Paul, MN 55103 or FAX to 651/290-2145
Questions? Call 651/224-5445

If you wish to receive the **FREE** weekly House and Senate publications, call:
For the Senate BRIEFLY - call 651/296-0504; For the House SESSION WEEKLY - call 651/296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550.

CAPITOL LETTER SUBSCRIPTION: Mail _____ E-mail _____ (Check one)

_____ I would like to subscribe to the **CAPITOL LETTER**. I enclose my check for \$10 to cover the cost of mailing 6-8 issues with the latest inside information from League lobbyists on Legislative activity during the 1999 session. *(It is not necessary to be an activist to subscribe)*

2000 LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

LWV member? _____ Yes _____ No

Local League (please specify) _____

Member-at-Large? _____

Why do you want to be legislative intern?

What kind of experience do you bring to this job?*

How does a legislative internship fit in with your personal goals?

What kind of time commitment can you make to lobbying? _____ # hours

_____ days/weeks _____ flexible?

Please circle your area(s) of interest:

Education

Election Laws

Women's/Children's Issues

Mental Health

Campaign Reform

Violence Prevention

Taxes/Financing Gov't.

Government

Environment/Nat. Res.

Health Care

Choice

Firearms

Criminal Justice

Civil Rights/Equity

Housing

**SUBMIT APPLICATION AT ANY TIME - APPLICATION DEADLINE IS NOV. 30, 1999;
APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED AS RECEIVED**

*Disclaimer: In true LWV fashion, we expect no lobbying or legislative experience -- we learn by doing -- and no one is asked to lobby without experience first as an intern with a seasoned LWV lobbyist.

UNDERSTANDING AND EXPLAINING "NONPARTISAN BUT POLITICAL"

The mission of the League of Women Voters is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League is political and takes action on selected governmental issues after membership study and agreement. It encourages members to be informed participants in political activity, but as a nonpartisan organization, it does not oppose or support any political party or candidate.

One of the problems that Leaguers all encounter sooner or later is a confused, dismayed or angry friend, neighbor, funder, or legislator who says, "How can you support that (bill - legislation - policy) if you are nonpartisan?" The following paragraphs may provide you with some ideas for replying to such questions.

The League is indeed nonpartisan in both parts of our mission --education and advocacy. We never support political parties or candidates for public office even if that office does not carry political party designation.

In our education role, we provide nonpartisan information to others with the understanding that they will use that information to make their own decisions. We do not state our own positions as an organization. We encourage others to register, to vote, and to communicate policy priorities to those in public office. To accomplish that goal, we provide information or training on voting procedures, candidates, issues, effective lobbying or even running for office. Candidate forums are a highly visible example of our education role.

We are also nonpartisan in our advocacy role, although we are political in the sense that we seek to affect the outcome of legislation or policy. The League's positions on issues are based on study and consensus by our members. When we work with public officials on legislation or policies that address our concerns on an issue, it is because of their position on that issue, not because of their party affiliation. It is in this role that we conduct legislative interviews.

To avoid the possible perception of partisanship, we ask our most visible leaders such as the president and voter service chair to refrain from political activity or active partisan support during their terms of office. League board members are asked to resign or take a leave of absence if they run for public office. While we encourage women and minorities to run for office, we are careful not to imply support for them over other candidates when they do so.

Clearly not every Leaguer agrees with every position. While we cherish the right to disagree as individuals, when we speak for the League in public, we speak only from League positions.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Mission

The League of Women Voters,
a nonpartisan political organization,
encourages
the informed and active participation of
citizens in government, and
influences
public policy through education and advocacy.