



## League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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# Constitutional Convention - 1955

St. Cloud  
● Under the title of "The State You're In," the Minnesota League of Women Voters has pinpointed some things that should be brought to the attention of our residents.

Minnesota has the largest senate of any state. Only 18 of the 48 states still operate under their original constitutions and Minnesota is one of the 18.

Minnesota and Nebraska are the only states to elect members to their legislatures without party designation.

Members of Minnesota's legislative house of representatives represent districts that vary in population from 7,290 to 107,246. We have not had a legislative reapportionment since 1910 despite the fact the constitution of Minnesota makes it mandatory each 10 years.

Minnesota has had only 13 special legislative sessions in almost 100 years. Only a governor may call a special session.

About 79 percent of the income of the state is dedicated to specific purposes and cannot be used for anything else.

Many of these things need correction. The corrections will come only when the people—you and me—insist upon them.

## Voter Group to Sponsor Essay Contest

The Minnesota League of Women Voters has announced its sponsorship of an essay contest for high school students.

Subject of essays, not to exceed 1,500 words, will be "Our Minnesota Constitution." The contest, open to all Minnesota students from grades nine through 12, will be open from March 19 to April 30.

Rules will be available at school superintendents' offices or through the state League of Women Voters' office, Fifteenth and Washington avenues SE.

First prize will be a set of Encyclopedia Americana and a day at the state legislature.

Judges for the contest will be Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, Rochester, Minn.; Ralph W. Keller and Judge Leroy E. Matson.

### THE VOTERS' BOOTH

Distribution of factual, objective, non-partisan information about elections, voting procedures and vital government issues is the service of the League of Women Voters.

**IMES**

Lake Area

CASS LAKE

Minnesota Editorial Ass'n and the National Editorial Ass'n.

Class Matter at the Post Office at Cass Lake, April 27, 1899. Under Act of March 3, 1879

**MARCH 22, 1956**

Estes Krelauver, candidate for presidential nomination, pauses at the hall in Duluth last night for a break in campaign schedule. In the picture, from the left, Diemart, Miss Angela Vrdoljak, Krelauver, and alter Smith.

The progress of insurance of the more encouraging field of fires.

A danger of this progress, gives to a policyholder. Although financial loss, every fire threat, more important element of value preventing fires.

**Kitchen Faucet Runs**



**FOUR MEMBERS OF THE** League of Women Voters rode through downtown Duluth today in a 1917 Model T Ford to emphasize that Duluth's commission form of government is "out of date." They were followed by a new model depicting the "up to date" strong mayor-council form of government which Duluthians will vote on next Tuesday. Left to right in the ancient vehicle are Mrs. Irving Gerald, Roy Wright, the driver; Mrs. Gilbert Buffington and Mrs. Clarence A. Johnson. Mrs. Kenneth Olsen is driving the new car. Pointing out that Duluth's present form of government and the Model T are both old, the women asked: "Both still run, but who wants them?" Next Monday the ride will be repeated with Mrs. Olsen, Mrs. Roger Emerson and Mrs. Robert Prescott taking part.—(Herald photo.)

## Legislative Day Is Set for Women

Progress of bills on party designation, reapportionment and constitutional convention will be reported by their authors at a legislative day of League of Women Voters of Minnesota Wednesday.

The event will be held in Weyerhaeuser room, Minnesota Historical society building, St. Paul.

Delegates from the 54 local leagues will visit senate and house of representatives and will discuss the authors' suggestions for passage of legislation supported by the league.

Sen. Daniel Feidt of Minneapolis, district 34, will speak at 10:20 a.m. on "The Role of the Constituent in Influencing Legislation," followed by a discussion of party designation by Rep. Karl F. Grittnr of St. Paul, district 39.

At the 12:30 p.m. luncheon, speakers will be Rep. Joseph E. Karth, St. Paul, district 41, and Sen. Stanley Holmquist, Grove City, district 26, on the constitutional convention bill, and Rep. Alf L. Bergerud, Edina, district 36 south, on reapportionment.

Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves of Rochester, state chairman of constitutional convention, will preside at the luncheon. Arrangements are being made by Mrs. Donald Guthrie of Birchwood, state legislative chairman.

Representatives of the Minneapolis league will be Mrs. Edgar Kuderling, 5521 Twenty-seventh avenue S.; Mrs. E. C. Widseth, 2919 NE. Arthur street, and Mrs. H. M. Flannery, 4222 Girard avenue N.



# THE CASS LAKE TIMES

Over 56 Years of Continuous Service To Cass Lake Area

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY THE UTLEYS OF CASS LAKE  
GRANT UTLEY, Editor and Publisher

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## Warmer, Snow

Warmer tonight with occasional snow, snow flurries Saturday.  
2 p. m. today, 26. See page 20.

# DULUTH HERALD

Vol. 73, No. 282

DULUTH, MINN., FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 1956

Five Cents



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# I LIKE IT HERE by GEORGE GRIM

## Minneapolis Tribune Really Travels --to Nicaragua, Alaska, Japan

THIS LITTLE part of the Minneapolis Tribune gets around. Minneapolis wrote a letter to the Tribune which our editor headed "Why Can't We Do What Alaskans Did?"

"I just got back from having spent six hours on the Rio Tipatapa," writes Mrs. Carl J. Her letter suggested advice.

"I have trouble with pelicans, too."

"Last time I went deep sea fishing, I threw out my length of clothesline and promptly a pelican swooped down and clobbered the bait."

"I hooked the pelican and my husband refused to speak to me the remainder of the day."

Will brother Herter in Waseca please send the cook book and any other ideas he has that would be helpful to Mrs. Carl G. Wendt, c/o American Embassy, Managua, Nicaragua.

ANOTHER here-to-there bit of newspaper geography: Mrs. Howard Evenson of

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"The fragile liveliness of cherry blossoms — the symphony of the geta on a summer's evening—the respectful attention and indescribable appreciation of an audience at a symphony or play — the fury of a seasonal typhoon — the delicious afterglow of a Japanese HOT bath—the hair-raising experience of a ride in the tiny 70-yen taxis — the thrill of caressing the toe of the bronze Buddha of Kamakura."

That's Betty Cavanaugh.

Read this column—you may travel. (Advt.)



Mrs. John Berdie

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Member of  
Entered as

VOTERS' BOOTH  
The League of Women Voters moves in the area of government. It studies and acts on such matters as City charters, State Constitutions, Public Schools, Taxation, health measures, merit systems, individual liberties, world trade & international cooperation.

Minnesota, April 27, 1899. Under Act of

TIMES

Cass Lake Area

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Office at Cass Lake,  
March 3, 1879

APRIL 5, 1956

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A report on the board meeting at the college, Oct. 7, was given by Mrs. Jerome Bechtold.

Mrs. Thomas Hunstiger, member of the League of Women Voters in St. Cloud, was the guest speaker. Her topic covered "people's Right to Vote for Calling a Constitutional Convention."

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*Tribune*  
*Apr. 4, 1956*

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THIS LITTLE part of the Tribune gets around.

"I just got back from having spent six hours on the Rio Tipatapa," writes Mrs. Carl J. Wendt. "Picked up the Jan. 8 Trib which arrived last week."

IN THAT ISSUE was this column's story of how to do such things as chopping off a turtle's head with an ax—an item from George Herter's cookbook called "Bull Cook Recipes and Practices."

One of the subscribers to the Tribune seems to be the Wendt family, Managua, Nicaragua.

"I feel the way I do when I get to the last page of a story in a magazine only to be greeted by 'Continued in the Next Issue.' How can you—when I spent every other cast this morning throwing green turtles back into the river?"

"I want to know what happens after I chop off the turtle's head."

"Lopping off the noggin is a cinch the way I hook 'em. In fact, one weighing about 25 pounds was so flabbergasted when he saw a hook with a hunk of beef heart on it that he swallowed hook, line and sinker."

"I had his neck stretched out so far that I was convinced he would shed his shell unaided. Naturally, I cut off the line and he waddled back like a drunk and re-entered the river."

"YOU SEE, I have a problem and need Herter's expert advice."

"I have trouble with pelicans, too."

"Last time I went deep sea fishing, I threw out my length of clothesline and promptly a pelican swooped down and clobbered the bait."

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Minneapolis wrote a letter to the Tribune which our editor headed "Why Can't We Do What Alaskans Did?"

HER LETTER suggested that if Alaskans could draw up a constitution that was modern, why couldn't we in Minnesota?

Result: We still don't have our Minnesota, up-to-date constitution, but Mrs. Evenson has a letter from Anchorage, Alaska, from a Mrs. Victor Fisher. It reads:

*"Did you know that your recent letter to the Minneapolis Tribune ended up on the back of a flier to be distributed to all voters in Alaska prior to April 24, when we vote on ratification of our constitution?"*

"My husband, who was a delegate to the convention, returned from Fairbanks the other day with one of the first copies to come off the press."

"YOU MIGHT like to know how far your letter traveled, the use it serves and how your words may contribute to a larger pro-ratification vote, thus perhaps achieving statehood for Alaska."

Oh, yes, our letter-to-the-Tribune-editor in Minneapolis also heard from Florida. North or south—our little old gazette's all over the map!

HOLD everything—even greater distance:

"You introduced me to Japan in your column of May 1954. The direct result of my reading that column was being accepted into the foreign service and eventual migration to Yokohama. Soon, I'll be on my way to another distant corner of the wide world. I'll have these memories of Japan:

"The fragile liveliness of cherry blossoms—the symphony of the geta on a summer's evening—the respectful attention and indescribable appreciation of an audience at a symphony or play—the fury of a seasonal typhoon—the delicious afterglow of a Japanese HOT bath—the hair-raising experience of a ride in the tiny 70-yen taxis—the thrill of caressing the toe of the bronze Buddha of Kamakura."

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## TIMES

Cass Lake Area

SOCIETY OF CASS LAKE AREA

Editorial Ass'n.

Office at Cass Lake, Mich.  
March 3, 1879



# Minnesota Lags Behind Other States In Up-To-Date Constitution, League



Teacher: These are some of the provisions that are ignored. Perhaps some day . . . .

This is the second article prepared by the Richfield League of Women Voters, in its drive for amending the Minnesota State Constitution. The league has announced several articles in a series intended to explain the source of the constitution and the need for changes in it. The News prints the articles as public service.

Is everybody out of step but Minnesota? One hundred eighty constitutional conventions have been held by the various states of the United States since these states adopted their original constitutions. From these conventions thirty new constitutions have been adopted. Why, then, can't Minnesota call a constitutional convention so that our constitution may be reviewed and a better instrument for running our state government forged?

Last week the League of Women Voters reviewed the way in which our state constitution was thrown together by a hurriedly called convention that was rabidly partisan. This week we shall try to show the need for reform that is recognized in many places and the unsuccessful efforts that so far have been made to bring about a change.

For four sessions of the legislature, the League of Women Voters of Minnesota has lobbied for a bill that would permit the people of the state to vote on whether or not they wished a convention held to revise our constitution. For four sessions the bill has failed to receive the necessary two-thirds vote of both House and Senate. Legislative hostility to change as well as fruitless controversy as to the methods of revision have prevented favorable action.

In spite of the bill's failure, the legislature does see the necessity for some change in the constitution. In 1947 the legislature appointed a commission to study the constitution and recommend changes—this was called the Constitutional Commission of Minnesota. After 14 months of study, the commission recommended major changes in 34 sections of the constitution in addition to six wholly new sections. Minor changes were advised in 78 other sections. The Commission's membership included eight members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker and eight members of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee so the legislature was well represented.

In 1949, a second commission, the popularly called "Little Hoover Commission" was set up by the legislature. This commission also pointed out the necessity for constitutional revision in order to modernize state government. In 1954, the legis-

lature's interim tax study committee found constitutional changes essential for sound fiscal policies.

In spite of these extensive and expensive studies, complete revision of Minnesota's constitution is still being delayed. Yet it is hard to find anyone who has studied or worked closely with the constitution who does not agree that change is necessary. Our legislature should cut down on special legislation for local communities, and our local governments need broader provisions for adoption and amendment of their own charters. Minnesota needs a fair and enforceable apportionment of the legislature; a more workable method of amending our state constitution; an improved financial structure; and judicial reform. These are just some of the improvements which have been suggested and which the League would like to see reviewed by a constitutional convention.

## Voter Unit Plans State Meeting

Leamington hotel will be the scene of the Minnesota League of Women Voters state council meeting Thursday and Friday.

Speakers will include Gov. Orville Freeman, who will talk Thursday on "How the State Constitution Hampers State Government" and State Senator Elmer L. Andersen who will be a guest Friday. His speech will be on "How the State Constitution Hampers the Legislature."

Council arrangements are being made by the Edina league. Mrs. John Sandberg and Mrs. T. M. Dale are co-chairmen. Mrs. Basil Young, Hibbing, Minn., state president, will preside. The meetings will begin at 9:30 a.m. with registration at 8 a.m. Thursday.

Five workshops meeting during the council will have as subject "Promoting the State League Program at the Local Level." Panel chairmen will be Mrs. John Grindlay, Rochester; Mrs. O. H. Anderson, Mahtomedi; Mrs. John R. Hill, Rochester; Eleanor Salisbury, 134 SE. Warwick street, and Mrs. John Klein, 1476 N. Grotto street, St. Paul.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**MOORHEAD DAILY NEWS**  
(Evening)

Date MAY 16 1956

## To Be Guest Speakers

MINNEAPOLIS (UP) — Gov. Orville Freeman and State Sen. Elmer Andersen of St. Paul will be guest speakers at the State Council of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota Thursday and Friday.

Some 250 persons are expected to attend. The council is meeting to assess the progress of the two-year program, hear reports and pass a budget.

Bemidji Pioneer  
May 16, 1956

## Women Voters League Schedule Revision Drive

The League of Women Voters have made plans for a Constitutional Revision Campaign. All action will be geared to Constitution Day which is May 25. Co-chairmen for the planning are Mrs. Romaine Powell, Mrs. Charles Lang and Mrs. John Cahill.

General plans include a block campaign by all members of the League, under the chairmanship of Mrs. John Cahill. All homes will be personally contacted and literature on constitutional revision will be distributed.

The remainder of the plans have been organized by the various units of the League and each unit will have a definite responsibility. Some of the plans include the use of posters, displays in store windows and libraries, newspaper and radio publicity, use of tags and participation in parades. Plans are all ready in action for a kiddies parade to take place on Constitution Day.

The League expects to extend its campaign into the summer and next fall stressing Constitutional Revision by convention.



Date

## Delegates Named To Attend Minnesota LWV Council Meeting

Gov. Orville Freeman and state Sen. Elmer L. Andersen will speak at the opening of the second biennial council meeting of the Voters of Minnesota, to be held May 17 and 18 at the Minneapolis. Governor Freeman will speak at the opening on "How the State Constitution Hampers State Government" and Senator Andersen will speak on "How the State Constitution Hampers the Legislature."

One of the prime purposes of the council meeting will be to discuss means of promoting the main program item adopted at last year's convention, "Building Public Opinion for a Constitutional Convention."

Other

## Freeman Favors Four-Year Term For Governor

MINNEAPOLIS —(UP)— Minnesota's constitution is not geared to the needs of modern government, Gov. Orville L. Freeman told the Minnesota League of Women Voters today.

"The time for revision is at hand," Freeman said. "Both political parties favor a constitutional convention, both major labor organizations favor it and citizens organized to promote good government support it."

He blamed public apathy and lack of understanding and opposition "by small minority forces with vested interests in certain provisions of the constitution" for the failure to revise the document.

The governor said the state charter fails in many respects to provide the framework and rules under which government can operate effectively and efficiently.

Freeman said a governor should have more time to provide a legislative program, that he should have a four year term instead of two, and that a 90-day legislative session is too short.

... of course, we can't let the people decide



## LWV Aims Guns On Need For Revising State Constitution

This is the third article prepared by the Richfield League of Women Voters explaining the source of the Minnesota State Constitution and the need for changes in it. The News prints the articles as a public service.

The first two articles in this series have shown how our state constitution was drawn up and the many changes that have been recommended. All this seems to point to the fact that constitution revision is needed "both to modernize the archaic and to organize the chaotic."

A small group of legislators and other anti-conventionists argue that the job of revision can be accomplished by the legislature through amendments rather than by specially elected delegates assembled in a constitutional convention. This argument continues despite the fact that under Article I of the constitution it is the people, not the legislature, who have the legal right to decide this question.

The gradual amendment method, under which the legislature proposes amendments for voter approval or disapproval would be very difficult under Minnesota's present amending process. Before 1898, 72% of all proposed amendments were passed by the people; since 1898, when the amending process was made more difficult, only 32% of all those submitted to the people have passed.

Another argument against revision by amendment is that the legislators do not have time for this monumental task. Our legislature, which meets for 90 days every two years, struggles with an avalanche of bills. In the 1955 session, the bills numbered 3,507. Although nearly 30 constitutional amendments were proposed, few ever came to debate and only three passed.

Also as regards the time element, the convention lasts a few months and then it is over. To revise Minnesota's constitution by the gradual amendment method would take by conservative estimate, over 50 years.

Many anti-conventionists say that calling a convention would be too expensive. New Jersey which had one of the most recent conventions spent \$325,000 out of \$350,000 appropriated for a convention which met for 22 days. The Missouri convention met for 131 days and spent \$697,000 out of \$725,000 appropriated.

The proponents of the amendment method would have us believe that gradual amendment is costless. This is not true. The State Auditor reports the cost

of submitting the 1953 amendments to the people was over \$18,000, but this sum does not include costs of counting ballots, abstract of votes polled, stenographer and clerk hire, or interim committee costs. Nor does it take into account that two of the amendments were being re-submitted, thus doubling their costs. A single session of the legislature, costs well over a million dollars so the expense of a convention is not a valid argument against it.

Then, too, a constitution revised entirely by amendment would be a hodge-podge as ours is today after 79 amendments. A constitution is basic law. Its parts should function in relation to each other. When there are too many amendments they cannot tie the whole together.

Another reason, of course, for the opposition to a convention is the fear of "what will happen" if we have a convention. No one can answer all the questions which arise in the regard, but we can say that constitutional conventions have been notably conservative, preserving, not destroying, our liberties and basic concepts of democratic government.

We can also point out that any constitutional convention in Minnesota whose delegates are to be elected as are the members of the House of Representatives will represent the interests and points of view of the people in all areas.

The constitutional convention is not a new-fangled idea. It is as traditional and as American as the Stars and Stripes. Indeed it is an American invention. It has been called our most significant contribution to the art and science of government. It was born out of the belief that the people have the inalienable right to decide their own basic law and to alter and reform their government in such manner as they deem proper.

The League of Women Voters believes that Minnesota government can be improved by revising our constitution. The league further believes that the best way to revise is by a convention called for that purpose. We hold to the concept that the people have the right to decide whether they want a convention, and we have faith in their ability to judge the final results.

The first step in the calling of a convention is for the legislature to pass a bill submitting this question to the people. Since 1949, the Minnesota Legislature has refused to pass this bill. We can convince the legislators all over Minnesota that we want the right to vote on the question by selling our neighbors, friends, relatives, milkmen, storekeepers, etc. on the idea that what happens to constitutional revision will have a direct effect on the future of our state.

(Concluding article next week)



Date

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One of the prime purposes of the council meeting will be to discuss means of promoting the main program item adopted at last year's convention, "Building Public Opinion for a Constitutional Convention."

Other features will be a shoptalk luncheon, designed to aid members of local leagues throughout the state in handling their jobs more efficiently; the adoption of a 1956-57 budget; review of other program items and a skit presented by the St. Paul league.

Four delegates will represent the Afton-Lakeland League of Women Voters at the two-day meet: Mrs. James Kerr, West Lakeland, president; Mrs. C. R. Humphries, Lakeland, state board member; and Mrs. Dean Honetschlager, St. Croix Beach, and Mrs. Marion Richsmann, Marine, both members of the local board of directors.



## LWV Aims Guns On Need For Revising

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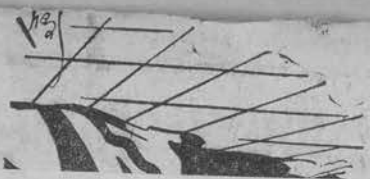
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as the Stars and Stripes. Indeed it is an American invention. It has been called our most significant contribution to the art and science of government. It was born out of the belief that the people have the inalienable right to decide their own basic law and to alter and reform their government in such manner as they deem proper.

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The first step in the calling of a convention is for the legislature to pass a bill submitting this question to the people. Since 1949, the Minnesota Legislature has refused to pass this bill. We can convince the legislators all over Minnesota that we want the right to vote on the question by selling our neighbors, friends, relatives, milkmen, storekeepers, etc. on the idea that what happens to constitutional revision will have a direct effect on the future of our state.

(Concluding article next week)



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## WOMEN VOTERS ISSUE TAGS—

# State Charter Drive Pushed

By FRED NEUMEIER

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is conducting an intensive drive to "sell" the need of a new state constitution to the people of this state.

This was pointed out today at the biennial council meeting of the league in the Leamington hotel, Minneapolis.

"Sale" tags are being dis-

tributed throughout the state and people are urged to wear them. These tags stated that "a new state constitution is a good buy" with the "price less than the cost of one regular legislative session."

The tag also states "Trade in Minnesota's outmoded 1857 constitution hastily written by 10 men in 10 days, patched by amendment 80 times, wasteful and inefficient for a new and improved model, revised by convention."

The council meeting of the league will continue through Friday and is being attended by two delegates from each of the state's 53 local leagues and a number of observers. There are now 5,051 members in the league.

Gov. Freeman was the main speaker at the session today. He declared the time is now at hand for the calling of a convention to revise the state constitution.

"Both political parties are on record favoring such a convention," the governor pointed out. "Citizens organized to promote good government support it and major labor organizations favor it."

"I have heard no argument against constitutional revision that seems to me to have any validity. The opposition's claim that the people could not be trusted to have a part in framing their basic law is a denial of the principle of democracy that is unworthy of men elected to represent a free people."

Mrs. Basil Young, Hibbing, president of the state League, presided.

At a "shop talk" luncheon at noon Mrs. Frank Chesley, Red Wing, state board member, reviewed the current

agenda which is "work for revision of the constitution of the state."

Following a dinner at 6:30 p. m. the St. Paul league will present a skit.

Among those observing the council meeting is Madame Nguyen Thau Hau of Viet Nam, a lawyer, who is a guest in this country of the State department.



Need of a new state constitution was stressed at the biennial council meeting of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota in the Leamington hotel, Minneapolis, today. Delegates are present from the state's 53 local leagues. Shown discussing the program are, from left, Mrs. Harold Wilson, Minneapolis, executive secretary, Mrs. S. H. Buttz, Alexandria, and Mrs. Basil Young, Hibbing, president.—Staff Photo.

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**MANKATO  
DAILY FREE PRESS**

(Evening)

Date **MAY 17 1956**

## Women Voters Hear Freeman

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"With such substantial support the defeat in 1955 in the state Senate of a bill to provide for a convention was a serious failure to recognize the will of the voters and a setback to our efforts to achieve better government."

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5¢ Sack TOBACCO

10¢ Cigarette Holder

25¢ Pipe

Date MAY 17 1956

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Date MAY 18 1956

## Everyone Wants Revision: Freeman

MINNEAPOLIS (UP) — Almost everyone is in favor of constitutional revision, Gov. Orville Freeman told the Minnesota League of Women Voters meeting here Thursday.

He said that a constitutional convention has the backing of both political parties, labor and citizens groups.

He blamed public apathy and opposition of small minorities with "vested interests in certain provisions of the constitution" for failure to revise the charter. Freeman said the document fails in many respects to provide the rules needed for modern government to operate efficiently.

Date MAY 18 1956

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Freeman said the opposition's claim that the "people could not be trusted to have a part in framing their basic law is a denial of the principle of democracy that is unworthy of men elected to represent a free people."

## Freeman Says Lobby Beat Bill

Gov. Freeman charged today that the 1955 Minnesota senate bowed to the railroad lobby in refusing to approve calling of a convention to revise the state constitution.

Senate defeat of the proposal, he said, was "a serious failure to recognize the will of the voters."

He told the League of Women Voters council meeting at Leamington hotel that the "extremely efficient lobby" of the Minnesota railroads was the real basis for the senate defeat.

"The railroads want to maintain their preferred position—it's that simple," he said, referring to the constitutional provision limiting railroads to taxes on gross earnings in lieu of all other taxes.

The governor spoke at the opening session of the two-day council meeting on "How the State Constitution Hampers State Government." Sen. Elmer L. Andersen, St. Paul, will speak Friday on the same subject from the legislative angle.

Freeman listed as the first constitutional defect the brief time given a governor to submit a legislative program and a state budget.

"I learned by experience that for a newly elected governor to do the work required and give serious consideration to the issues involved, in the preparation and presentation of a budget, and to do this in the limited time provided, is a tremendous task," he said.

"No person can fulfill this responsibility as well in a few weeks as he could if he had more time."

Other defects listed by the governor are the 90-day limit on legislative sessions, provision for two-year terms for governors, restrictions on fiscal operations and non-constitutional matters included in the basic law, such as exact routing of the trunk highway system.

Local self-government also is hampered by the constitution, Freeman declared.

"Our municipalities should have more responsibility and authority, both in the interest of the principle of home rule and in the interest of greater citizen participation," he said.

Date MAY 18 1956

## Freeman Backs Women's League On Constitution

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**MOORHEAD DAILY NEWS**  
(Evening)

Date MAY 18 1956

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He blamed public apathy and lack of understanding and opposition "by small minority forces with vested interests in certain provisions of the constitution" for the failure to revise the document. The governor said the state charter fails in many respects to provide the frame-work and rules under which government can operate effectively and efficiently. Freeman said a governor should have more time to provide a legislative program, that he should have a four year term instead of two, and that a 90 day legislative session is too short.

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**EDINA MORNING SIDE  
COURIER**  
Date MAY 17 1956

## Edina League Will Serve State-Wide Council Parley

Edina League of Women Voters has been selected by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota to serve as hostess to the state council meeting today and tomorrow at Leamington hotel.

The Edina chapter of the League will be hostess for two luncheons, a dinner and coffee hour. Members will operate an information booth in the hotel, greet delegates, arrange for speakers' tables and a public address system. Over 200 delegates are expected at the luncheons.

Function of the council is to adopt a state budget and give guidance to the state board on program and methods of work.

State current agenda which the League will support includes revision of the Minnesota constitution.

Possible result of the constitution revision would be a reapportionment of Minnesota voting districts, a local League official said

this week. Before reapportionment is possible, a state constitutional convention would be necessary. The Minnesota legislature consistently has deferred this action in recent years.

Governor Freeman will speak today on "How the State Constitution Hampers State Government."

Senator Elmer Anderson will address the council tomorrow on "How the State Constitution Hampers State Legislation."

Discussion groups on current agenda will meet in afternoon sessions.

Mrs. John Sandberg of 4320 West 58th St.; Mrs. Thomas Dale of 5801 Drew Ave. S. are co-chairman of the hostess committee for the meeting.

Edina League delegates are Mrs. Palmer Tang of 5100 Oxford Ave. and Mrs. Samuel McClocklin of 5021 Oxford Ave. Other members will attend as observers.

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**ST. CLOUD DAILY TIMES**

Date MAY 17 1956

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**RED WING DAILY  
REPUBLICAN-EAGLE**

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## Andersen: 'Overhaul State Laws' Senator Says Charter Is Antiquated

Minnesota lacks effective governmental procedure because of its antiquated constitution, Sen. Elmer L. Andersen, St. Paul, told the biennial council meeting of the League of Women Voters in the Leamington hotel, Minneapolis, today.

"It is my conviction that Minnesota government would be improved if a constitutional convention were to be called, obsolete material removed from the constitution, the document shortened and simplified to a statement of principles, a framework of government, a delegation of power," he declared. "This would lead to the state more easily meeting its responsibilities and retarding the demands for centralization of government, authority and responsibility at the federal level. I am more interested in state responsibility than I am in state's rights."

The Minnesota League of Women Voters has long been active for revision of the constitution and Sen. Anderson urged that they keep up the fight.

"Any setback," he said, "is simply a part of the educational process and only by constant effort over a long time can accomplishment be achieved."

He discussed how the present constitution hampers the Legislature. One section he attacked limits legislative sessions to 90 days which has resulted in the procedure of stopping the clock.

"A 90-day session is simply too short a time to accomplish the immense burden of work that faces each legislative session," he said.

Another serious restriction, he cited, is the provision for biennial sessions only.

"It is becoming increasingly clear that particularly on matters relating to taxes and appropriations meeting but once every two years is not often enough," he added. "It is simply impossible to know what cost levels are going to be during that entire time and to appropriate money judiciously."

He also discussed reapportionment and declared "not only is our present procedure unrepresentative, but it is immoral in that we are flagrantly and deliberately disobeying the constitution."

Sen. Anderson hit at provisions which restrict members of the Legislature from holding other offices and pointed out that because of them no member of the House can run for lieutenant governor at this year's election. He noted that no member of the state Senate is available to seek any other elective position during the middle of his four-year term, even if he is prepared to resign.

Sen. Andersen declared the constitution is weak in setting up sufficient authority for home rule of cities and "thus we have developed the situation of having innumerable bills every session, skillfully drafted to pretend to be general bills, but so worded that they apply to only one county, only one school district, or whatever the subdivision of government the bill seeks to reach."

He cited the provisions in the constitution relating to dedication of funds and declared that "differentiation should be made between trust funds and dedicated revenue funds." He called the provisions regarding the method of taxing railroad property as "unjustified at the present time."

The biennial council meeting of the League of Women Voters ends today.

Date MAY 18 1956

## State Senator Seeks Constitution Revision

Sen. Elmer L. Andersen of St. Paul declared today "there is no justification for further delay" in calling a convention to revise Minnesota's century-old state constitution.

Voters indicated their desire for constitutional revision in 1954, when they approved changes that would permit legislators to serve as convention delegates and election ratification of the new document drafted, said Andersen.

The state senator spoke before the Minnesota League of Women Voters council, meeting at Leamington hotel and appealed for continued League support of efforts to get legislative approval of constitutional revision.

Legislative operations are hampered by numerous antiquated constitutional restrictions, Andersen declared. Among them are the 90-day limit on sessions, provision for only biennial sessions and the throwback to English parliamentary insistence that revenue bills originate only in the house of representatives.

Other "dead wood" also clutters up the basic law, Andersen said, including provision banning the legislature from granting divorces.

As did Gov. Freeman Thursday, Andersen rapped as "unjustified" the constitutional provision requiring an amendment to change the state's method of taxing railroad property.

"The evidence is overwhelming as favoring the need for revision," Andersen said. "Surely the time has come when the people should be given an opportunity to vote on it."

## Women Here Attend State League Session

Several Rochester women attended the biennial council meeting of the Minnesota League of Women Voters Thursday and Friday at the Leamington Hotel, Minneapolis.

They were Mes. John Grindlay and John Hill, state board members; John Silliman, local league president; J. W. DuShane, Louis Murphy and M. M. Hargraves, state committee members.

Reports on both this council meeting and on the national convention will be given Monday at 8 p.m. at the home of Mrs. John Hill, with Mrs. Silliman presiding. Another meeting will be held at 9:45 a.m. Wednesday at the home of Mrs. DuShane, with Mrs. R. Drew Miller presiding. All local league members are urged to attend one of those meetings. They also are open to visitors. Mrs. R. W. Symmonds is in charge.

During the council meeting in Minneapolis, the state budget for the coming year was adopted, ideas were exchanged and the state board was directed in how to program for

were panel publication v

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**ST. PAUL DISPATCH**  
(Evening)  
MAY 18 1956

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**MINNEAPOLIS STAR**  
(Evening)

Date MAY 18 1956

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**ROCHESTER**  
**DAILY POST-BULLETIN**  
(Evening)  
Date MAY 19 1956

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Reports on both this council meeting and on the national convention will be given Monday at 3 p.m. at the home of Mrs. John Hill, with Mrs. Silliman presiding. Another meeting will be held at 9:45 a.m. Wednesday at the home of Mrs. DuShane, with Mrs. R. Drew Miller presiding. All local league members are urged to attend one of those meetings. They also are open to visitors. Mrs. R. W. Symmonds is in charge.

During the council meeting in Minneapolis, the state budget for the coming year was adopted, ideas were exchanged and the state board was directed in how to best carry out its program for 1956-57, which was adopted at the national convention. The current agenda states, "The League of Women Voters of Minnesota will work for revision of the Constitution of the state of Minnesota."

Mrs. Grindlay conducted a session Friday on the state of the league, and Mrs. Hill conducted a workshop on publications. Mmes. Silliman, Murphy and DuShane

were panel members on various publication workshops.

Mrs. Hargraves was toastmistress at the dinner Thursday evening, given in honor of Miss Hope Washburn, longtime state worker. Gov. Orville Freeman spoke Thursday morning on "How the State Constitution Hampers State Government."

Sen. Elmer L. Anderson was the speaker Friday morning. He discussed the topic, "How the State Constitution Hampers the Legislation."

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Date MAY 19 1956

## Local League of Women Voters Gets Award

Talks by Gov. Orville L. Freeman on "How the State Constitution Hampers State Government" and by Senator Elmer L. Andersen of St. Paul on "How the State Constitution Hampers the Legislature" were highlights of the Minnesota League of Women Voters Biennial Council meeting held at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis on May 17 and 18.

Attending from the Bemidji League were Mmes. Arthur Peterson, Ervin Nordquist, Wesley Winter, Romaine Powell and Miss Hazel Shimmin.

Other sessions of the meeting included work groups on development of the work of the LWV in fields of voters service and membership as well as building public opinion for the calling of a state constitutional convention. Reports on the National LWV convention held recently in Chicago were given by the State president, Mrs. Basil Young of Hibbing, and other delegates.

At the closing session of the Council meeting, the Bemidji League of Women Voters received one of the five State awards of recognition for its plans to bring the need for a constitutional convention to the people on Constitution Day, May 25, and during the year ahead.

Date MAY 20 1956

## Women Note Constitution Day Friday

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota will conduct varied activities on Minnesota Constitution day Friday.

The day was proclaimed by Gov. Freeman for the anniversary of the date (May 25) in 1857 when the territorial governor signed into law a bill calling for a Constitutional convention.

The leagues through the state, which have as their current state agenda, "The League of Women Voters of Minnesota will work for revision of the constitution of the state of Minnesota," are marking the day by informing the people of their communities of the need for again calling a Constitutional convention.

Tags will be distributed in many towns. Exhibits, window displays, parades and proclamations by mayors will be a part of the day's activities.

# Deephaven League Tells Problems of Constitution

The following is an introductory article of a series to appear in this paper concerning the need for revisions in the Minnesota State constitution. The articles are being compiled and submitted by members of the Deephaven League of Women Voters.

One hundred years! It's been that long since the FIRST constitutional convention was called — to write a Constitution for the state of Minnesota. An anniversary indeed! But should we celebrate? A look at the history makes one wonder.

Written in haste in 1857, our Constitution was wobbly then. Political factions were so badly split at the time that the two parties would not even sit together in convention to draw up a constitution. Two Constitutions were written as a result and after much "maneuvering," five Republicans and five Democrats drew up the compromise document we still use today. The desire for statehood "in a hurry" gave Minnesota the document which has dictated policy and

direction in state government ever since.

State government grows more complex as the years roll by — but the legs holding our Constitution are as wobbly as they were in 1857. There are, of course, many ways in which our state legislature could increase its effectiveness merely by revising its rules or by passing laws. As for reapportionment of legislative districts, it could obey our present Constitution, which says this shall be done every 10 years, but which the legislature has refused to do since 1913. Other problems, however, cannot be solved so easily. These are the restrictions which our antiquated Constitution has imposed on the legislature.

Save money? Save time? Save effort? Why not! Well, the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, after delving into problems of finance, local government, administration and law-making, has met a DEAD-END STREET EACH TIME. Why? The roots of the real problems lie in our state constitution. Today's state and local problems are big problems, affecting over 3 million persons in our state. The founding fathers could not predict such growth — and the constitution which they wrote has not proved able to adjust to the times.

What's the answer? Only one, says the League of Women Voters, just one voice of many who are sounding the cry for a new constitution. In 1947 the Legislature itself created the Minnesota Constitutional Commission to study the Constitution and make recommendations. The net result was 34 major and 78 minor recommendations, plus 31 new sections. More important, the Commission recommended that the Constitution be revised by means of a Constitutional Convention, not by merely adding more amendments. The League concurs wholeheartedly here. Revision by Convention could provide Minnesota with a new Constitution in six years, if there is no delay in the sequence of events. And judging by the way amendments are defeated time and time again, it has been estimated it would take 40 years to pass the recommendations of the Constitutional Commission via the Amendment method.

The first step in 1957 is for the legislature, by a two-thirds majority, to vote to submit to the people the question of whether or not to call a constitutional convention. In 1955 — as in 1949, 1951, 1953 — this has been denied by the legislature. We believe that the people have the right to decide that question.

The League of Women Voters in 1956 is directing its effort to build informed public opinion. With Constitution Day upon us, the Deephaven League would like, through a series of articles, to inform Minnetonka residents about our State government.

Date MAY 19 1956

## League 'Sells' for New Constitution

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is conducting an intensive drive to "sell" the need for a new state constitution to the people of Minnesota.

This was pointed out Thursday in Minneapolis at the biennial council meeting of the league.

"Sale" tags are being distributed and people are urged to wear them.

The tag states that "Trade in Minnesota's outmoded 1857 constitution hastily written by 10 men in 10 days, patched and amended 80 times, is wasteful and inefficient and there is need for a new and improved model, revised by convention."

# THE DEEPHAVEN ARGUS

Entered as second class mailing matter, July 29, 1939, at the post office at Wayzata, Minnesota, under the act of March 3, 1879.

M. G. Gullixson - - - - - Editor  
Kathleen Kachel - - - - - Associate Editor  
W. E. Rasmussen - - - - - Advertising Manager

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## We May Make Better

In June of 1857 a group of men, actually two groups, got together to draft a state constitution in what was then a territory. As it turned out partisan politics played a bigger part than common sense and the desire for statehood overshadowed any good intentions for careful planning and deliberation.

The final product was dual in nature with each of the two groups involved coming up with its own version. Over 300 differences are to be found in the hastily constructed documents. But they achieved their purpose. In 1858 Minnesota ceased being a territory and became a state.

It is with this ill constructed antique that fast moving, modern day Minnesota government is being run. Minnesota is one of the 18 states still using its original constitution. It has been amended some 79 times and each patch has added to the crazy quilt pattern of thought.

This situation is obviously undesirable and the answer is just as obvious—hold a constitutional convention and straighten the twisted channels through which the state's government has to flow.

The improvements that could result from such a convention and the almost certain change of the constitution are many. Our legislature at present can meet just 90 days every two years. Yet we expect it to raise and spend over 300 million dollars and give consideration to hundreds of bills which affect Minnesota's citizens. A new constitution could remedy that. Among other things Minnesota needs a fair and enforceable apportionment of the legislature, a more workable method of amending the state constitution, improved financial structure, and judicial reform.

Calling a convention is hardly a new idea, but since 1949 the state legislature has seen fit to refuse the people the right entitled to them as stated in Article I, Section I of the present constitution, namely to determine the need for review of Minnesota's constitution.

Once again the answer lies with public opinion. If enough people go to bat for a constitutional convention the state's legislators may also see the necessary light.

One hundred years ago Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote:

"In dealing with the State, we ought to remember that its institutions are not aboriginal, though they existed before we were born; that they are not superior to the citizen; that every one of them was once the act of a single man; every law and usage was a man's expedient to meet a particular case; that they are all imitable, all alterable; we may make as good; we may make better. . . ."

Indeed, Minnesota may make better.

## Voter League to Urge Constitution Revision

When Minnesota marks Constitution day Friday, Leagues of Women Voters throughout the state will use the occasion to call attention to their project of working for revision of the Minnesota constitution.

Friday is the anniversary of the date in 1857 when the territorial governor signed into law a bill calling for a constitutional convention.

Local leagues have planned various ways to call to public notice their belief in the need for again calling a constitutional convention.

In Minneapolis, league units will distribute tags in shopping centers and at community meetings all this week. They are especially urging business men, legislators and teachers to wear them.

In the suburbs, tags will be distributed, window displays are being arranged and newspapers will carry accounts of the proposal.

The League of Women Voters in St. Paul will sponsor a luncheon Friday in St. Paul Athletic club to acquaint representatives of organizations with the league's project. Invitations have been sent to 60 organizations. Speakers will be Val Bjornson of the St. Paul Pioneer Press-Dispatch and Byron Allen, state commissioner of agriculture.

In Bemidji, in addition to distribution of tags and window displays all week, there will be house-to-house distribution of literature by league members. Girl Scouts will present a radio skit Thursday.

When Minnesota marks Constitution day Friday, Leagues of Women Voters throughout the state will use the occasion to call attention to their project of working for revision of the Minnesota constitution.

Saturday, there will be a "kiddies' parade," led by the high school band.

Hutchinson plans radio and newspaper coverage, following proclamation by the mayor.

THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR  
Mon., May 21, 1956 \* 7B

Children in Rochester will inspect a trailer exhibit of articles, documents and photostats of 1857 newspapers having to do with the first constitutional convention. League members will discuss the constitution with adults and children who visit the exhibit, which they have arranged jointly with the Olmstead County Historical society.

Roseville league presented a program, "99 Years with the Same Constitution."

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ST. PAUL DISPATCH  
(Evening)

Date MAY 21 1956

### Val Bjornson To Speak

Val Bjornson, associate editor of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, and Byron Allen, Minnesota commissioner of agriculture, will be the speakers at a Constitution day luncheon Friday in the Athletic club with the St. Paul League of Women Voters as host.

Minnesota Constitution day, proclaimed last week by Gov. Freeman to note the anniversary of May 25, 1857, when the territorial governor signed a bill calling for a constitutional convention, will be observed in many ways by League of Women Voters groups in the State.



Date **MAY 22 1956**

## Constitution Day Parade Here Friday

The League of Women Voters of Bemidji has announced a parade of school children Friday to back up its campaign for overhaul of Minnesota's 1857-model state constitution. Prizes for youngsters with outstanding costumes are being offered by the league.

The parade will form at Central school behind the High School band at 4 p.m. Friday, and will march to the National Guard Armory, where treats donated by Russell's Creamery will be given to all participants. Prizes in the form of gift certificates donated by the Ben Franklin, F. W. Woolworth and Lindrud stores will be awarded children in Grades 1 through 6 for the best costumes in the following divisions:

**OLD**—“Life Was Like That” in 1857. \$1 first prize, 50c second prize. Costumes showing life back in 1857; for example,

logging and Paul Bunyan, Indians or pioneer life.

**NEW**—“Out of This World” in 1957. \$1 first prize, 50c second prize. Costumes showing life in 1957; for example, robots, frogmen, spacemen, jet-age.

Friday has been proclaimed Constitution Day by Governor Freeman.

Said a league spokesman today: “Our present constitution was geared to living in the good old days of the horse and buggy. In 1857. We need a modern constitution to face the needs of present day and future living. We hope that all who see the parade as well as those who participate in it will see the necessity for constitutional revision.”

Date **MAY 23 1956**

**FRIDAY WILL** be observed as Minnesota's Constitution Day by the League of Women Voters. It is an event unique in several aspects.

It marks the 99th anniversary of the signing by the territorial governor of a bill calling for a constitutional convention. Thus it misses a centennial by one year.

The observance isn't to laud Minnesota's constitution as a great and enduring document. On the contrary, the purpose is to point out that the constitution is outmoded by time, and needs replacing.

Mrs. Dean White, local league president, gave us a ring to brief us on the observance. The state constitution was written in 10 days by 10 men, she reports. It has been patched up 80 times by amendments. The section on taxes and finance, of vital interest to most people, has alone been amended 19 times. The league is working for a constitutional convention to draw up a new constitution. Cost of such a convention would be less than that of one Minnesota legislative session.

*Rochester Post Bulletin 4-3/56*

## Observance Planned For Constitution Day

Constitution Day in Minnesota will be observed Friday in Rochester with a public display of items of historical interest in a trailer to be located on 2nd St. SE just off South Broadway, the Rochester League of Women Voters announced.

The display is being planned by the League with the Olmsted County Historical Society, and will be open from noon to 9 p.m. Friday.

Exhibited will be clothing and furniture of early periods in Minnesota history, pictures, maps, plats and business directories of

the pictures will include photos of early leaders of Olmsted County and of Broadway when it was still a dirt road. An 1857 map of Rochester will be included along with a plat of the city used in the office of C. C. Willson, early lawyer in the county.

Mayor Claude McQuillan has proclaimed Friday as Constitution Day in Rochester and urged citizens to “take note of the significance of the day and acquaint themselves with the proposed revisions of our State Constitution.”

He pointed out that the statewide League of Women Voters and other service organizations have advocated that the State Legislature call for a Constitutional

Convention in 1957 to revise the Minnesota Constitution. “Government is instituted for the security, benefit and protection of the people with the inherent right of the people to alter, modify or reform such government whenever needed,” the mayor stated.

May 25 is the 99th anniversary of the day the territorial governor of Minnesota signed the bill calling for the First Constitutional Convention. Seven days after the signing, on June 1, 1857, an election was held to choose delegates to the convention. They met in separate groups, the Republicans in one and the Democrats in another, from July 13 to Aug. 8, when a conference committee was appointed to iron out the differences between the constitutions proposed by the two groups. The committee finished its work Aug. 28 and the next day Gov. Henry Sibley signed the constitution of Minnesota.

## 200 Participate in Constitution Day Parade in Bemidji

The Constitution Day children's parade, sponsored by the Bemidji League of Women Voters, was held Friday afternoon with about 200 children participating. The Bemidji High School band, the Boy Scouts' honor guard and the Girl Scouts added color and snap to the parade. The winners for their costumes were as follows: 1st prize (old) went to Sharon Wright; 2nd prize (old) went to a couple, Gale Landman and Mary Kay Carlson; 1st prize (new) Marilyn Emter; 2nd prize (new) David Britton. Judges, who found it difficult to decide on winners from the many clever costumes, were Mrs. Kenneth Bush, Mrs. Ed. Nordheim, Sr., and Mrs. Jack Louma.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**STILLWATER  
DAILY GAZETTE**

Date **MAY 23 1956**

## Need Of Constitution Convention Stressed By League Of Voters

LWV  
Governor Freeman has proclaimed Friday, May 25, "Constitution Day." This proclamation is on the anniversary of the day the territorial governor signed the bill calling Minnesota's first constitutional convention in 1857.

ta's first constitutional convention in 1857.

The League of Women Voters, is marking the day by informing the people in local communities of the need for calling a new constitutional convention.

Mrs. Den Honetschlager, state resource chairman of the Afton-Lake-land League of Women voters, points out that the state constitution is now 99 years old. While this does not make it automatically "bad," she says, it does suggest that a systematic review of its contents might be in order. This is a part of "keeping up-to-date."

"Many persons think of Minnesota's constitution as comparable to our federal Constitution which has been changed only 22 times," Mrs. Honetschlager explained. "History

quickly tells us how farfetched this comparison is. The Minnesota constitution was not written in an atmosphere of thoughtful deliberation. Instead, it was written in haste (in order to achieve statehood) by a convention, split in two by bitter partisan strife."

"A conference committee of 10 men wrote our state constitution in 10 days. And then, two copies had to be made because the Republicans and Democrats would not sign the same document. There are over 300 differences in the two versions, and no one, even today, knows which is the correct one!"

"Not everyone in favor of constitutional revision agrees on all the changes, but changes, lots of them, have been suggested. The League of Women Voters believes that a constitutional convention would be the most efficient and best method of accomplishing the needed changes."

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**HUTCHINSON LEADER**  
MAY 24 1956

Date

## 'Constitution Day' Observance Slated Friday, May 25

Friday is Minnesota Constitution Day by proclamation of Gov. Orville Freeman.

The day marks the anniversary of the day the territorial governor signed into law a bill calling Minnesota's first, and only, constitutional convention in 1857.

With the observance of Constitution Day, the Hutchinson League of Women Voters will join with Leagues throughout the state in calling attention to their project of working for revision of the Minnesota constitution. Mrs. Walter Norton is the constitution chairman for the Hutchinson League of Women Voters.

Women attending the county wide League meeting last Wednesday at Hutchinson had a preview of the tags calling for constitutional revision which will be distributed on Friday.

The original constitutional convention in 1857 was called a "roaring farce" by William Watts Folwell, one of the state's foremost historians, because of the faction and wrangling involved. The constitution finally was written by a committee of 10 men in 10 days and has since been amended 80 times.

## 99-Year Old Document

## Women Voters Push Citizen Support For Revision Of State Constitution

Tomorrow is the day designated by Governor Orville Freeman as "Constitution Day" to draw Minnesota citizens' attention to their state constitution, now 99 years old and amended 80 times.

Edina League of Women Voters will take part in activities which tie-in with a state-wide program to inform the people in each community of the need for a Constitution Convention to revise the present model.

The Edina League will distribute tags on Constitution

Day in the 50th and France district. A representative of the Morningside unit, which recently joined the Edina League, will distribute them at 44th and France. The red, white and blue tags contain information on the old constitution and point out advantages of a new one.

The Edina League will establish a speakers' bureau which will be available to Edina groups and organizations interested in learning the facts on the revision. Mrs. Donald R. Teslow of 5840 Ashcroft Ave. is in charge of arrangements.

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**RICHFIELD NEWS**

Date **MAY 24 1956**

## Kittell Proclaims Constitution Day

Mayor Fred Kittell has proclaimed May 25 as Constitution Day in Richfield. The Minnesota State Constitutional Convention bill was signed on May 25, 1857.

The Richfield League of Women Voters will have a window display in the J.C. Penney Co., 66th and Nicollet from the 25th to the 28th of May. The 100 year old costume which will be on display has been loaned to the League by the Minnesota Historical Society.



## State Constitution Copies To Be Displayed Friday

Copies of Minnesota's original constitution, a plat of 1857 Rochester and an autographed business directory of Rochester in 1865 are some of the featured items to be displayed Friday in observance of Constitution Day here.

Sponsored by the Rochester League of Women Voters and the Olmsted County Historical Society, the public display will be housed in a trailer on Second St. SE just off South Broadway. It will be open without charge from noon to 9 p.m.

Copies of the constitution have been loaned to Rochester by the archives of the State of Minnesota. They were photostated from the original long-hand copies of the Minnesota constitution drawn up at the Constitutional Convention of 1857. Since the originals were written by two separate groups of clerks, discrepancies in both punctuation and wording can

be noted. Photographs and histories of George Head, founder of Rochester, and David Olmsted, for whom the county is named, also will be in the trailer.

School children throughout Rochester have had a special invitation to visit this display. They will be particularly interested in the rocking chair used in 1857 by Edna Emerick when she was a young girl. Miss Emerick was the first person to receive a diploma from Rochester high school. Also of interest is the buffalo robe used by Dr. C. E. Fawcett of Stewartville in the 1860s, and a pair of twin dolls with china heads dating back to 1851.

Exhibited also will be an original map of Rochester in 1857 and a photograph of the city as it looked in those days; one of the first warranty deeds issued in this county after Minnesota became a state; photostatic copies of the Olmsted Journal and the Oronoco Courier

printed during 1857 while the state Constitutional Convention was in session. A hand-made child's dress worn by Elbert H. Vine, father of Earl Vine, funeral director, may be seen.

Constitution Day is being observed by communities throughout the state as a result of a proclamation by Gov. Orville Freeman. Mayor Claude McQuillan has urged all citizens to note this 99th anniversary of the day the territorial governor of Minnesota signed the bill calling for the first Constitutional Convention.

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The Edina League will establish a speakers' bureau which will be available to Edina groups and organizations interested in learning the facts

on the revision. Mrs. Donald R. Teslow of 5840 Ashcroft Ave. is in charge of arrangements.

### LEAGUERS AT WORK

Four members of the Wells League of Women Voters attended a biennial council meeting of the state League in Minneapolis last Thursday, May 17, at the Leamington Hotel. Those attending from the local league were Mrs. Manville Oren, Mrs. Lloyd Stussy, Mrs. Maynard Heitner and Mrs. James Murry. Among the speakers they heard were Governor Orville Freeman and Mrs. Basil Young, president of the state League of Women Voters. They also attended shop talks and enjoyed a clever mystery skit on "constitutional revision" put on by the St. Paul league.

Look in Oren's Clothing Store window for a display concerning "Constitution Day" May 25. Also watch for posters on this subject.

Ten members of the board of the League of Women Voters met in the committee room of the Peoples State Bank for a business session on Tuesday, May 22.



Mrs. H. M. O'Hotto, a member of the Alexandria League of Women Voters, is shown above putting a "New State Constitution for Minnesota" tag on Mayor Lee Hewett's lapel. The League of Women Voters is promoting revision of the clumsy, outmoded present constitution. Similar tags were attached to Dutch Girl Dairy and Carlson Dairy milk bottles delivered to Alexandria homes today and tomorrow.

# League Of Women Voters Open Fire On "Antiquated" State Constitution

Unit 5 of Hopkins' League of Women Voters will fire the first salvo tomorrow in the organization's drive to scrap Minnesota's antiquated constitution and replace it with a better one.

In a mighty assist to members of Unit 5, Hopkins Camp Fire girls will tie a cute little shipping tag on the door knob of every home in Berrytown—something like 2,400 of them. On one side, printed in red, there will be found reasons why the voters when they go to the

polls in November, should vote to "scrap" the old state constitution that was adopted by the people in 1857. On the other side, printed in blue, citizens will find listed some reasons why the proposal to adopt a

new and streamlined constitution is, "a good buy."

The other four units will swing into action, on specified dates between now and general election day, to strike their blows for the same cause, each in its own manner and with its own unique idea. The League guns will continue barking until the dust of political battle lifts on the eve of election day!

Tomorrow was selected as the date on which to open its "con-

(Continued on Page 16)

(Continued From Page 1)

stitution" barrage because the day marks the 98th birthday of Minnesota's constitution. It went into force and effect May 24, 1858, after a long struggle for statehood. The historians report that the writing of it, that is the scene of and the events which accompanied its drafting and could with considerable justification be described as a brawl.

Actually, there were two drafts made, one by the Democrats and one by the Republicans. The Democrat version prevailed, an election was called, the constitution was approved by the people and a slate of state officers was elected. All this took place in October, 1857. Meanwhile, the government was functioning as a territory, and would continue as a territory until such time as Congress admitted it to the union. The application for admission as a state along with a copy of the constitution was sent to Washington, Jan. 11, 1858 the resolution making Minnesota a state was introduced. Congress was embroiled with the slavery issue. North and South were in deadly parliamentary combat over its extension.

Since the time of the Missouri Compromise the delicate and deadly question was building up. By now it was moving toward crisis, following the historic Dred Scot decision in 1857. It was most difficult to move the Minnesota resolution through the national legislative mill at such a difficult time. So it was not until May 11, 1858, that it was at length passed, and Minnesota became a state.

There were no railroads reaching St. Paul in 1858. Nor were there telegraphs, or telephones. Eastern newspapers made their way down the Ohio river to St. Louis, then up the Mississippi to St. Paul. St. Paul papers took the same route to Washington, New York and other points south and east. It was not until May 24 when the official notification from Con-

gress reached the newly elected secretary of state of Minnesota. The state officers elected the previous October were sworn in at once. Minnesota became a state with completion of the swearing-in ceremonies — 98 years ago today.

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**BRainerd**  
**DAILY DISPATCH**  
(Evening)

Date **MAY 24 1956**

## Constitution Day Proclaimed Here Friday

Tomorrow has been proclaimed State Constitution Day in Brainerd by Mayor Levi Johnson.

The special day is being promoted by The League of Women Voters, which is supporting revision of the constitution.

In recognition of the day the league will have a window display in the building formerly occupied by Goggin's Candy shop, next to the Laurel Eat Shop on Laurel street.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**HIBBING DAILY TRIBUNE**

**MAY 24 1956**

Date



**CONSTITUTION DAY TODAY**—Mrs. John Neumaier, president of the Hibbing League of Women Voters, fastens a Constitution Day tag on Mayor Gerald Thomas. The league is observing Constitution Day today to call attention to the need for a new state constitution. The constitution, written in 1857, has been amended 80 times.



MAY 24 1956

## Let The People Speak On Constitutional Revision

This is Constitution Week. As good citizens, we are supposed to give consideration to the importance of constitutions.

Constitution Week in Minnesota has particular significance. It is encouraging, indeed, to find the local League of Women Voters doing its capable best to draw public attention to the problems of government in Minnesota directly attributable to our present state constitution. A word of commendation for the Dutch Girl Dairy and Carlson's Dairy is also in order, for these two firms have agreed to attach "A New State Constitution" tags to every bottle of milk delivered to Alexandria homes today and tomorrow.

These tags are being provided by the League of Women Voters and carry a brief but pointed message concerning the need for revision of the state constitution.

The League is pressing hard for a constitutional convention to consider revisions. But it is working for first things first. And the first thing which must be done is to mobilize public opinion to a point of strength where it convinces recalcitrant state senators that the people have the right to vote on whether a constitutional convention should be called.

Consider for a moment the fact that Minnesota's constitution is 100 years old, that it was written in haste in order to achieve statehood, that it was split in two by partisan differences, that it was actually written by only ten men in only ten days and that two copies had to be made because the Republicans and the Demo-

crats would not sign the same document.

It has been pointed out that there are more than 300 differences in the two versions, and no one, even today, knows which is the correct version.

If the people are allowed to vote for a constitutional convention and the vote is favorable, then the following session of the legislature will set up the machinery for the election of delegates to the constitutional convention. The year after that delegates would be elected and the year after that the convention may complete its deliberations so that in the following session of the legislature arrangements could be made for a ratification vote.

What would a new state constitution offer? Well, in a nutshell, here are a few of the good things which could come out of a conscientious revision:

1. It could give Minnesotans more for their taxes;
2. It could give both the executive and legislative branches power equal to their responsibility;
3. It could organize the judicial branch more efficiently;
4. It could enforce reapportionment;
5. Most important, it could give counties, towns and cities more self-government.

Amending the constitution will not solve the problem. The constitution has been amended 80 times in 100 years—and it is still a wasteful and inefficient document. Only revision, after conscientious study and discussion, can give Minnesota what it needs most today—an up to date, streamlined and efficient constitution.

—J.C.O.



Dressed in an outfit nearly as outdated, claims the Deephaven League of Women Voters, as the state constitution, Mrs. Joseph Jester accepts a League tag from Mrs. Frank Blessing as Mrs. Robert Hoss looks on. The tags which stress "Trade in Minnesota's outmoded constitution and get a good buy with a new one," are being distributed by League members as part of their project to inform the public on the need for a new constitution. (See first in a series of articles on this topic on page 2 of this issue.)

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835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**DEEPHAVEN ARGUS**  
MAY 25 1956

Date



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Posters will also be displayed carrying that theme across to the public. Being encouraged is the planning for a constitutional convention.



# Hibbing Daily Tribune

Entered as second class matter October 15, 1909, at the postoffice at Hibbing, Minnesota, under the act of March 8, 1879. The Hibbing Tribune was first published July 1, 1899. With it has been merged The Hibbing News first issued January 19, 1894. The Tribune is therefore a continuation of the first newspaper published in Hibbing and as such is in its sixty-first year.

Published daily except Sunday at The Tribune Co., at Hibbing, Minnesota.

R. W. HITCHCOCK

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GEORGE M. FISHER  
Executive Editor

P. C. HITCHCOCK

General Manager  
BERT E. ACKERSON  
Managing Editor

Member of The Associated Press  
and Audit Bureau of Circulation

MAY 24 1956

## Constitution Needs Changes

Thursday, our Minnesota state constitution is a century old and like anything else, advancing age has created alterations in requirements of the state constitution in order to meet the needs of our changing times. Our wise forefathers planned for the future and they enabled us to change the constitution, to alter it, modify or reform our system of Minnesota state government.

The first article in the Bill of Rights gives us that privilege and in another section, the machinery is provided for the holding of a constitutional convention.

This constitutional convention can be assembled for the purpose of examining our constitution and changing it, where changes are essential.

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota, supported by many legislators and statesmen, organizations and state leaders, have gone on record as recommending changes in Minnesota's constitution which would bring it up to date, alter some of the obsolete sections, and make changes which will accrue to the best interests of our state and our citizens.

For instance our state legislature can meet 90 days every two years. Yet we expect it to raise and spend over 300 million dollars and give consideration to hundreds of bills which affect all of us. Our state government as a whole is in a hurry to get on with it in bringing it about. Shall it be done by amendment or by convention? This is the issue which the people of the state must decide upon without delay.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

ROBBINSDALE POST

MAY 24 1956

Date

## Streamlining of State Government Urged by Freeman

Gov. Orville L. Freeman told the Robbinsdale Business Men's association last Tuesday at Louie's Log Cabin that he favors a general revision of the Minnesota state constitution that is nearly 100 years old.

May 25 has been designated Minnesota Constitution Day. The Minnesota League of Women Voters and other groups interested in good government are making an especial effort to bring to the attention of the people of our state certain basic facts about our state constitution, the governor pointed out.

The governor told how the constitution was framed during the heated days that just preceded the civil war. Two conventions went to work to draft a constitution, each claiming to be the proper, official body. But when they learned that their disagreement might result in a failure in the attempt to secure Minnesota's admission as a state — something they both wanted — they decided to compromise.

Each convention selected a committee of five. The 10 men worked together, for about 10 days, and composed the draft that became our constitution. Each convention, then, separately adopted a copy of that draft — so that regardless of which one might be the officially proper body, the constitution and statehood would be secure.

Many state constitutions provide for an automatic consideration, every 10 or 20 years, of whether the constitution should be revised. Ours contain no such provision. It has been amended 79 times, but even with these amendments it has failed to keep up with the rapidly changing needs of modern society.

Now so many parts of it have become obsolete, contradictory, and inadequate to meet government needs, that most of those who have studied it believe it needs a complete revision that can be secured best by a constitutional convention. Both political parties are agreed on this need.

Such a revision would, of course, keep our great bill of rights, and the basic provisions for sound, democratic government. But it could eliminate those defects which seriously hamper our government today in the opinion of the governor.

In 1947 the legislature provided for a constitutional commission to study and make recommendations. After comprehensive and serious study, this commission recommended a revised constitution which was incorporated in its report. Its recommendations included many necessary and important changes. But the report was pigeonholed.

In the 1954 election the voters were given an opportunity to express their opinion by voting on an amendment which makes it easier to have a constitutional convention, and which provides that a constitution so drafted should later be submitted to the people. When the people accepted this amendment in 1954 it indicated they believed a constitutional convention would be a good thing.

But the state senate, in 1955, defeated a bill which would have allowed the people to vote directly on whether to have such a constitutional convention. This was a serious set-back to progress toward better government. The defeat was apparently brought about by pressure from a few small minorities who have vested interests under the present constitution which they fear they might lose, and by a conviction expressed by some members that the people cannot be trusted to consider the basic law under which they shall live, the governor contended.

Public opinion was apparently not sufficiently roused on this issue to overcome the pressure of such minority interests, and such undemocratic opinions. The need for better public understanding is the reason why the League of Women Voters is leading its campaign for constitutional revision. In this the League is adding another valuable public service to the many it has already performed.

"I believe that it is a part of my responsibility as governor to do my best to help to give such information to the people, and I hope to present more in a subsequent newspaper column. Meanwhile, in considering the question, let only those who are willing to drive in a horse and buggy say of our constitution that 'what was good enough for my ancestors is good enough for me'; and let only those who admit denying the principle of democracy say that people cannot be trusted to consider the basic law of our state," Governor Freeman said.

He said various departments today overlap. As an example he cited that the rent which has been paid for space used for offices will pay for the new state building.

He recommended that the governor and state legislature be elected in alternate years. Today any man elected governor must draft his budget even before he assumes office. Governor Freeman also said he felt the legislative session should be longer.

He cited the fact that many different forms are used by our mental hospitals as one example of where coordination was lacking. Every state income tax blank that has been filed since 1925 is filed in cabinet space.

The state today does not even know how many automobiles it owns. There is no centralized power to check on the use of the cars, the governor pointed out.

The governor pointed out the economic resources that have been developed such as taconite. He said Minnesota is blessed with an abundant water supply.

Governor Freeman recommended that steps be continued toward preparing for the future increased school population and that work in vocational rehabilitation be further developed.

He said many improvements have been made. A 15 million year at the association m

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OWATONNA DAILY  
PEOPLES PRESS

(Morning and Sunday)

MAY 25 1956

Date

## Women Voter League Starts Up Campaign

Following in line with Governor Orville Freeman's expressed concern over the need for constitutional revision, the Owatonna League of Women Voters have embarked on a plan to acquaint the public with the issue.

Patrons at a number of Owatonna stores will find a little tag tucked into their packages with the following statement:

"Trade in Minnesota's outmoded 1857 constitution. For a good buy! A new state constitution."

Posters will also be displayed carrying that theme across to the public. Being encouraged is the planning for a constitutional convention.

deficit of 18 months ago will probably be replaced by a surplus of from 3 to 5 million. Reorganization, the governor said, has accomplished this.

The governor took a definite stand against a sales tax. He classed the personal property tax as unfair. The governor said he favors a state withholding tax comparable to the federal plan and declared this will make more people pay.

The governor told the businessmen that "we are well on the way to making the Minnesota state government an up-to-date business organization."

He declared the change is being brought about through efficiency and economy that can only be affected through modern methods.

Governor Freeman contended that a new program of inspecting merchandise sold to the state will save \$25,000 a year and that another change of beginning the budget procedure earlier in the year will make it possible to arrive at a sounder program for the next biennium.

Another defect in addition to the 90-day limit on legislative sessions, provision for two-year terms for governors, restrictions on fiscal operations and non-constitutional matters included in the basic law, such as routing of the state highway system, cited by Governor Freeman was the hampering of local government.

Governor Freeman contended, "Our municipalities should have more responsibility and authority, both in the interest in the principle of home rule and in the interest of greater citizen participation."

The governor's appearance drew the largest attendance of the year at the association m



# Open Forum

To The Editor:

The framers of the Minnesota constitution in 1857 wisely provided methods for making changes in the constitution as they were needed. They foresaw the need to adapt the framework of government to changing circumstances. Many amendments to the constitution have been made but no revision by a convention has ever been carried out. Both major political parties, many civic organizations, and numerous individuals have endorsed the movement for constitutional revision.

The League of Women Voters is to be commended for its efforts to develop interest and support for this important movement to improve state government as Minnesota approaches the beginning of its second century as a state.

Very truly yours,  
Harold T. Hagg,  
Bemidji, Minn.

To the Editor:

Approximately one hundred years ago a Constitutional Convention drew up a plan of government for Minnesota. In spite of many amendments, we are still operating our state under the general plan formulated a century ago. The wisdom of the original convention is apparent, their work has served us well, but it is time for a change.

This fact has been recognized by both our major political parties, by a majority of political science and public administration experts both in and out of the state service. The Minnesota Bar Association has been recommending for years a reformation of our court system which would require constitutional change.

Opposition to change seems to arise from two major sources: a comparatively small group of vested interests who receive a

preferential position, tax or otherwise, from the present constitution, and a larger group who seemingly look upon governmental institutions as a sacrosanct, "must not touch" arrangement.

It is easy to understand the position of the vested interest group but it is harder to understand the second. It is always tempting to point out the inconsistency of individuals who demand the latest improvements in housing, transportation, medical services, and all the other things that have made the American standard of living the envy of the world but who are insistent on limping along with ancient and outmoded governmental institutions.

The people of Bemidji owe the League of Women Voters a vote of thanks for their outstanding efforts in a similar situation, the adoption of an up-to-date charter for our city, may we express our commendation to them for bringing this issue of state constitutional revision to our attention and express our hope that this effort may be likewise successful.

Very cordially yours,  
A. C. Clark.

To the Editor:

Friday, the 25th of May, is Constitution Day. Perhaps most, if not all, of us know far too little about our State Constitution. This is quite well verified by the fact that in almost every session of the State Legislature there are bills introduced calling for amendments to the Constitution in addition to other bills calling for outright revision of or re-writing of the State Constitution.

During the past centennial there have been many amendments to the Constitution and it

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
DEEPHAVEN POST

Date MAY 25 1956

## Women Voters Elect New Officers; Hear Delegate

### EXCELSIOR

Members of the Excelsior League of Women Voters will meet at the home of Mrs. Maurice Schanfield, league president, on Monday night, May 28, starting at 8 p.m. The general meeting will replace the unit meetings for St. Alban's Bay, Vine Hill and Excelsior.

Highlight of the meeting will be a report by Mrs. Harold Setnan on the National Convention which she attended as a delegate. The State Council meeting will also be reviewed.

The League's Voters Service Committee has announced that special displays will be made in the windows of local stores in observance of Constitution Day, Friday, May 25. The displays will depict the theme, "Off With the Old and On With the New" in keeping with the League's stand

### DEEPHAVEN

Two new officers and three directors were elected Tuesday evening when members of the Deephaven League of Women Voters attended their annual dinner meeting at the Golden Valley Country club. Elected as second vice president was Mrs. Charles North while Mrs. Kirk Wickersham is the new treasurer. New directors are Mrs. John Berkey, Mrs. William Perry and Mrs. Robert D. Hoss.

Following the dinner, the League members saw a twenty minute movie produced and narrated by Edward R. Murrow on Peaceful Assembly and Free Speech. The 1956-1957 budget was also adopted. In charge of arrangements for the dinner were Mrs. Thomas Gardiner and Mrs. Baird Hawley.

Other officers and directors on the Board of the Deephaven League are the following: Mrs.

ff, president; Mrs. ist, first vice president, Robert Beckman, second directors, Mrs. Salster, Mrs. Ben Shank, eph Jes'er.

For several days before  
May 25, 1956

## Coming Events

FRIDAY, MAY 25 the League of Women Voters will sponsor a children's parade at 4 p.m. in observance of Constitution Day.

can undoubtedly be said with justification that the present Constitution could probably be revised or rewritten; nevertheless, the fact that something becomes old does not necessarily mean that it is outmoded, and if the Legislature has not taken an affirmative position with respect to constitutional revision it is because the average legislator is not completely satisfied in his own mind of the results that would be accomplished by re-writing the Constitution.

Some explanation might be made to this extent that the railroads perhaps have been the strongest opponents to constitutional revision. At the same time a certain amount of justification must be granted in this respect for the reason that it is not too many years back that the railroads were in a very serious financial position, even to the extent that the credit of railroad companies in the purchase of ties and other materials was often questioned because it was not uncommon to wait many, many months for the railroad company to pay. Naturally, it is assumed that the railroad companies oppose constitutional revision for the reason of the assumption that a new Constitution would in all probability raise the gross earnings tax on railroad property. So, this explanation appears quite clear.

Looking at the Constitution from a different angle no one should be criticized in taking a view that there are many outmoded sections in the present State Constitution. As a matter of fact, I can truthfully say in my own personal instance that I believe the State Constitution is outmoded when it requires a member of the State Senate to

wait approximately four full years before seeking an office in which the remuneration has been increased during the term of the party desiring to seek the office. This, of course, is just one slight illustration which I found to personally affect a situation of my own.

At the same time, beyond a doubt there are just countless numbers of other Constitution provisions which are definitely antiquated, but it does occur to me that constitution revision to be properly accepted by the members of the State Legislature will have to be explained in a way that will remove any doubt in the members of the Legislature that by voting for Constitution revision they are in effect voting for an improvement of which the results are understood so that in casting their votes they can safely feel that the vote has been made for better government.

Very truly yours,  
Leonard R. Dickinson

# Open Forum

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The League of Women Voters is to be commended for its efforts to develop interest and support for this important movement to improve state government as Minnesota approaches the beginning of its second centennial.

Very truly yours,  
Leonard R. Dickson, Minn.

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The League's Voters Service Committee has announced that special displays will be made in the windows of local stores in observance of Constitution Day, Friday, May 25. The displays will depict the theme, "Off With the Old and On With the New" in keeping with the League's stand for the need of a new state constitution.

Members of the committee include Mrs. John G. Schmitt, Mrs. Everett Clauson and Mrs. J. F. Saulon.

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Other officers and directors on the Board of the Deephaven League are the following: Mrs. Nicholas Duff, president; Mrs. Walter Angrist, first vice president; Mrs. Robert Beckman, secretary; and directors, Mrs. Salyards Hofmeister, Mrs. Ben Shank, and Mrs. Joseph Jes'ner.

For several days before  
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JOHNSON'S NEW  
HOLIDAY BRONZE  
SEA-HORSES

They're smart! They  
gleam! The new '56 Sea-  
Horses styled in Holiday  
Bronze and Spray White.  
Come in and see them.  
Nine great new models  
—3 to 30 hp!

BOAT TRAILERS  
MARINE SUPPLIES  
Expert Outboard Service  
on All Makes

BEMIDJI AUTO  
PARTS CO.

Johnson  
SEA-HORSES  
DEPENDABILITY



## GROUPS SEEK TO REVISE DOCUMENT—

# Today Observed As Minnesota Constitution Day

Today is Minnesota Constitution day.

May 25 is the anniversary of the day in 1857 on which Samuel Medary, territorial governor, signed into law a bill calling the original constitutional convention.

The state constitution was adopted Oct. 13, 1857, and the state was admitted to the Union on May 11, 1858.

The League of Women Voters and other organizations are observing today by stressing their campaign for a convention to revise the present constitution. Luncheons, polls on constitutional subjects, window displays, exhibits are some of the ways the day is being observed in communities throughout the state.

The League of Women Voters has compiled a list of questions and answers regarding the present constitution and why changes are needed. Here are some of them:

**Q.** What is the chief objection to the Minnesota constitution?

**A.** It sets up a rigid, bulky system of government which has not been able to adjust itself to meet changing conditions.

**Q.** How old is our constitution?

**A.** Ninety-nine years old. Only 10 states are governed under documents older.

**Q.** Is not a constitutional convention a very rare occurrence?

**A.** No. One hundred and eighty constitutional conventions have been held by the 48 states.

**Q.** How many times has the constitution been amended?

**A.** Eighty-two times in 99 years. The brief federal constitution has been amended 12 times, exclusive of the Bill of Rights, in 167 years.

**Q.** Name one obsolete provision in the constitution.

**A.** U. S. senators are to be elected by the Legislature.

**A.** A state census is to be taken every 10 years.

**A.** Specie payments (gold and silver) cannot be suspended.

**A.** State-bank notes are controlled.

**A.** Women can vote only in library and school board elections.

**Q.** Do any organizations favor revision?

**A.** Yes. Among them are the DFL, the GOP, and the League of Women Voters.

**Q.** Who would be the members of a constitutional convention?

**A.** The members would be elected from the districts

throughout the state in the same manner as the members of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

**Q.** Has the Legislature studied the need for revision?

**A.** Yes. In 1947 it set up the Minnesota Constitutional commission which after months of study recommended 40 major changes and the calling of a convention.

**Q.** Why cannot Minnesotans be proud of its convention of 1857?

**A.** The delegates were elected hurriedly, some fraudulently. Large numbers of new settlers were poorly represented. The fear and distrust which generated the Civil War split the convention into two separate bodies. Prohibition and Negro suffrage were hot issues which detracted from the basic problems of constitution writing.

**Q.** Students of government point out that if a state has a detailed constitution it must, also, have an easy amending process. Does our constitution meet this requirement?

**A.** No. It did, as it originated from the founders of the state. In 1898, however, the amendment method was made difficult. Today, the votes of

those who do not vote at all on an amendment, in effect, are counted as "no" votes.

**Q.** In what way is our constitution said to establish an over-rigid system of government?

**A.** By being filled with details, each of which cannot be changed except by amendment. These details make the state constitution nearly three times as long as the federal constitution.

**Q.** The constitution states, "The representation in both houses shall be apportioned equally throughout the different sections of the state, in proportion to the population." Has this been complied with?

**A.** No. There has been no such equalization since 1913. Today each representative speaks for from 7,000 to 107,000 people, and each senator represents from 17,000 to 153,000 people.

**Q.** If Minnesota redrew the lines of its districts, would not the cities "control" the state?

**A.** No. Hennepin and Ramsey counties plus Duluth would then elect only 38 per cent of the Legislature.

**Q.** Have any Midwest states reapportioned recently?

**A.** Yes. Since 1950 Illinois, Michigan, South Dakota and Wisconsin have reapportioned their Legislatures.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**ROCHESTER**  
**DAILY POST-BULLETIN**  
(Evening)  
Date MAY 25 1956



CONSTITUTION DAY EXHIBIT—Charlie Collins, a third grader at St. Francis School, and Mrs. Louis Murphy of the Rochester League of Women Voters are shown above looking over some of the early historical items of the city that are being displayed today in a trailer on 2nd St. SE at South Broadway in observance of Constitution Day. Sponsors of the exhibit, which is free and open to the public until 9 p.m. today, are the Olmsted County Historical Society and the League of Women Voters. (Post-Bulletin photo)

## Letters to the Editor

(The Post-Bulletin invites readers to express their opinions on matters of public interest through the Letters to the Editor column. Short letters are more interesting, and the right to condense letters is reserved. Letters must bear the signature and address of the writer. Anonymous letters will not be published.)

### Two 'Original' State Constitutions on Display

To the Editor: Gov. Orville Freeman has proclaimed today Constitution Day in Minnesota. It was 99 years ago, on May 25, 1857, that Henry Sibley, territorial governor of Minnesota, signed a bill calling for the first Constitutional Convention. From this convention came our present constitution, hastily pieced together in order to get Minnesota into the Union as quickly as possible.

Locally, Mayor Claude McQuillan has urged Rochester citizens to "take note of the significance of the day and acquaint themselves with the proposed revisions of our State Constitution."

After delegates to the 1857 convention were elected they actually broke down into two conventions, the Republican and the Democratic, each maintaining it was the only legal convention. Each faction drew up separate proposals and could not reach any agreement. Consequently, a conference committee of only 10 men was finally appointed to do the job. In a little over one week these men drew up our Minnesota Constitution. Political historians William Anderson and Lloyd

Short have presented in carefully documented articles these statements made by members of that conference committee: "We admit that the constitution is not perfect. The important question now, however, is to adopt peacefully some constitution, whatever it may contain, and to get Minnesota into the Union as quickly as possible."

Even the final work of enrolling and signing was rushed through. Two groups of clerks made so-called "originals," but comparison reveals vast differences in punctuation and outright discrepancies in wording. Both enrolled "originals" are of equal validity, therefore no one knows today exactly what was and is the legal Minnesota Constitution.

Today residents of Rochester have the opportunity to view photostatic copies, loaned by the Archives of the State of Minnesota, of the two "originals" of our state Constitution. They are on display in a trailer located on 2nd St. SE just off Broadway. Many other items of historical interest and significance to that period also are on display. I urge all residents of Olmsted County the children too, to take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about our basic charter, the Minnesota Constitution. The trailer will be open until 9 p.m.

Mrs. R. Drew Miller  
Rochester, Minn.  
First vice president,  
League of Women  
Voters

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835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

ST. PAUL DAILY  
PIONEER-PRESS  
(Morning)

Date MAY 25 1956

### Better Government From Constitutional Reform

The Minnesota League of Women Voters deserves strong public support in its efforts to get favorable legislative action on a constitutional revision convention. Great gains for good government on the state and local levels could result.

Our 99-year-old constitution prevents establishment of an efficient, modern type executive department for the state. It severely handicaps the Legislature in many ways. It is an obstacle to effective home rule for municipalities. It bars many persons experienced in state problems from running for public office.

What this long and complicated constitution needs is an overhauling to make its basic good provisions more effective and to weed out the nonessential and defective portions. The way this can be accomplished in a thorough, intelligent manner is through a constitutional convention.

Actually, all that the League of Women Voters proposal calls for from the 1957 Legislature is a chance for the people to vote on whether or not they want a convention. The Legislature must authorize a referendum on this question before any other steps can be taken. There is no justification for denying the voters their opportunity to say yes or no on a convention proposal.

Leaders of both the Democratic and Republican parties favor constitutional revision. Governor Freeman has described some of the benefits to be gained from an executive viewpoint. State Senator Elmer

Republican, has pointed out the standpoint of the people who speak for many other citizens who have long advocated the next Legislature

### Many Know Too Little About Constitution

To the Editor: Yesterday was Constitution day. Most of us know far too little about our state constitution. This is verified by the fact that in most every session of the legislature bills are introduced calling for amendments or outright revision.

There have been many amendments to the constitution and it can be said with justification that it could be revised or rewritten. Nevertheless, the fact that something is old does not mean it is outmoded. If the legislature has not acted affirmatively with respect to revision it is because the average legislator is not satisfied in his own mind of the results that would come from rewriting it.

The railroads perhaps have been the strongest opponents of revision. It was not too many years back that the railroads were in a serious financial position. It is assumed that they oppose revision on the assumption that a new constitution would raise the gross earnings tax rate on railroad property.

But there are many outmoded sections in the present constitution. I think the document is outmoded in its requirement that a member of the state senate must wait approximately four full years before seeking an office in which the remuneration has been increased during the term of the person desiring to seek the office. This is one slight illustration which I found to personally affect a situation of my own.

Constitutional revision, to be properly understood and accepted by members of the legislature, will have to be explained in a way that will assure them that by voting for revision they are voting for better government. — Leonard R. Dickinson, former state senator, Bemidji, Minn.

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### THIEF RIVER FALLS TIMES

Date MAY 28 1956

### SEE NO NECESSITY FOR NEW STATE CONSTITUTION

Red Lake Falls Gazette

The League of Women's Voters of Minnesota is agitating for a constitutional convention to revise the state constitution. This left-wing organization, theoretically non-partisan but actually a female counterpart of the Americans for Democratic Action is going to have a hard time convincing Minnesota voters that they need a new constitution. What's the matter with the one we have? It has lasted the state almost one-hundred years and has been amended to fit the needs as they have arisen. In spite of its minor deficiencies it's far better than anything we are likely to get from a partisan convention. Leave well enough alone!



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Leaders of both the Democratic and Republican parties favor constitutional revision. Governor Freeman has described some of the benefits to be gained from an executive viewpoint. State Senator Elmer L. Andersen, a Republican, has pointed out the needs from the standpoint of the Legislature. They speak for many other students of government who have long advocated this reform. The next Legislature should act.

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The railroads perhaps have been the strongest opponents of revision. It was not too many years back that the railroads were in a serious financial position. It is assumed that they oppose revision on the assumption that a new constitution would raise the gross earnings tax rate on railroad property.

But there are many outmoded sections in the present constitution. I think the document is outmoded in its requirement that a member of the state senate must wait approximately four full years before seeking an office in which the remuneration has been increased during the term of the person desiring to seek the office. This is one slight illustration which I found to personally affect a situation of my own.

Constitutional revision, to be properly understood and accepted by members of the legislature, will have to be explained in a way that will assure them that by voting for revision they are voting for better government. — Leonard R. Dickinson, former state senator, Bemidji, Minn.

**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
**Executive Department**  
**A Proclamation For**  
**MINNESOTA CONSTITUTION DAY**

Whereas, May 25 marks the anniversary of the day on which the governor signed the original bill calling for a Constitutional Convention in Minnesota, and

Whereas, Our state constitution, now nearly a century old, no longer provides the best up to date framework for a state government that could insure the maximum efficiency, economy and responsibility to the people of Minnesota, and

Whereas, the League of Women Voters and other leading citizens interested in better government are engaged in an effort to give to all citizens of our state an understanding of the importance of our need for constitutional revision,

Now, Therefore, I, Orville L. Freeman, Governor of the State of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim May 25 as Minnesota Constitution Day and urge all citizens to study our state constitution in terms of the problems and needs of today, and to give serious consideration to methods by which we, the people of Minnesota, can best secure constitutional revision in the interest of better government.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the **Great Seal of the State** of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this fourteenth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and fifty-six and of the State, the ninety-ninth.

ORVILLE L. FREEMAN  
Governor

JOSEPH L. DONOVAN  
Secretary of State



St. Cloud Daily Times May 25, 1956

## Did You Know

That the legislature has consistently denied the people of Minnesota their right to vote on whether or not a constitutional convention should be called?

League of Women Voters of St. Cloud

## Other People's Opinions

"Let the People Have the Truth, and Freedom to Discuss It"

## People's Right To Decide

Editor Times:

Since May 25 has been designated Constitution day by Governor Freeman, I would like to emphasize the need for citizens to acquaint themselves with the facts about our Minnesota constitution. It is almost 100 years old, but its inadequacy, not its age, keeps it from meeting present needs. In the first place, it was not drawn up calmly or deliberately, but hastily amidst great dissension. Those who wrote it agreed that what it contained didn't matter; the important thing was to get Minnesota into the Union as quickly as possible. Is it any wonder that this document has been amended 80 times?

A constitution should be a brief statement of fundamental principles rather than a long, detailed one filled with statutes that ought to be left to the legislature to make.

Because ours does not live up to this standard, it is riddled with provisions that are obsolete and ignored. For example, a section provides that senators be elected by the legislature (obsolete), and another section provides for reapportionment every ten years (ignored). It is muddled, cumbersome, disorganized and inefficient.

A constitutional convention would be the most desirable method of revising our constitution to give us more efficient, responsible, and democratic government. This constitution would represent the Will of the people of Minnesota since the delegates to a constitutional convention would be their duly elected representatives.

Regardless of the pros and cons of revision, there can be no argument as to the right of the people to decide whether or not a conven-

tion should be called. We in the League of Women Voters believe that the people, if given the facts, can then on the basis of information and conviction make their decision if allowed the chance. So far our legislature has refused to give us this chance; it is up to each of us to convince our legislators that we want it.

Mrs. R. W. Newman  
Constitutional Revision  
Chairman  
League of Women Voters  
of St. Cloud.

MAY 28 1956

Moorhead Daily News

## Women Voters Work To Revise Constitution

In connection with the designation of last Friday as Minnesota Constitution Day, the Moorhead Provisional League of Women Voters announces that their program for the coming year is revision of the state constitution.

Mrs. Stanley Bristol, president of the group, points out that the much amended present constitution contains many obsolete provisions and some which are no longer observed in practice.

"We need to consider provisions regarding the size of the legislature, the length and type of its sessions, and reorganization of the executive, administrative, and judiciary machinery," Mrs. Bristol explained.

Members of the League will work toward acquainting local citizens with ways in which desired changes could be secured. They suggest that such changes could be effected through adoption of an entirely new constitution or individual amendments in sufficient numbers to remedy the ills.

Editorial appearing in The St. Cloud Daily Times on Friday, May 25, 1956

### "Constitution Needs Change"

Constitution Day finds Minnesotans joining hands in a movement to call a convention to consider the state's organic act. Sentiment for it has been growing in recent years.

A constitutional convention is supported by both major parties in Minnesota, by a succession of governors, and by many organizations.

Each time a measure providing for it is drawn, however, it runs into a stone wall of silent opposition in the legislature. The people of Minnesota, said one state senator, cannot be trusted to write the laws which govern us.

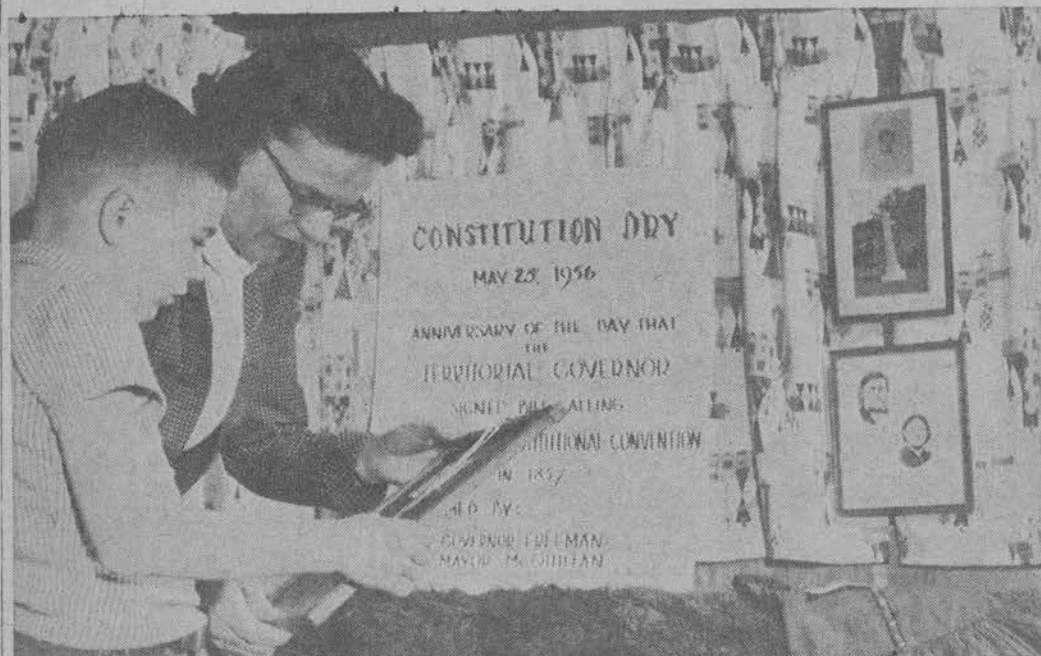
Our state constitution was drawn almost 100 years ago and since then has been amended 80 times. It is now an almost hopeless hodgepodge of contradictions which stand in the way of efficient and streamlined state government.

Some of its provisions have been violated many times and others have been ignored. There is a provision, for example, that calls upon the state legislature to reapportion itself after every federal census. No legislature since 1911 has seen fit to abide by that mandate.

Fundamentally the blame for this sort of situation rests with all of us who elect our state representatives and senators. We take too little interest in how the candidates stand on such important issues. Until the electorate demands constitutional revision and reapportionment, we will probably continue to have a solid phalanx of opposition in the legislative chambers in St. Paul.

Constitution Day may well serve to remind us of our obligations as citizens this election year.

Rochester Post Bulletin 5/25/56



CONSTITUTION DAY EXHIBIT—Charlie Collins, a third grader at St. Francis School, and Mrs. Louis Murphy of the Rochester League of Women Voters are shown above looking over some of the early historical items of the city that are being displayed today in a trailer on 2nd St. SE at South Broadway in observance of Constitution Day. Sponsors of the exhibit, which is free and open to the public until 9 p.m. today, are the Olmsted County Historical Society and the League of Women Voters. (Post-Bulletin photo)

## Women's League Distributes Tags

The League of Women Voters distributed 500 tags in the downtown section on Friday, which was Constitution Day. The tags were given out to promote interest in the calling of a constitutional convention when the legislature meets next fall.

Mrs. Kermit Kleene, Mrs. John Strang, Mrs. Mike Kromminga and Mrs. A. R. Gareis were assisted by members of two Girl Scout troops, of which Mrs. S. P. Gislason and Mrs. Roger Schmid are leaders. The girls who will receive credit for civic work were Pennell Somsen, Jane Vogelpohl, Harriet

## NEW ULM JOURNAL

4 Tues., May 29, 1956

Stegemann, Lynn Hendricks, Mar-ni Gislason, Jeanne Durham, Sheryle Peterson, LaDonna Peterson, Jean Gleisner, Ricky Spel-brink, Gloria Epp, Sheri Christensen, Mary Kay Schmid, Mary Jane Hillmer, Karen Rockvam, Patsy Middleton, Ronda Loose, Kathleen Blerbaum, Mary Beth Hesse, Barbara Kosek, Catherine Tietel and Judy Neubauer.

# THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR

LARGEST DAILY NEWSPAPER IN THE UPPER MIDWEST

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JOHN COWLES, President; JOYCE A. SWAN, Executive Vice President; LYLE K. ANDERSON, Vice President and Treasurer; STANLEY HAWKS, Vice President and Secretary; OTTO A. SILHA, Vice President and Business Manager; WILLIAM F. STEVEN, Vice President and Executive Editor; JOHN W. MOFFETT, Vice President and Advertising Director; HOWARD MITHUN, Vice President; WILBUR ELSTON, Editor of Editorial Pages; JOHN THOMPSON, Publisher Emeritus.

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FRIDAY, MAY 25, 1956

## Laggard Minnesota

THIS is Constitution day in Minnesota, the anniversary of the signing in 1857 of the bill calling the convention which gave the state its constitution. That convention broke into two groups (Democrats and Republicans) which met separately, each drawing up its own constitution. Eventually the two factions got together on a compromise, the only constitution Minnesota has had.

The farcical behavior of the delegates and the plain illegality of some of their actions makes one of the most interesting chapters in the state's history. The wonder is that the final draft of the constitution, which was hastily patched together in a few days, wasn't much worse than has proved to be the case.

But that constitution isn't good enough to give modern Minnesota the most efficient government. Amendments have been approved from time to time, though this method of improving the basic charter of the state is cumbersome and uncertain. What is needed clearly is a constitutional convention.

Today the League of Women Voters of Minnesota is holding meetings all over the state to call attention to constitutional revision. Tags and window displays and parades are part of this push toward better government. The state league has prepared an excellent study of the constitution, "The State You're In," and is planning to publish a shorter version soon.

The Minnesota Citizens Constitutional committee, organized in the Twin Cities last fall, recently was expanded to include all congressional districts. This group also will try to get support for a better constitution.

Even under the most favorable circumstances the people of Minnesota could not pass on a proposed new constitution until 1962. And a referendum even then would depend upon the legislature taking the first step at its next session in 1957.

It is almost certain the legislators of 1957 will be too busy with other things unless a lot of voter sentiment is aroused and expressed in the meantime. That's why Constitution day is important as a jumping off date for a big drive for revision.



Date.....MAY 31 1956.....

## It'll Be New, But Better?

LW Minnesota's nearly 100 years old constitution comes in for a kicking at every political convention, has active groups working to get it replaced and is the subject of frequent editorial criticism.

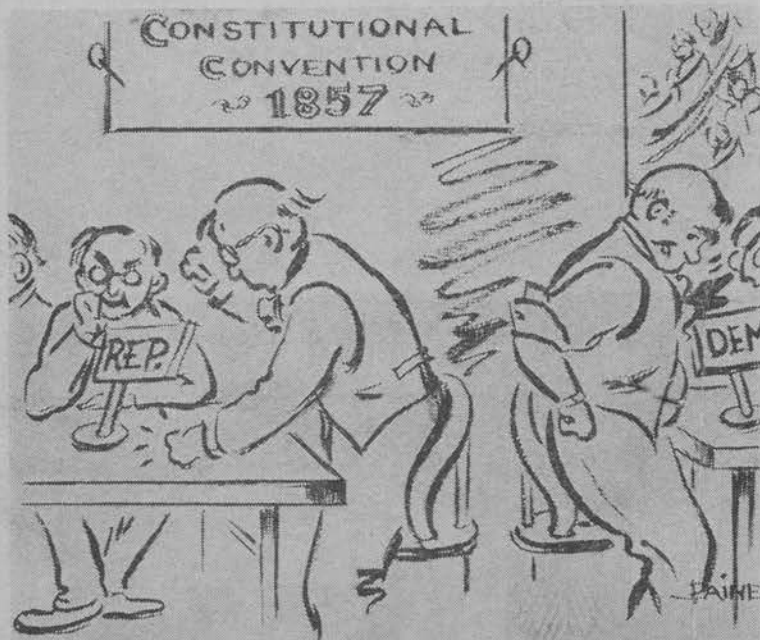
No one defends the old document as being above reproach. It has been amended frequently, and not always wisely, and outdated sections cause some to smile, others to become horrified.

One pattern is common to most editorial attacks, recalling the strained circumstances under which it was written, the factions, rump convention and finally the compromise.

While establishing that the document wasn't prepared in ideal circumstances, its detractors completely ignore the very strong possibility that a modern constitutional convention might run into very similar complications. Preparing a constitution for a virgin territory was a simple task compared with compiling one for a state with 3,000,000 people organized into thousands of municipal and civic groups and with no end of interests both selfish and otherwise. True they would have expert advice, but no two experts will agree on a great many points, and innumerable citizens are likely to disagree with the experts.

Minnesota will come up with a new constitution when the movement has sufficient momentum. But it is no more than an even bet that it will be a better one.

## League Of Women Voters Calls For Constitutional Convention in 1957



"Statehood in 10 days"

MAY 31 1956

## Mail Bag

To the editor:

To amend the constitution of the state of Minnesota, or rather for an amendment to pass, there must be a majority of all the voters who go to the polls and vote favorably on the issue. Thus if a voter fails to mark the ballot on the amendment it amounts to a no vote.

Here is an example, suppose 40 per cent of the voters vote for the amendment, 20 per cent vote against, and 40 per cent leave their ballots blank, it is necessary that over 50 per cent vote in favor to pass, so the measure is lost.

A bill was introduced in the last session of the legislature to change the requirements to 60 per cent of those who mark their ballots to carry a measure. Now let me give you another example. Suppose a particular issue is well advertised and the people thoroughly understand it, and suppose 90 per cent of the voters mark their amendment ballots. Under the proposal of 60 per cent in this instance it would take 54 per cent to carry the measure. With that in mind, I voted against it.

The 50-foot truck bill would give the truckers of bulky loads such as livestock an additional five feet of length and increase their payload and also conform with laws of the neighboring states and make it possible for the livestock feeders to bring cattle in from the West and allow them to come into Minnesota. The bill passed the House and I voted in favor. It lost in the Senate by a small margin. Some Senators feared that there would be a move then to increase the weight limits per axle, which was not the intention. I would vigorously oppose increase in the weight limits, since it is the heavy loads that break up our road beds.

Our Minnesota constitution was written a hundred years ago and at that time the writers of the constitution did not foresee the large population centers that we have today. They wrote the articles providing representation in both houses by population, to be apportioned every 10 years. In our federal government, the House of Representatives is apportioned according to population and the Sen-

ate has two from every state regardless of population. To out the two extremes, New state has 48 representatives two senators, while Arizona has only one representative and a two senators. Thus the population centers can be held in check in the Senate and the sparsely settled sections can be held in check in the House of Representatives. It acts as a check and balance which is healthy. It is not good government to have any one faction in full control.

There has not been a reapportionment since 1913 in Minnesota and in that time Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth have grown greatly and the distribution of population in relation to the rural areas has changed. This question is contested in each session of the legislature on a rural versus city basis. Those of us from the rural areas feel that the constitution should be amended to give one house representation on a population basis and the other on an area basis. It is agreed that the House with 131 members is large enough and if the urban centers are to gain members then it will be necessary to take away from the rural districts.

The bill that Mr. Bergerud introduced in the last session provided that district 10 would comprise Jackson, Cottonwood and Watonwan counties, with one senator and two representatives, both to run at large. I voted against that arrangement. I think each county should have at least one representative. I doubt if any re-

apportionment will be accomplished until the voters in the cities are willing to amend the constitution.

This concludes this series of let-

ters for the present and I hope they have been informative. I shall be happy to write you again later.

—Louis H. Hussong

Thursday, May 31, 1956

## REPORT from the GOVERNOR



by  
Orville L. Freeman

In last week's column I reported on efforts being made under the leadership of the Minnesota League of Women Voters to acquaint the citizens of Minnesota with the need for a convention to revise our state constitution. Some of the information which Minnesotans ought to know relates to parts of our basic law which are obsolete and/or unenforced; to parts which prevent our state government from operating as economically and efficiently as it could; and to those defects which fail to insure the effective observance of some of our fundamental principles of American democracy.

### Obsolete Provisions

Our state constitution still contains such obsolete sections as those which provide:— that women can vote only in school and library elections; that United States senators should be elected by the state legislature; that Indians should be treated in a special way as if they were not citizens; and that the state debt should be limited to \$250,000.

Other provisions of the constitution, such as that which says that half of the state senators should be elected at one election and the other half at the next, and that which provides for the reapportionment of the legislature every ten years, are regularly ignored.

### Respect for Law

In a sense the constitution is the highest law of our state. When many of its provisions are regularly ignored—for whatever reason—it is more difficult to develop a spirit of respect for law and its observance. Who ought to decide whether a law is so obsolete that it can be ignored?

### Government Handicapped

State constitutions should provide adequate framework and authority for effective state government. Many provisions in Minnesota's constitution, which may have been adequate a century ago, no longer meet current needs. Some examples of these are:—the limitation of sessions of the state legislature to 90 days; restrictions on the investment of state funds which prevent us from earning as much income as we could safely get; the provisions that our gross earnings tax on railroads can not be changed by the legislature but only by a popular referendum; and many others.

### Principles of Democracy

A constitution should as far as possible provide such a basis for government as would assure the maintenance of basic American democratic principles. One principle that we have held since our earliest days is that of local self government. We believe that many functions are best performed by city and village governments, that are closest to the people and their needs.

### Local Self-Government

Because our state constitution does not provide adequately for local home rule, cities and villages are constantly asking the legislature to pass special laws, applying only to one area. This is done repeatedly each session, even though our constitution forbids special legislation. This practice is not

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The Owatonna League of Women Voters have embarked on a plan to acquaint the public with the need for constitutional revision.

And Patrons at Owatonna grocery stores have found a tag in their package the past week with the following statement: "Trade In Minnesota's outmoded 1857 Constitution; hastily written by 10 men in 10 days; patched by

as much as ten times the voting strength as a voter in another legislative district. This inequality is the result of legislative failure to carry out the constitutional requirements for reapportionment. Our constitution should provide a method of reapportionment that would automatically prevent such inequality.

### Lagging Behind

Only ten states operate under constitutions that have been allowed to age without complete revision longer than ours. The fact that ours is in great need of revision now is no reflection on those who framed it,—it is rather a reflection of great changes that have taken place.

As we try to put our state in the lead, and direct our efforts toward building for Minnesota a great future, let us give our government the kind of basic rules operation that will enable it to contribute most effectively toward that goal.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
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PHOTO-NEWS

MAY 31 1956

Date

## League Of Women Voters Campaign



—PN Photo

amendment 80 times; wasteful and inefficient, for a new and improved model, revised by convention. For more information, call your local League of Women Voters".

Posters are displayed carrying the same theme to the public to encourage the plan for a constitutional convention.

Shown in the picture, are: Mrs. Donald Honath and Mrs. Joe Edwards handing tags to Mrs. Carmen Bye, a customer.



Thursday, May 31, 1956

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by  
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good for the operation of our state legislature, nor is it conducive to a responsible local government. Better provisions for local government ought to be a part of our constitution.

### Equal Voting Rights

Another basic principle of American democracy holds that each citizen should be the equal of every other citizen in voting rights. Yet there are parts of our state in which, for the purpose of electing members of the state legislature, one voter has as much as ten times the voting strength as a voter in another legislative district. This inequality is the result of legislative failure to carry out the constitutional requirements for reapportionment. Our constitution should provide a method of reapportionment that would automatically prevent such inequality.

### Lagging Behind

Only ten states operate under constitutions that have been allowed to age without complete revision longer than ours. The fact that ours is in great need of revision now is no reflection on those who framed it,—it is rather a reflection of great changes that have taken place. As we try to put our state in the lead, and direct our efforts toward building for Minnesota a great future, let us give our government the kind of basic rules operation that will enable it to contribute most effectively toward that goal.

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Posters are displayed carrying the same theme to the public to encourage the plan for a constitutional convention.

Shown in the picture, are: Mrs. Donald Henrich and Mrs. Joe Edwards handing tags to Mrs. Carmen Bye, a customer.



- The Minnesota League of Women Voters is working to get a Constitutional convention called to become a state. The United States Congress passed the act enabling Minnesota to become a state on February 26, 1857.

As a matter of fact, the election was bitterly partisan and the issues were slavery and prohibition. Not one of the candidates talked about the constitution he wanted to be elected to write.

Party differences were obvious in Minnesota in those days. The Democrats had been in power; they were the conservatives. The Republicans were a brand new party, considered wildly idealistic. They were anti-slavery and prohibitionist.

On July 13, at 11:43 a. m., the Democrats marched in a body into the House chambers where the Republicans were waiting, called the convention to order, adjourned, and marched out. This was the only time the convention actually met as a whole! From then on the parties went their separate ways.

The split convention was well publicized. In Minnesota party people backed their delegates right down the line on the split. On August 8, a resolution was introduced into the Democratic wing to appoint a conference committee of five from each side. The sponsor was roundly rebuffed and it was "indefinitely postponed." The Republicans passed the Democrat's resolution on August 10 and appointed their five members. After much behind-the-scenes maneuvering, the Democrats came through on August 18 and the committee immediately sat.

The ten appointed delegates pieced together the Republican and Democratic constitutions for the next six days. The two constitutions would have to be submitted to the people after all. But two days later the Republicans gave in. In place of suffrage they won a constitution more easily changed than that of any other state in the Union. All that was required for an amendment was a simple majority in the legislature and a simple majority of those voting on the question.

Because Democratic leader Henry Sibley refused to sign the

The circumstances surrounding the writing of our present state constitution were anything but conducive to clear, dispassionate thinking. The Territorial Legislature was under constant pressure during 1856 and 1857 (it met for 90 days every year) to set up the machinery whereby Minnesota could become a state. The Republicans were to sign, two copies had to be made—and they had to be done overnight. The work of 16 copyists is distinguishable in the two documents. There are so many differences it is impossible to print an absolutely correct text of the constitution. Since no minutes were kept of the conference proceedings, it is often impossible to ascertain the intent of a doubtful passage.

On May 11, 1858, Minnesota was finally admitted to the Union. In the early days amendments were frequent. However, in 1898 the amending process itself was changed to make it one of the most difficult in the Union. Since then changes have become more rare.

MAY 31 1956

Date \_\_\_\_\_

In taking a firm stand for a revision of the Minnesota state constitution, Governor Orville L. Freeman two weeks ago told the Robbinsdale Businessmen's association at their meeting that:

Efforts are being made under the leadership of the Minnesota League of Women Voters to acquaint the citizens of Minnesota with the need for a convention to revise our state constitution. Some of the information which Minnesotans ought to know relates to parts of our basic law which are obsolete and/or unenforced; to parts which prevent our state government from operating as economically and efficiently as it could; and to those defects which fail to insure the effective observance of some of our fundamental principles of American democracy.

Other provisions of the constitution, such as that which says that half of the state senators should be elected at one election and the other half at the next, and that which provides for the reappointment of the legislature every 10 years, are regularly ignored.

"State constitutions should provide framework and authority for effective state government. Many provisions in Minnesota's constitution, which may have been adequate a century ago, no longer meet current needs. Some examples of these are:—the limitation on sessions of the state legislature to 90 days; restrictions on the investment of state funds which prevent us from earning much income as we could safeguard; the provisions that our gross earnings tax on railroads can not be changed by the legislature but only by a popular referendum; and many others," the governor reported.

One principle that we have had since our earliest days is that of local self government. We believe that many functions are best performed by city and village governments, that are closest to the people and their needs," the governor declared.

he governor touched on one  
nt that particularly affects  
n growing areas as rural Hen-  
in and North Minneapolis  
en he declared:

Only 10 states operate under institutions that have been allowed to age without complete revision longer than ours. The fact that ours is in great need of revision now is no reflection on



MAY 31 1956

Date

## League of Women Voters Asks Constitutional Conclave

Ed. Note: This article was brought to the Anoka Herald by Mrs. Galen Adkins, member of the Anoka League of Women Voters. Because it deals with a current problem about which there has been and will be much discussion, we present it to our readers for their own information.

If the time and study had been put on the Minnesota State constitution when it was written in 1857 that was put on our national constitution it undoubtedly would be adequate with, possibly, an amendment occasionally. But in order to achieve statehood, it was written in 10 days by 10 men so split by partisan strife that the Democrats and Republicans would not sign the same copy. In the two copies there are over 300 differences and even today no one knows what is correct.

The first article of the Bill of Rights gives us the right to modify or reform our government. In another section the machinery is spelled out for holding a constitutional convention for the purpose for examining and changing the constitution where changes are needed to give us what we seek.

Some 200 constitutional conventions have been held in the 48 states. Minnesota must not continue to lag as we have for nearly 100 years. While many changes have been suggested and anyone who has worked with the Minnesota constitution would agree changes are necessary — just what they are would, of course, be debatable.

Probably most would agree that 90 days once in two years is not sufficient time to raise and spend over 300 million dollars and give consideration to hundreds of bills.

In reality, the state government has six heads elected by the people and yet the governor is responsible for what is done during his term even though the six elected officials may have opposing beliefs and be working at odds with one another.

Among other things, Minnesota needs a fair and enforceable reapportionment of the legislature, a more workable method of amending our constitution, improved financial structure, and judicial reform.

One of the most compelling reasons for needing a new constitution is described as follows in report of President Eisenhower's Commission on Intergovernmental Relation: "Early in its study, the Commission was confronted with the fact that many state constitutions restrict the scope, effectiveness, and adaptability of state and local action. These self-imposed constitutional limitations make it difficult for many States to perform all the services their citizens require, and consequently have been the underlying cause of state and municipal pleas for federal assistance."

The case for constitutional revision has solid support — the question is one of method — amendments or convention. We have tried amendments and only a third of all amendments submitted to the voters in the last 58 years have been adopted. Therefore, the League of Women Voters believe a constitutional convention is the better solution.

A convention would consist of the same number of delegates as there are members in the House of Representatives. In our district, for example, over one-half of our population is not represented. The document would be submitted to the people for their approval. We ask that the people be allowed to say what they think is the best way to do the job.

The first step in the calling of a constitutional convention is for the legislature to pass a bill submitting the question of calling a constitutional convention to the people.

Since 1949, the Minnesota legislature has refused to pass this bill which would give us the right to answer this question. This is our right (as stated in Art. 1, Sec. 1, of our constitution) — to determine the need for review of Minnesota's constitution. This decision will have a very direct effect on the future of our state.

If you think you and your friends and neighbors should have the right to vote on whether or not you want a constitutional convention called, tell your legislator.

MAY 31 1956

Date

## League of Women Focus Attention On Constitution

The attention of Upper Tonka residents was, and is being, focused by the Mound League of Women Voters on the need for a constitutional convention to revise the present Minnesota constitution.

Activities of the League centered on Friday, "Constitution Day," when members distributed tags on parked cars in the shopping districts in the area. Mrs. Lorraine Erickson, aided by drawings from Mound students, also set up a display in the Streamer Lumber company picturing how antiquated our state constitution is.

quers are tying with the state in promoting constitution—and amended prence Warner e chairman on year. the old consti- out advantages ntained on the e tags distrib- d League

**RENNVILLE  
STAR-FARMER**

MAY 31 1956

Date

## CONSTITUTION IN THE NEWS AGAIN

Minnesota's slightly worn and frayed constitution was back in the news again last week, along with new plans aimed at providing for revision of the stately document.

It doesn't necessarily follow that because anything is old it is outmoded. But it is feared that age is now showing in the venerable document and the time may be very near for a complete overhaul.

It should not be surprising, for the constitution was adopted in expedient compromise when the warring of two factions threatened to thwart the state's admission into the United States. So bitter was the fight between the two groups that only the threat that the territory would be passed by brought the compromise.

Since then, the constitution has fallen into a disrespectful shambles. And although it is to be considered the highest law of the state, many of its provisions have been ignored with studied regularity for decades. Other provisions have fallen into obsolescence without the benefit of revision or amendment. And others, through their inadequacy, have hamstrung the bi-ennial legislature with the need to pass almost endless special and almost personal laws.

Two years ago voters of the state expressed their favor of a plan to set up a constitutional convention for revision of the document. The plan was sidetracked in the legislature last year and left to die in quiet, but now it seems that the issue will have new life breathed into it for the coming campaigns.

It would seem only natural and sensible for citizens of the state to have the desire to put this important document back on a respectful and respected status. The welfare of the entire state should call for an end of personal jealousies and selfish interests which block the continuation of this important work.

★ ★ ★

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# League of Women Voters Asks Constitutional Conclave

**Ed. Note:** This article was brought to the Anoka Herald by Mrs. Galen Adkins, member of the Anoka League of Women Voters. Because it deals with a current problem about which there has been and will be much discussion, we present it to our readers for their own information.

If the time and study had been put on the Minnesota State constitution when it was written in 1857 that was put on our national constitution it undoubtedly would be adequate with, possibly, an amendment occasionally. But in order to achieve statehood, it was written in 10 days by 10 men so split by partisan strife that the Democrats and Republicans would

## Plan Landscaping of County Fair Grounds

their new home. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schultz were dinner guests at the Donald Schultz home Thursday evening.

of Minneapolis were Saturday afternoon guests at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Erickson, helping them get settled in their new home.

ness Saturday afternoon.  
Mr. and Mrs. Durward Erickson  
of Minneapolis were Saturday at-

day afternoon.  
Mrs. John Bodine and Mrs. Liz-  
zie Wood were in Anoka on busi-

John Bodine, Mrs. Donahue, Mrs. George Wyatt, helped Mrs. Lizzie Wood celebrate her birthday Fri-

mer Starkey home.

Agnes Starkey of Minneapolis was a week-end guest at the El-

Sunday at the Harry Lathrage home at Cross Lake.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Stone and family spent Saturday and

William Hughes.

identical, the selection committee of the organization voted to award scholarships to both students. "Because we are patriotic, we must forget there is north, south, east or west. We are all Americans." And while Memorial day significance is not lost, the award is not meant to be a day of mourning.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
MOUND PILOT

MAY 31 1956

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## League of Women Focus Attention On Constitution

The attention of Upper Tonka residents was, and is being, focused by the Mound League of Women Voters on the need for a constitutional convention to revise the present Minnesota constitution.

Activities of the League centered on Friday, "Constitution Day," when members distributed tags on parked cars in the shopping districts in the area. Mrs. Lorraine Erickson, aided by drawings from Mound students, also set up a display in the Streater Lumber company picturing how antiquated our state constitution is.

The Mound Leaguers are tying in their activities with the state wide organization in promoting the need for a new constitution—now 99-years-old and amended 80 times. Mrs. Florence Warner has been committee chairman on revision the past year.

Information on the old constitution, pointing out advantages of a new one, contained on the red, white and blue tags distributed by the Mound League



## New Constitution Is Live Issue

The plan to call a convention to revise Minnesota's constitution, which the legislature last year thought it left to die, is getting new life in this campaign, says Tom Linklinder of the Renville Star-Farmer. It seems only natural and sensible that Minnesotans should desire to put this vital document back on a "respectful" status, despite "personal jealousies and selfish interests," Linklinder asserts.

A number of state editors, however, would like to know why it is necessary to call a constitutional convention to remove any defects and contradictions when the legislature can do all that by amendment. Andrew Finstuen of the Kenyon Leader feels that it would be "enlightening" to hear a discussion of what is thought to be so wrong with Minnesota's basic charter that a convention is preferred as a means for revising it.

"A constitutional convention would be pretty apt to be made up of politicians whose responsibility would end when it adjourns," Finstuen thinks. On the other hand, legislators have the duty to propose changes and as long as they are members of the legislature they would have to live with the results of their changes.

The "broadside" George W. Christie of the Red Lake Falls Gazette says Gov. Freeman delivered against the obsolete provisions of the state charter raises questions about how well a convention would do.



Christie

and can be remedied as in the past.

Every political convention, says Scott Schoen of the Redwood Falls Gazette, hears our old state constitution being kicked around. But he suspects a constitutional convention would be little more likely to hit the ideal circumstances for writing a new charter than the first such convention did. "Minnesota will come up with a new constitution when the movement has sufficient momentum," he believes. "But it is no more than an even bet that it will be a better one."

## Campaign Funds Not Nonpartisan

A "black mark" against Minnesota's legislators, thinks Harold Schoelkopf of the St. Cloud Times



Schoelkopf

is the way they "defy the constitution which should rule us all." The League of Women Voters is trying to acquaint the people with the need for constitutional revision and reapportionment. The new 1957 legislature, he hopes, may be the one with "the moral backbone to do what its predecessors have failed to do."

It is becoming more clear to Minnesota voters, thinks Sander Olson of the St. Peter Herald, that continuance of the legislature on a nonpartisan basis "serves no good purpose." He be-

## R BJORNSON

bune editorial page staff

lieves that the growth in independent voters, who owe no party loyalty, is healthy, but the "nonpartisan candidate" to our legislature doesn't fit into the broad philosophy of responsibility. A return to party designation, urged by both party platforms but rejected last session by both liberal and conservative votes, looks like the answer to him.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
ANOKA UNION

JUN 22 1956

Date

## Women Voters Hear Talk on Biennial Council Meeting

• "When a constitutional convention is held in Minnesota, to revise our Constitution, a great deal of credit for that development will be due to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota," Mrs. William Fletcher quoted State Senator Elmer L. Anderson as saying at the Biennial Council Meeting of the LWV held in May in Minneapolis.

Mrs. Fletcher, president of the Anoka League of Women Voters, was reporting at the annual picnic of the local units held last Wednesday afternoon at the summer home of Mrs. Fritz Petersen at Lake George.

The title of Senator Andersen's address to the council meeting, Mrs. Fletcher went on to say, was "How the State Constitution Hampers the Legislature". She went on to quote further from Senator Andersen's address: "It is my conviction that Minnesota government would be improved if a constitutional convention were to be called, obsolete material removed from the constitution, the document shortened and simplified to a statement of principles, a framework of government, a delegation of power. My observation would indicate that substantial improvements could be made in the executive branch of the government, in the legislative and in the judicial."

Quoting from the speech given by Governor Orville L. Freeman, "How the State Constitution Hampers State Government", Mrs. Fletcher said that Freeman referred to the following points as among the many defects which hamper good state government:

1. The timing which requires the Governor to submit a legislative program only a few days after he takes office, and to submit a budget within a few weeks.
2. The 90-day limitation on legislative sessions.
3. The 2-year terms of office for Governor is too short.
4. Provisions which restrict lawmakers in framing the best possible fiscal policy.
5. The rigidity and inflexibility resulting from the difficulty of amendment and from the great number of detailed non-constitutional matters that are specified in our constitution.

Members of the Coon Rapids unit who attended the annual picnic to hear Mrs. Fletcher's report were Mrs. Thomas Forsberg, unit chairman, Mrs. Walter Doty, Mrs. Kenji Horita, Mrs. M. K. Plasha, Mrs. Kingsley Bronson and Mrs. Robert Hayford.



Date JUN 1 1956

Date MAY 31 1956

## Why The Fuss About Constitution Day

Governor Orville Freeman proclaimed Friday May 25 "Constitution Day." This proclamation, on the anniversary of the day the territorial governor signed the bill calling Minnesota's first Constitutional Convention in 1857, was requested by the League of Women Voters. Why did the League request this proclamation? Because the League thought it fit to remind the citizens of Minnesota that our state constitution is almost 100 years old. The League feels it is time to review the contents of this 100-year old document to determine whether it is "up-to-date." We do not expect the farmer to produce using a hand-made plow; we do not expect the manufacturer to produce, using outmoded machinery; yet, we seem to expect state government to produce, using a 100-year-old basic charter.

Many persons think of Minnesota's constitution as comparable to our federal constitution which has been changed only 22 times. History quickly tells us how far-fetched this comparison is. The Minnesota constitution was not written in an atmosphere of thoughtful deliberation. Instead, it was written in haste (in order to achieve statehood) by a convention, split in two by bitter partisan strife. A conference committee of 10 men wrote our state constitution in 10 days. And then, two copies had to be made because the Republicans and Democrats would not sign the same document. There are over 300 differences in the two versions, and no one, even today, knows which is the correct one.

But that is past, and we are concerned with the present and the future. Why change Minnesota's constitution—why review it? It is hard to find anyone who has studied or worked closely with the constitution who does not agree that change is necessary. Not everyone agrees on all the same changes—but many changes have been suggested. Our legislature can meet just 90 days every two years. Yet we expect it to raise and spend over 300 million dollars and give consideration to hundreds of bills which affect Minnesota citizens. We hold our chief executive, the governor, responsible for what is done during his term. Yet our state government, in reality, has six heads, all elected by the people—governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, treasurer, secretary of state and auditor. Since they are all elected, they may have opposing beliefs, thus working at odds with each other. Minnesota needs a fair and enforceable apportionment of the legislature; a more workable method of amending our state constitution; an improved financial structure; and judicial reform.

The case for constitutional reform has solid support. The question remains one of method. Shall we do it by amendment or by convention? We have tried amendments—we have patched and patched—some 80 times, but our difficult amending process defeats most amendments. Only a third of all amendments submitted to the voters in the last 58 years have been adopted. The League of Women Voters believes a constitutional convention is the best method. It would consist of the same number of delegates as there are members of our House of Representatives. It would have the time required to consider thoughtfully all aspects of the constitution, as a whole. The document which it would write would be submitted to the people for their approval. It is the safe and sane method of revising the constitution. All the League asks is that the people be given a chance to say if they think it is the best way of doing the job.

Here is what some of our teachers in the public school have to say about Constitutional Revision:

Much has been said and written about our state constitution which is a "horse and buggy document in a jet age." There is much need for revising this antiquated document. The Social Studies Department of Wells High met Tuesday morning and made the following suggestions to be considered on Constitution Day:

1. We should have a unicameral (one house) instead of bicameral (two houses) in the legislature.
2. The legislature should meet each year.
3. Higher salaries should be paid for full time thus bringing higher caliber men into our government.
4. Legislators should have party designation.
5. The governor should serve four years.
6. The state should be redistricted.
7. Our tax structure should be overhauled to help our education facilities and encourage industry to our state.

Think about these suggestions and be prepared to vote wisely when the question of constitutional revision is brought up.

# League of Women Voters Makes Report Of Study of State Constitution

•In connection with Governor Freeman's proclamation of State Constitution Day last week, the executive board of the Anoka League of Women Voters appointed Mrs. Jesse Giddings, Mrs. Mary Spurzem and Mrs. Gaylen Adkins to study the historic background of the constitution, and to make clear the reasons why the league strongly supports a constitutional convention. The report, prepared in its final form by Mrs. Jesse Giddings, is given below.

If the time and study had been put on the Minnesota State Constitution when it was written in 1857 that was put on our National Constitution it undoubtedly would be adequate with, possibly, an amendment occasionally. But in order to achieve statehood, it was written in ten days by ten men so split by partisan strife that the Democrats and Republicans would not sign the same copy. In the two copies there are over three hundred differences and even today no one knows what is correct.

The first article of the Bill of Rights gives us the right to modify or another spelled al conv examin stitution ed to g two hu vention forty-ei must n have f

years. While many changes have been suggested and anyone who has worked with the Minnesota Constitution would agree changes are necessary—just what they are would, of course, be debatable. Probably most would agree that ninety days once in two years is not sufficient time to raise and spend over three hundred million dollars and give consideration to hundreds of bills.

In reality the State government has six heads elected by the people and yet the governor is responsible for what is done during his term even though the six elected officials may have opposing beliefs and be working at odds with one another.

Among other things, Minnesota needs a fair and enforceable reapportionment of the legislature, a more workable method of amending our Constitution, improved financial structure, and judicial reform. One of the most compelling reasons for needing a new Constitution is described as follows in report of President Eisenhower's Com

The case for constitutional revision has solid support—the question is one of method—amendments or convention. We have tried amendments and only a third of all amendments submitted to the voters in the last fifty-eight years have been adopted. Therefore, the League of Women Voters believes a constitutional convention is the better solution.

A convention would consist of the same number of delegates as there are members in the House of Representatives. In our district, for example, over one-half of our population is not represented. The document would be submitted to the people for their approval. We ask that the people be allowed to say what they think is the best way to do the job.

"The first step in the calling of a constitutional convention is for the legislature to pass a bill submitting the question of calling a constitutional convention to the people. Since 1949, the Minnesota Legislature has refused to pass this bill which would give us the

is question, as stated in Constitution) need for re- constitution. ve a very di- ture of our

Date JUN 7 1956

## LEAGUERS AT WORK

The League of Women Voters met at the home of Mrs. Donald Baustian on Monday evening, May 28, with Mrs. Wayne Unke the assisting hostess.

Following the business meeting Mrs. Dale Bartholomew spoke briefly on the local city council membership and the duties of the members.

Mrs. F. M. Hockenbush gave a report on "Constitution Day" which was May 25 and she explained to the group the great need for revision of the present state constitution.

Mrs. Winton Melby gave a short talk on Iraq and solving the Arab refugee problem.

The four members of the local League who attended the state biennial council meeting at the Hotel Leamington in Minneapolis on May 17 gave very interesting reports of that meeting. Attending the meeting were Mrs. Manville Oren, Mrs. Lloyd Stussy, Mrs. Maynard Heitner and Mrs. James Murray.

The highlight of the evening's program was an inspirational talk by Mrs. Ben Musser on "Women's Place in Government."

Date MAY 31 1956

## Girl Scouts Receive Curve Bar Awards

On May 21, at the spring court of awards, the eight members of Troop 233 received the Curved Bar, the highest rank in the Intermediate Girl Scout program. The award was given in the field of Citizenship, and was presented to the following girls: Lanajean Casselton, Harriet Fraser, Joan Kay Anderson, Joanne Haag, Priscilla Hamper, Lorelei Korlin, Ellen Richardson, and Alice Wettleson.

Recent service projects of the troop have included assisting on "paint day" at Katherine Abbott camp. At this time, the girls helped with the preparation of the camp for the annual day camp program. On Constitution Day, the troop assisted the local League of Women Voters by handing out the tags to the people of North St. Paul.



## NEW TEST—

# State Constitution Change Again To Be Vote Issue

(Second of three articles on Minnesota's constitutional amendment proposals which will be put before voters in the general election Nov. 6.)

By Richard E. Wanek

Three times in the last decade—1948, 1950 and 1952—Minnesotans have voted against changing the constitution on the distribution of the gasoline and motor vehicle license taxes.

In 1956 they again will be asked to make a change by approving an amendment which will give counties a bigger share of the two "highway user" taxes and give cities and villages over 5,000 population their first share of the receipts for use in maintaining their main streets.

The new amendment was drafted by the 1955 legislature after an interim commission had spent more than \$70,000 for an engineering study of the present and future highway needs of the state. To put it simply, the constitutional amendment No. 2 proposed for next fall would:

A. Lump all proceeds from license tax into one fund, gasoline tax and motor vehicle tax known as the "highway user tax distribution fund."

B. Money in the highway user tax distribution fund shall to the trunk highway fund, 29 per cent to the county state-aid highway fund and 9 per cent to the municipal state-aid highway fund.

C. Distribution of the county and municipal fund money would be according to laws passed by the Legislature.

D. The state is authorized to issue up to \$150,000,000 in highway bonds. The present limit is \$75,000,000. The present limit of \$10,000,000 in any one year also is removed.

Under present constitutional requirements the state highway sinking fund gets all of the motor vehicle license money and two thirds of the gas tax money. Counties get one-third of the gas tax money. Cities and villages get nothing.

The state trunk road system is some 11,000 miles long. It contains 308 routes, 70 of which are listed, mile for mile, in the constitution.

The amendment would take mention of the routes out of the constitution itself, and mention them only as "those routes adopted in the 1920 constitutional amendment." The Legislature would be given continued power to add to or subtract from the routes.

Another provision of the proposed amendment would give townships and counties the legal right if they so chose to levy "wheelage" taxes to raise local street or highway improvement money. These taxes—somewhat like an additional license tax—are legal now in cities, villages and boroughs, although not any are in effect. The amendment continues this right in the municipalities and extends the right to all political subdivisions.

A legislative interim commission is trying to decide how to subdivide the 29 per cent county aid money and 9 per cent municipal aid money. Factors may seem somewhat confusing, but that is how much money would be available for immediate use. It way mileage, etc., have been suggested for consideration. The trust fund's 50 per cent share of the occupation tax on iron ore paid in 1956 on 1955 mining operations.

The 1956 payment was the largest in the history of the state. Barring a sudden change in economic conditions, the record may last only one year, for iron ore shipments from the Great Lakes area are already running 3,300,000 tons ahead of this time a year ago.

Amendment No. 3, affecting article IX, section 1A of the state constitution, is the shortest of the three amendments that will be voted on in November. Its effect however, if passed, can be the most far-reaching. The portion of the existing section 1A proposed to be amended now reads as follows:

report is due to be made before the election.

After Jan. 1, 1963, according to the amendment, the Legislature can take 5 per cent of the highway user revenues and distribute it as it wishes among one or all of the three highway user funds before applying the 62-29-9 formula to the remainder.

(Wednesday: The iron ore tax amendment for schools).

## AMENDMENT VOTED—

## Money Could Be

"Funds derived from the state general revenue herein provided for shall be apportioned: 50 per cent to the state general revenue fund, 25 per cent to the permanent university fund and 10 per cent to the permanent university fund. The Legislature shall make the necessary provisions for carrying out the purpose of this section."

If amended, that paragraph section will read:

"Funds derived from the state general revenue herein provided for shall be used as follows: 50 per cent to the state general revenue fund, 40 per cent for the support of elementary and secondary schools, and 10 per cent for the support of the permanent university. The Legislature by law make the necessary provisions for carrying out the purpose of this section."

In other words, the

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(Wednesday: The iron ore tax amendment for schools).

ST. PAUL DISPATCH

## IF CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT VOTED—

## School Money Could Be Used Immediately

(Last of three articles)

By RICHARD E. WANENK

If constitutional amendment No. 3, to be put before the voters next fall, were now in effect, Minnesota's public schools would be \$11,424,000 richer and the state university would be \$2,860,000 better off for 1956.

This may seem somewhat startling, but that is how much additional money would be available for immediate use. It represents the trust fund's 50 per cent share of the occupation tax on iron ore paid in 1956 on 1955 mining operations.

The 1956 payment was the largest in the history of the state. Barring a sudden change in economic conditions, the record may last only one year, for iron ore shipments from the Great Lakes area are already running 3,300,000 tons ahead of this time a year ago.

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"Funds derived from the tax herein provided for shall be apportioned: 50 per cent to the state general revenue fund, 40 per cent to the permanent school fund and 10 per cent to the permanent university fund. The Legislature shall by law make the necessary provisions for carrying out the provisions of this section."

If amended, that part of the section will read:

"Funds derived from the tax herein provided for shall be used as follows: 50 per cent to the state general revenue fund, 40 per cent for the support of elementary and secondary schools, and 10 per cent for the general support of the university. The Legislature shall by law make the necessary provisions for carrying out the provisions of this section."

In other words, the amend-

ment provides that the iron ore occupation tax no longer will be placed in permanent trust funds, but can be used for current expenses of the schools and university as well as for general revenue purposes.

Only earnings from investments on money in the trust funds can be spent for schools and the university. The amendment will not touch any of the present 214-million-dollar trust fund for public schools nor any of the \$43,200,000 trust fund for the university.

The trust funds will continue to grow slowly through additional principal accumulated through sale of trust fund lands, products mined on or grown on the trust fund lands, or from earnings on investments.

Since the Legislature is going to be hard-pressed in 1957 to find about 18 million dol-

lars to continue school aids at their present level, passage of the amendment would help, at least for the present, solve a major part of the problem.

The income from this source will fluctuate according to the amount of ore mined. While ore tax money going into the trust funds topped 14 million dollars this year, only twice before—in 1951 and 1954—has the total exceeded 10 million dollars. In several of the depression years of the 1930's the total amount was under 1 million dollars and in 1933, based on 1932 shipments from almost completely shut down mines, only \$130,000 was received.

Also the 1956 tax collection was swelled by a special surtax that will expire after 1957 unless the Legislature renews it. That surtax provided about 2 million dollars of the more than 14-million-dollar total.



JUN 28 1956

Date

## Women's League Give Constitution A Close "Shave"

★ ★ ★

The Richfield League of Women Voters are going all-out to see that attempts to call a convention for amending the state constitution doesn't get too close a "shave."

The League is requesting the council to grant permission for erection of Burma Shave type signs in several areas in the village. The signs would be erected on vacant lots, the League hopes.

Although approving the idea itself, councilmen were not so sure that several snares would not confront the league. The state definitely does not want the signs on any state right-of-way. The county feels the same way. The village is willing, but doesn't own that many vacant lots. And, the question came up as to whether the signs could be legally placed close enough to the roads to be read by motorists.

Size of the signs would be about 12 by 18 inches, and would be about five feet high, spaced approximately 100 feet apart. Wording might be along the order, "Here's A Fact, It's Not Surprising. Our State Constitution Needs Revising." They would be done by silk screen process, as hand painting would be too expensive, league officers said.

The village manager and attorney were instructed by councilmen to assist the league as much as possible. In the meantime the council passed a motion voicing no objection to the League's project.

JUN 28 1956

Date

## PUSH CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

# Women Voters Believe in Signs

The League of Women Voters has turned backster.

What they're trying to sell, however, is not soap or cigarettes or used cars.

It's a constitutional convention to draft a new state constitution.

### KEEP MINNESOTA

They've been concentrating on constitutional revision for some eight years now, but this year the League decided to step up public relations work on their goal.

Mrs. Robert Damon, 7317 Bryant avenue S., Richfield, came up with the idea of Burma-Shave-type signs that catch the eye of passing motorists, who always read them.

### UP TO SNUFF

In July hundreds of such signs will blossom out on Min-

nesota roads.

League chapters in Edina, Bloomington, Wayzata, Excelsior, Bemidji, Circle Pines, White Bear township, Afton-Lakeland, Anoka, Golden Valley and Hopkins have already placed orders.

Fielding the orders is Mrs. Gordon J. Grunditz, 6715 Eliot avenue, Richfield. She expects more orders.

### AMENDING LAWS

In Richfield itself, the signs will be out July 10 on main thoroughfares—Cedar, Nicollet and Portland avenues and Sixty-sixth street.

In calling for a constitutional convention, the League argues this way:

The present state constitution was framed in haste 100 years ago, and needs to be brought up to date.

### AIN'T ENOUGH.

Since many laws in the state constitution are given only token observance, it's hard to teach respect for law.

Piecemeal amendment of the constitution is more expensive and more unwieldy, in the long run, than a constitutional convention would be.

Citizens they do "sell" on the project will have to "buy" the idea on the installment plan.

The 1957 legislature would first have to approve putting the question on the ballot, and it would probably be 1958 before voters could express themselves on a convention to draw up a new constitution.

The slogan on the signs? You read it as you went along. Sneaky, weren't we?

JUL 3 1956

Date

## Humorous Skit To Highlight Meet Of Afton-Lakeland LWV

Mrs. Phillip Carlson will be the hostess at the Afton-Lakeland League of Women Voters general membership meeting Wednesday, July 11, at 8 p.m. Assisting will be the Mmes. C. R. Humphries, Charles Doermann, and M. France.

Mrs. Humphries, who was the local delegate to the National convention in Chicago, and Mrs. James Kerr and Mrs. Dean Honetschlager, two of the delegates to the second biennial council meeting in Minneapolis, will relate some of the many interesting and educational features of the meetings they attended.

A highlight of Wednesday's meeting will be a humorous skit, enacted by Miss Mary Jane Leonard and Mrs. W. Clyde Eckholm, depicting Minnesota's need for a constitutional convention. Our antiquated 99 year old constitution, with its many amendments, hampers both the executive and legislative departments of our state government, as both Governor Freeman and State Sen.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**RICHFIELD NEWS**

JUN 28 1956

Date

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
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**STILLWATER  
DAILY GAZETTE**

Date JUL 3 1956

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Mrs. Phillip Carlson will be the hostess at the Afton-Lakeland League of Women Voters general membership meeting Wednesday, July 11, at 8 p.m. Assisting will be the Mmes. C. R. Humphries, Charles Doermann, and M. France.

Mrs. Humphries, who was the local delegate to the National convention in Chicago, and Mrs. James Kerr and Mrs. Dean Honetschlager, two of the delegates to the second biennial council meeting in Minneapolis, will relate some of the many interesting and educational features of the meetings they attended.

A highlight of Wednesdays meeting will be a humorous skit, enacted by Miss Mary Jane Leonard and Mrs. W. Clyde Eckholm, depicting Minnesota's need for a constitutional convention. Our antiquated 99 year old constitution, with its many amendments, hampers both the executive and legislative departments of our state government, as both Governor Freeman and State Senator Elmer L. Anderson have stated. As the skit points out, the League feels that a constitutional convention is the most efficient method of overhauling our long, complicated constitution in order to weed out the defective and non-essential portions and to make the basic good provisions more effective.

### Sporting Goods, Cameras

- ☐ Reg. 3.75 Gal. Super Flat Wall Paint. Discontinued colors ..... Gal. 2.86
- ☐ Reg. 1.05 Qt. Super Flat Wall Paint. Discontinued colors ..... qt. 89c
- ☐ Reg. 12.99 Expanded Metal Basket Car Top Carrier for handy hauling..... 9.97
- ☐ Used Lawn Mowers (trade-in models) sold as-is at big savings, as low as \$10
- ☐ Reg. 83.50 Rotary Power Mowers—used and

### Hardware, Auto

- ☐ Reg. 12.95 Medicine Cabinet with glass mirror



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RED WING DAILY  
REPUBLICAN-EAGLE  
(Evening)

Date JUN 30 1956

## Editorials

### An Obligation to Be Recognized

There is wide recognition in the state of Minnesota that our constitution needs revision. The state constitution unlike the constitution written for the federal union of states by such eminent men as Washington, Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, and others is a lengthy document covering a multitude of matters—not a general charter of principles to guide state officials. In the Minnesota Blue Book, the state constitution takes up 22 pages of fine print—the federal constitution seven pages.

There are two ways to bring the constitution up to date—one by the amendment process; the other by calling a constitutional convention for an overhauling of the entire charter. The amendment process is a slow and often frustrating performance inasmuch as few of the voters at an election concern themselves with amendments and the occasion is all too rare when an amendment, no matter how popular it may be, can command a majority of all those casting votes as the constitution requires for passage.

Although both political parties in their platforms have consistently asked that the legislature give the people an opportunity to vote whether a constitutional convention should be called, in past sessions the legislature has refused to do this.

Members of the legislature evidently take the point of view recently expressed by Andrew Finstuen, editor of the Kenyon Leader, who prefers that the legislature consider what parts of the constitution need revision and submit proposed amendments one by one to the electorate. How the legislators, assailed by a mountainous volume of urgent matters at their biennial 90-day sessions, can accomplish a constructive job is almost beyond comprehension. They simply do not have the time to sit down and give their undivided attention to the job.

Finstuen, a former member of the state's law-making body, advances the opinion that revision of the constitution "better be left to be done by the legislature (because) a special convention for the purpose would be likely composed of a great number of politicians not particularly qualified for the work."

In other words what Finstuen is saying is that Minnesotans other than members of the legislature cannot be trusted with the work. This is a rather ridiculous statement—one that surely the people of the state would reject.

Some of the opponents of a constitutional convention oppose it because they think that somehow or other big city interests would dominate such a meeting. This hardly makes sense since the constitution says that delegates to a convention would be elected on the same basis as members of the legislature—the convention membership would have the same territorial complexion as the legislature.

Should a convention be called, the people would undoubtedly select a large number of their state legislators to sit in the convention. But it is only sensible to expect that they would show their intelligence in choosing outstanding citizens with an experience in public affairs whether or not they had ever sat under the dome of the capitol in St. Paul. The experience in other states where successful constitutional revision has been accomplished is that the people respond to such a challenge by electing as their delegates an unusually level-headed group of men and women.

Does the state constitution need an overhauling? The confusion and frustration imposed on the present legislature by the 90-day limitation—one of the constitutional provisions which strait-jacket constructive government in Minnesota—is ample evidence of the need. The people of this area should insist that the men they choose for the legislature this fall pledge themselves to give the public an opportunity to vote on calling a convention. One wonders how any conscientious politician could possibly fail to recognize such an ob-

# THE CASS LAKE TIMES

OVER 56 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE TO CASS LAKE AREA

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY THE UTLEYS, OF CASS LAKE  
GRANT UTLEY, Editor and Publisher

Member of Minnesota Editorial Ass'n and the National Editorial Ass'n.

Entered as Second Class Matter at the Post Office at Cass Lake, Minnesota, April 27, 1899. Under Act of March 3, 1879

AUGUST 2, 1956

## THE VOTERS BOOTH

The Constitution of the United States is a perfect example of a self-revising document. It has only 6,700 words and was deliberately planned to be flexible and adaptable. Our State Constitution which contains 25,800 words, lost its flexibility by an amendment which leaves it among the least flexible in the U. S.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

RICHFIELD NEWS

JUL 19 1956

Date

## Richfield LWV Idea On "Burma Shave" Signs Catch On

In its attempt to "shave" off some of the present state constitution and bring it up to date, the Richfield League of Women Voters has begun putting up Burma Shave type signs in the village to call attention of residents to the need for a constitutional convention to make revisions.

The signs read:

"Keep Minnesota  
Up To Snuff  
Just Amendments  
Ain't Enuff

Call a Constitutional Convention"

Signs are on 66th street at Graham Ave., 66th street at 10th Ave., 63rd and Cedar, and 67th and Portland.

Mrs. Robert Damon, 7317 Bryant avenue made the original suggestion for the State League to publicize the need for constitution convention with road signs. Mrs. Gordon Grunditz, 6715 Elliot avenue, as vice-president of the Richfield League, has been in charge of ordering the signs to be used by all leagues throughout the state.

Richfield League husbands have been called in to do the actual placing of the signs. Saturday Gordon Grunditz, Ken Arnold, Bob Stotts, and Jim Schepers put up three sets and the fourth went up Monday night.

Leagues that have ordered the signs so far are: Afton-Lakeland, Anoka, Bemidji, Bloomington, Circle Pines, Golden Valley, Edina, Excelsior, Fergus Falls, Hopkins, Owatonna, St. Cloud, Wayzata, Wells, and White Bear Township.

Date **AUG 7 1956**

## Women Voters League Board Plan Activities

Plans for the coming year were made by members of the executive board of the League of Women Voters as they met Monday evening at the home of Mrs. Edwin Nordheim, 1205 Dewey avenue. Miss Hazel Shimmin, president of the local league presided.

Arrangements for the Fair booth which has become an annual League project were completed. This year the League will conduct a slogan contest in connection with the booth.

A voters service institute to be held this fall, some radio programs for the near future were discussed and problems for unit meetings during the year. Placement of "Burma Shave" type signs which Minnesota League members are putting up along highways this summer to help sell the idea of a constitutional convention came up for discussion.

The Bemidji League purchased three series of these signs which will soon appear on all highways leading into Bemidji.

At the close of the meeting refreshments were served by Mrs. Nordheim and Mrs. Jack Snively.

835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**TRACY  
HEADLIGHT-HERALD**

Date **AUG 9 1956**

## League of Women Will Have Voters' Booth Labor Day

A special meeting of the League of Women Voters was held Monday evening at the home of president Mrs. Dick Donaldson.

Plans were developed for a voters' service booth to be maintained during the Box Car Day celebration on Labor Day.

Literature and information will be made available on all party candidates at the league's booth, probably to be located in the city park.

The league members also decided to have a float in the parade to emphasize the need for revision of Minnesota's outdated constitution.

Date **AUG 16 1956**

## LEAGUERS AT WORK

Members of the League of Women Voters have been vacationing this summer in one way or another, but they have not lost touch with each other and their thoughts are turning to League activities beginning again officially in September.

Several of the program chairmen have given informal coffee parties recently to exchange ideas for the good of the League. One of the parties was given by Mrs. Lloyd Stussy and another at the home of Mrs. F. M. Hockenbush.

The League president, Mrs. Manville Oren, sent out an interesting letter recently to the members, containing reminders and ideas for vacation reading during this exciting political convention year. Included in the letter were notes and suggestions from each of the program agenda chairmen.

At the Kernel's Party on Monday, August 6, League members gave away 275 New Constitution price tags. The League thanks Mrs. Sam Hawkinson for making the arm bands worn by the members that day. Thanks to all those who worked and many who offered to help with that project.

**STILLWATER WEEKLY  
GAZETTE**

Date **AUG 9 1956**

## Afton-Lakeland LWV To Have Booth At Fair

As in the past, the Afton-Lakeland League of Women Voters will again have a booth at the Washington County fair, Aug. 10-12, and this year's theme will be one of constitutional revision.

The league has been advocating for many years the remodeling of the state constitution by way of a convention, as many states have already done, rather than by the more costly amendment method.

The League is now being supported in its desire for a constitutional convention by Governor Freeman and many members of both political parties.

Mrs. Melvin Anderson and Mrs. Raymond Stephan, are co-chairmen of the fair project. The league's booth will acquaint all with Minnesota's need for constitution revision and other league policies and activities.

Thursday, August 16, 1956

Page Four

Cass Lake, Minnesota

## THE VOTERS BOOTH

Minnesota's State Constitution is 98 years old—only 10 states have older constitutions than ours. Age itself is no defect: but a constitution must be flexible enough to adapt itself to new and modern conditions. Ours is one of the few states where the citizen has never had the opportunity of a convention to revise the present document or frame a new one.

**HOPKINS REVIEW**

Date **AUG 30 1956**

## Hopkins LWV Unit Volunteers At Fair

Hopkins league of Women Voters unit will operate the LWV booth at the Minnesota State Fair Saturday morning, according to Mrs. J. E. Cummings, local president.

Hopkins women will distribute literature and meet state fair visitors at the booth. A contest based on guessing rice tags in a fish bowl will be conducted



MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**WELLS MIRROR**

Date SEP 27 1956

## Minnesota Needs A New Constitution

Why hasn't there been more action with regard to constitutional revision? Because fruitless controversy has been fostered in the legislature regarding the method of revision. In session after session, a small group of legislators argue that the job can be accomplished by the legislature through amendments, rather than by specially elected delegates assembled in a constitutional convention. This obstructive and untenable argument continues despite the fact that under Article I of the Constitution it is the people, not the legislature, who have the legal right to decide this question. But the people cannot decide it until the question is submitted to them at the polls. And this the legislature repeatedly refuses to do.

For four sessions of the legislature, a bill that would permit the people of Minnesota to vote on whether or not they wished a convention held to revise Minnesota's Constitution has failed to receive the necessary two-third vote of both House and Senate. Legislative hostility to change has prevented favorable action. This legislative reluctance has been played upon effectively by paid lobbyists for railroads and other segments of industry which oppose any possibility of change that might jeopardize their status under the present law.

**Wells League of Women Voters**

MEA Clipping Bureau  
**WHITE BEAR LAKE  
PRESS**

SEP 27 1956



The White Bear League of Women Voters had to call on the men for help with the "spadework" in this project of their "ground work" campaign for a Constitutional Convention in Minnesota. These signs reading "Keep Minnesota Up to Snuff; Just Amendments Ain't Enuff; Call A Constitutional Convention -League of Women Voters", flank Highways 100 and 244 and County Road E just east of Bellaire Avenue. In the picture are, left to right, front row: Mrs. L. A. Guggemos, resource chairman; Mrs. C. W. Wegner, unit leader of Sunrise Park unit; Mrs. John Rawson, public relations chairman; and Mrs. E. M. Fornshell, township league secretary. Standing are Mr. John Rawson and Ms. E. R. Gullickson. Not pictured is Mrs. Wayne Ellinger, bulletin editor.

of Women Voters, spoke on the subject, "Constitutional Convention," Wednesday noon at the weekly meeting of the Lions Club at the Carlton Hotel.

She gave a brief history of the adoption of the original state Constitution, pointing out that it was not arrived at in a manner that would produce a satisfactory document for the state for all time.

Mrs. Pemberton stated that the present Constitution has been amended 80 times, making it unsatisfactory for modern times.

The League of Women Voters is urging the State Legislature to pass a bill enabling state residents to vote on whether or not a convention should be called to write a new Constitution.

Special guests at the meeting were Archie Erickson and Walter Anderson, representing the Minnesota Organization of Blind in the

**POST-BULLETIN** ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA  
Thursday, August 23, 1956 — 15

Twin Cities. The men discussed the White Cane drive that is being held in Rochester today and Friday under the sponsorship of the Lions Clubs.

## Lions Club Hears Mrs. Pemberton

Mrs. John de J. Pemberton Jr., representing the Rochester League

**WELLS MIRROR**

Date **SEP 27 1956**

**LEAGUERS AT WORK**

LWV  
On Monday evening, September 24, the League of Women Voters met at the home of Mrs. Lloyd Stussy with Mrs. John Russ the assisting hostess.

All League members and their husbands are urged to attend the dinner and meeting with the Civic and Commerce Association on Monday evening, October 8, at 6:30 p. m. at the First Lutheran church. Dr. Ralph Fjelstad, brother of Luther Fjelstad, will speak on "The Needs of Our State Government."

The League wishes to thank the Wells Mirror for their splendid cooperation in bringing before the public the great need for revision of the Minnesota state constitution.

The Voters Service committee of the League deserves credit for giving out leaflets at the P. T. A. meeting last week, containing factual information about the three proposed amendments to be voted on in the coming election. These leaflets will be given to the Home and School Association members also. You may find it worth while to listen to radio station WCAL (the University station) on Tuesdays at 11:15 a. m. On October 2 the three proposed amendments will be discussed and most everyone needs to learn more about them.

Luther Fjelstad spoke to the League of Women Voters on Monday evening on Amendment No. 3, the Iron Ore Tax Amendment. He explained that iron ore taxes that now go into a huge trust fund, hereafter will be used to help pay mounting school costs. If Minnesota voters want to ease the drain on their own pocketbooks in school financing, they will vote for Amendment No. 3. It will mean the adding of 8 or 10 million dollars to the current fund for school expenses. The money will come from the Iron Ore occupation tax. If it doesn't come from that source, it will have to come from the addition of direct taxes on the people to pay the rising school expenses. Mr. Fjelstad gave permission to quote him in saying "Vote Yes for Amendment No. 3." Remember no X on your ballot counts as a "no" vote.

The League will sponsor a poster contest for high school students on "Getting out the vote." Mrs. Mariys Juhnke will explain details of the contest to her art students. Watch for these posters in the business district during the next few weeks.

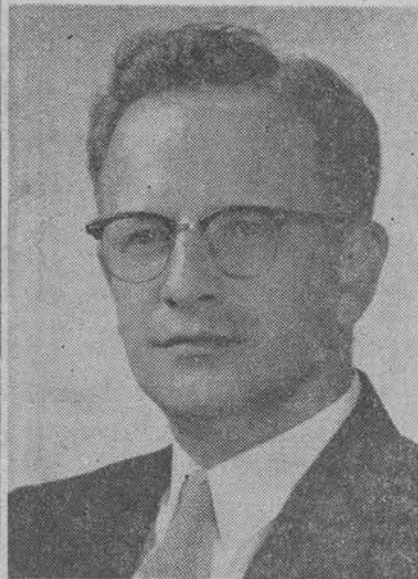
Before the meeting was adjourned, Mrs. J. Murray spoke briefly on Fair Trade Laws and Mrs. Mark Virnig gave the League members some background information on the outdated Minnesota Constitution and some of the reasons for revising it.

**WELLS MIRROR**

Date **SEP 27 1956**

**Dr. Ralph S. Fjelstad  
Guest Speaker Here  
Monday, October 8** LWV

Dr. Ralph S. Fjelstad will be the guest speaker at the joint dinner meeting of the Civic and Commerce Association and the League of Women Voters, their husbands and wives, on Monday, October 8. The dinner will be held in the dining room of the First Lutheran church at 6:30 p. m.



Dr. Fjelstad is Professor of Government at Carleton College on the Edward C. Congdon Foundation and co-chairman of the Department of Government and International Relations.

He came to Carleton in 1948 as assistant professor of Government. A native of Minnesota, he graduated summa cum laude from Concordia College, Moorhead, and earned his Ph. D. from Northwestern University in 1948.

Enrollment officer at Concordia for three years, Dr. Fjelstad held the position of Director of Personnel in the War Department, Illinois Ordnance Plant, Carbondale, Ill., from 1941 to 1943.

He was on leave from Carleton in 1952 as a Faculty Fellow under the Fund for the Advancement of Education, to make a year's study of state legislative practices and procedures, with particular reference to the legislature of Minnesota.

The topic he will discuss at the joint dinner meeting is "The Needs of Our State Government."

Any one who is not a member of either organization, may attend the dinner by obtaining tickets (\$1.50) from either Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Heitner or Mrs. Manville Oren on or before October 1.

Dr. Fjelstad, who is a brother of Luther Fjelstad, superintendent of the Wells Public Schools, is interested in community activities and is chairman of the 1956 Northfield Community Chest. He has been a member of the Northfield Advisory Committee on Education.

**WELLS MIRROR**

Date **SEP 6 1956**

**Minnesota Needs A  
New Constitution**

Since 1898, when the amending process to our Constitution was made much more difficult, 96 amendments have been proposed and only 31 have been adopted. On the average only 67% of the voters participating in a general election vote on proposed amendments. An amendment, therefore, goes to the people at a general election with a 33% handicap; only 18% of those voting upon the measure are enough to defeat it!

This low approval rate has not happened because proposed amendments have been unpopular, but because the voter who fails to mark his ballot is counted as voting "no." 93% of the amendments submitted from 1899 to 1954 received a majority of "yes" votes. In other words, the voters who did not vote on the amendments defeated them.

Be an informed voter—learn all you can about the amendments and then vote either "yes" or "no."  
Wells League of Women Voters

**DULUTH DAILY HERALD  
(Evening)**

Date **SEP 6 1956**

**SENATOR TO TALK**

State Sen. Elmer L. Andersen, St. Paul, will address the Duluth League of Women Voters at 12:45 p. m. Sept. 26 in the Medical Arts building. He will speak on "How the Constitution Happens the Legislature."

Date **SEP 21 1956**

THE HIBBING depot in the Great Northern Square has been repainted. . . Minnesota Voter a publication of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, has issued an appeal under the signature of Mrs. Basil Young, president, Hibbing, asking a personal contribution to the Constitutional Revision fund for the printing and distribution of more pamphlets on the appeal for the revision of Minnesota's constitution. The booklet is off the press. It was professionally written, cleverly illustrated, purse size and striking. It is a fascinating story and one that should arouse public opinion for a constitutional amendment at the state legislative session.



9-28-52

8

# THE WASECA JOURNAL, WASECA, MINN.

EDITORIALS

## A Change

ful . . .

A self-survey task force has recommended that the governor and lieutenant governor be the only elective officials in state government.

The attorney general, state treasurer and secretary of state would be appointed by the governor and the clerk of the supreme court by the members of the court. The office of state auditor would be eliminated.

Also recommended was a wholesale shift of the duties of the three top officials.

Surely the proposal has merit but it hasn't much chance of adoption. It would require a constitutional amendment and they are difficult to pass on controversial matters.

The public would be pretty well divided on this proposal. Many would view with alarm the idea of taking away the voters voice in naming particularly the attorney general, state treasurer and secretary of state.

Too, there are those who like the idea of having a dissenting voice on the executive council during those years when neither party has been able to make a clean sweep of all state offices. Under the appointment system all of the other state officers would be controlled by the party winning the governorship. There would be a possibility of having a governor of one party and a lieutenant governor of another but it would not be likely.

Logical as the proposal appears to be we do not expect to see it adopted. The legislative might better take one step at a time. Submission of a constitutional amendment making the clerk of the supreme court an appointive office should be the first move, an early one, and one easy to achieve.

Realizing that people, in general, are living faster these days, and that they don't always bother to "read the fine print" before they act, we shuddered at the sight of the dark cloud dropping earthward to envelope our own state capitol at St. Paul.

It should be called a dark cloud, because if it is ever permitted to close in we may know many years of blindness.

We refer to the news of last week telling of a "survey committee" recommendation advocating the complete reorganization of our state government. You haven't heard of it? Little wonder, it didn't make the splash in news circles we think it deserved.

The survey committee, called a state government self-survey committee, has as its apparent objective the streamlining of the nucleus of our state governing system. The committee, headed by a University of Minnesota political science professor, one Lloyd M. Short, recommends the concentration of all state services into 14 departments. It recommends that the voters should not vote for their state officials but that they be appointed by the governor. The voters would elect a governor and lieutenant governor only. The duties of the state auditor, state treasurer and secretary of state would be consolidated within other agencies and friends of the governor would control these agencies on an appointive basis. Sound cozy? There's more!

The governor's term in office would be increased to four years. The attorney general would be appointed instead of elected. He would boss a Department of Law and Public Safety. From what continent have you heard similar sounding titles before?

The clerk of the Supreme Court would also be made an appointive position. It will be anyway if we approve amendment No. 1 at the coming election on November 6.

In addition to these, there is a long list of other consolidations, concentrations and changes recommended by the committee, many of them lined up to affect the present systems controlling state education, health and welfare.

The report of the committee's findings which we read seemed to have omitted one familiar word . . . that oft used, well-worn term "efficiency." But perhaps it was implied.

So what does all this mean? We think it means that Mr. John Q. Voter had better start watching where he marks his X's on election day, — and if he hasn't been paying much attention to what goes on outside his own 160 or across the street, it's high time he develop an awareness of the forces which may even now be selecting the proper time to jerk his plow from beneath him.

When amendments come up at election time, read them. Then read them again . . . they can be confusing. The state legislature may also pass reorganization laws, — watch 'em like a hawk.

Obviously, an all-appointed bunch of state officers would not be a desirable thing. But it has been recommended, and that must be the first step.

When you lose your right to vote, — what earthly possession do you have left?

We consider this entire measure a bold, wholesale insult to the voting public. It may appear absurd to you too, but that doesn't guarantee its not being passed into law. We may soon be asked to vote upon just such a proposition, if, when election time rolls around again, we still have that privilege.

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835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**VIRGINIA  
MESABI DAILY NEWS**

Date **OCT 2 1956**

## LWV Begin Unit Study Meetings

The provisional League of Women Voters of Virginia is prepared to begin the study of constitutional revision in Minnesota, officials announced today.

Mrs. Thomas Muff, Eveleth, resource committeewoman, conducted a workshop for the unit leaders. Mrs. Elmer Isaacson, Mrs. Kenneth Sexton, Mrs. Richard Silvola, Mrs. Douglas Blackwell, Mrs. N. T. Rykken, and Mrs. Muff will present the material for discussion at the unit meetings.

Any woman of voting age who is interested in the League of Women Voters program is cordially invited to attend the unit of her choice, officers of the provisional chapter said. The unit meetings are arranged to give interested women an opportunity to meet at the time and location best suited to their own needs. No formal invitations are extended.

Unit meetings are scheduled as follows: Unit No. 1, at 7:30 to 9 o'clock this evening, at 1010 Seventeenth Street North with Mrs. Leonard Stone as hostess. Unit No. 2, Wednesday from 2 to 3:30 o'clock at 723 Douglas Avenue in Eveleth with Mrs. Muff as hostess.

Unit No. 3, Wednesday from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at 415 Fourth Street South with Mrs. Walter Damberg as hostess; Unit No. 4 on Wednesday from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at 912 Fifth Avenue South with Miss Winifred Reynolds as hostess. Unit No. 5 also will meet on Wednesday from 8 to 9:30 p.m. at 37 Taconite Drive with Mrs. Douglas Blackwell as hostess. The final unit, Unit No. 6, will meet from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Thursday at 39 Taconite Drive with Mrs. N. T. Rykken as hostess.

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**NEW ULM  
DAILY JOURNAL**

Date **OCT 3 1956**

## Literary Club Hears Richfield Speaker

Mrs. Gordon Grunditz of Richfield, chairman of the constitutional revision committee that will lobby at the legislature, was guest speaker at the meeting of the Women's Literary Club Tuesday afternoon. She explained the reasons why a constitutional convention for the purpose of revising the present outmoded constitution is necessary.

Members of the League of Women Voters, the Current News Club and the Crescendo Club were invited guests.

The meeting was held at the home of Mrs. T. R. Fritsche with Mrs. Carl Fritsche, assisting hostess.

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**ROCHESTER  
DAILY POST-BULLETIN  
(Evening)**

Date **OCT 4 1956**

## State Constitution Revision Urged

"The importance of building public opinion to demand a constitutional convention to revise the state constitution," was stressed at a statewide executive meeting of the League of Women voters held Wednesday at the Minneapolis YWCA.

Mrs. John Silliman, local league president, and Mrs. R. Drew Miller, legislative chairman, represented the local group, and Mrs. John Hill of Rochester, state publications chairman, spoke to the group on the use of publications at the local level.

Mrs. Basil Young of Hibbing, state league president, presided during the discussions, which included local lobbying and the current agenda. Guest speaker was Mrs. Errol Horner of Washington, D. C., national league representative.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**ROSE TRIBUNE**

Date

## Roseville LWV Organizes Drive To Revise Minnesota Constitution

As part of a statewide campaign for a constitutional convention to draw up a new modern state constitution, the Roseville LWV has organized a concerted drive to acquaint citizens of this community with the need for constitutional revision. League members have turned author, producer and actor and will present an original skit on the subject at various civic and social meetings throughout the month of October.

The state League has published a booklet on constitutional revision entitled: "Well What D'ya Know, Minnesota Has A Constitution". Local Leaguers have come up with a hatfull of ideas and will be using every one to

accomplish wide distribution of the booklet, which sells for 25 cents. You will be seeing and constitution all during the month of October, and a fascinating story it is.

The disturbed atmosphere and haste in which Minnesota's basic law was drawn, the outdated provisions, and other aspects of our confusing state document have been presented in the League's booklet in very readable fashion and with graphic cartoon illustrations. To promote the sale of this booklet a committee headed by Mrs. Theodore Lindbom has set up an ambitious program for this area.

(Continued on Page Seven)

Date OCT 4 1956

### WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

#### Let's Be Ever Watchful

Realizing that people, in general, are living faster these days, and that they don't always bother to "read the fine print" before they act, we shuddered at the sight of the dark cloud dropping earthward to envelope our own state capitol at St. Paul.

It should be called a dark cloud, because if it is ever permitted to close in we may know many years of blindness.

We refer to the news of last week telling of a "survey committee" recommendation advocating the complete reorganization of our state government. You haven't heard of it? Little wonder, it didn't make the splash in news circles we think it deserved.

The survey committee, called a state government self-survey committee has as its apparent objective the streamlining of the nucleus of our state governing system. The committee, headed by a University of Minnesota political science professor, one Lloyd M. Short, recommends the concentration of all state services into 14 departments. It recommends that the voters should not vote for their state officials but that they be appointed by the governor. The voters would elect a Governor and Lt. Governor only. The duties of the state auditor, state treasurer and secretary of state would be consolidated within other agencies and friends of the governor would control these agencies on an appointive basis. Sound cozy? There's more!

The governor's term in office would be increased to four years. The attorney general would be appointed instead of elected. He would boss a Department of Law and Public Safety. From what continent have you heard similar sounding titles before?

The clerk of the Supreme Court would also be made an appointive position. It will be anyway if we approve amendment No. 1 at the coming election on November 6.

In addition to these, there is a long list of other consolidations, concentrations and changes recommended by the committee, many of them lined up to affect the present systems controlling state education, health and welfare.

The report of the committee's findings which we read seemed to have omitted one familiar word — that oft used, well - worn term "efficiency". But perhaps it was implied.

So what does all this mean? We think it means that Mr. John Q. Voter had better start watching where he marks his X's on election day, — and if he hasn't been paying much attention to what goes on outside his own 160 or across the street, it's high time he develop an awareness of the forces which may even now be selecting the proper time to jerk his plow from beneath him.

When amendments come up at election time, read them. Then read them again — they can be confusing. The state legislature may also pass reorganization laws, — watch 'em like a hawk.

Obviously, an all - appointed bunch of state officers would not be a desirable thing. But it has been recommended, and that must be the first step.

When you lose your right to vote, — what earthly possessions do you have left?

We consider this entire measure a bold, wholesale insult to the voting public. It may appear absurd to you too, but that doesn't guarantee its not being passed into law. We may soon be asked to vote upon just such a proposition, if, when election time rolls around again, we still have that privilege.

Westbrook Sentinel

Date OCT 4 1956

## Falcon Heights LWV Plans Fall Meetings

Wednesday, October 3, at the home of Mrs. Walter Hiller, 2203 Falwell, Univ. Grove, members of the Falcon Hts. L. of W. V's and their guests, will hold their opening fall meeting. A short movie depicting hi-lites of the local league's past year's activities and spotting village scenes of interest will be shown to acquaint our guests with some aspects of League work and with the village in which they live. The evenings speaker, Mrs. William Peet of the St. Paul League, will review the new booklet, "Well, What D'you Know, Minnesota has a Constitution." A short dramatic story of Minnesota's Constitution.

Any Falcon Hts. resident interested in attending this opening meeting is urged to contact Mrs. Clark Peterson, Mi. 6-5723 with whom transportation may be arranged if needed. Meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of each month.

A board of directors meeting was held at the home of Mrs. J. Duddleston, 1429 W. Hoyt, Sept. 10th. Candidate replies to the state League questionnaire were reviewed and plans were formulated for the coming months unit

meetings based on material prepared by the state and national offices.

The Falcon Hts. League will again sponsor the sale of the well designed appointment calendar for '57 which carries the League name on it. This calendar offers adequate space for daily appointment notations, is only \$.50 and may be ordered thru any local league member.

OCT 4 1956

## Voters League Sponsors Speaker On Constitution

The League of Women Voters throughout the state of Minnesota has been pushing for a constitutional convention to draft a new state constitution.

The Wayzata League now presents the opportunity for its league members, guests and all interested people to learn why a new constitution is so important to Minnesota.

On October 11 at 8 p. m. in the Wayzata high school library, Mrs. Stanley Kane will speak on "Constitution and You."

Mrs. Kane is well qualified to present this subject. She has been editor of the "Minnesota Voter," reapportionment chairman for the LWV, and is on the constitutional revision and legislative committees.

Plan on attending this important meeting. The Wayzata league welcomes you.



MEA Clipping Bureau  
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## WELLS MIRROR

OCT 4 1956

Date

### Minnesota Needs A New Constitution

We have mentioned before how the amending method to revise our constitution is difficult and expensive. You have but to read the entire content of the first proposed amendment (revision of the judiciary article of the Constitution) which is to be voted on at the coming election to see how involved some amendments are.

Let us turn now to the convention method. A constitutional convention is composed of delegates elected by the people from each legislative district. In an orderly, systematic fashion, the convention considers the Constitution as a whole and proposes a revised Constitution for the voters' approval or disapproval.

The initial step to achieve a constitutional convention is simplicity itself. All it requires is that the legislature pass a bill submitting to the voters the question "Shall a Constitutional Convention be called?" What would happen if the bill should pass at the next legislative session and the people vote yes? Delegates would have to be elected, and before the final document could be ratified, at least five years of successive steps would be required. The convention method is not a hasty one.

If you think you and your friends and neighbors should have the right to vote on whether or not you want a constitutional convention called, tell your legislator. Minnesota's future is in your hands.

Wells League of Women Voters

MEA Clipping Bureau  
DEEPHAVEN ARGUS

Date OCT 5 1956

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AUSTIN DAILY HERALD

Date OCT 4 1956

## League of Women Voters Continues Constitution Study

Ten groups of League of Women Voters in Austin and one in Adams started their year's work Wednesday discussing the three amendments which are to be on the ballot in the coming November election, hearing reports of a board meeting held Friday, and continuing study and discussion about the revision of the state constitution.

For six years Austin Leaguers have had on their program, topics pointing up need for revision of the state constitution. Some of the members, the same as some legislators, feel a Constitutional Convention should be called with a view to writing an entirely new constitution. Others are of the opinion there are no good reasons for having a Constitutional Convention; they believe necessary changes can be made by amendments; that it would be a dangerous undertaking at this time when so many hidden means are being used to attempt to change our form of government.

Inasmuch as the League was organized for the purpose of aiding women to become well informed on all subjects of government; to help them analyze situations, and to do their own thinking so as not to be carried away by pressure groups; all sides of questions, such as Constitutional Revision and a Constitutional Convention are studied thoroughly.

If a Constitutional Convention is called these are the steps which would become necessary: In 1957 the Legislature would vote to submit to the people the question of whether or not to call a constitutional convention; in 1958, the people would vote on calling a convention; in 1959, the legislature would set up the machinery for a convention; in 1960 voters would elect delegates to a convention, to serve without pay; in 1960-61, the legislature would set up the election, for approval or rejection of the document framed by the convention; and in 1962, the voters would vote to approve or reject the document framed by the convention.

The state legislature, in 1947, recognizing there are changes which should be made in the present state constitution, created a commission to study it. In 1949, the commission recommended 112

changes and six new sections and a constitutional convention. In 1951 the legislature voted "no" on the commission's recommendation of a constitutional convention. Again in 1953 and 1955, they voted "no".

The majority of the legislators feel that necessary changes can be made by amendments. They also feel a convention is too expensive. They feel, too, there might be danger in rewriting the state constitution and that the present form of government might be undermined and rights of the citizens endangered.

To amend the constitution it takes two-thirds of the votes cast for the amendment to pass it. The League is urging all citizens of Austin and Mower County to read carefully, the three amendments which are on the ballot in the coming Nov. 6 election, and vote. If a person neglects to vote on amendments it is the same as a "no" vote.

Meetings Wednesday were held at the following homes:

Group 1, Mrs. Wlater Nordin Jr. Highway 16 West; group 2, Mrs. Walter Nordin Sr., Lakeshore Drive; group 3, Mrs. A. L. Sponberg, 303 Elm Tree Rd.; group 4, Mrs. P. J. Holand 100 Elm Tree Rd.; group 5, Mrs. James Dice, 504 W. Bridge; group 6, Mrs. Dean M. White 200 Southwood Rd.; group 7, Mrs. L. B. Hill, 506 N. First; group 8, Mrs. Kenn Thompson, Northwood Road; group 9, Mrs. Archie Lane, 304 Nassau; group 10, Mrs. Orrin Bawly, 311 W. Winona; Adams group, Mrs. Vance Torgerson.

Program chairman were: Group 1, Mrs. W. C. Sayles Austin Rt. 2; Group 2, Mrs. H. E. Rasmussen, 907 Lansing; Group 3, Mrs. R. D. Gower, 303 Southwood Rd.; Group 4, Mrs. Ray M. Wescott, 604 W. Winona; Group 5, Mrs. Manley Hammer, 90 Myrtle; Group 6, Mrs. R. M. Jacobson, 708 N. Third; Group 7, Mrs. Lester B. Hill, 506 N. First; Group 8, Mrs. Ernest Larson, Northwood Road; Group 9, Mrs. A. C. Fossey, 401 Prospect; Group 10, Mrs. John W. Holmes, 402 Kenwood, Mrs. Richard White, 1402 W. Baldwin; Adams Group, Mrs. Vernon Schaefer.



# Women Driving for a Modern Constitution

By LORA LEE WATSON  
Minneapolis Tribune Staff Writer

Prime project of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota this year is working for a constitutional convention to draw up a new, modern state constitution.

The state league and individual local leagues have been promoting their project on all fronts for a year. Now the "big push," the concerted drive to acquaint all Minnesotans with the need for constitutional revision, will begin Monday.

The state league has published a booklet on constitutional revision called "Well What D'ya Know . . . Minnesota Has a Constitution!" Each local league will try to achieve wide distribution of the booklet, which will sell for 25 cents.

In Minneapolis, for instance, one of the gimmicks to attract attention will be an ancient car, carrying league members dressed in costumes of the same vintage as the Minnesota constitution. This eye-catcher will tour the city, followed by a station wagon from which the booklets will be sold. The antique car has been lent by Minnesota Bible college.

LEAGUE UNITS will use additional cars to cover all areas of the city.

Mrs. John G. Lee, Farmington, Conn., national president of League of Women Voters, will be in town Monday. She is making a national tour of league units and will go from here to Duluth.

Elsewhere in the state, other promotional schemes are being used. In Kasson and Alexandria, window displays have been set up. The Roseville league, together with Falcon Heights, has worked up a brief skit on the need for a constitutional convention, and for two weeks—starting Monday—will present it for any organization desiring it.

Wayzata will have a public meeting Thursday, promoting the league project. Mrs. Stanley Kane of the Golden Valley league will give talks on the new book.

EDINA HAS SET UP a speakers' bureau and also will purchase a supply of the books to be distributed for use in business and professional waiting rooms.

A series of coffee parties is planned in Arden Hills, with the cost of admission being the price of the book—plus a promise to read it.

"A Very Funny Story" is the name of a 15-minute movie on the first constitutional convention, which the state league office has for rental. Script for the movie was written by Philip Gelb.

The state office also has available a tape recording of "Well, What D'ya Know . . .," for classroom, organization and radio use.

BOOKS WILL BE displayed at the Minnesota Education association convention in St. Paul auditorium Oct. 25 and 26, and the league will have members on hand to answer questions on what help teachers can get from the league.

On Oct. 18, the state board of the league will entertain at luncheon the authors of the last constitutional convention bill introduced in both house and senate. The luncheon will be in University of Minnesota Coffman Memorial Union with Mrs. Basil Young of Hibbing, state league president, presiding. In charge will be Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves of Rochester, chairman of the constitutional convention item on the state board.

In addition to the "What D'ya Know" leaflet, the league has brought out a second publication entitled "The State You're In." This 87-page book contains condensed information on all aspects of the state constitution, its problems and the need for a constitutional convention.

INTENDED FOR REFERENCE and study, the book will be used for league unit work. It also is meant for members of other organizations working for a constitutional convention, speakers preparing talks, librarians, students and persons in government. A copy will be available for each legislator and for the Minnesota Historical society.

The League of Women Voters has had the matter of constitutional revision as one of the items on its agenda since 1947. Some years it shared billing with other projects. In 1948 and again in 1953-55, it was sole item for concerted league action.

Others working for constitutional revision have been these: Minnesota Citizens Constitutional committee; Minnesota State Grange; the two major political parties; AFL, CIO; Council of Jewish Women; several newspapers, church groups and many individuals.

Minnesota's constitution dates back to 1857, the year before Minnesota was admitted to statehood. The state legislature, elected at the same time the constitution was accepted by voters, amended it even before President Polk signed the admission bill.

The 1947 Minnesota legislature created a Minnesota constitutional committee to suggest changes. After 14 months of study, the committee recommended 112 changes, six completely new sections and a constitutional convention to put these changes into effect.

These are among facts being brought to the attention of Minnesotans by the League of Women Voters in their all-out drive for a constitutional convention.



Drive for New Constitution: Chet Hyland drives his 1908 Cadillac to help the League of Women Voters promote its drive for a new state constitution. League members, dressed in costumes from the day when Minne-

sota's constitution was written, are, from left, Mrs. Russell Daniels, 4705 Merilee drive, Minnetonka; Mrs. Donald Overholt, 58 Van Buren avenue S., Hopkins and Mrs. Ray Makepeace, 11403 Marian Hill road, Plymouth.

MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE PHOTO BY DUFF JOHNSTON



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**ST. CLOUD DAILY TIMES**  
(Evening)

Date OCT 6 1956

**As The Times Sees It**

## **Changes Asked In State Gov't.**

**I**F COUNTIES are our most inefficient governmental units, most of our states are not far behind. This gives special interest to a study made by the committee surveying the Minnesota state government.

The most drastic change recommended, one which other states ought to consider seriously, would make all state offices except lieutenant governor and governor appointive instead of elective. At present the attorney general, secretary of state, treasurer and three railroad and warehouse commissioners are elected.

This encumbers the ballot without doing much to enhance popular control of the state administration. Few voters know any of the candidates for these offices, or any reason why one should be elected over another. The average man has only the party to guide him and, in default of anything better, generally takes the party's recommendations. The results are apt to be mediocre; sometimes they are disastrous.

Other proposals would make the governor's term four years instead of two, and allow him to appoint and remove department heads. This would make his position somewhat analogous to the presidency. This system has worked out well nationally.

The Minnesota committee recommendations are of interest not only in that state but also in numerous other states. The report offers valuable guidance toward better state governments.

Date **OCT 7 1956**

## Women Voters To Distribute Book On Constitutional Revision

"Minnesota Has a Constitution," a booklet telling the lively story of the battles that preceded our state's recognition, will be offered to the public this week by the Minnesota League of Women Voters.

The disturbed atmosphere and haste in which Minnesota's basic law was drawn and the outgrown laws, now ignored, have been presented in graphic pictures and prose in the league's booklet to state their case for the need for constitutional revision, officers said.

Local league groups, including St. Paul and Ramsey county units, will be covering the state with Leaguemobiles, window displays, coffee parties and contacts with friends and neighbors to make citizens aware of the book and its contents throughout the month.

Also scheduled is a special luncheon Oct. 18, with the Minnesota league board of directors as hosts, for legislators who authored constitutional convention bills in the last session of the Legislature. Among those present will be Sen. Elmer Andersen and Rep. Joseph Karth of St. Paul. Mrs. Basil Your of Hibbing, state president, and Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves of Rochester, state chairman of the constitutional convention item, will present the legislators with copies of the booklet.

Another book, "The State You're In," also is being presented this month by the League of Women Voters. It is a research work on the Minnesota constitution which, it is

felt, can be used for reference by legislators and teachers.

## ROCHESTER DAILY POST-BULLETIN (Evening)

Date **OCT 8 1956**

## Women Voters Sponsor Exhibits

"The Need for Revision of the Minnesota Constitution," is the theme of window displays now appearing in the windows of the First National Bank, the Kahler Coffee Shop and Massey's.

The displays, which were made by Mrs. Oliver Dorschner, Mrs. Fred Rolstad and Mrs. Louis Murphy, unit 5 members of the Rochester League of Women Voters, are centered around the new state publication, "Well, What D'Ya Know—Minnesota Has a Constitution."

The exhibits were made as part of the League's state-wide project to acquaint all Minnesotans with the need they feel is evident for a convention to revise the Minnesota constitution.

Date **OCT 9 1956**

## League Issues Two Books On State Constitution

Two new publications on the need for revising Minnesota's constitution are being issued this week by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. One is intended for the public and the other for persons doing research.

Copies of "Well, What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota Has a Constitution," a booklet written in humorous style and illustrated with cartoons, will be given to county libraries, in addition to those already sent to state legislators and newspaper editors. A tape recording is planned for use by schools, radio stations and organizations.

Dealing mainly with Minnesota's freak 1857 constitutional convention and the legacy of problems it left in the state, this booklet calls for a present-day convention "to meet together in the old American way and review and revise our constitution into a vibrant, living thing, rather than a ghostly scroll of 100 years ago."

In most of the 54 league communities, "Leaguemobiles" will circulate the booklet in business and residential sections Monday, October 8.

"The State You're In," an 87-

page book for reference and study, is meant for speakers, persons in government, students, and members of other organizations working for a Minnesota constitutional convention. It compiles information on all aspects of the state constitution and its problems.

Both books will be displayed in a booth at the Minnesota Educational association convention in St. Paul October 25-26.

Further information on the books and tape recording may be obtained from the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 15th and Washington avenue, S. E., Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.

## WAYZATA HERALD

Date **OCT 11 1956**

## Mrs. Kane Speaks On Constitution Tonight at 8:00

Mrs. Stanley Kane will address the League of Women Voters, friends, and guests on why Minnesota should have a new state constitution today, October 11, at 8 p. m. in the Wayzata high school library.

Mrs. Kane, who is well qualified to present this subject, titles her talk "Constitution and You." She has been editor of the "Minnesota Voter," reapportionment chairman for the LWV, and is on the constitutional revision and legislative committees.

## ST. CLOUD DAILY TIMES

**OCT 8 1956**

● The plight of Minnesota and its archaic state constitution is graphically portrayed in a new booklet prepared by the League of Women Voters. It is good reading, right to the point, and based on facts.

It tells how the present state constitution was hastily drawn and illegally adopted and how out of date it has become over the years.

The League of Women Voters, of course, is interested, like so many other citizens, in a constitutional convention which might draw a new constitution or at least bring the present one up to date and eliminate some of its more serious errors and inconsistencies.

You'll want to have a look at this book. It's on sale now at the Marsh drug store shop, and will be available on the street day and Tuesday.



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**ROCHESTER  
DAILY POST-BULLETIN  
(Evening)**

Date OCT 10 1956

## Parent-Teacher Associations Meet

Golden Hill and Longfellow schools PTAs met Tuesday evenings at their respective schools.

Mrs. R. Drew Miller, Mrs. Louis Murphy and Mrs. John de J. Pemberton Jr., of the Rochester League of Women Voters, led a discussion on revision of the State Constitution at the Golden Hill meeting. Also, during the meeting Glenn Chronister, school principal, and Norris Nutting were named to attend the State Congress of Parents and Teachers Oct. 23 and 24 in Minneapolis.

It also was announced that two raincoats will be purchased for the school patrol, and a report on the new skating rink was given by Gordon Branes. The attendance prize was won by the third grade, and refreshments were served by the seventh grade parents.

Boy Scout Troop No. 106 held a Court of Awards at a meeting of the Longfellow School PTA. Lloyd Mitchell received a life Scout award and a first aid merit badge, David Daggett was awarded the art and scholarship merit badges, and Richard Loomis received swimming and lifesaving badge and was also awarded the explorer's tie clasp for leadership during summer camp.

Girl Scouts and Brownies receiving awards were Karen Dunn, homemaker, housekeeper and backyard camper; Linda Perkins, cooking and sewing, and Linda

Girls who received Brownie pins were Diane Asleson, Cynthia Erickson, Cheryl Hickok, DeMarci Hunt, Diane Logan, Jeanette Logan, Anita Nereson, Jane Olson, Donna Rogers and Theresa Suhr.

Troop committee members attending the meeting were Amos Gullickson, chairman, Ben Mitchell and Martin Mohlke. Leaders are Ray Dunn, Mrs. Donald Perkins and Mrs. Ben Mitchell. Mrs. Eugene Thompson assisted with a skit presented by the Girl Scouts and Brownies.

Prizes were won by W. D. Hickok, Mrs. Richard Wilson, Mrs. E. I. Sniesrud, Mrs. Duane Johnson and Mrs. Curtis Amdahl.

## Constitution 'Too Sacred' to Change

To the Editor: I note on your women's section of Oct. 7 the vicious attempt to show our state constitution as obsolete by showing an old model of a car.

The constitution of the state of Minnesota is a sacred thing and not to be dealt with like an old car or an old horse.

Officials of this state are pledged to uphold and defend the constitution, so I cannot see why a newspaper would publish an item made to shame this sacred doctrine.

It is doubtful that today one could get through a constitution that would give life, liberty, or freedom in its tenets to the people.

Changed constitutions usually bring new strife, error, revolution, and continuous tampering with the rights of the free man and the common people whom the constitution was in the first instance drawn up to defend and protect.—James Childs, Fairmont, Minn.

To the Editor: I have just finished reading Lora Lee Watson's description of the League of Women Voters' drive to establish a "new-model state constitution."

Calling a state constitutional convention is of great importance. This ancient constitution should be re-made, not only because of its two-wheel brakes attempting to compete with present-day four-wheel power brakes, but because written into the existing constitution are terms which favor, taxwise, large corporations operating within the state at the expense of the average taxpayer.

The constitution should be overhauled to the end that all taxpayers are treated equally and fairly.

The League of Women Voters should be loudly commended for this forthright effort.—George Murk, Minneapolis.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
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**STILLWATER WEEKLY  
GAZETTE**

Date OCT 11 1956

## Women Voters To Present Skit At Meeting Of AAUW

This fall the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, together with local leagues throughout the state, is launching an all-out campaign to acquaint Minnesotans with the need for an up-to-date constitution.

A booklet on constitutional revision, entitled, "Well, What D'Ya Know, Minnesota Has a Constitution," has been prepared under the auspices of the State League.

At the general membership meeting of the Afton-Lakeland League of Women Voters, Oct. 3, Thomas Bingham of the state publications committee discussed the booklet, and told the group of various gimmicks that will be used by local leagues to promote its distribution.

Miss Mary Jane Leonard and Mrs. James Kerr of the Afton-Lakeland League have prepared a humorous skit which they will give to organizations in the St. Croix Valley desiring it.

On Monday evening, Oct. 15, at 8 o'clock, they will perform at a meeting of the local branch of the AAUW, which will be held in the home of Mrs. Fred Andersen at Bayport. Mrs. Dean Honetschlager will introduce the skit and distribute the booklets to all those who wish to purchase them.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
**MOUND PILOT**

Date OCT 11 1956

**OUTDATED . . .**

## League of Women Campaign in State For New Constitution

"Well, what d'ya know . . . Minnesota has a Constitution" the Mound League of Women Voters, but it's outdated, outdated just out-of-place, they

And to impress that fact upon Upper Tonka voters, they're joining with the state organization in a campaign for a constitutional convention, which can revise the present document and then bring it before the public for a vote.

Monday's parade, with floats and all, which covered the area, opened the local campaign to focus attention on the constitution. Next in their plans is to sell at the markets from Navarre to Mound a Constitution booklet, explaining how Minnesota got two constitutions and why the need for a new one.

Date **OCT 11 1956**

## Men Voters Issue Two New Publications On Constitution

Two new publications on the League of Women Voters for revising Minnesota's constitution are being issued each week by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. One is intended for the public and the other for persons doing research.

Copies of "Well, What D'Ya Know... Minnesota Has A Constitution," a booklet written in humorous style and illustrated with cartoons, will be given to county libraries, in addition to those already sent to state legislators and newspaper editors. A tape recording is planned for use by schools, radio stations and organizations.

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Further information on the books and tape recording may be obtained from the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 15th and Washington Avenue, S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.

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Date **OCT 11 1956**

## League Lights

By North St. Paul  
League of Women Voters

"Well, What D'Ya Know—Minnesota Has A Constitution!"

This is the catchy title of a new booklet published by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, whose prime object this year is to push for a constitutional convention to draw up a new, modern state constitution.

**DID'YA KNOW . . . . .**

That our state constitution is almost three times as long as the federal constitution? It has become a crazy, mixed-up patchwork with its many amendments, unwieldy and ignored because of its limitations.

That according to our present constitution U. S. senators should be elected by the legislature? (Wonder how Hubert Humphrey and Ed Thye ever got to Washington. Bet they thought they were the people's choice!)

That only supreme and district court judges need to be "learned in the law"? All other officials of the judicial system run for office in popular election and are not necessarily qualified or trained in the legal profession.

That many times citizens must wait for the legislature to pass a special law before they can start municipal garbage collection? (Wouldn't it be better if the legislature would concern itself with state-wide issues instead of those of local nature?)

That many tax monies are rigidly earmarked for certain funds? We all know that changing times bring changing needs in finance.

That in 1947 the legislature came right out and admitted that the Minnesota constitution needed a good going over? Yet that same legislature, after appointing a Min-

nesota Constitutional Committee, turned down its suggestions with a big, flat "NO."

That we need a constitution that is clear, concise, and adaptable to changing conditions? Our legislators are the only ones who can help us to call for a constitutional convention.

YOU MEN wouldn't drive a horse and buggy or even a Stanley Steamer, and YOU GALS wouldn't be caught dead in a whale-bone corset—or even in last year's hat; yet in this important matter of government the attitude of 'what was good enough for Grandpa is good enough for me' prevails. The present state constitution is as outmoded as the mustache cup and the bustle. Let your legislators know that you want a revision of the Minnesota State constitution, by convention.

District 41—Senator Leslie E. Westin, Rep. Joe Karth and Bill Shovell (State Capital, St. Paul, Minn.)

Any woman who is a United States citizen and of voting age (and will admit it!) is eligible for membership in the League of Women Voters. Call SP 7-1715 for further information. Join the League and become informed about local, state, and national issues.

Date **OCT 11 1956**



—Sun Photo By The Norlings

VILLAGE MANAGER Frank Lawler is shown above receiving a supply of the pamphlet, "What Do You Know—Minnesota Has a Constitution," from Mrs. Robert Clark (right) and Mrs. Donald Glabe of the League of Women Voters. The pamphlets will be distributed to the village council Monday night. Anyone desiring a copy can contact Mrs. Clark, SO. 1-5135.



Date **OCT 11 1956**

## Two Books Issued on State Constitution

Two new publications on the need for revising Minnesota's constitution are being issued this week by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. One is intended for the public and the other for persons doing research.

Copies of "Well, What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota Has A Constitution", a booklet written in humorous style and illustrated with cartoons, will be given to county libraries, in addition to those already sent to state legislators and newspaper editors. A tape recording is planned for use by schools, radio stations and organizations.

Dealing mainly with Minnesota's freak 1857 constitutional convention and the legacy of problems it left the state, this booklet calls for a present-day convention "to meet together in the old American way and review and revise our constitution into a vibrant, living thing, rather than a ghostly scroll of a hundred years ago!"

In most of the 54 League communities "Leaguemobiles" will circulate the booklet in business and residential sections on Monday, October 8.

"The State You're In", an 87-page book for reference and study, is meant for speakers, persons in government, students and members of other organizations working for a Minnesota Constitutional convention. It compiles information on all aspects of the state constitution and its problems.

Both books will be displayed in a booth at the Minnesota Educational Association convention in St. Paul October 25 and 26.

Further information on the books and tape recording may be obtained from the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 15th and Washington Avenue, SE., Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.

Date **OCT 11 1956**

## LEAGUERS AT WORK

The dinner meeting of the Chamber of Commerce Association and the League of Women Voters, their wives and husbands on Monday, October 8, was very well attended. The dinner was held in the dining room of the First Lutheran church at 6:30 p. m.

Maynard Heitner, president of the Chamber of Commerce Association, and Mrs. Manville Oren, president of the League of Women Voters, introduced several guests. State Representative L. B. Erdahl spoke briefly as did Sidney Flo, who is running for the Legislature in this district. Other guests were State Senator Erdund, and Judge L. J. Irvine.

Dr. Ralph S. Fjelstad, Professor of Government at Carleton College, was the guest speaker. He spoke on the topic, "The Needs of Our State Government." His excellent talk was concerned mainly with Minnesota's century old constitution and he cited some of its faults and outmoded provisions. "Whether to rewrite the constitution is an open question," he said, "and the legislators alone should not decide it." He explained that the story of the writing of the constitution is a fabulous yarn and makes very interesting reading.

The State League of Women Voters has put out a clever booklet entitled "Well, What D'Ya Know, Minnesota Has a Constitution." Some of these booklets were distributed at the dinner and more of them will be available to the public soon. In many parts of the state they are being sold for a quarter each but the Wells League decided to sponsor this project here and the booklets are offered to you free if you will kindly cooperate by reading them and sharing them with your friends and neighbors. Look for them soon at either the banks in Wells.

Several League members were kept busy before the dinner, handing out printed reports. One listed in concise form the three amendments so coming up for vote. The other reported facts and figures on a constitutional convention.

On Tuesday morning, October 9, 11:15 a. m. on radio station WCA Amendment No. 1, The Judicial Amendment, was discussed in question and answer form. One could learn a good deal about the other two amendments by tuning in to this station in the coming weeks.

The League of Women Voters wish to express their thanks to John Nelson for putting our road signs on posts and to Manville Oren for putting up the clever signs about constitutional revision along the highway east of Wells.

Let's all try to be informed voters at the polls this year!

Date **OCT 11 1956**

## Voters' Service Program Planned By League Here

A program centering around "Voter's Service" will feature the next meeting of the Jackson unit of the League of Women Voters, to be held Tuesday, Oct. 16, at 7:30 p. m. at the home of Mrs. Clyde Shearer.

Mrs. Nels Hauge, chairman, announces there will be a film, "Your Vote Is Your Key." Other features include a candidates' bulletin board, a review of state constitutional amendments and the special ballot on changing to the county system of poor relief which will be voted on next month. The League has gone on record in favor of the change.

Ed Hiley will also speak on the proposed city charter amendment to provide for operation of the new municipal hospital.

Monday, members of the League sold booklets on Minnesota's constitution, from a booth at Swanson's Super Fair. The League favors revision of the state constitution to bring it up to date.

On Monday, Oct. 15, a group of Jackson women plan to attend a League area conference at Eibner's Cafe in New Ulm, starting at 10 a. m. A report of the conference will be given at the meeting next Tuesday. Anyone wanting a ride to New Ulm should contact Mrs. Albert Teigen by Friday of this week.

OCT 11 1956

## League Members in Costume To Sell Constitution Booklets

"Well What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota has a Constitution!" is the title of the booklet on constitutional revision to be sold by the League of Women Voters here tomorrow (Friday).

To impress local citizens with the antiquity and inadequacy of the present constitution, written in 1957, local League members will be driving around town tomorrow in cars of a past era and the present. They will attempt to show the people, as they appear in costumes of the past, that the state constitution now in use is as far short in meeting the needs of the people as a car of 1910 would be!

The local League is joining all other Leagues in the state

in promoting the prime project of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota . . . that of working for a constitutional convention to draw up a new, modern state constitution.

The booklet, "Well What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota Has a Constitution!", which will sell for twenty-five cents, has been written to help the League put their ideas across to the people.

The "big push" is on this year in all Leagues throughout the state to make people aware of the need for a new state constitution, and to promote the sale of the booklet. Locally, there will be dis-

plays in windows and also posters, as well as the cars touring the town selling the booklet.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**STILLWATER  
DAILY GAZETTE**

Date **OCT 11 1956**

## Women Voters To Present Skit At Meeting Of AAUW

This fall the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, together with local leagues throughout the state, is launching an all-out campaign to acquaint Minnesotans with the need for an up-to-date constitution.

A booklet on constitutional revision, entitled, "Well, What D'Ya Know, Minnesota Has a Constitution," has been prepared under the auspices of the State League.

At the general membership meeting of the Afton-Lakeland League of Women Voters, Oct. 3, Thomas Bingham of the state publications committee discussed the booklet, and told the group of various gimmicks that will be used by local leagues to promote its distribution.

Miss Mary Jane Leonard and Mrs. James Kerr of the Afton-Lakeland League have prepared a humorous skit which they will give to organizations in the St. Croix Valley desiring it.

On Monday evening, Oct. 15, at 8 o'clock, they will perform at a meeting of the local branch of the AAUW, which will be held in the home of Mrs. Fred Andersen at Bayport. Mrs. Dean Honetschlager will introduce the skit and distribute the booklets to all those who wish to purchase them.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**NORTH MINNEAPOLIS  
POST**

Date **OCT 11 1956**

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"The State You're In," an 87-page book for reference and study, is meant for speakers, persons in government, students and members of other organizations working for a Minnesota Constitutional convention. It compiles information on all aspects of the state constitution and its problems.

Both books will be displayed in a booth at the Minnesota Educational association convention in St. Paul Oct. 25 and 26.

Further information on the books and tape recording may be obtained from the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 15th and Washington ave. S. E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**LAKE HARRIET COURIER**

Date **OCT 11 1956**

## Women Voters Issue Two New Publications On Constitution

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835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**RICHFIELD NEWS**

Date **OCT 11 1956**

## Richfield LWV Distributes Two Voter Info Booklets

The Richfield League of Women Voters announces the release this week of two new publications, "Well, What D'Ya Know, Minnesota Has A Constitution" and "The State You're In".

The first publication is a short booklet to bring out a few facts about the need for revising Minnesota's hundred year old constitution. The second is an eighty page book for reference and study.

The League will offer copies of "The State You're In" to the Richfield Public Library and the high school library. The League also hopes to place copies of both publications in all local doctor and dentist offices and public places in the village.

These publications are available to interested individuals and organizations. Call Mrs. J. R. Schepers at RO 9-4163 to place orders.



MEA Clipping Bureau  
CASS LAKE TIMES

OCT 11 1956

Four local women attended an important workshop of the Northern Minnesota area of the League of Women Voters at Fergus Falls on Tuesday of this week, Oct. 9th. The Fergus Falls League was hostess to the workshop and those in attendance from Cass Lake were Mrs. C. R. Swenson, Mrs. James Sevard, Mrs. Conrad Olson, and Mrs. Rudolph Jacobson. Mrs. Horner from the Washington D. C. office of the National League of Women Voters was leader of the meeting and gave the members many useful aids and suggestions in carrying on League work as well as inspiring them with enthusiasm and interest in new phases of the work.

Three areas of work on the local level were covered. The first—planning and preparation for the annual meeting—emphasized the importance of the work of the Nominating Committee. This discussion was led by Mrs. Horner. The second, planning a local agenda, and the third, building a better budget, were both led by Mrs. E. C. Viste of the unit of Alexandria, Minnesota. How to plan, how to select, and where to find sources of material were explained. Mrs. Viste stressed expanding League work—in service to the community and urged higher goals for League members.

The women returned from this meeting more eager than ever to "pitch in" in League work. Last Sunday's Minneapolis Sunday Tribune featured an article on the front page of the Women's section on the League's drive for a new state constitution. The local league is planning to work along this line too and will have copies of the new booklet entitled "Well, what do' ya know—Minnesota has a Constitution" for distribution.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**ROCHESTER**  
**DAILY POST-BULLETIN**  
(Evening)  
Date OCT 11 1956

## 'Operation Leaguemobile' Here to Promote Revision

The Rochester League of Women Voters Saturday will join with other leagues throughout the state in a drive to acquaint all Minnesotans with the need for constitutional revision through "Operation Leaguemobile."

As part of Saturday's celebration of Constitution Day, members of the local league will sell to the

public a small booklet on constitutional revision called "Well, What D'Ya Know, Minnesota Has a Constitution." These booklets will be sold for 25 cents throughout the city by women parked in "leaguemobiles."

Dealing mainly with Minnesota's 1857 constitutional convention and the legacy of problems it left the state, this booklet, professionally written and illustrated with cartoons, calls for a present-day convention "to meet together in the old American way and review and revise our Constitution into a vibrant, living thing, rather than a ghostly scroll of a hundred years ago."

The League hopes to sell the need for revision of the State Constitution to all readers, so that they will let their legislators know how they feel. It is hoped then to bring about the passage of a bill in the 1957 Legislature which will submit to the voters of Minnesota, the question of whether they want a constitutional convention called to revise Minnesota's Constitution.

Mrs. John R. Hill of Rochester is state chairman of the League of Women Voters state publications committee which is presenting the booklet. Mrs. R. Drew Miller heads the committee publicizing it in Rochester.

The state league also has issued an 87-page booklet, "The State You're In," designed for speakers, persons in government, students and other organizations working for a Minnesota constitutional convention. It compiles information on all aspects of the State Constitution and its problems.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
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**EDINA-MORNINGSIDE**  
**COURIER**

Date OCT 11 1956

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**ROCHESTER  
DAILY POST-BULLETIN**

(Evening)  
Date **OCT 12 1956**



**STATE CONSTITUTION MOTORCADE**—Three Rochester women, members of the local League of Women Voters, finish a dress rehearsal for Saturday's drive to acquaint Minnesotans with the need for revision of the state constitution. The league is joining with other league's around the state in "Operation Leaguemobile," selling small booklets on constitutional revision. Among those participating in the local drive are (left to right) Mrs. John Pemberton, state item co-chairman; Mrs. Drew Miller, first vice president of Rochester League of Women Voters, and Mrs. Robert Falett, national item chairman. (Post-Bulletin photo)

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**BEMIDJI  
NORTHLAND TIMES**

Date **OCT 12 1956**

## New Constitution Voters Fight For League of Women

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**GOLDEN VALLEY  
SUBURBAN PRESS**

Date **OCT 11 1956**

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**MINNEAPOLIS  
PROGRESS-REGISTER**

Date **OCT 13 1956**

**LEAGUE ISSUES TWO BOOKS ON  
STATE CONSTITUTION**

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**BRainerd  
DAILY DISPATCH**

Date **OCT 15 1956**

## League Membership Tea Held by Women Voters

"There is no longer any argument on the need for constitutional revision in Minnesota," Mrs. Ralph Norgaard of Minneapolis told the Brainerd League of Women Voters Saturday at the League membership tea at the Ransford hotel.

Mrs. Norgaard, a board member

of the Citizen's committee for constitutional revision spoke for Mrs. Basil Young, Minnesota League president, who was originally scheduled as guest speaker.

"Working for a constitutional convention to draw up a new, modern state constitution is the prime project of the Minnesota League," Mrs. Norgaard told the League members.

"Constitutional revision has been accomplished in 30 states. Minnesota is one of the 18 states left which have not yet had such a change."

"Amendments are costly," Mrs. Norgaard pointed out. "The 80 amendments on the present Minnesota constitution have cost Minnesota 27 million dollars, and that is a conservative estimate."

"One hundred twelve changes are needed in the Minnesota state constitution, the Commission of Constitutional Revision found and they recommended a constitutional convention to accomplish revision," Mrs. Norgaard said.

"Other states have risen to the demand and have elected high caliber men and women as delegates to their constitutional conventions and Minnesota can and will do so too" Mrs. Norgaard said in conclusion.

Mrs. Roger Klein, of Brainerd, and formerly a Minnesota League board member introduced the speaker.

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE  
(Morning)**

Date **OCT 15 1956**

## The Ladies Speak of Age

THE LEAGUE of Women Voters of Minnesota has studied the state constitution and come to the conclusion that it is badly out of date. Amending this oxcart document, it believes, would be like sewing sleeves on a vest. What is needed, in the league's opinion, is a constitutional convention which would create a new docu-

ment and submit it to the people for their approval.

A booklet just issued by the league presents a persuasive case for such a convention. It also does a good job of proving that the present constitution is a first-class museum piece.

For example, says the league, the constitution provides:

"The state debt shall not exceed \$250,000. (The constitution says so but it might be a little difficult just to ignore the \$109,712,000 which showed up in the 1953 records!)"

"U.S. senators shall be elected only by the legislature. (Funny . . . we thought those were U.S. senators we were voting for...)"

"Women can vote only in school and library elections. (Heavens! We've voted in all the state and national elections.)"

While it is considered indelicate to talk about a lady's age, we think it is perfectly in order for the ladies to talk about the constitution's age. Let us face it — the state's fundamental organic law is superannuated, decrepit, doddering and senile. We can even hear it creak and wheeze from here.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

ST. PAUL DAILY  
PIONEER-PRESS

(Morning) OCT 12 1956



**OLD-FASHIONED PUBLICITY** is given the newest League of Women Voters' publication, a research work on the Minnesota Constitution. Offering the public a copy of "The State You're In" are Mrs. Dennis W. Watson, 2106 Hendon, legislative active committee worker, and Mrs. Axel N. Pedersen, 904 Osceola, publications committee member. The Voters League also puts out the pamphlet, "Minnesota Has A Constitution."

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

ROCHESTER  
DAILY POST-BULLETIN  
(Evening)

Date OCT 12 1956

## THE Kahler Korner

We're right in the middle of National Fire Prevention Week—so what better time to clean out the basement, garage, attic or other storage areas.

As part of the National Fire Prevention Program, everyone of our employees will witness demonstrations in the proper handling of various type fire extinguishers on the three different classes of fires. The demonstrations will be run next Wednesday by the Rochester Fire Department in our Kahler Auto Park No. 3.



Interesting note in the hotel field —The famous Parker House in Boston (House of the Parker House roll), celebrated its 100th Anniversary this week. During the 100 years, the front door was never locked, and this, believe it or not, means 876,000 hours of continuous hotel service!

Tomorrow, October 13, is Minnesota Constitution Day. Just 99 years ago tomorrow the people of this state voted for the vehicle which has since been referred to as our State Constitution.

The League of Women Voters are again pushing for a revision of the Constitution as well as a constitutional convention. They have some exceedingly interesting displays up around town which you should take the time to see. There's one in the window outside the Coffee House. Stop by and give it a long look.

Bob Rossman had a group of Minnesota Automobile Association personnel in yesterday for an all day meeting in the Mr. "K" Club with a luncheon in the Windsor Room.

Besides the Realtors Convention and the huge tea for Mrs. Ernest Ives, Adlai Stevenson's sister, the Kahler will host the Order of the Eastern Star dinner tonight in the Royal Room.

Tomorrow Witt & Company will be with us for a luncheon in the Elizabethan Room. Also tomorrow noon there will be fifty occupational health nurses having lunch in the Coach Room.

In the evening the Big "9" principals and their wives will honor Jerry Imbody of Owatonna at a "going away" party in the Royal Room. Mr. Imbody, who has been Senior High School Principal in that city for several years, is going into private business in Owatonna.

—ady.



MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

ST. PAUL DAILY  
PIONEER-PRESS

(Morning)

Date OCT 15 1956

## Val Bjornson—

# Cartooned History

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS BOOKLET URGING revision of Minnesota's constitution, out last week, is not only light in tone. Its sprightly text is further enlivened by a baker's dozen of cartoon-like illustrations, most of them designed to emphasize the near-ridiculous situation which found the 1857 constitutional convention divided into embattled partisan camps, as the 1857 organic act was being written here in St. Paul.

There is nothing particularly noteworthy about the cartoons. In fact, the whole tone of levity may be justly criticized. But cartoons have had their pronounced influence on political life in the past. After all, they gave us the party symbols—the donkey and the elephant. And, with constitutional revision a hardy perennial among state concerns ever since the nineties, women in the League probably decided that a bit of satirical laughter at our own foibles might be more conducive to action than has been the case with solemnity over the years.

A STATE CONSTITUTION is nothing to laugh at. That unquestioned conclusion may be pointed to by those who would rather not see a constitutional convention summoned to revise Minnesota's basic document. But laughter may be the most charitable treatment to be given such episodes as the semi-fabulous incident when Willis Gorman, second territorial governor, broke his cane over the head of Thomas Wilson, convention delegate from Winona—grandfather of Martha Bowers, who became Mrs. Robert A. Taft.

"Accounts of this part of our history," the League of Women Voters pamphlet acknowledges, "are as colorful as they are

varied," but the fact is established that the two belligerents did retire at that stage from any role in the 10-man group seeking to reconcile differences between the 55 Democrats and the 59 Republicans who continued separate sessions instead of meeting as a full-scale constitutional convention, back in 1857.

H. P. HALL'S "OBSERVATION," long since out of print, recount the Wilson-Gorman story in some detail. William Watts Folwell's history of Minnesota mentions the incident, with some suggestion that it might be apocryphal. The traditional version is the most appealing. That's why it has survived.

The usual answer to repeated pleas that our constitution be revised, all at one sitting, is that we've been getting along pretty well for 99 years without any such performance. And the greatest impediment to a revision move—a two-thirds vote of the Legislature first in submitting it to referendum, with a majority then of all votes cast in the election where the matter is submitted—is the evident fear of pressure groups in the convention itself. A greater conviction as to "burning need" must be developed before revision by a convention can become a reality.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
MOUND PILOT

OCT 18 1956



TO CALL ATTENTION to Minnesota's out-dated constitution and the need for a new one, Mound's League of Women Voters built and paraded through Upper Tonka the above float last week. Mrs. Kenneth Romness and Ken Chapman in Model T Ford (photo insert) helped show the contrast between the old and the new (a 1957 car also used in the parade.) League members are selling an interesting booklet outlining why a new constitution is needed and how it came about that there are two in Minnesota.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
ASKOV AMERICAN

OCT 18 1956

Date.....

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

## ST. LOUIS PARK DISPATCH

Date OCT 18 1956

## Women Voters Sell Booklet On 'Revision'

"Well, what d'ya know . . . Minnesota has a CONSTITUTION!" is the intriguing title of a new publication by the League of Women Voters, on sale by League members.

This booklet is a condensation of the facts about Minnesota's makeshift and antiquated constitution. It states:

"Did you know that according to the original Minnesota constitution the state debt shall not exceed \$250,000 . . . (The constitution says so . . . but it might be a little difficult just to ignore the \$109,712,000 which showed up in the 1953 records.) Or that U.S. Senators shall be elected only by the legislators . . . ? (Funny . . . we thought those were U. S. senators we were voting for . . .) Or that women can vote only in school and library elections . . . ?"

The booklet further states: "No wonder Minnesota teachers don't use the Minnesota Constitution for instruction in classrooms. Can't you just hear them: 'Yes, it is the basic charter of our state, but because so many of its provisions are worn out, we have to ignore parts of it . . . ' The Minnesota State Constitution **does** need revision."

Local units of the League are contacting organizations in St. Louis Park, selling the booklet in order to acquaint the public with the need for revision of the Constitution by the calling of a constitutional convention.

The booklet is sold for 25 cents by League members who urge that each copy be read carefully, then passed on to someone else. Local organizations are being contacted, so that the booklet may be sold at their meetings.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

## ROSE TRIBUNE

OCT 18 1956



HAVE YOU BOUGHT YOUR BOOKLET, "Well What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota Has A Constitution?" It is a booklet put out by the League of Women Voters explaining why Minnesota is so badly in need of a new constitution. A five-minute skit is being put on for civic, church and school groups in connection with the subject by women from the Roseville League. Three of the women are pictured above. Reading left to right—Mrs. Wayne Klopp, Mrs. N. E. Lund, and Mrs. John Scanlon.



**MOOSE LAKE  
STAR-GAZETTE**

OCT 18 1956

**LEAGUE ISSUES TWO BOOKS  
ON STATE CONSTITUTION**

Two new publications on the need for revising Minnesota's constitution were issued last week by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. One is intended for the public and the other for persons doing research.

Copies of "Well, What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota Has A Constitution," a booklet written in humorous style and illustrated with cartoons, will be given to county libraries, in addition to those already sent to state legislators and newspaper editors. A tape recording is planned for use by schools, radio stations and organizations.

Dealing mainly with Minnesota's freak 1857 constitutional convention and the legacy of problems it left the state, this booklet calls for a present-day convention "to meet together in the old American way and review and revise our constitution into a vibrant, living thing, rather than a ghostly scroll of a hundred years ago!"

In most of the 54 League communities "Leaguemobiles" will circulate the booklet in business and residential sections on Monday, October 8.

"The State You're In," an 87-page book for reference and study, is meant for speakers, persons in government, students and members of other organizations working for a Minnesota Constitutional convention. It compiles information on all aspects of the state constitution and its problems.

Both books will be displayed in a booth at the Minnesota Educational Association convention in St. Paul October 25 and 26.

Further information on the books and tape recording may be obtained from the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 15th and Washington Avenue, S. E., Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.

*Park Region Echo - Oct-18-1956  
Alexandria*

**LWV Members Tour City in Costumes,  
Cars of Early Years to Sell Booklets**



The League of Women Voters last Friday sponsored the sale of "Well What D'ya Know—Minnesota Has A Constitution," booklets describing the Minnesota Constitution.

The members joined with other members of the state organization in a statewide drive. Dressed in old fashioned costumes, they toured about town in cars of an early era bearing placards, "Trade in Minnesota's 1857 Constitution". They stopped from place to place to sell the booklets.

Shown above in a Model T Ford are Mrs. A. Woodrow Wilson, driver, Mrs. F. M. Unumb and Miss Alma Anderson.

The League of Women Voters is working hard for a new state constitution.

Date **OCT 20 1956**

**TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS** on the need for revising Minnesota's constitution are being issued by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. One is intended for the public and the other for persons doing research. Copies of "Well, What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota Has A Constitution," a booklet written in humorous style and illustrated with cartoons, will be given to county libraries, in addition to those already sent to state legislators and newspaper editors. A tape recording is planned for use by schools, radio stations and organizations. Dealing mainly with Minnesota's freak 1857 constitutional convention and the legacy of problems it left the state, this booklet calls for a present-day convention "to meet together in the Old American way and review and revise our constitution into a vibrant, living thing, rather than a ghostly scroll of a hundred years ago!"

ST. LOUIS PARK  
DISPATCH

Date OCT 25 1956

Stillwater  
Gazette Oct. 18, 1956

## AAUW Hear Youth Directors Commend Volunteer Workers

The October meeting of the AAUW held Monday evening at the home of Mrs. Fred C. Andersen in Bayport, was well attended.

Mrs. Dean Honetschlager introduced the two women who participated in a clever skit on revision of the state constitution, in which Miss Mary Jane Leonard represented the 100 year old constitution and Miss Shirley Kerr, the proposed model constitution.

Mrs. Gloria Erwin, director of Y-Teen activities at the high school, and Mrs. Jean Davidson, county 4-H club leader, gave comprehensive reviews of their work.

Mrs. Jerry S. Vessel from the regional office of the Girl Scouts made a plea for more adult leaders, stating that one out of every four girls is a Girl Scout. In Minnesota there are now 36,742 Girl Scouts and by 1960 this number is expected to increase by 40 percent. Mrs. Ella Olson introduced these speakers.

Each of the speakers gave much credit to the volunteer workers for valuable assistance.

The local branch went on record as favoring the passage of the school amendment No. 3, so that school dollars can be put to work now.

# Saturday Anniversary Of Constitution 'Farce'

By MRS. E. C. DAVIDSON  
State Resource Chairman  
Park League of Women Voters

Oct. 13 was the 99th anniversary of the ratification of Minnesota's constitution—the anniversary of the acceptance of the results of Minnesota's only constitutional convention, described by eminent historian William Watts Folwell, as the "roaring farce of 1857."

This opinion is confirmed by the fact that when congress debated the question of Minnesota's admission to the Union, in the spring of 1858, the constitutional proceedings in Minnesota were condemned on the floor of House and Senate on these five counts: election of delegates to the convention was fraudulent; an excessive number of delegates were elected; delegates who had never been elected at all were seated in the convention; there had been no true convention — only "two badly organized mobs;" and the constitution had not been drawn up by the convention, but by a small committee thereof.

Minnesota's constitution contains 25,800 words and is one of the longest in the nation. Only 18 states retain their original constitutions, and Minnesota is one of only 14 states where the citizens have never had the opportunity of a convention to revise the present document or frame a new one.

Her present Constitution makes a convention difficult, since she is one of only 18 states requiring a two-thirds vote of each house in the Legislature to submit the convention issue to the people. Only 14 other states require as large a majority for voter approval of the convention to revise a constitution.

At President Eisenhower's request, a Commission on Intergovernmental Relations was appointed in 1953 "to study the means of achieving a sounder relationship between Federal, State and local governments."

Early in its study, the Commission was confronted with the fact that self-imposed constitutional limitations in many states made it difficult for them to serve their citizens effectively.

The specific reforms suggested for state governments by this Commission are substantially the same as the reasons for recommending constitutional revision in Minnesota, the need for: an equitable system of representation in state legislature, greater flexibility of legislative action, reduction of earmarked revenues, adequate executive powers, and strengthening of local governments.

That Minnesota would benefit from such major revision of its constitution was first expressed a century ago by members of the first constitutional convention, who looked forward to a new convention as early as 1870; by our early governors; by each recent governor; by both political parties; by the legislature's own Constitutional

Commission of 1947; and by the voters in 1954, who overwhelmingly passed an amendment clearing the way for a constitutional convention.

In spite of this mandate, the 1955 legislature failed to enact a bill which would give the people an opportunity to vote whether or not they want a constitutional convention. The legislature of 1957 faces the same challenge of improved state government.

The League of Women Voters of St. Louis Park is cooperating with the League of Women Voters of Minnesota and many other organizations in publicizing this need for constitutional reform.

They recently have launched the sale of a booklet called, "Well, what d'ya know ... Minnesota has a CONSTITUTION!" which sets forth the history of the constitution, its faults, the need for revision, and the methods of revision. The booklet is sold for 25c by League members through local organizations and at local meetings.

Clipping Bureau

MIRROR

OCT 25 1956

Date

## Leaguers At Work

On Monday evening, October 22, the League of Women Voters met at the home of Mrs. Nell Jensen with Lucille Schoen assisting hostess. Mrs. James Murray was in charge of the program and she introduced the two guest speakers, Judge L. J. Irvine of Wells and Rector Putnam of Blue Earth. They explained the judicial system in this state and also discussed the duties of the district judge. Each man explained why he felt he was qualified for the office. Following the talks was a discussion period during which the two men answered the questions brought up by League members.

The October 25th issue of "Treasure Chest," a comic book used widely by Catholic schools, should make League members proud. Beginning on page 28 is a strip telling, in comic book style, the story of a boy who sought to win a school election by questionable methods. His methods are contrasted with the clean politics as practiced by the League of Women Voters. This presentation of the League story was entirely unsolicited.

The League again plans to send home "I Will Vote" tags with the school children for their parents. Also, please cast an appreciative eye toward the clever "Get Out The Vote" posters being displayed in stores in the business district of Wells. The posters were made by high school students in their art class at school.

In the Wells banks you will find posters about Minnesota's constitution and interesting free booklets entitled, "Well, What D'Ya Know, Minnesota Has a Constitution." There are also free copies there of the three amendments (in brief form) soon coming up for vote.



MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**ST. LOUIS PARK  
DISPATCH**

Date OCT 25 1956

## Well, What D'ya Know!

The dire, actually pathetic need for a new state constitution is graphically presented by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota in a 30-page booklet entitled, "Well, What D'ya Know, Minnesota Has a Constitution!"

The pamphlet is cleverly and humorously written about a very non-humorous situation. Briefly it tells the statehood story of Minnesota from the last days it functioned as an official territory under the Organic Act of 1849. It is a story of disgustingly partisan, intollerant haggling, of outright fraud and medicine show tactics to compose and have adopted not one, but two, state constiutions.

Illegal throughout were the calling of a constitutional convention and election of so-called delegates to that convention. It is a story of under-the-table, back-room dealings . . . of actual blows exchanged by pugnacious committeemen who framed the constitution. It is a story of feeble, fragile compromises . . . of how in two days the separate, unworkable Democratic and Republican conventions accepted constitutions reported to them only verbally . . . documents drawn up in 10 days by eight men who previously could not evolve a specific document in seven weeks of obstreperous bickering.

The two separate products of their mental gyrations contain different spelling and penmanship, 299 differences in punctuation, five grammatical deviations, three omissions of a word, one omission of a phrase and three differences of wording. No absolutely correct text of our state constitution ever has been published!

The disdain in which the President and U. S. Congress held Minnesota and its constitution is impertinently evident in President Polk's refusal to sign the admission bill until May 11, 1858, and then only after congress inserted a clause absolving it from any respon-

sibility for Minnesota's actions!

The state's 1947 legislature admitted the state constitution needed revision and created a study committee which worked diligently 14 months to finally proposed 112 changes, six completely new sections and a constitutional convention to effect the changes. The labor was in vain. The legislature not only turned down the suggestions but would not even let the matter get to the polls so that the electorate could vote for or against a constitutional convention.

The league maintains we need a constitution which will:

1—Give us a chance to call a convention to review our constitution at specified times.

2—Give us a decent amending process so that adoption of amendments to the constitution as they may be needed will clearly express the people's voice.

3—Give us reapportionment provisions which will distribute voting strength equally throughout the state.

4—Put more responsibility on our executive, to let him appoint persons to some of the lower executive offices rather than have them elected.

5—Give the officials a longer, more uniform term of office so they can have more time to prove themselves and put their policies into effect.

6—Give us longer or more sessions of the legislature so our representatives can have more time to propose, consider, debate and act in our behalf.

And 7—Give us more home rule for local governments so communities can meet their own problems right where and when they occur.

The booklet concludes by recommending that we call for a constitutional convention and call a halt to trying to make things right by continually attempting amendments. It will be necessary to elect men and women to represent us at a convention and survey and revise the constitution as a whole before turning it back to the people to approve or reject it.

Our legislators are the only ones who can call for a constitutional convention. Those for this area, the 36th Legislative district, are Sen. Archie Miller and Rep. Alf Bergerud of the south half and Rep. Leonard E. Lindquist of the north half. All resident of the state are urged to write their legislators and inform them they want them to vote for a revision of the constitution by convention, to ask them to push such a convention through the next legislative session.

Considerable level-headed thinking, planning and just plain hard work have gone into producing this booklet. It is a job well done for a very worthwhile cause and it is just one of the many civic projects the League of Women Voters have undertaken.

They are to be commended for their efforts, but even more than that every resident should make certain those efforts are fruitful. If you have not obtained and read a copy of the booklet, do so immediately. And then do as the league suggests . . . let the men you have elected to office know you are their boss and you demand that they, as your employees, do something about constitutional re-

Same Clipping in: (Oct. 25, 1956)  
Lake Harriet Courier  
Edina-Morningside Courier  
Golden Valley Suburban Courier  
Hopkins Review.

THE DEEPHAVEN ARGUS

Nothing to Gain but 4 Million 11/2/56

## Women Voters Review Work Of Little Hoover Commission

Would you like to save \$4,300,000 per year? That is the amount the Little Hoover Commission estimated could be saved for the state of Minnesota through reorganization of the administrative branch of the government. Sweeping organizational and administrative changes were proposed, including some major financial re-adjustments.

Some activities would be eliminated but non which the Commission considered to be essential. Primarily they would be those which are duplicated by other state agencies, or in some cases, federal or county.

The Little Hoover Commission was composed of 19 business, professional, labor and agriculture leaders. Nine members were appointed by the Senate and nine by the House from lists submitted for each Congressional district in the state. The 19th member was appointed by the Governor.

The Commission issued its report in December of 1950. Recommendations included:

1. The large number of state agencies should be telescoped into a few major departments to promote economy and efficiency.

2. There should be fewer elected officials.

3. State administration should be centralized under an administrative head, the governor.

In February of 1955 Governor Freeman asked the legislature for extensive changes in the administrative machinery. These proposals were very similar to those made by the Little Hoover Commission.

The legislature cut deeply into the proposed suggestions but some major steps forward were taken. Payroll and disbursing operations can now be centralized and accounting procedures improved. The creation of a Department

Commission issued a report in October of 1948. This was a legislative group, composed of 8 senators, 8 representatives and 6 other persons. This Commission said that major changes were needed in 34 sections of the Constitution, minor changes in 78 sections. Six new sections were suggested. By unanimous resolution the Commission recommended these changes be made by a convention.

The Constitutional Commission suggested many changes that would help strengthen the legislature to a point where it could more adequately fulfill its obligations to the public and be better equipped to meet future problems. Some of the recommendations were:

1. The legislature should be allowed to meet more frequently than every other year and for longer than 90 days.

2. It should be able to call special sessions and be able to decide what will be taken up there.

3. Both the House and the Senate should be allowed to introduce revenue raising measures, instead of just the House as at present.

4. A post-auditor should be chosen and be responsible to the legislature.

We need effective lawmaking in these complex, rapidly changing times. We need lawmaking responsive to the needs of the state and the people.

The Constitution should allow the Legislature to adapt itself to modern conditions. Constitutional provisions which remove the shackles that now bind the Legislature would go a long way toward improving our state government.

## Why? Why? Why?

1. Why does the legislature try to do two years' work in 90 days?

A. The biennial 90 day session is required by our State Constitution.

2. Does the legislature decide how state income should be spent?

A. Only 28% of the money. All the rest has been dedicated by the Constitution for specific purposes.

3. How long would it take us to get a new Constitution for the state of Minnesota?

A. A minimum of 6 years . . . a maximum of forever. The choice is yours!

See League of Women Voters article, page 2.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**FARIBAULT DAILY NEWS**  
(Evening)

Date OCT 27 1956

## Revision of State Constitution Aim Of Women's League

Faribault residents have been asked by the Minnesota League of Women Voters, to take an active part in the League's intensive drive to revise Minnesota's constitution—the same one which has been in effect since 1857. Two new publications on the need for constitutional revision have been issued by the League. One is intended for the public and the other for persons doing research.

Copies of "Well, What D'Ya Know . . . Minnesota Has A Constitution," a booklet written in humorous style and illustrated with cartoons, will be given to county libraries, in addition to those already sent to state legislators and newspaper editors. A tape recording is planned for use by schools, radio stations and organizations.

Dealing mainly with Minnesota's freak 1857 constitutional convention and the legacy of problems it left the state, this booklet calls for a present-day convention "to meet together in the old American way and review and revise our constitution into a vibrant, living thing, rather than a ghostly scroll of a hundred years ago!"

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Both books were displayed in a booth at the Minnesota Educational Association convention in St. Paul October 25 and 26.

Further information on the books and tape recordings may be obtained from the League of Women Voters on Minnesota, 15th and Washington Avenue, S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.



## For Constitution Revision

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of five stories on proposed revision of the state constitution. Other stories will appear this week in the Duluth Herald.

BY EINAR W. KARLSTRAND  
Herald Political Writer

ST. PAUL—The big push is on in the Minnesota legislature for revision of the state's century-old constitution.

The move is led by the Minnesota League of Women Voters and has the backing of both Republican and Democratic-Farmer-Labor parties. Veteran legislators say that never before have they seen so much pressure for the proposal.

Proponents of a constitutional change are hopeful they can swing enough support behind their program to get the slow-moving legislature to give Minnesotans a chance to vote in 1958 on whether they want a constitutional convention.

They feel citizens should at least have that opportunity.

BUT THEIR enthusiasm is tempered by what has happened in the past and especially in 1955 when the state senate voted 40 to 27 against submitting the question to voters. That year the constitutional convention bill never received a final vote in the house.

Rejection by the legislature of the measure two years ago ired proponents who contended voters just a few months before had indicated they wanted a convention. Minnesotans in a referendum amended the constitution to allow legislators to sit as delegates in a constitutional revision parley.

Lobbyists for the League of Women Voters have been openly active since the outset of the 1957 legislative session in promoting the organization's desire for a convention to rewrite the state's basic legal document. Opponents have been working behind the scenes to resist efforts of the league.

MRS. DONALD GUTHRIE, Mahtomedi, and Mrs. Stanley Kane, Golden Valley, are lobbyists for the league at the state capitol. They contend the state constitution is outmoded in many respects and needs revision.

Opponents maintain complete revision is unnecessary and that any changes can be enacted through special referenda. They point to the 1956 election when the state's voters approved constitutional amendments to improve courts, schools and highways.

Revision by individual amendments is too slow, the league contends. It maintains that it would take 50 years to do it this way.

Even revising the constitution through convention will take five years.

THE CURRENT legislative session is an important one for the proponents of constitutional change through convention. Here is the timetable set up by the league:

1957 — The legislature passes

## Some Changes Must Be Made

In the Minnesota state constitution are some rather "defunct" provisions. And although the League of Women Voters has been constantly pushing for constitutional revision and though merely a scratch in the surface has been made, here are some things that make it more apparent than ever that the constitution should be rewritten.

(1) Election of United States Senators. The state constitution provides that U. S. Senators be elected by the state legislature. And yet the voters have done the electing since 1916.

(2) Voting by Women. The state constitution restricts the rights of women to vote. Yet women have been voting in Minnesota since 1916.

(3) Limiting State Debt. The state constitution limits the state debt to \$250,000. The state debt has far exceeded that figure and has done so for several years.

(4) Redistricting. The state constitution requires that the state be redistricted every ten years. The state was last redistricted in 1913.

(5) Indian Voting. The state constitution provides that Indians can vote but only if they have a court order declaring them capable of voting.

## Sought

(Continued From Page 1.)

a bill submitting to the people for vote the calling of a constitutional convention.

1958—Minnesotans vote, at a general election, for or against a constitutional convention.

1959—If a majority of the voters want a convention, the 1959 session of the legislature sets up the machinery for the election of delegates to the convention.

1960 — Delegates would be elected (they probably would be nominated at the regular party conventions).

1961—The constitutional convention meets and completes its deliberations in time for the 1961 legislature to make arrangements for a ratification vote a year hence.

1962—Ratification of the new constitution by voters.

THE LEAGUE says there is little argument in Minnesota on the need for some kind of constitutional revision.

In 1947, the state legislature appointed a commission to study the constitution and recommend changes. After 14 months of study the commission recommended 112 changes in addition to six new sections. Its members voted unanimously that a constitutional convention would be the best way to accomplish revision.

Then in 1950, a second commission, the so-called Little Hoover commission, urged constitutional revision in order to modernize government. And in 1954, the legislature's interim tax study committee found constitutional changes essential for sound fiscal policies.

THE LEAGUE lobbyists bemoan the fact that despite these extensive and expensive studies, complete revision of Minnesota's constitution is still being delayed.

"Why has not something been done?" the proponents ask.

Fruitless controversy has been fostered in the legislature regarding the method of revision. A small group of legislators argue that the job can be done through amendments rather than by specially elected delegates assembled in a constitutional convention.

The league's lobbyists say that this "untenable argument continues despite the fact that under the constitution it is the people, not the legislature, who have the legal right to decide this question."

AND THEY point out that voters cannot decide it until the question is submitted to them at the polls. This the legislature repeatedly has refused to do, and the odds are that lawmakers will again turn their backs on constitutional revision by Convention.

# Minneapolis Morning Tribune

The Voice  
of Minnesota

Largest Morning Newspaper  
in the Upper Midwest



JOHN COWLES, President; JOYCE A. SWAN, Executive Vice President; LYLE K. ANDERSON, Vice President and Treasurer; STANLEY HAWKS, Vice President and Secretary; OTTO A. SILHA, Vice President and Business Manager; WILLIAM P. STEVEN, Vice President and Executive Editor; JOHN W. MOFFETT, Vice President and Advertising Director; HOWARD MITHUN, Vice President; WILBUR ELSTON, Editor of Editorial Pages; JOHN THOMPSON, Publisher Emeritus.

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VOLUME XC  
NUMBER 246

FRIDAY,

## Minnesota Debates Its Constitution

### Tuneup or Overhaul?

MINNESOTA'S state constitution is almost 100 years old and one may identify it, as the centennial approaches, by those loud creaking noises often identified with senility and obsolescence.

The legislature cocked an ear toward the constitution this week and was reminded again how age has diminished whatever vigor and spryness that document might have had in 1857.

One bill introduced in the lower house would submit to Minnesota voters the question of a constitutional convention. If the voters approved the idea, the way would then be opened for the adoption of a brand-new constitution.

But other bills sought merely to improve the present document by amending out some of the ancient deadwood solidly embedded in it. This might be called the minor operation technique and it is directed toward some of the most ludicrous provisions that ever remained in a state constitution long after they were doornail-dead.

One of these limits the state debt to \$250,000. Another provides that our United States senators shall be elected by the state legislature. Still another limits women to voting in school and library elections. No wonder the constitution creaks. No wonder it has long been viewed with growing disrespect and cynicism.

Today Minnesota is one of 18 states operating under its original constitution. We have amended it many times, adding patchwork to patchwork. But we have never given it a major overhauling.

The case for such an overhauling is a strong one. Yet some legislators would not even give Minnesotans the opportunity to say whether or not they want a constitutional convention. This decision they reserve for themselves; they do not trust the people to make it.

So long as that attitude prevails, there can be no constitutional convention and no escape from the present system of imposing patches on an antiquated body of organic law.

Now the legislature has another opportunity to place the question of a constitutional convention before the people. The year 1957, a full century after the state's first and only constitutional convention, would be a fitting time to offer that expression of faith in the people's maturity of judgment.

LIKE everything else, state constitutions suffer considerably from age. The people of Minnesota have a constitution that is 100 years old. It has gotten rusty in spots and takes a lot of patching up with amendments.

For many years there has been a move on in that state for major revision of the constitution. Finally, in 1954, voters adopted an amendment clearing the way for a constitutional convention.

The 1955 legislature failed to follow up and the present legislature will be called upon for a bill to allow voters of the state to decide whether or not they want a state constitutional convention.

The Minnesota League of Women Voters, one of the organizations advocating constitutional revision, has recently published a detailed study of the question, under the title, "The State You're In."

The League's study uncovers many interesting facts about state constitutions and Minnesota's in particular. Only a third of the 48 states retain their original constitution, Minnesota being one of these. Thirty states have adopted from two to ten constitutions over their history.

In a rush to adopt its first constitution as a prerequisite to being admitted to the union in 1858, Minnesota wound up with two conventions, one held by Republicans and one

held by Democrats. Hand copying of the final compromise document resulted in two copies with 299 differences in punctuation, five grammatical deviations, three word omissions, one phrase omission and three slight differences in wording. To this day the courts have never decided which of these two documents is the constitution. Therefore, the League study claims, "it is impossible to print a really correct text of the constitution of Minnesota."

When Congress debated Minnesota's admission to the Union, charges of fraud, political dishonesty and undemocratic procedure were hurled on the floor of the House and the Senate. Election of delegates was fraudulent. Delegates who had not been elected were seated. There had been no convention, just two "mobs" and the constitution had been drawn up by a small committee, not by the convention. Those were some of the charges of chicanery during the debate.

The League's study presents the arguments both for and against a constitutional convention. The chief arguments used against in Minnesota are that conventions are cumbersome, that they are costly and that they are controlled by "radicals."

But the League says its study of the question shows that a convention would be less cumbersome and less costly than amendments. The study also shows that conventions held in other states have proved more independent of political and special interest pressures than have legislatures.

The League points out that the Minnesota Constitutional Commission of the legislature has suggested 112 changes in the constitution. Forty separate amendments would be required for the major changes alone. Taking the cost to taxpayers of the four amendments in the 1954 election as \$66,168, the League estimates the cost of these 40 major changes as \$1,985,040. "The most expensive convention in the country hasn't cost that much!" the League comments.

The federal constitution is a unique document covering the broad powers of the federal government. The drafters deliberately set it up so that it would be flexible and adaptable. Not so with state constitutions, says the League. They must smell everything out very carefully. They are restrictive. "Too often we have had to amend and amend and amend; and, where we were unable to amend, to ignore, in order to carry on the business of state government."

The League of Women Voters is to be congratulated in making available this detailed and authentic study of the issues involved in constitutional revision. We urge all interested persons to get a copy. For information write to the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 15th and Washington aves. S. E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.

### FARMERS UNION HERALD

Conservation for Better Land—  
Cooperation for Better Living

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VOLUME XC  
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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1957

1 2

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**DULUTH DAILY HERALD**  
(Evening)

Date FEB 26 1957

## State Con in Rush

Editor's note: This is the second on proposed revision of the state constitution will appear this week in the Duluth Daily Herald.

BY EINAR W. JENSEN  
Herald Political Editor

ST. PAUL — Minnesota has never had a basic charter that was the will of the people.

The document now called the Minnesota constitution was hastily thrown together by eight men in 1887 in order to get the state into the Union as quickly as possible.

That's the story being told these days in the state capitol as proponents for a constitutional convention seek feverishly to convince the 1957 state legislature of the need for such action. A decision on the issue is coming soon.

Political historians relate that in a hot August 100 years ago 10 members of the legislature were appointed by two rival factions to hurriedly draft a constitution in one week. Two of them withdrew before the week was out.

The eight men hastily pieced together a document, the contents of which did not matter so much as did agreement upon a single charter so that Minnesota could become a state.

The hodge-podge of bits and pieces that came out of that week's huddle was passed by both branches of the legislature within 24 hours without a single change. It is reported that legislators of the day admitted the constitution they wrote was not perfect but that it served the purpose of getting the state into the union as quickly as possible.

Even the final work of enrolling and signing was rushed. Two groups of clerks made so-called "originals" but comparison reveals over 300 differences in punctuation, some of which change the sense of the sentences, and 17 outright discrepancies in wording.

The Minnesota League of Women Voters points out that both of the enrolled "originals"

league members contend. There would be 131 such delegates. They would be elected in the same manner as members of the house of representatives are now.

There may be a difference of opinion on whether Minnesota's constitution needs a complete revision, the league spokesman says, but there can be no serious question of the people's right to vote on whether a constitutional convention should be called.

That's the nub of the league's argument in the 1957 legislative session.



## Can We Afford It?

THE MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE has been asked to consider the awesome cost of a constitutional convention by Otto F. Christenson, executive vice president of the Minnesota Employers association.

Christenson estimates that it would cost from one and a half to two million dollars to hold such a convention. He tells a house committee that it would be more economical to keep amending the old constitution than to pay the costs of a new one. The state could finance 60 amendments, says this bargain-minded witness, and still not spend as much as a constitutional convention would require.

This is a little like arguing that the family can't afford a new car although it could quite easily afford 60 patch-up jobs on a decrepit old jalopy.

The notion that Minnesota can't afford the cost of replacing its 100-year-old constitution seems to us fantastic. For the sake of argument, let us accept Christenson's estimate of two million dollars as the cost of a convention. (Missouri held one in 1943 for \$697,000 and New Jersey spent \$330,000 on a convention in 1947, but we'll concede that costs have risen sharply since those days.)

The point is this: Two million dollars would be mere peanuts to spend on a constitution which might last Minnesota for another century. The actual outlay for a convention would be measured in a single year but the benefits of a modern constitution might be shared by several generations. And among those benefits there might conceivably be an overall economy in government which would far outbalance the convention costs.

Minnesotans, at any rate, should be given the opportunity to vote on the question of a constitutional convention. If they are then appalled by the idea of investing two million dollars (the Christenson figure) on constitutional revisions which could meet their needs for many years to come, it will be their privilege to say so.

# Minneapolis Morning Tribune

The Voice  
of Minnesota

Largest Morning Newspaper  
in the Upper Midwest



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1957

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**DULUTH DAILY HERALD**  
(Evening)

Date FEB 26 1957

## State Constitution Said Written in Rush

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of five stories on proposed revision of the state constitution. Other stories will appear this week in the Duluth Herald.

BY EINAR W. KARLSTRAND  
Herald Political Writer

ST. PAUL — Minnesota has never had a basic charter that was the will of the people.

The document now called the Minnesota constitution was hastily thrown together by eight men in 1887 in order to get the state into the Union as quickly as possible.

That's the story being told these days in the state capitol as proponents for a constitutional convention seek feverishly to convince the 1957 state legislature of the need for such action. A decision on the issue is coming soon.

Political historians relate that in a hot August 100 years ago 10 members of the legislature were appointed by two rival factions to hurriedly draft a constitution in one week. Two of them withdrew before the week was out.

The eight men hastily pieced together a document, the contents of which did not matter so much as did agreement upon a single charter so that Minnesota could become a state.

The hodge-podge of bits and pieces that came out of that week's huddle was passed by both branches of the legislature within 24 hours without a single change. It is reported that legislators of the day admitted the constitution they wrote was not perfect but that it served the purpose of getting the state into the union as quickly as possible.

Even the final work of enrolling and signing was rushed. Two groups of clerks made so-called "originals" but comparison reveals over 300 differences in punctuation, some of which change the sense of the sentences, and 17 outright discrepancies in wording.

The Minnesota League of Women Voters points out that both of the enrolled "originals" are of equal validity. Therefore, no one knows today exactly what was and is the legal Minnesota constitution. And to compound the confusion, printed versions all varied considerably from one another and from both originals.

It is maintained by proponents for a change that the Minnesota constitution is not bad because it is old. They say it is bad because it was hastily conceived.

The proponents for a constitutional convention say that amendments have largely failed because no document can be amended properly out of text in such lengths.

Opponents of revision contend that the federal Constitution, written 168 years ago, needs no complete change. Similarly, they say, the state constitution need not undergo a major change.

But the League of Women Voters lobbyists in the state capitol tell the lawmakers there is small comparison between the Minnesota and United States constitutions.

The federal Constitution was written by the ablest and most brilliant men ever assembled in an American convention, the league leaders point out.

And they go on to add that the U. S. Constitution was fully de-

state constitution declare there can be no serious contrast of the federal documents with the "hodge-podge, hastily-drawn together" state charter.

They say the time has come, indeed is "long overdue, for a systematic and orderly review of our basic charter."

The league believes that the "yes" vote by the people in 1954 on letting legislators serve as members of a constitutional convention "is a clear mandate to the legislature to call a constitutional convention."

Lobbyists for the league further believe there is "little or no reason" to fear the results of holding such a convention.

Delegates to such a body would be fully cognizant of the gravity and importance of their task, the

league members contend. There would be 131 such delegates. They would be elected in the same manner as members of the house of representatives are now.

There may be a difference of opinion on whether Minnesota's constitution needs a complete revision, the league spokesman say, but there can be no serious question of the people's right to vote on whether a constitutional convention should be called.

That's the nub of the league's argument in the 1957 legislative session.

On a decrepit old jargon.

The notion that Minnesota can't afford the cost of replacing its 100-year-old constitution seems to us fantastic. For the sake of argument, let us accept Christenson's estimate of two million dollars as the cost of a convention. (Missouri held one in 1943 for \$697,000 and New Jersey spent \$330,000 on a convention in 1947, but we'll concede that costs have risen sharply since those days.)

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Minnesotans, at any rate, should be given the opportunity to vote on the question of a constitutional convention. If they are then appalled by the idea of investing two million dollars (the Christenson figure) on constitutional revisions which could meet their needs for many years to come, it will be their privilege to say so.

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Date FEB 28 1957

## Learn With the League . . .

By The League of Women Voters

### A Look at the Constitution

Let's examine Minnesota's Constitution. It was probably never taught you in school because, for one thing, it is impossible to re-print any EXACT version of the document since there are two "originals" — both different! Probably another reason is that it would encourage increased disregard for the law, for despite more than 80 amendments, parts of our constitution are so obsolete that they are just ignored. Some of these provisions include a \$250,000 debt limit, election of U. S. senators by the legislature rather than by the people, the right for women to vote only in school board and library elections, currency issuance by state banks, and many others.

True, these probably do no great harm because they have been superceded by either the federal constitution, judicial decision or other provision, but they cause much confusion, particularly in the minds of citizens reading it for the first time.

A part of the unnecessary length of our constitution can be attributed to these obsolete provisions, but far more important in this regard is that the constitution goes into statutory detail which has no place there at all. For instance, it lists the complete routes of our 70 trunk highway systems; this makes up approximately one-fourth of the present document.

The major consequence of such detail is that it ties the hands of the legislature and prevents the introduction of more efficient methods in all three branches of government.

A good constitution should be a broad statement of principles clearly and logically developed which would provide the blueprint for legislation and for the structure of government. It must be flexible enough to provide for dynamic adjustment to the problems of the future and it should include provision for a method of revision or amendment which would adequately express the will of the people.

Our present constitution does not do this.

Particularly in the area of taxes and finances, the present constitution is rigid and binding. The dedicated funds, special taxes for certain industries, etc. tend to make efficient financing and budgeting almost impossible.

Many amendments regarding taxation, while certainly bringing a variety of taxing methods to our state, have often made the constitution even more rigid. Particular provisions in terms of dollars and cents have no place in such a document because they often simply necessitate future constitutional revision.

Another of the difficulties the legislature encounters in coping with our obsolete constitution is that its time in session is limited to 90 days each biennium. The effect of the time limit has led to extreme haste in legislation during closing weeks and to failure of desirable measures because of lack of time.

Too, since our constitution does not limit the size of the legislature, we now have the largest Senate in the country with 67 members; the national average is 35. The House of Representatives with 131 members, too, is oversized in comparison with the average 120 members. Reapportionment on a higher per capita basis could be accomplished by a convention in order to return the legislature to a less unwieldy size.

During each session the legislature passes much special legislation, that is, laws affecting only one member of any class of local government, even though such legislation is specifically prohibited by the constitution. However, this is necessary because there is no provision in our constitution for adequate home rule. In fact, there is no provision whatsoever for county home rule!

Minnesota's requirements for adopting and amending a municipal charter are the most difficult in the United States. A charter, once adopted by a community, must remain its charter. There may be amendments, but a new charter may not be written. Many earlier written charters are faulty and inadequate for today's needs.

The greatest administrative inadequacy in our constitution is that it provides for a five-headed executive department. Our governor cannot be a chief executive or even an executive! Good government is predicated upon a balance of strength between the three branches of government. Democracy today requires institutions that are strong enough to govern, yet responsive to the electorate. A governor must be able to be held accountable for his administration, but he cannot be until he has the power to appoint department heads and the lines of authority are clear.

We have dealt with only a few of the many problems which our constitution creates. Because amendment is costly and difficult, the simplest method of reform lies in calling a constitutional convention to revise our constitution as a whole and then return it to us, the people, for rejection or acceptance, as we may choose.

Date FEB 27 1957

## League Hits Constitution As Costly

Editor's note: This is the third in a series of five stories on proposed revision of the state constitution. Other stories will appear this week in the Duluth Herald.

BY EINAR W. KARLSTRAND  
Herald Political Writer

ST. PAUL — Minnesota's 20,000-word state constitution is a costly document in the price of inefficiency it exacts.

That's the position of the League of Women Voters which is virtually begging the state legislature to give Minnesota voters a chance to express themselves in 1958 on whether they want a constitutional convention.

The league maintains the book-length constitution contains obsolete and unenforced provisions. The wordy document, it is contended, causes a great amount of litigation.

One league member said: "A constitution should be an enabling act and not a piece of legislation in itself. For one reason, absolute clarity and brevity in the language of the constitution is important in order to avoid unnecessary litigation in the courts."

But the league declares that an "even greater fault than wordiness" is the inflexible language of the century-old state constitution.

The inflexible provisions tie the hands of the legislature and the people—and the hands of progress, it is contended. There have been 81 amendments. These, the league claims, were largely of matters which should never have required an amendment.

Proponents for a constitutional convention argue that the power of the constitution should have been sufficiently broad to enable the legislature to act without such amendment.

The league in a recent statement said: "We of the League of Women Voters have sufficient belief in the wisdom of the people's chosen representatives to believe that inflexible restraints need not be laid down by a constitution."

Minnesota's constitution now places restrictions on home rule (power of cities, towns and counties to govern themselves), making it necessary for local communities to go to the legislature for special legislation, it is claimed.

Special legislation, a law pertaining to only one community, is prohibited by the constitution. The legislature every session passes laws relating to local government.

One of the big issues at a constitutional convention would be whether citizens can more easily amend their home rule charters.

Some say the present constitution hampers the state in financing important services.

The league says that Minnesota faces a critical situation in the financing of its schools and that rigid and obsolete constitutional provisions do not lend themselves to meeting this problem. The organization says restraint should only be imposed by the constitution where real danger of dispersal of public funds can be foreseen.

Obsolete provisions of the state constitution now are largely ignored. However, they have not been deleted by law.

Thus, Minnesota is operating under a basic charter which it observes in part and ignores in part without specifying which parts are being currently observed and which parts ignored, lobbyists for a change declare.

It is pointed out that Minnesota teachers, while using the federal Constitution for classroom instruction, do not use the Minnesota state constitution for educational purposes.

The league lists among the more often quoted antiquities in the state constitution:

1. The limitation of the state debt to \$250,000. In December, 1953 it was \$109,712,000.

2. A section providing for the election of United States senators by the legislature.

3. Special provisions for Indians as though they were not citizens.

4. A provision that state senators be elected from even-numbered districts at one election and from odd-numbered at the next.

In addition, there are ignored sections. One of these is the direction to the legislature to provide for a state census every tenth year and a provision for a reapportionment and a redistricting of the state after each state and federal census.

The league maintains that the constitution is too restraining because of mandatory allocation of revenues.

"A just contention of thoughtful legislators has been that legislative decision, based on current conditions, is a better way to determine fiscal policy," the league says. "The subject of the state's finances has been dealt with in nearly half of the amendments to the constitution."

"Article IX alone has been amended 19 times. Each amendment has given greater rigidity to the taxing system since each one has, in some way, tied the hands of the legislators even when it seemed to be giving them more power."



MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**WELLS MIRROR**

FEB 28 1957

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**LEGISLATIVE DAY FOR LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS HELD.**

Legislative Day for all Minnesota League of Women Voters was held on February 20. Mrs. Neal Slindee and Mrs. Winton Melby were delegates from the Wells League. This day was held to inform the League on how the bills in which they are particularly interested, are progressing in the legislature.

Two senators and two representatives spoke to the League on party designation, constitutional convention, and reapportionment. The delegates had the opportunity of sitting in on a committee meeting to learn how they are conducted.

The ladies visited the Senate and House in session. Senator E. J. Anderson and Representative L. B. Erdahl met them and helped them to have a very profitable day.

The Wells League of Women Voters made it possible for Mr. Buelke, Jackie Hassing, Kenneth McKee and Inge Lise Kristensen to visit the legislature the same day.



FEB 28 1957

Date

## Second In A Series Of Articles By League Of Women Voters

(The League of Women Voters of Bloomington, recognizing that the voters of Bloomington will again be called upon to evaluate a proposed city charter at some future date, is conducting a study of city charters. The various methods of election have been the main subjects of study and it is in this connection that a series of three articles, of which this is the second, has been prepared).

By MRS. JOHN MAISTROVICH

LAST WEEK we discussed briefly the method of election at large for city councilmen, based on the principle of a community being represented as one whole unit with its common interests more important than any of its diverse interests. The other principle of representative government—recognizing and giving a voice to the minority—is the basis for the ward system. Wards are geographic districts of equal population, each electing the same number of men to the council. Regulations are usually provided for ensuring proper reapportionment of the ward boundaries as the population shifts or grows.

BLOOMINGTON could have the ward system in its city charter with either all councilmen elected every two or four years or with staggered terms.

The ward system is old, dating back to 1686 in Albany and New York City, and attained its greatest popularity in the nineteenth century.

Although it has received much criticism in recent years the proponents of the ward system can point out several important factors in its favor.

These include: all sections of the city are guaranteed representation, the odds are against a clean sweep by one party thereby assuring the minority some representation, it is most likely to produce a working majority of community-minded councilmen and a minority that is critical but not obstructive. It creates a closer relationship between each councilman and his constituents, requires a shorter ballot, is easier for voters to become informed about candidates, and campaigning is simpler and less expensive.

SOME disadvantages of the ward system are: wards are usually artificial areas rather than distinctive social communities, the danger exists of ward boundaries being determined by gerrymandering, the relation between the councilman and his constituents is frequently impersonal especially in large cities. Councilmen are more concerned about ward interests than the welfare of the city as a whole which aids in the development of machines and bosses. Able men are often denied opportunity to serve the community because they are members of the minority in their own wards. Each councilman is accountable to only a small portion of the voters, a slight change in the comparative voting strength of each side can drastically change the proportion each has in the council.

A party's citywide total of votes does not determine the election results which means that a minority may gain control of the council because the majority strength is unfavorably distributed by ward boundaries or a sizable minority may not elect a single councilman because its supporters are scattered throughout the city, majority may be over represented.

Because of the conflict between election at large and by the ward system there have been attempts at a compromise in some cities.

ONE METHOD is the nomination of the candidates by wards and their election by the entire city. Although St. Cloud is the only Minnesota city to use this system, it is fairly popular throughout the country with San Diego, California; Tampa Florida; and Wilmington, Delaware among those using it.

Another compromise method is that of electing part of the council by wards and the remaining members at large. This practice is fairly common in Minnesota where 30 of 84 home-rule cities elect from one to three of their councilmen at large.

That political scientists generally agree that a ward system is not the best method of election available is shown by a report of the National Municipal League relating the results of a study made in 1941 by the St. Louis Governmental Research Institute.

Date

MAR 1 1957

## EVERYBODY'S IDEAS

### The Cost of Amendments

To the Editor: Otto Christenson, executive vice president of the Minnesota Employer's association, attacked the proposal to hold a constitutional convention. He stated before the house general legislation committee that the Constitution has been amended 83 times and that a convention to revise it would cost \$1,500,000.

Here are some additional facts that may help to put this matter in proper perspective. Of the amendments submitted to the voters since 1899, only 35 of the 96 or 36½ per cent have been approved. Many were submitted two, three or even five times before passing. The cost of preparing the amendment, publicizing it, preparing the ballots and holding the election is considerable. If one takes the secretary of state's estimate that at least one-fourth to one-fifth of election costs are due to amendments, the average cost per election has been approximately \$66,000. It is interesting to estimate that at current costs the 29 elections since 1899 in which amendments have been submitted for vote would have cost nearly two million dollars. The most expensive convention in the country hasn't cost that much. New Jersey's 90-day convention cost \$330,000; Missouri's \$697,000 and lasted one year.

The League of Women Voters has actively supported legislation which would permit the people of Minnesota to vote on whether they wished a convention held to revise the Minnesota constitution.

St. Paul.—Mrs. Homer Mantis, Chairman,  
Mrs. Herbert Wright,  
Legislative Committee,  
St. Paul League of Women Voters.

## ANOKA UNION

MAR 1 1957

Date

### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The need for reapportionment will be the subject of a radio program to be presented by the League of Women Voters on Tuesday, March 5, at 3:30 p.m. on radio station KANO. Mrs. William Fletcher, president of the Anoka League, will lead the discussion.

# Minnesota Constitution Needs Revision Badly, Legislators Claim

## BERGERUD AND LINDQUIST REPORT

Our personal lives are tied up with certain basic principles that guide our actions as members of society. So under our State and Federal systems, the Constitution is the basic charter that sets forth the principles under which government functions.

Our Minnesota Constitution was written and voted upon in 1857—one hundred years ago. Those were the days when many homes had a spinning wheel, and ox carts rattled along forest trails. A civil war loomed black on the

horizons and the question of slave states versus free states was the burning issue of the day.

THESE PIONEER people took their politics with a martial spirit, and when it came to the matter of writing a Constitution, the political parties of the day split into two battling conventions, each of which wrote a Constitution. After considerable political maneuvering, it remained for a conference committee of ten men, five from each political party, to put the framework of our constitution together in a period of ten days. Speedy action was necessary so that Minnesota could be organized as a State and elect six delegates to Congress to swell the Northern free vote.

Many learned and dedicated people of the State of Minnesota have studied our Constitution in relation to present day needs for efficient operation of government. Every one of the constitutional committees consisting of these distinguished citizens has come to the conclusion that a constitutional convention should be called to improve and strengthen this basic law. Among reasons given for calling a constitutional convention are the following: The executive branch of our State government is so unwieldy as to make impractical responsible administration; our Court system does not have the independence that it should have under the separation of powers doctrine; the Legislature has failed in its solemn duty to reapportion on basis of population; extension of powers of self-government to local communities would relieve the Legislature of passing on hundreds of local Bills on which they have little or no information; the meaning of the Constitution is lost in a maze of amendments, hundreds of which have been proposed and eighty-three approved by the voters; provisions relating to fiscal policy are so restrictive that current needs of the State suffer; and so many provisions are obsolete that revision is in order on this ground alone.

OPPONENTS of constitutional revision argue that what was good enough for our forefathers is good enough today; that there is no guarantee that representatives of the people sitting in convention will come forth with a better framework of government than our present Constitution represents; that insidious forces could very well be at work in such a convention to destroy our concept of fundamental rights for a free society; that we know what we have now—there is no telling what we might receive as a result of a convention, and we can accommodate changing needs by amendment.

This fear complex instilled by opponents of constitutional revision is in direct contrast to the principles enunciated by our fathers. The founders stated in the first section of the first articles of the Constitution that the people have "the right to alter, modify or reform such government, whenever the public good may

require it" and in order to insure the accomplishment of this fundamental principle, they set forth detailed procedures to follow in revising the Constitution.

IN THIS 1957 session of the Legislature a bill again will be proposed authorizing the voters in the next election to answer the question: "Shall there be a convention to revise the Constitution of the State of Minnesota?" If the majority of the Minnesota citizens voting in the election answer that question in the affirmative, the Legislature would then set up the procedures for calling a convention, and the voters would elect delegates to the convention in the same manner that they elect State Representatives. These delegates would then meet in convention to frame a Constitution, and thereafter the voters would be given an opportunity to approve or reject the document.

This procedure insures that delegates of the people elected from representative districts would frame the Constitution for submission to the voters for their approval or rejection. What fear then need we have of enemies in our midst, if such there be? Why shouldn't the people have the right now to assemble in convention through their representatives and seriously consider whether the public good requires a complete revision of our present Constitution?

LEGISLATORS under our constitutional system may enact laws only within the powers granted under the Constitution. Further, Legislators have no right to violate or impede accomplishment of the basic principles of government set forth in that document. Enough people have studied and spoken on the need for constitutional revision. It is for us to let the people decide now on whether or not a convention to revise the Constitution should be called. Accordingly, we shall support the Bill that gives the people an opportunity to vote on that question.

## LETTERS TO THE TRIBUNE

### Convention to Revise Constitution Urged

To the Editor: Many Minnesotans await with interest the action Monday of the general administration committee of the house, under chairmanship of Carl Hagland, on a bill which would allow them to vote on a convention to revise the state constitution.

In support of the bill, people appeared before the committee representing the Minnesota Citizens Constitutional committee, the Democratic and Republican parties, Minnesota Grange, League of Women Voters and a member of President Eisenhower's commission in intergovernmental relations.

Last Monday the opponents spoke. They were two—Mike Galvin, attorney for the railroads, and Otto Christenson, executive vice president of the Minnesota Employers' association. Will the committee be more influenced by two men representing special interests than by a broadly representative segment of the population?

THAT the constitution needs revising is not a point of disagreement. At each general election the legislature submits amendments to the voters. Twenty-six amendments have been introduced at this legislative

stitutions restrict the scope, effectiveness and adaptability of state and local action. These self-imposed constitutional limitations make it difficult for many states to perform all the services their citizens require, and consequently have frequently been the underlying cause of state and municipal pleas for federal assistance . . . The commission finds a very real and pressing need for the states to improve their constitutions."

In view of these facts, why have the citizens of Minnesota been denied for three legislative sessions a right fundamental to representative governments? Have the legislators forgotten that they are elected representatives of the people and that all of them will be standing for re-election in 1958?—Mildred Hargraves, Rochester, Minn.



# Constitution Revision Move Gets Backing

A proposal for voters to decide next year whether a convention should be called to revise the state constitution today was approved by the house general legislation committee.

The committee vote was 11-6 that the bill be recommended to pass.

The bill has bipartisan house backing and is one of three major issues that Minnesota's two major political parties are pushing in the 1957 legislature.

The bipartisan support was cited by Rep. Joe Karth, St. Paul liberal, the bill's chief author, in urging the committee action. He emphasized he feels the bill "should be submitted to the whole house for proper debate."

"The house is in a position that is deserving to hear the expression of opposing viewpoints," Karth said.

Rep. Clarence Langley, Red Wing conservative and co-author of the bill, said he has "both doubt and convictions" on the measure.

"I have doubts that our constitution is such an inviolate document that it can't be improved upon and a conviction that we can do as good a job in 1958 as was done in 1858," Langley said.

Only real committee opposition came from Rep. Carl Iverson, Ashby liberal. Iverson questioned whether rewriting the constitution would eliminate the need for future amendments.

Karth acknowledged that amendments might be neces-

sary, but that the 1947 interim commission that studied constitutional revision had held that the present document would require amendments in 36 major sections, addition of six new sections, and 90 minor changes to be brought up to date.

Rep. Carl Hagland, Minneapolis, committee chairman, said the bill had been given three hearings and he feels the committee should take action.

Voting for the bill were Representatives Hagland, Kelly, Bergerud, Ernst, Karth, Klaus, Kording, Murk, Skeate, Tomczyk and Wee.

Voting against it were Alderink, Enestvedt, Fitzsimons, Iverson, Tieman, Thompson and Windmiller.

Representatives Albert Lovik and Helmer Thompson passed the vote.

Provisions of the bill propose that the matter of calling a convention to rewrite the constitution go before the voters at next year's general election.

If approved, the constitutional convention probably would meet in 1959 and its result would be submitted to voters at the next general election.

A committee vote had been expected today on another controversial measure—the 50-foot truck bill—but it appeared it would be stalled off for several weeks.

Chairman Antony Podgorski of the house commercial transportation committee said the measure would be laid over until action is taken on several other bills affecting the big trucks.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**MINNEAPOLIS STAR**  
(Evening)

Date MAR 5 1957

## EVERYBODY'S IDEAS

### Let the People Decide

To the Editor: Shall the people of Minnesota have a chance to decide for themselves whether or not they want a convention called to revise the constitution of Minnesota, or shall they again be denied that right? The issue involved in the constitutional convention bill now before the legislature is as simple as that. It seeks only to place the question where it belongs—in the hands of the people.

It is interesting to note that those who support this legislation fall into the one general category of public interest groups. The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is one of them. Its membership has studied the facts thoroughly and arrived at consensus through the democratic deliberative process of discussion and agreement at convention. Our unpaid lobbyists can testify in the legislature, secure in the knowledge that they speak for 5,000 league members in 54 local leagues throughout the state.

Those who oppose it fall into two general categories: 1) special interest groups who want to keep the status quo and fear change or loss of special privilege, and 2) those who believe that the slow, expensive amendment method is good enough for Minnesota.

The League of Women Voters believes that Minnesota deserves something better than this snail's pace reform. It believes that a constitutional convention composed of delegates elected by the people would be the most orderly, efficient and economical way of revising the constitution.

Minnesota's constitution needs improvement; there is little argument about that. Your readers may not all agree on what should be changed in our constitution, and that is a good thing in a democracy. A constitutional convention would afford more opportunity for discussion and debate than a legislative session that is all too short and crowded with bills and other duties.

Minneapolis.—

Mrs. Basil Young,  
President, Minnesota  
League of Women Voters.

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

**ST. PAUL DAILY  
DISPATCH**  
(Evening)

Date MAR 6 1957

## 'Right To Vote On Convention'

Minnesotans were told today "not to let a smoke screen of side issues hide the basic fact that you have the right to vote on whether you want a convention to revise the state constitution."

The declaration was made by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

"Opponents of the constitutional convention bill testifying at a House hearing have tried to switch the spotlight to many other issues," the statement said, "but not one has given a single real reason why the people should not be allowed to vote on having a convention."

"We advise those who believe in this right to tell their legislators immediately."

Date **MAR 7** 1957

# Constitution Revision Is Eye-Washed

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"We advise those who believe in this right to tell their legislators immediately."

← Same Clipping in 1 (Mar. 7, 1957)  
St. Louis Park Dispatch  
Golden Valley Suburban Press  
Lake Harriet Courier  
Edina-Morningside Courier

Dr. Twin City Mental Hygiene  
Unit, speaking on the principles  
of mental health.  
Awards will be presented to  
the Groveland winners of a re-  
cent talent show at Minnetonka  
High school including: Barbara  
Larsen, piano soloist; Marsha  
Larsen, tap dancer; John  
Peterson and Ted Tomlinson,  
piano soloist.  
John Berkey, representing the  
Twin City Council, will give char-  
acters to the four scout and cub  
troops sponsored by the PTA.  
Capt. Scout Troop 935, Mrs. Mil-



MAR 6 1957

## Letters to the Tribune

### Emphasizes Support for Convention Bill

To the Editor: The vote on the constitutional convention bill in the legislative committee of the house of representatives should answer two questions: 1. Who does the legislature represent? 2. Who influences our legislature?

Otto Christenson, executive vice president of the Minnesota Employers' association, spoke in opposition to the bill for one hour at a house hearing. He admitted that he spoke for about one-fourth of the members of his organization. Michael J. Galvin, lobbyist for Minnesota railroads, the only other opponent of the bill, made it clear he was speaking as an individual.

The proponents of this bill were authorized by the people they represent to support it. When both political parties, the president of the state grange, the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, a representative of labor, the legislative chairman of a leading women's organization, the chairman of a statewide committee organized to support this measure, and an eminent college professor testify in favor of a bill, they are a cross-section of Minnesota's population asking to be heard. They represent many thousands of people, compared to Christenson's 400.—A. L. Grossman, Minneapolis.

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### Let the People Decide

To the Editor: Shall the people of Minnesota have a chance to decide for themselves whether or not they want a convention called to revise the constitution of Minnesota, or shall they again be denied that right? The issue involved in the constitutional convention bill now before the legislature is as simple as that. It seeks only to place the question where it belongs—in the hands of the people.

It is interesting to note that those who support this legislation fall into the one general category of public interest groups. The League of Women Voters of Minnesota is one of them. Its membership has studied the facts thoroughly and arrived at consensus through the democratic deliberative process of discussion and agreement at convention. Our unpaid lobbyists can testify in the legislature, secure in the knowledge that they speak for 5,000 league members in 54 local leagues throughout the state.

Those who oppose it fall into two general categories: 1) special interest groups who want to keep the status quo and fear change or loss of special privilege, and 2) those who believe that the slow, expensive amendment method is good enough for Minnesota.

The League of Women Voters believes that Minnesota deserves something better than this snail's pace reform. It believes that a constitutional convention composed of delegates elected by the people would be the most orderly, efficient and economical way of revising the constitution.

Minnesota's constitution needs improvement; there is little argument about that. Your readers may not all agree on what should be changed in our constitution, and that is a good thing in a democracy. A constitutional convention would afford more opportunity for discussion and debate than a legislative session that is all too short and crowded with bills and other duties.

Minneapolis.—  
Mrs. Basil Young,  
President, Minnesota  
League of Women Voters.

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
ROBBINSDALE POST

Date MAR 7 1957

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MEA Clipping Bureau  
835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1  
**NORTH MINNEAPOLIS  
POST**

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**BEMIDJI  
NORTHLAND TIMES**

Date MAR 8 1957

## League of Women Voters Ask For Constitution Conv.

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On the bipartisan committee are: GOP — Mrs. Leonard Wilson, Carlton; Sen. Albert Quie, Dennison; Rep. Alf Bergerud, Edina; Mrs. C. E. Howard, Excelsior. DFL — Mrs. Marge Maki, St. Paul; Dr. C. F. McQuiggan, Marshall; Mrs. Betty Green, St. Louis Park; Gerald Dillon, Minneapolis.

Joining in issuing the statement were several persons who testified at the House hearing in favor of the constitution convention bill. They are Bill Pearson, Ogilvie, master of the Minnesota State Grange; Donald Holmes, Minneapolis, chairman of the Minnesota Citizens Constitutional Committee; Mrs. Ellis Peilen, Minneapolis, state legislative chairman of the National Council of Jewish Women; Geo. W. Lawson, St. Paul, active in the AFL; Mrs. Graydon J. Kilborn, Minneapolis, Hennepin Co. Republican Workshop; Stanley Platt, Minneapolis; Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, Rochester, constitutional convention chairman of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.

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**MINNEAPOLIS STAR  
(Evening)**

Date MAR 8 1957

## To Speed Up Legislation

To the Editor: The legislative session is half over and most of the important legislation is yet to be acted upon. Since the length of the session is limited by the state constitution, it cannot be extended. But more frequent committee meetings would help. Some committees meet twice weekly. Others meet only once.

We suggest that committees such as the reapportionment committees, which have a backlog of important bills to consider, schedule two meetings a week. This could prevent important bills being buried in committee until the latter hectic days of the session.

—Mrs. Donald Guthrie,  
Legislative Chairman,  
League of Women  
Voters of Minnesota.

White Bear Lake, Minn.

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835 Palace Bldg., Minneapolis 1

## KENYON LEADER

Mar 8 1957

Date

### WHY A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION?

As these lines are being written, the Minnesota Legislature is considering and discussing the proposed bill to call a constitutional convention to re-write the present constitution. There is hot discussion going on, but indications are that the proposal will not carry. As this paper has said many times in this column, method of amendment to the constitution up to this time has been that proposal of amendment be made by the Legislature. At the committee hearing in regard to the matter, we note that the matter of cost is one objection against the proposal to have this amendment made by convention. It seems to be agreed that the cost of this process, instead of the one that is now used would cost about \$1,500,000. Under present law, proposal by the Legislature has to be submitted to the people for vote. It seems unthinkable under present circumstances that the convention method will carry, as the present constitution does provide the method that has been used heretofore.

Members of the Legislature, a cross section of the people of the state, are particularly qualified to consider and deal with this subject.

It should be borne in mind that the bill which the Legislature is considering, even if acted upon favorably, will not become law or a part of the constitution at once. The question before the Legislature in regard to this matter is that of submitting to the people the question whether or not they desire to vote on it in 1958. The law, if it passed today, will provide that such a convention may be called if the people order it, convention for that purpose. As stated above, the constitution can be changed under present law upon proposal by the Legislature. In order to do it under the convention method, the people have to vote upon whether they favor calling such convention instead of continuing to do it as now, with or without proposal of the Legislature by the convention method.

MEA Clipping Bureau  
DULUTH PUBLICITY

Date MAR 8 1957

## League, Bipartisan Committee Warn People to Guard Rights

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## ST. PAUL DAILY PIONEER-PRESS (Morning)

Date MAR 11 1957

### Letting The People Vote

Opponents of the constitutional convention proposal in the Legislature have a hard time producing effective arguments on the merits of the bill itself. It is much easier to sidestep the specific provisions and talk about more general matters.

What the bill provides is merely that the people have a chance to vote on the question of whether a convention should be held to revise the constitution. If the voters expressed disapproval, there would be no convention. If they approved, a convention would be held. In that case a revised constitution would later be submitted to the people. It could not become effective without first being approved by the voters.

Opponents of the convention bill not only are against a general revision of the constitution. They are also against letting the voters of Minnesota show how they feel on the matter.



# COMMENT

## In League With The Suburbs

### Minnesota Needs New Constitution

By Mrs. E. Robert Schwartz

Golden Valley League of  
Women Voters

Minnesota's Constitution was written and adopted under questionable circumstances more than 100 years ago. The great state that resulted is celebrating its centennial in 1958. We take pride in Minnesota's birthday, but not in the age of its decrepit constitution.

The League of Women Voters has been working for more than 10 years to bring about the calling of a Constitutional Convention to rectify the mistakes which began with a faulty original document and continued through one hundred years of eighty-seven amendments to become ambiguous, outmoded, and confusing to the extent that the state government must pretend that certain provisions of the Constitution do not exist.

In recent years, two legislative commissions and a tax study committee have recommended a Constitutional Convention as the best way to accomplish most necessary revision. Yet the Legislature refuses the necessary 2-3 vote of each branch required by the Constitution to give the people the opportunity to vote on whether or not they would like to have a convention. Why? Many reasons are given, cost among others. In spite of the fact that statistics show that in states that have held conventions, such as New Jersey in 1947, the cost of \$350,000 was scarcely more than the \$204,168 cost to Minnesotans in 1956 of passing the three amendments. Yet a convention would have accomplished a complete instead of a piece-meal revision. Additional advantages reported by states where conventions have cleaned up and thrown out old Constitutions are a resultant economy and efficiency in state government. When we consider cost, we must not forget that only one out of every three proposed amendments has passed since Minnesota became a state, but the taxpayers have paid for three out of three whether they passed or not.

Some opponents of a convention claim the people of today cannot be trusted to do as good a job on a constitution as was done in 1857. Subversive elements and vested interests might take over the convention. Strangely, the only paid lobbyists at the 1957 legislative sessions were the opponents of a constitutional convention.

If 24 out of the 48 states have found it advantageous to adopt new constitutions, we must conclude that Minnesota is out-of-step with progress when she sentimentally hangs onto her original document.

Now is the time, Centennial year and election year, to ask your candidates how they feel about a new constitution for Minnesota. Surely if you can be entrusted with selecting your legislators, they in turn should have enough faith in you to let you decide on a Constitutional Convention. Likewise, if the legislature must meet every two years to revise laws, then a revision of the Constitution after 100 years might seem logical.

Constitutional Convention in  
1957 Legislative Session  
By Mrs. E. C. Davidson  
St. Louis Park League  
of Women Voters

A bill to permit a vote of the people on whether or not a constitutional convention should be called was introduced in the 1957 Legislature. Authors of this bill in the House of Representatives were: Karth, A. I. Johnson, Langley, Luther, and Noreen. In the Senate, the authors of the bill were: Holmquist, E. L. Andersen, and Schultz.

In spite of having bi-partisan support, as well as the support of the League of Women Voters, and other organizations, the bill was defeated by failure to pass in the Senate Committee, where a 9-9 tie was not called for a new vote, nor were

4 St. Louis Park  
DISPATCH

Thursday, April 24, 1958

absent members of the committee polled. In the House of Representatives, the bill was passed in the committee by a vote of 11 yes and 6 no, and on the Floor of the House by 89 yes and 38 no votes.

When the Legislature convenes next January, it is hoped that the results of the fall election will produce a realignment, especially in the Senate, that will be favorable to presenting the calling of a constitutional convention to the people. The League of Women Voters is continuing to work for constitutional revision through its program of study by its members, providing information for the public, and contact with legislative candidates to make the facts known.

The League of Women Voters has published a number of booklets and pamphlets on this subject. If you desire more information, call Mrs. Bruce G. Edward, GR 3-5883. If you wish to express your opinion, write to the editor of this paper, or to your Legislators.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota, 15th & Washington S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.  
March 1958 030558D

WORKSHOP ON REACHING THE LEGISLATORS

REVIEW OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT (LWV 1957)

LEAGUE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD LOBBYING

KNOW YOUR SUBJECT

KNOW THE LEGISLATOR'S VOTING RECORD

OFFER THE LEGISLATOR LEAGUE MATERIAL

REACH LEGISLATORS IN NON-LEAGUE DISTRICTS

INTEREST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY IN OUR PROGRAM

WORK WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS



# Letters to the Tribune

## Constitution Draft Isn't League's Job

To the Editor: Recently a reader asked why the League of Women Voters doesn't write a "model constitution" for Minnesota in order to show what a revised constitution would be like and gain support for a constitutional convention.

The reason is that we feel it is not the function of the league or any other advisory group to write a proposed constitution. It is the delegates to the convention, an elected representative body, who have the authority and the privilege of drawing up the specific provisions of a constitution.

The league can point out aspects of the constitution which need change, and this it has done over the past 10 years through many publications. The league and other groups can make recommendations which they would like to see incorporated into a revised constitution. Some of the most urgent and talked-about are:

More clearly fixed executive responsibilities; some method of enforcing reapportionment of the legislature; adequate length of legislative session; removal of obsolete, contradictory, or purely statutory material from the constitution; workable amending process; overhauling of the financial provisions, some of which are archaic or unnecessarily restrictive.

The constitutional commission appointed by the legislature in 1947 studied the constitution and recommended many changes of the sort mentioned above, plus a constitutional convention to achieve them.

However, the commission also compiled its recommendations into a model constitution for Minnesota. For this last effort the commission was criticized by some as having exceeded its authority.

The League of Women Voters will not take over the job of the duly-elected delegates to a constitutional convention, but we will continue to advocate a constitutional convention as the most efficient and democratic way to get the constitutional improvements

that Minnesota needs. — Mrs. Kenneth Green, constitutional revision chairman, League of Women Voters of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

## Women Voters' Contest To Open

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota today announced their third annual essay contest open to high school students on the subject "How Representative Government is Assured by our State Constitution."

The contest opens Monday and closes Feb. 14. Only Minnesota high school students, grades 9 through 12, are eligible.

First prize is a 30-volume set of the Encyclopedia Americana. The first three winners will come to St. Paul for an all-expense-paid day at the state Legislature.

## Essay Contest Winners Named

A senior at St. Margaret's Academy and two Marshall, Minn., high school students are winners in the 1959 high school essay contest sponsored by the League of Women Voters.

First place went to Sharon Locy, Marshall.

Second place winner was Eileen McDonald, 7200 N. Lakeland Av., Brooklyn Park.

Delores Frair, Marshall, was third.

Topic of the contest was "How is Representative Government Assured by Our State Constitution?"

## The Answer Is NO

THE SENATE judiciary committee has voted to table indefinitely a bill which might have opened the way to a constitutional convention in Minnesota. This means that the bill is as good as dead for the present session.

Minnesotans who make note of its demise should understand one fact clearly. The bill in question would not have provided for a constitutional convention. It would merely have given the voters the right to decide, in referendum, whether a constitutional convention should be called.

Those who opposed it, therefore, in effect were denying the people the opportunity to resolve this important question for themselves. Perhaps some of them were thinking: "This issue is too difficult for the people to understand. Therefore we will make the decision for them by killing the bill."

At any rate, the legislature for the sixth time has refused to permit the people of Minnesota to say whether or not they would like to see their antiquated state constitution revised in a convention.

This speaks well for the legislature's consistency. It does not speak well for its opinion of the people. Are the voters not qualified to decide for themselves whether a constitutional convention should be held? The senate judiciary committee has provided its own answer to this question. It is—bluntly—no.

## Bill for Constitution Convention Is Killed

By WILLIAM R. MacKAYE  
Minneapolis Star Staff Writer

The constitutional convention bill was killed today in the senate judiciary committee.

The bill, which has been considered by at least the last six legislatures, would have permitted voters to decide whether to call a special convention to revise the state constitution.

Principal support for the bill comes from the League of Women Voters. League president Mrs. O. H. Anderson told the committee today the amendment method of revising the constitution is "too slow, too costly."

Some 85 amendments have been approved since the Minnesota constitution was adopted in 1858.

Mrs. Anderson stressed, to

To the Editor: Recently the state senate rules committee killed a bill which would allow the citizens of Minnesota to decide whether or not they wished to call a constitutional convention.

a half-empty committee room, that in the United States the citizen is the constitution-maker.

She urged putting the question of a convention to the voters.

The bill's perennial sponsor, Sen. Stanley Holmquist, Grove City, argued that everyone agrees the constitution needs alteration. Disagreement is only over method, he said.

Sen. Gordon Rosenmeier, Little Falls, took an opposing position.

The need for a constitutional convention, he said, was eliminated by recent determination that an entire constitutional article (or section) can be revised through a single referendum question.

Previously it was believed that referendum question could cover only single propositions. Example of revision of an entire article last fall's Amendment No. 1, which voters approved.

Also appearing in favor of the convention was Dr. Lloyd Short, University of Minnesota political scientist.

Sen. Chas. Root offered the motion to postpone the bill indefinitely, in effect, killing it. His motion was adopted 12 to 8, on a standing vote.

After the vote was taken Sen. Leo Lauerma, Olivia, who voted with the majority asked to explain his vote.

"If there were any demand at all for this proposal, supporters would have come to the capitol and to this hearing."

"Since there is no popular demand, I feel duty-bound to my people to vote against this bill."

## Deplores Outmoded State Constitution

Practically speaking, rules committee members knew they could safely do this because the public at large does not realize what an archaic and poorly-drafted constitution we have. They also do not realize how important this constitution is in deciding what kind of government we have in Minnesota.

OUR constitution was drafted more than 100 years ago, and was drawn quite specifically to cover the situation as it then existed.

Unfortunately, the drafters were not quite as skillful as those who drafted our federal constitution. They did not realize the difference between a constitution (which embraces basic powers and duties and creation of and proper separation of the fundamental instruments of government) and what should properly be a subject of statutes or laws passed by the legislature.

For example, the idea of a 90-day session of the legislature every two years was probably fine in that day, since the business of the state could be accomplished in that time and, besides, the farmers had to get home to the spring planting.

WHAT application has this got to life today? The legislature must resort to the childish device of covering the clock to prolong the session.

Why must the constitution be cluttered up with seven or eight pages describing the trunk highways of the state, iron ore taxes, railroad provisions, veterans' benefits, stockholders' rights, and insane asylums? These things are surely a matter of general law but have no part in a constitution.

We believe it the public duty of your newspaper to run a series of articles acquainting the public with the state constitution.

The League of Women Voters, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and possibly other groups and individuals are quite concerned about the matter.—William J. Endersbe, president, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Bloomington.



Holmquist