



January Unit Meetings

Community Solar Gardens: How They Work and Help Subscribers Reduce Their Energy Bills

Speakers: Julie Risser, Ph. D. Development Team Member and Land Acquisition Associate at SunShare Jenny Monson-Miller Legal & Regulatory Associate at SunShare

Saturday Jan. 9 - Edina City Hall Thursday Jan. 14 - Edina Senior Center Refreshments 9:45; programs 10:00 - 11:30

At the January unit meetings we'll learn about the hot new green topic of community solar gardens – what they are, how they work, and the challenges they face in light of new regulations. This program forecasts our environmental future. Join us, and bring your friends!

Did you know that the city of Edina is considering a community solar garden? Edina issued an RFP for design, installation, subscription, operation and maintenance of a community solar garden to be located on the roof of the city's public works building. If the project goes ahead, Edina residents could subscribe to the solar garden.



Julie Risser

Julie Risser was a co-author of the 2015 LWVEdina study on Renewable Energy. She has served on the Edina Environment and Energy Commission [continued p. 2]

December Unit Meetings

Thursday Dec. 10: Proposed LWVUS Positions on Money in Politics - Edina Senior Center

Saturday Dec. 12: Lively Issues - Edina City Hall Refreshments 9:45; programs 10:00 - 11:30

On Thursday Dec 10, we will discuss and try to reach consensus on updating the LWVUS positions on money in political campaigns. LWVEdina President Lonni Skrentner is a member of the LWVUS Study Committee on Money in Politics. The LWVUS consensus questions are posted at this link: http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/money-politics-consensus-questions-links-background-papers

Our Saturday Dec. 12 meeting is Lively Issues. We will review the LWVEdina positions and decide whether to recommend local updates or studies for 2016-17. Bring the white insert in this Leaguer to the meeting. It summarizes LWVEdina positions. The full positions are printed in your member directory. Hope to see you in December!

Inside This Leaguer page February Unit Meetings.....2 Member in the Spotlight.....3 Contribute to Fall Fund Drive.....3 Bouquets.....3 Money in Politics Forum.....4 CMAL Meeting Recap.....4 A Message from LWVMN President.....5 LWVE Positions Review Form.....insert

[January unit meetings, continued from page 1]

and the Edina Planning Commission. The LWVEdina Renewable Energy study is available at our website: <https://sites.google.com/site/lwvedina/local-studies>.

Julie Risser works at SunShare, researching and identifying 5-30 acre sites suitable for community solar gardens. Founded in 2011, SunShare builds community solar farms in Minnesota and Colorado.

The StarTribune's recent report on community solar gardens is at <http://www.startribune.com/solar-garden-options-rolling-out-for-xcel-energy-customers-in-minnesota/347919831>.

Come to the Saturday January 9th or Thursday January 14th unit meeting and get up to speed on community solar gardens, a fast-developing area in energy conservation.

February Unit Meetings Edina: A Human Rights City

Speakers from Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission:

Ellen J. Kennedy, PhD (Saturday meeting)

Rachel Carlson (Thursday meeting)

Thursday February 11 – Edina Senior Center

Saturday February 13 – Edina City Hall

Refreshments 9:45; programs 10:00 - 11:30

The Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission has taken on a global initiative from the United Nations called Human Rights Cities. This initiative calls for cities to guide their strategies for education, health, housing, employment by the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which calls for dignity, liberty and equality for all. The Human Rights Cities initiative was endorsed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 2013. Edina mayor Jim Hovland and several other Minnesota mayors supported the initiative.

'Human Rights City' is an aspirational title. It is intended as a guide for individual, community, and city actions.

At the Saturday February 13 meeting, Ellen J. Kennedy, PhD., Vice-Chair of the Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission, founder and Executive Director of World Without Genocide at William Mitchell College of Law, and an adjunct professor at the College, will explain the Human

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Rights Cities Initiative and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as Edina moves to become a Human Rights City.



Rachel Carlson

Rachel Carlson, an intern for Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission, and a law student at William Mitchell, will speak on the same topic on Thursday, February 11.

You may ask: why is Edina moving toward becoming a Human Rights City? Eleanor Roosevelt, who chaired the international committee which developed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, likely answered that. "Human rights begin in small places, close to home - so close and so small they cannot be seen on any maps of the world...Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere."



Ellen J. Kennedy

Please join us on February 11 and/or 13 to hear more about the importance of Edina moving to become a Human Rights City.

Member in the Spotlight

This month the Leaguer features Vivien Talghader as our “member in the spotlight”. She joined the LWVEdina board as Secretary about eighteen months ago. She is also actively involved with LWVEdina in myriad other ways, including volunteering at candidate forums, organizing speakers for unit meetings, and regularly attending the monthly Saturday morning unit meeting.

Vivien and her husband Joey have four children: two in middle school, one in high school, and one who is an Edina graduate. She and her family have lived in Minnesota for eighteen years, the last eleven of those in Edina.

Educationally and professionally, Vivien has a doctorate in electrical engineering. She has worked for Seagate Technology in Bloomington for the last eighteen years, doing research and development for magnetic disk drive recording heads.



Vivien Talghader

She has been, and continues to be, an active Edina Public Schools volunteer. Vivien has served as Creek Valley PTA co-President, Valley View Site Council President, and Edina Public Schools’ Parent Leadership Council co-Chair. Currently she is the Edina High School PTO President.

When she isn’t working, chauffeuring children, volunteering, or cleaning the house, Vivien enjoys reading, hiking, and traveling. Vivien says she has “enjoyed getting to better know the organization and the wonderful members who comprise LWVE”. Thank YOU, Vivien, for spending some of your very limited spare time as an active member of LWVEdina!

Would you like to connect with other LWVEdina members? Consider joining our board, or serving on an off-board committee in 2106. If you are interested in learning more - without obligation of course - call Debby McNeil.

Contribute to LWVEdina’s Fall Fund Drive

Have you received our fall fund drive letter? Please consider making a donation to LWVEdina. The fact is that almost all of our membership dues go to the state and national leagues, LWVMN and LWVUS, for their required per-member payments. So our League relies on fall fund drive contributions to pay for candidate forums, the Leaguer newsletter, and other initiatives. Remember, LWVEdina is a 501c3 organization, so your contribution is tax deductible as allowed by law.

There are two easy ways to make a contribution: either on our website, lwvedina.org (click on “donate”) or by mailing a check in the return envelope that came with your fund drive letter.

Thank you for your consideration and for supporting LWVEdina !

Bouquets To:

Idelle Longman, Susan Clark, Colleen Feige, Vivien Talghader, Suzanne Kerwin and Lonni Skrentner, for volunteering at the October CMAL meeting held at Edina Library.

Joni Bennett, for arranging the November unit meeting speaker.

Suzanne Kerwin, for bringing refreshments for the Thursday November unit meeting.

Lonni Skrentner, for speaking at the November 12 program, “Is the Sky the Limit? Money in Minnesota Elections” sponsored by LWVs in Edina, Bloomington, and Minnetonka/Eden Prairie/Hopkins.



Money In Politics Forum Draws a Crowd

Over 100 people attended the November 12 forum, “Is the Sky the Limit? Money in Minnesota Elections”, organized by LWV Edina, Bloomington, and Minnetonka/Eden Prairie/Hopkins.

StarTribune politics and government columnist Lori Sturdevant moderated presentations by five panelists: Lonni Skrentner, member of LWVUS Study Committee on Money in Politics; Peggy Leppik, MN Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board; Jeff Sigurdson, Assistant Executive Director of the CFPD; Anthony Sanders, Institute for Justice MN; and Jeremy Schroeder, Common Cause MN.

Smartphone-enabled polling allowed the audience to express opinions on whether campaign contributions should be limited, and whether contributors’ names should be disclosed. The audience poll overwhelmingly favored limiting campaign spending and requiring disclosure of contributors’ names.



L-R: Lori Sturdevant (moderator) with panelists Lonni Skrentner, Peggy Leppik, Jeff Sigurdson, Anthony Sanders, and Jeremy Schroeder.



L-R: Jeff Sigurdson, Lonni Skrentner, Anthony Sanders and Jeremy Schroeder after the forum.

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Peggy Kvam (L), creator of the audience poll; with moderator Lori Sturdevant.



After the forum Susan Sheridan Tucker, LWVMN Executive Director (L), talks with Terry Kalil, LWVMN President, and George Beck, chair of the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

CMAL Meeting Recap

LWVEdina hosted the quarterly CMAL meeting on October 17 at Edina Library, concerning the Metropolitan Council’s strategic planning process. About 35 people attended a presentation by Lisa Barajas, Met Council’s manager of Local Planning Assistance.

All but five of the 181 cities and townships in the seven county metro area are required to submit comprehensive plans to the Met Council every ten years. The plans primarily address transportation, water, wastewater treatment, parks, and housing.

Thanks to LWVEdina members who volunteered at this event, all listed in Bouquets on page 3.

A Message from LWVMN President Terry Kalil

The article below appeared in the November issue of LWV Minnesota News, an online monthly newsletter from the LWVMN state office. President Terry Kalil is talking here about LWV's future in Minnesota. Her full message is at: <https://www.lwvmn.org/sites/default/files/downloads/2015%20Nov%20LWV%20Minnesota%20News%20%2011.3.15.pdf>

Today, I'm asking each of you to think carefully about the future of League — locally and statewide — and consider ways in which your local League and LWVMN can work together to build a stronger organization. Our future is at stake. Your Board of Directors is poised to make difficult decisions and we welcome your comments and suggestions on the questions below:

1. Legacy organizations such as LWV no longer reflect the diversity of Minnesota's population. LWVMN is building relationships with many cultural and ethnic organizations to further the work of League. Are you and your local League prepared to welcome partners with whom you've not previously worked?

2. LWV's membership today is typically older, white, upper middle class educated women. As our members age, new younger people are not joining or are not staying engaged with League. How are you and your local LWV going to recruit and welcome new members? How will your local LWV change its activities/ programs to meet the needs of these new members?

3. LWV Minnesota operates on a shoestring budget without great financial reserves. Should our resources continue to be invested in maintaining and office and supporting the work of our local Leagues? How would local Leagues operate if the staff and all services provided went away?

That last question is a scary one and let's be clear — I am not advocating such a position. Quite the opposite. There's seldom a day that goes by when I don't appreciate the work being done by LWVMN to advance the mission of League. For the average League member, you might not be aware of all that happens every day. But, I guarantee that you'd certainly notice if that foundation was eliminated.

How do we address a declining membership, lack of funding, a pressing need to diversify and become culturally competent, and continue to be relevant in a

fast-changing political climate? I believe we band together and invest. I believe we stop acting like 34 individual Leagues and become one single-minded organization that supports the mission and work of League. I believe we bet that the American people want an informed electorate, voting rights for all citizens, and a restored confidence in our government and democracy.

Finally, it is my strong belief that there is no organization with the track record of service, the history of fighting for equality at the voting booth, and the willingness to focus on voting rights as its mission better suited for this work than the League of Women Voters Minnesota. I've written a lot about change these last few months. Today I'm advocating that we all change... together, to create a stronger, more vibrant and energetic League that welcomes all and works to improve our democracy. That requires your individual support and the support of every local League working together to support LWV Minnesota just as we work to support each local League.

Thank you for considering these questions about our future.

Terry Kalil, LWVMN President



Terry Kalil

LWVEdina Calendar

DECEMBER 2015		
Thursday December 10 9:45 – 11:30 AM	Unit Meeting: Consensus Discussion on LWVUS Money in Politics Study	Edina Senior Center
Saturday December 12 9:45 – 11:30 AM	Unit Meeting: Lively Issues	Edina City Hall
JANUARY 2016		
Saturday January 9 9:45 – 11:30 AM	Unit Meeting: Julie Risser/ Jenny Monson- Miller - Community Solar Gardens: How They Work and Help Subscribers Reduce Their Energy Bills	Edina City Hall
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FEBRUARY 2016		
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Saturday February 13 9:45 – 11:30 AM	Unit Meeting: Edina: A Human Rights City. Speaker: Ellen Kennedy	Edina City Hall



The Edina Leaguer

Edina, MN

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The League of Women Voters of Edina is a non-partisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information, please visit www.lwvedina.org.

