

League of Women Voters -

Upper Mississippi River Region ILO

LWV-UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION ILO NEWS

President's Column: Third issue of the Ummer's newsletter! We are now an official "Inter League Organization", having been officially recognized by LWV US at their April 1 Board meeting. This means we will be sending a voting delegate to the LWV National Convention in June, and are co-sponsoring a Water Caucus at 7:15am on Saturday, June 18. Lynn Scarlett, Global Policy director for the Nature Conservancy, will speak on the nexus of Water and Climate Change. If you are at the National Convention, join us at the Caucus!

Outreach to local Leagues - Is your League interested in learning more about their watershed and the work of the ILO, have we got a deal for you. The ILO Board and Action Committee will do it's best to provide material and even send speakers to local Leagues wanting to have a meeting on the Mississippi River and it's tributaries and what can be done to protect and improve water quality. If your League would like some help in setting up a watershed-oriented meeting, contact me, Gretchen Sabel, at lwwumrr@lwvmn.org.

Programs following Board meetings: We plan to invite a speaker at the close of each ILO Board meeting on a topic that relates to the River or our program of action. On June 6, this will be Dr. Don Wyse, an agricultural researcher from the University of Minnesota (details follow). League members are welcome to attend these sessions either in person or by phone/video connection. Watch the newsletters for information on topics and speakers for each meeting (the first Monday of even-numbered months). Our August 1 meeting will be in the La Crosse area, and our October 3 meeting will be in Cedar Rapids.

This issue of the newsletter has a ghost writer, me, Gretchen Sabel. Our Communications Director, Bonnie Cox, will be back on line for the next issue. Look for her return with meeting information and links to our new website toward the end of May. Until then, Yours in League, Gretchen Sabel

Monday, June 6 - LWV UMRR ILO Board Meeting in Minneapolis. The Board meeting will take place from 10 am to 12:45, immediately followed at 1pm by Dr. Donald Wyse (shown left and described below). All are invited to attend both parts of the meeting at the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization offices, 2522 Marshall St. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418-3329.

Speaker on agricultural options for improving water quality – Dr. Donald Wyse from the University of Minnesota will discuss cover crops and market enhancements aimed at improving water quality in farm lands. Interested LWV members are invited to join the Board for this talk, immediately following the Board meeting, at the offices of the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, 2522 Marshall St. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418-3329. The MWMO facility features a Stormwater park where a variety of Stormwater treatment processes are on display, and is across the street from Betty Danger's Country Club, where diners can ride a Ferris wheel while sipping drinks. If you can't make it in person, we will offer phone or video connection in the May newsletter. And of course, anyone interested in the Board is welcome to attend our meeting from 10 to 1.

Website coming soon: We are diligently working to establish our ILO's website – we will send a link in the next newsletter and keep building from there.

Annual payments from member Leagues are due in July, notices will be sent to member Leagues in May. The \$25/League annual membership dues go a long way to supporting the work of the ILO; thanks in advance for these! Look for an email soon with a form to send us with your payment so we can keep our contact information up to date. For 2016, we will still be requesting that member Leagues pay by check through US Post. Thanks to LWV WI for their help in managing this!

Action Committee Report

The Ummer's Action Committee is moving ahead! Here's a summary from co-chair Lonni McCauley:

Work of Action Committee:

The Ummer has adopted the Lake Michigan ILO goal of having 100 watershed meetings by the 100th anniversary of the LWV in 2019. If your League is interested in meeting on watersheds in your area, and determining a course of action to improve water quality, contact Chair Gretchen Sabel at lwwumrr@lwwmn.org, and she will connect you with an Action Committee member in your state.

The Action Committee is developing resources for holding these meetings and tracking progress toward our goal. Specifically:

Up to three power point presentations are now stored online in Dropbox for members to access and change at will re their specific audience.

Lonni and Gretchen have worked on a chart which will accumulate and store action items by any and all Leagues. We will provide a link to this form on our new website.

Dee Christensen (Minnesota) has joined the action committee. She was a Minnesota delegate to the October 24 organizational meeting. Her expertise is graphic/brochure design. If members want to access her to work on a piece they have in mind email Gretchen at lwwumrr@lwwmn.org and she will make the connection. Our goal is to develop stock pieces that can be customized for use by local Leagues in their watershed work. Thanks to Dee for offering her assistance here!

Thanks to Action Committee members for getting moving on things. More hands are needed! Join us in Action!