

The Voter

The official publication of the League of Women Voters of Roseville Area

FALCON HEIGHTS, LAUDERDALE, LITTLE CANADA, MAPLEWOOD, ROSEVILLE

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League of Women Voters
ROSEVILLE AREA

Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maplewood, Roseville

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We're on the Web!

www.lwvrosevillearea.org

And Facebook!

www.facebook.com/lwvRosevilleArea

And Instagram!

[@lwvrosevillearea](https://www.instagram.com/lwvrosevillearea)

www.instagram.com

September meeting to focus on homelessness

The League of Women Voters of Roseville Area will host a panel of experts who will discuss homelessness and the struggle to find stable housing at a Sept. 19 meeting at the Little Venetian Restaurant in Little Canada. They are:

- State Representative Peter Fischer, a Director at Avenues for Homeless Youth in Minneapolis
- Elaine Carnahan, Senior Career Counselor at Women Achieving New Directions (WAND) at Fairview Community Center in Roseville
- If available, people who have experienced homelessness.



Peter Fischer



Elaine Carnahan

The meeting will be from 6:30 – 8 p.m. at the Little Venetian Restaurant, 2900 Rice St., Little Canada. A social hour and pasta buffet will begin at 5:30 p.m. Cost is \$20. **Please reserve by Sept. 15 by mailing a check made out to LWV Roseville Area to Mindy Greiling, 2495 Marion St., Roseville, MN 55113.** The program is free and open to the public.

Roseville Council rejects affordable housing proposal

On June 5, an opportunity arose for League action in support of affordable housing. The Roseville Economic Development Authority (EDA) — comprised of City Council members — voted on a resolution to enable a developer to seek state funds for a multi-housing development in northwest Roseville that included 60 units of affordable housing.

Bonnie Koch testified in support of the proposal, stating, “The League believes that all people have a right to housing and that the public and private sectors should work together to ensure that everyone has access to adequate, decent, affordable housing. We support fair housing and equality of opportunity for housing for all persons regardless of their race, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. We support government incentives to promote a mix of housing opportunities, including rental housing for people of all ages with very low, low, and moderate-incomes. These long-held League positions all apply to this housing proposal.”

Unfortunately, only one person voted for the proposal, Council Member Jason Etten. The League has more work to do.

—Mindy Greiling

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Gwen Willems

League positions well researched, documented

A year ago we were swimming, perhaps drowning in election-year rhetoric, but we regularly reminded ourselves to remain focused on the LWV mission, a constant during challenging political times: "... *a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*"

And then before year's end it became necessary for LWV at all levels to look at long-held positions - *voting rights, environmental, educational, social, etc.* – and begin taking a stand to support those well researched positions.

While those positions were and are occasionally interpreted as being *too political*, veteran Leaguers assisted newer members in understanding the League's process of well documented research in reaching those positions.

It is probably fair to say that the struggle will continue, sometimes feeling like we move a step forward, then two steps back. But like others our Roseville Area League is experiencing a surge of new members coming with new ideas and energy in assisting this venerable organization to steadily move forward. And those new members come with many LWV questions which can only be answered by our veteran members. Thank you ALL for supporting each other!!

As always check out LWV –RA website for details, photos, announcements:

www.lwvrosevillearea.org/

No downtime for LWV Roseville Area this summer!

Board Workshop: Our LWV-RA Board of Directors began the summer with a workshop in late May, coming together for a long evening at the Maplewood Library to become acquainted with each other, to try and understand the "culture" of League, and to understand their specific Board positions. As reported at the Annual Meeting, the structure of the Board has changed with five organizational teams: Action, Communications, Membership, Program, Voter Services. Most Board members are not only new to their position, but relatively new to LWV.

Civic Engagement 101: Seeing a need to include information in our local programming on how our government works at all levels, two Voter Services Board members, Sherry Hood and Karen Lake attended the St. Paul LWV workshop titled *Civic Engagement 101*, bringing back web links that we can all use: <http://www.lwvsp.org/thevoterblog/4913027>. Please take a moment to explore these links.

Interested in Communications?

If you have been looking for an opportunity to contribute to League but don't have a lot of time, consider joining the Communications Committee. We meet infrequently to recommend means of communicating with members, and we also communicate information about and during events. If you aren't intimidated by technology, you can learn to post League information on one of our social media platforms. If this sounds interesting, please contact Barb Anderson at blander-son7@msn.com. We'd love to have you join us.



Rita Mills

2 Cs to consider about affordable housing

By Florence Sprague

“We can build new housing while preserving the quality and character of adjacent residential districts and ensuring infill development strengthens the surrounding neighborhood.”

Gavin Newsom, Lieutenant Governor of California and past mayor of San Francisco

I grew up in a first ring suburb of Cleveland, born at the peak of the core city’s population. It was a pleasant, protected place to grow up. In my teens, I was distressed when a block of older two-story brick buildings on the main commercial street, the kind with stores on the main level and apartments above, was torn down. A favorite store was forced to move several blocks away (where it thrives to this day) and a steel and glass 7 to 10 story office building rose in its place.

When I grumbled to my father about this, what he said stuck in my head, “When a place stops changing, it starts dying.” The first C-Change. It is inevitable. Some changes are good, some are bad, and some changes are good for some of us but bad for others. Our role is to plan so that we can optimize the good and be prepared for the challenges that face our communities.

Which brings me to the second C-Community. We all are part of a larger community which we affect and which affects us. It is incumbent upon us to think periodically about how we define community. Is our concept of community adapting to the inevitable changes constantly happening all around us?

Proposals to build new affordable housing in our communities touch upon both Cs. They represent change in several ways — new construction and the intentional inclusion of lower income residents. They connect to community because welcoming or challenging such proposals forces us to think about our personal definition of community.

What sorts of change might new affordable housing bring? More people, and with them more traffic, more cars to park, more students in the school, more conflicts, and maybe people who are “different” from their neighbors. We can plan for these and end up enriched. The metropolitan area is growing and we must grow with it and seek thoughtful growth, not stagnation.

Some of the unspoken changes in the ideas above are already with us. Change is happening all the time. And these are still wonderful communities. Did you know that the student body of ISD623 is 47% white? Did you know that the need for free and reduced price meals for ISD 623 students was 48% in 2016-17? www.isd623.org/sites/isd623.org/files/623Demographic%20Report%202016-17.pdf. These are our families who are a large part of our community. They are us, not them.

How do we contribute to making change a good thing? We welcome everyone. We work to be inclusive and neighborly to everyone. We work with our civic leaders to plan for the inevitable growth. We encourage employers to pay a living wage and landlords to support affordable housing. Ah, we have come full circle to affordable housing.

A home provides stability and helps children do better in school. A home connects families to a community. A home offers dignity.



(Continued on page 4)

League members advocate for affordable housing

League members testified at our five city councils this summer advocating for our affordable housing study recommendations that were adopted by our members at the Annual Meeting. Testifiers summarized our study process, directed those interested to our webpage for complete information and read these recommendations:

- Provide for a full range of affordable housing.
- Preserve and improve existing affordable housing.
- Consider inclusion of affordable housing when available land is developed.
- Support incentives to make development/re-development more attractive to developers.
- License and monitor rental properties.
- Promote better awareness of linking low-income renters to support services.
- When licensing landlords, urge or require them to list on Housing Link if their units are affordable.

Thanks to these members who gave League testimony: Cathy Ciernia at Falcon Heights, Rebecca Bormann at Lauderdale, Rita Mills at Little Canada, Rachel Geiser at Maplewood and Bonnie Koch at Roseville. Roseville granted us 30 minutes, so Bonnie also presented a PowerPoint of our study. Thanks, too, to the many League members who came to the meetings to show support.

Housing Committee member Beth Salzl gave eloquent and personal testimony to augment the official testimony in Roseville: “My father, former Mayor Gale Linebarger, fought for Coventry - a 195 rent-assisted unit in Roseville. He firmly believed that if you have service jobs and other lower income positions you would want the workers to live near where they worked. He fought for and got this approved. At that time (like now) it’s not a popular choice. We as a family received many angry calls from people who didn’t want this in their back yard. It would ruin Roseville and bring down the property values. This never happened. Have the courage as we did in the past to include affordable housing in your plan.”

We will find out which recommendation are included in each city’s plans when they participate on a panel at February unit meetings.

—Mindy Greiling

Windows and Mirrors

(Continued from page 3)

Terminology gets interesting when a topic is controversial and complex. One person’s affordable housing is another’s workforce housing is another person’s panic attack. Why? Words quickly become loaded down with connotations and assumptions and stereotypes which trigger unconscious responses. So pause, take a deep breath and look around.

People are generally smart about social cues. They can tell when a word, a name, a category is considered unacceptable in their circles. Then they avoid being included in that word or concept. Unfortunately, they often do not take the time and effort needed to understand the concept and dispassionately examine its validity and relationship to themselves and their decisions. Emotion and defensiveness then kicks in. That is too bad, because, as noted, people are smart. They could understand if they could get beyond self-protection. I see this a lot with the phrase “white privilege.” “NIMBY” is another one. That acronym stands for “not in my backyard” and is often applied to those resisting the presence of “other” “lesser” things in a certain neighborhood. That is “bad” and no one admits to being “bad”; there is always another reason for whatever is going on.

So, take the time to examine. You are a good person. You don’t want anyone to be homeless. You don’t want anyone to spend so much on rent that they can’t afford the other necessities of life, you don’t want children to be uprooted and bounced from school to school, BUT... As soon as an apology or explanation hits the magic word BUT you know that what comes next is likely to negate any goodwill created by what came just before. If you are the one speaking or thinking that BUT, take a moment, no take several moments, to consider what comes after that word.

Decisions about where to locate affordable housing are multifaceted often involving tax policy, social policy, race, crime, fear, gentrification or its opposite, subsidies, schools, impact on kids, and on and on. Individuals have a role in helping their communities to plan and prepare and make wise choices. Change is inevitable. Like life, it happens while you are busy making other plans. (As John Lennon and others before him have noted.) Work to help the changes meet the needs of all in your welcoming community.



Brews & Book Reviews:

Not all summer gatherings were about work, as was witnessed at the Bent Brewstillery in Roseville, on a steamy July 25 evening! Recent member, Rachel Geiser, suggested that we move our July convening of LWV book lovers to a local brewery. The owner dutifully saved a high top table for about 8 - 10 Leaguers, but some 30 showed up, wet and laden with bags of reading favorites. Besides there were way too many books and podcasts to share with way too many Leaguers and guests for one evening! So, we decided to repeat this program! Stay tuned for future program announcements.

League supports mental health liaison officers on police forces

Building on our police study last year, the Action Committee recently sent letters to our five cities in support of community mental health liaison officers on their police forces.

The letters stated, “As you know our League studied local policing issues recently and part of our recommendations included supporting the Memphis Model, or a substantial equivalent Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), for police officers dealing with mental health crises. Having a mental health liaison officer would maximize the benefit of those trainings.

“NAMI-Minnesota tells us that CIT training for all officers is greatly enhanced by having one liaison officer who coordinates with the Ramsey County Crisis and Emergency Medical Services. Family members in the community would have one officer to call. The liaison could also lead efforts about what more the community could do to improve how we include people with mental illnesses in our cities.

“There would also be a benefit from having a mental health liaison officer who could free up other officers to do the city’s business as opposed to a non-commissioned employee who would still need the police department’s support.

“Larger cities have mental health liaison officers, but a good model for smaller cities to look at is Lakeville.”

Roseville Police Chief, Rick Mathwig, has asked for this position in his budget request, and we hope the League’s support will help further it along. League Member Kathy Juenemann, also on the Maplewood City Council, will discuss the position with their new police chief as well.

Although we can’t lobby at the state level with our local position unless LWVMN concurs with it, our League also followed state legislation this year that fit with Police Study recommendations. Our study supported increased crisis intervention for police officers dealing with mental health crises and domestic violence as well as diversity training. This year’s Omnibus Public Safety Bill, signed into law by Governor Dayton, included an extra \$6.5 million a year – an increase from \$2.9 million annually – dedicated specifically to training.

Training funding only extends through 2021, so hopefully by then LWVMN will be positioned to advocate to continue it.

2017 – 2018 LWV Roseville Area Program Calendar

This year's calendar was developed by the Program Team, chaired by Bonnie Koch. Contributing planners: Barb Anderson, Joyce Blomquist, Rachel Geiser, Mindy Greiling, Anne Haugan, Sherry Hood, Gladys Jones, Ann Cleland, Karen Lake, Barb Leary, Rita Mills, Beth Reinhart and Karen Schaeffer.

Check the calendar carefully because not all evening meetings are on Tuesday. Evening meetings will be recorded and played at the following Wednesday 9:30 a.m. meetings in November, February, March and April at Resurrection Lutheran Church, 910 County Road D, Roseville.



September 19– “Is There a Place for Me?” Speakers: State Rep. Peter Fischer, Avenues for Homeless Youth, and Elaine Carnahan, Women Achieving New Directions, Resource, Inc.; 5:30 p.m. dinner, 6:30 p.m. program, Little Venetian, 2900 Rice St., Little Canada.

October 17 – Making Your Voice Heard – sponsored by Membership. Find out how the LWV Roseville Area can give power to your voice; 6:30 p.m., Maplewood Library, 3025 Southlawn Drive, Maplewood.

Saturday, October 21 —Affordable Housing in the Metropolitan Area; co-sponsored by Metropolitan Council of Leagues of Women Voters and LWV Roseville Area. 10 a.m. - refreshments; 10:30 a.m. program. Speakers: Chip Halbach, long-time Executive Director, Minnesota Housing Partnership; Gail Dorfman, Metropolitan Council and Executive Director. St. Stephen's Human Services; Cathy Bennett, Housing Initiative at Urban Land Institute. Centennial United Methodist Church, Snelling Ave. and County Rd. C2, Roseville.

Monday, November 13 – Immigrants and Minnesota's Workforce – Matt Schmidt, U. of M. Director of the Regional Competitiveness Institute/Senior Research Fellow; co-sponsored by the Roseville Library; 7 p.m., Roseville Library, 2180 Hamline Ave.

Saturday, December 9 - Replacing our traditional holiday dinner with a “giving” experience, participating in a two-hour food packing session at 9 a.m., **Second Harvest Heartland**, 1140 Gervais Ave. Maplewood. Participation limited to 20 League members with option for other members to join volunteers at lunch at Guldens Restaurant.

January 23 – VIP/Conversations with Constituents; 7 p.m., Maplewood City Council Chambers, 1830 County Rd. B, Maplewood.

February 20 - City staff representatives updating status of housing comprehensive plans; 6:30 p.m., Autumn Grove Park, Lydia and Hamline, Roseville.

March 20 – Redistricting, Democracy & Census. Speaker: Annastacia Belladonna-Carrera, CEO Common Cause Minnesota; 6:30 p.m., Autumn Grove Park, Lydia and Hamline, Roseville.

April 17 - Minnesota's Next Steps to Grow Renewable Energy. Janet Drake Hamilton, Fresh Energy; 6:30 p.m., Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 2561 Victoria, Roseville

May 1 – Annual Meeting; Little Canada City Hall, 515 Little Canada Rd. E., Little Canada.

June - Field Trip: Tour of Bridging to coordinate with Housing Study.

Be a League Observer at City Council or School Board Meetings!

This year the Action Committee is reactivating our League observer program and a training will be held for those interested in observing local public meetings on Thursday, Sept. 7 at 3:30 p.m. at the Lexington Park Building, 2131 Lexington Ave. N., Roseville.

Observers may monitor City Council meetings for our five cities of Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maplewood and Roseville, focusing on housing and an eye to our other 2017-2018 priorities: police, environment and openness in government or sign up to monitor our three School Board meetings – Mounds View 621, North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale 622 or Roseville Area 623 – with a focus on environmental issues, e.g., Styrofoam trays, and openness in government.

The training will be conducted by Mindy Greiling, Wayne Groff, Elizabeth Hansel and Gladys Jones and will explain the purpose of observing, procedures, League positions that may come up and a short reporting form.

Mindy Greiling and Gladys Jones

Action Committee Co-Chairs

LWVRA, CMAL Hosts Housing Panel in October

The Roseville Area League of Women Voters and the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues will host a panel of housing experts at an Oct. 21 meeting. The League supports fair housing and equality of opportunity for housing for all persons. Speakers will discuss housing issues, including city comprehensive plan housing updates and the role of the Metropolitan Council. The meeting is co-sponsored by Centennial Methodist Church.

Panelists are:

- Chip Halbach, long-time Executive Director of the Minnesota Housing Partnership;
- Gail Dorfman, Metropolitan Council Representative and Executive Director of St. Stephens Human Services;
- Cathy Bennett, Housing Initiative, Urban Land Institute Minnesota.



The meeting will be at 10:30 a.m. at Centennial Methodist Church, 1524 W. Co Rd C-2 (corner of C-2 and Snelling) Roseville. The event is free and open to the public.

Candidate Forum set for Sept. 25 in Falcon Heights

The Voter Services Committee has scheduled a candidate forum on Sept. 25 for persons running for the Falcon Heights City Council.

The event will be at 7 p.m. at Falcon Heights City Hall, 2077 Larpenteur Ave. W. At press time, filings had not closed, so be watching our Web site, www.lwvrosevillearea.org for more information.

Judy Berglund, editor
2075 Farrington St.
Roseville, MN 55113

Calendar

September

19 “Is There a Place for Me?” Speakers: State Rep. Peter Fischer, Avenues for Homeless Youth, and Elaine Carnahan, Women Achieving New Directions, Resource, Inc.; 5:30 p.m. dinner, 6:30 p.m. program, Little Venetian, 2900 Rice St., Little Canada.

25 Candidate Forum 7 p.m. Falcon Heights City Hall, 2077 Larpentour Ave. W., Falcon Heights.

October

17 Making Your Voice Heard – sponsored by Membership. Find out how the LWV Roseville Area can give power to your voice; 6:30 p.m., Maplewood Library, 3025 Southlawn Drive, Maplewood.

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Editor’s note: See page 6 for the 2017-18 Program Calendar.



Happy Fall!