

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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Find us on our website and other social media sites!

Website:
www.lwvrosevillearea.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/lwvRosevilleArea

Instagram:
www.instagram.com/lwvrosevillearea

YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjWhyaOul7m9LEgYY8IMPfg>

Finding Common Ground on Gun Safety

How does gun safety impact public health?
Are sensible gun laws possible?
Is there a place for agreement on this controversial subject?

Join us on Tuesday, October 16 from 6:30-8 p.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 2651 Victoria St. N., Roseville (corner of Victoria and County Rd. C). Reverend Nancy Bence, Executive Director of Protect Minnesota, will discuss research, legislative possibilities, and how Minnesotans can work together to reach consensus on gun safety.

Protect Minnesota is an independent, state-based, nonprofit organization whose network includes gun violence survivors, gun owners, veterans, public health professionals, hunters, farmers, elected officials, and law enforcement officers.

Reverend Bence is an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and previously served as executive director of a statewide legislative coalition dedicated to religious freedom and women's rights.

A flyer is attached to the emailed version of The Voter for you to post or give to friends who may be interested.

At the national level, LWV has had a position on gun safety dating from 1990. In brief, the position advocates to "protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons and support the allocation of resources to better regulate and monitor gun dealers."

Additionally, LWVMN has adopted a position to "support restrictions on the sale, possession and use of firearms by private parties in the state of Minnesota" including background checks, licensing, and registration of long guns, hand guns, and assault weapons; a ban on the manufacture, sale, and importation of assault weapons and weapon parts; mandatory firearm safety training before purchase; gun owner liability when others are harmed due to negligence; and stiffer or mandatory penalties for people who commit crimes with firearms.

For Auld Lang Syne

December will be a time to renew League friendships and make new ones. Mark your calendar for a pre-holiday luncheon on Saturday, December 1, at 11:30 a.m. to share food and conversation. We will gather at Gulden's Restaurant, 2999 Maplewood Drive, Maplewood (the corner of County Road D and Hwy 61). Lunch will be ordered off the regular menu.

Contact Gladys Jones (gjones70@gmail.com or 651-341-5179) to be included on the guest list.

This year we are unable to volunteer at Second Harvest Heartland in December. We will talk about interest in volunteering at a later date at the luncheon.



Rev. Nancy Bence

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

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I have had two very gratifying experiences this past month as a member of LWV of Roseville Area. The first is meeting several new members we have had since the beginning of the year and working with them to help residents apply for absentee ballots at extended care facilities in our area. Also, I was very impressed with new members participating at the Observer Corps training meeting last week. The Observer Corps is an effective and active way of attending open government meetings and reporting back to us on actions and opinions that support or are contrary to our League's positions.

My second experience was attending the refugee exhibit presented by Doctors Without Borders at The Commons in downtown Minneapolis. It was experiential and eye-opening. The refugee crisis is so breathtaking in its scope! I had the recent privilege of working with refugees at the Rice Street Gardens in Roseville, registering new voters and talking to these amazing people who have been through so much to reach a place of safety in our country.

And finally, I send a huge thank you to Alana Howey and Rita Mills for their very hard work with the Secretary of State's office and other local organizations to put on the transit riders' registration drive in the metro area on September 22 (see the recap on [page 6](#)). It is a first time project and very complex in its execution. I hope that many of you, if your time allowed, volunteered to help them out on registering new voters.



Sherry Hood

LWV of Roseville Area Voter Registration at Rice Street Gardens

By: Sherry Hood



Left to right: Sherry Sanders from Do Good Roseville, who is the creator and manager of these magnificent Rice Street Gardens for agrarian refugees for the past 3 years; Sita Koirala, Bhutanese Community Organization of Minnesota (BCOM), Social Services Coordinator (Sita was born in Bhutan and lived in a refugee camp in Nepal for 19 years before settling in Minnesota); Sherry Hood, President of LWV of Roseville Area; and Hta Thi Yu Moo, voter services-type coordinator for the Karen Organization of Minnesota (KOM), she was born in a Thai refugee camp in 1994 and she and her family moved to St. Paul in 2007.

...And Don't Tell Me You're Retired

By Florence Sprague

"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples to build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

— Robert F. Kennedy



It is election season. Active Leaguers are registering voters, staffing candidate forums, talking to friends and neighbors about the value of informed voting, learning about the issues that affect their lives, thinking about how they would like to see them addressed, and seeing where candidates stand on those issues.

The challenges that face our world can seem overwhelming. The momentum built into our political system makes course changes grindingly difficult. It is easy to feel powerless. But while I don't think that I will be the butterfly who changes history, I still believe that what individuals do for their communities does matter.

This summer I had the good fortune to meet Candy Peterson while on Isle Royale. Living for months of the year on an island, she and husband Rolf Peterson, the lead researcher in the moose/wolf study of the interrelationship between prey and predator on Isle Royale, welcome thousands of visitors each year.

They are gracious and friendly hosts to any and all visitors who are interested in learning about this long term work and in return take a warm interest in all of their visitors. After friendly preliminaries, Candy inquired, "What do you do?" Noting the probable ages of her guests, this was promptly followed by, "And don't tell me you are retired. What do you do now to stay engaged with your community?" She wanted to know where we volunteered and invested our energies and was keenly attuned to how these choices reflected values.

She is so right. It matters very much that we all use our talents and spend all of our years engaged and productive as we are able. League is a great place to start. Let's make many ripples on affordable housing, inclusion, fair wages, voter participation, environmental protection, educational equity, safe communities, food insecurity, and other areas of League positions and interest. Where do your interest and concerns lie? What is your expertise? What gives you satisfaction? You will find an opportunity there. What we do and how we think about the world and our place in it matter.

Let today's highly engaged youth be your inspiration, your source of courage. How you engage may change from year to year, but, as life and health allow, share the bounty of you.

"The mainspring of this movement is not selfishness, but a love of justice and a desire to serve."

— Clara Ueland, first President of LWVMN

Wherefore the Metropolitan Council?

The Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters (CMAL) presents a panel of experts who will answer questions about how the Metropolitan Council should be governed and what the current controversy is: Deb Dyson (Minnesota House legislative analyst), Keith Carlson (Executive Director of Minnesota Inter-County Association), C. Terrence Anderson (University of Minnesota Center for Urban & Regional Affairs), and Patricia Nauman or designee (Association of Metro Municipalities).

The program will be on Saturday, October 20, with coffee and sign-in at 9:30 am and the program from 10-12 p.m., at the Autumn Grove Park Gathering Center, 1365 Lydia Ave. W., Roseville. This event is part of the CMAL process for evaluating its current positions on the Metropolitan Council and will be the subject of consensus questions in February 2019.

September Event Recap: The Refugee Journey in 2018

Seynab Miyer and Madie Spartz, representatives from the International Institute of Minnesota, spoke at the Shoreview Library on September 4 on The Refugee Journey in 2018. This presentation was organized by the Shoreview Library in partnership with the LWV of Roseville Area. It was the introductory session to the six-part immigration program series the Shoreview Library will be holding starting in November.

The talk given by Miyer and Spartz started with the sobering 2016 statistics of how many forcibly displaced people there are in the world (65.6 million), how many are identified as refugees (22.5 million), and just how few of those are eventually resettled (189,300).

Miyer and Spartz continued by narrowing in on the U.S.'s admission of refugees and specifically the numbers of those resettled in Minnesota. The number of refugees being admitted into the U.S. has drastically dropped to 45,000 people, the lowest since the resettlement program was begun a number of years ago. They discussed the anticipated drop in numbers again for 2019 once the current administration announces the upcoming capacity limits. (*Editor's note: The number was announced since this event was held and the refugee capacity was lowered again to 30,000 people for the 2019 year.*)

As of June 2018, 539 refugees arrived in the Twin Cities for the 2018 year, with 23 in St. Cloud and 49 in Rochester. The ethnicity of the arrivals in Minnesota is a diverse mix with Burmese (Karen) (31%), Other Burmese (11%), Congolese (11%), and Somali (10%) being the largest groups to resettle in Minnesota.

Being labeled a refugee is a legal status and is not to be confused with an immigrant status. Refugees are given this status prior to their arrival in the U.S. and it is valid indefinitely. They are authorized for work upon arrival and given a path to citizenship that can take 5 years. Refugees are also eligible for most public benefits, but need to pay back the cost of travel to the United States shortly after they arrive. They are most often resettled with family that already live in the area and can provide support. Agencies such as the International Institute of Minnesota are the only groups that can accept and resettle refugees and are given 2-4 weeks notice before they arrive. The agencies work to connect them to their families, housing, jobs, and education and provide programs to help them become successful contributors to their new communities.

If you'd like to know how you can help refugees in your community, Miyer and Spartz suggested advocating for refugee rights (e.g., attend a pro-refugee protest), support immigrant-owned businesses, volunteer with the International Institute of Minnesota, and provide donations (money and supplies) particularly now that federal funding is low.

To learn more about the International Institute of Minnesota, visit their website at iimn.org or call them at 651-647-0191.



Madie Spartz and Seynab Miyer

Help Wanted: Escorting Residents to Absentee Voting Area

Kara Reiser, Director at Johanna Shores senior care residence, was appreciative of the LWV of Roseville Area's Voter Services Committee members recent help with assisting 77 of their facility's residents in completing their absentee ballot applications. (See the event recap on [page 5](#)).

Reiser is requesting additional help from any who would wish to assist on Thursday, October 25, from 1-4 p.m. Assistance is needed to escort residents, most of whom will be in wheelchairs, to common areas where Ramsey County Election Judges will be assisting residents with voting via their absentee ballots and then assistance escorting them back to their rooms. Johanna Shores is at 3220 Lake Johanna Blvd., Arden Hills.

Individuals who wish to volunteer should contact Reiser directly and volunteer as individuals. Email Reiser at kreiser@preshomes.org or call at 651-631-6037.

September Event: Fixing the Hole in Our Democracy – Ending Taxation Without Representation

*“We don’t want special status, we want equal status.”
Josh Burch*

Josh Burch, who is a member of both the LWV of District of Columbia and Neighbors United for DC Statehood, gave a presentation on the proposal for statehood for Washington, D.C., at the New Brighton Community Center on September 17, organized by LWV of New Brighton in partnership with LWV of Roseville Area.

LWV has long supported the statehood of the nearly 700,000 residents of the D.C. area. Currently a D.C. representative sits on the U.S. House of Representatives, but the area does not have a representative in the Senate. The House representative can sit and vote in committees, introduce legislation, and participate in legislative debates, but can’t vote on bills being considered for the full House or break any voting ties. D.C.’s local government must pass many of their area laws by the federal government who can pull funding to prevent enforcement of any D.C. laws they do not agree with.

Burch addressed many questions people have about D.C. statehood including constitutional legality (the seat of government only has to be ten miles square), why they do not want to just become a part of Maryland or Virginia (neither state wants that nor do the D.C. residents), are they big enough to be a state (they have a population that is larger than two current states), and can they afford statehood (residents pay more taxes than 20 states).

Minnesota residents that want to support and advocate for D.C. statehood are encouraged to contact Senator Amy Klobuchar and Senator Tina Smith to encourage them to sign on as co-sponsors of the DC statehood bill. If you missed this presentation, visit the Neighbors United for DC Statehood website (the51st.org/) to learn more and find out what you can do to help the citizens of Washington, D.C., attain full civil rights. A print version of the PowerPoint presentation that was shown at the meeting can be found at this link: lwvrosevillearea.org/sites/lwvrosevillearea.org/files/docs/Washington%20DC%20Statehood%20Powerpoint.pdf.



Josh Burch



Attendees of the DC Statehood Meeting

Voter Services Committee Expands to Serving Senior Residences

By Karen Lake

Members of the LWV of Roseville Area Voter Services Committee offered voter registrations and assistance with completing applications for absentee ballots at two senior care residences, New Perspectives and Johanna Shores. The most need was for help with absentee ballot applications. At New Perspectives, 9 residents were registered to vote and 19 received assistance with absentee ballot applications. At Johanna Shores, 77 residents were assisted to apply for absentee ballots. Those who volunteered for this effort were Rita Mills, Sherry Hood, Alana Howey, Donna Peterson, Beth Reinhart, Grace Gee, Brenda Himrich, Barb Luck, and Karen Lake.

Reaching Out: Registering MTC Riders to Vote

By: Rita Mills

“When we are involved in a project with other people, our flexibility and open-mindedness will allow us to be more cooperative and considerate.”

For the past two months LWV of Roseville Area members Alana Howey and I have been meeting and working with the Minnesota Secretary of State office, three local Leagues, Let People Vote Coalition, COPAL (Comunidades Organizando El Poder Y La Acción Latina), and numerous other metro organizations on a non-partisan voter registration and messaging project.

This began with Metro Transit approving 25 transit stops and providing free advertising on select buses and platforms for “Get Out the Vote” messaging. With individual donations, LWV of Roseville Area purchased large posters for ten bus platforms while other organizations purchased large stickers for clothing worn by volunteers and election advertising banners for buses.



League members participating in registering voters at MTC transit stops

Saturday, September 22, was selected for the registration drive at the approved MTC transit stops. (My stop happened to be at University and Snelling.) Bus stops were selected with the intent of reaching areas with high numbers of eligible, but non-registered voters. Volunteers sporting their big red and blue “I Will Vote” stickers came from across the metro area, providing wonderful opportunities to meet new people and become familiar with their respective organizations. Armed with registration forms as well as voting information, volunteers stood adjacent to specified bus stops between 1-4 p.m. and chatted with whomever happened to be walking to and from bus stops.

Patience and open-mindedness were definitely needed while working with so many different organizations and in assisting at the actual event. “Doing it only the League way” simply was not acceptable, yet leadership skills acquired by League members definitely assisted in bringing an event of this magnitude to fruition. And, it is not over.....the signage on buses and at transit shelters will remain up reminding all of the necessity to vote on November 6!

Takeaways from September 22:

- LWV of Roseville Area members who volunteered: Barb Barany, Megan Dahlberg, Gladys Jones, Shelly Hood, Alana Howey, Rita Mills, and Teresa Wernecke.
- The necessity of occasionally just *listening* rather than espousing our League mantra is important.
- Many individuals not experiencing white privilege do not have the same belief in the importance of voting that we Leaguers proclaim.
- About 90 registrations were collected and some 80 were sent home.
- The event provided opportunities for countless conversations all over the Twin Cities area about voting, the election, and civic participation.
- A number of conversations took place with former felons, who were unaware of their rights and were eager to spread the news to friends.

Regardless of our organizations’ affiliation, we were collectively humbled by the experience and will long remember the faces, conversation, and importance of getting out of our comfort zones.

Future League Events

Check the calendar carefully because not all evening meetings are on a Tuesday. League evening meetings will be recorded and available on our website: www.lwvrosevillearea.org.

- **November 8 – Promise and Prejudice (Becoming American Series).** First in the six-part series of films and discussions co-hosted with the Shoreview Library and Do Good Roseville; *New York: A Documentary Film* and *The Jewish Americans*; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Shoreview Library, 4560 N. Victoria St., Shoreview.
- **November 13 – Everyone Counts: Ramsey County Takes on the 2020 Census.** Speaker: Jolie Wood, Ramsey County Planning and Policy Department; 6:30-8 p.m.; Autumn Grove Park Building, 1365 Lydia Ave. W., Roseville.
- **December 1 – Holiday Luncheon.** See event description on page 1 for more details and RSVP information; 11:30 a.m.; Gulden's Restaurant, 2999 Maplewood Dr., Maplewood.
- **December 13 – Promise and Prejudice (Becoming American Series).** Second in the six-part series of films and discussions co-hosted with the Shoreview Library and Do Good Roseville; *Welcome to Shelbyville*; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Shoreview Library, 4560 N. Victoria St., Shoreview.
- **January 10 – Between Two Worlds: Identity and Acculturation (Becoming American Series).** Third in the six-part series of films and discussions co-hosted with the Shoreview Library and Do Good Roseville; *The New Americans (The Nigerians)*; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Shoreview Library, 4560 N. Victoria St., Shoreview.
- **January 15 – Conversations with Constituents.** Interact with office holders in our five cities; 6:30 p.m. refreshments, 7-8:30 p.m. program; Roseville City Hall, 2660 Civic Center Dr., Roseville.
- **February 14 – Help Wanted? Immigration and Work (Becoming American Series).** Fourth in the six-part series of films and discussions co-hosted with the Shoreview Library and Do Good Roseville; *Destination American, The Golden Door*; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Shoreview Library, 4560 N. Victoria St., Shoreview.
- **February 19 – Spotlight on the Metropolitan Council: Ripe for Change or Pretty Darn Good As It Is?** CMAL study update presentation, consensus; 6:30-8 p.m.; Location TBD.
- **March 14 – Family and Community (Becoming American Series).** Fifth in the six-part series of films and discussions co-hosted with the Shoreview Library and Do Good Roseville; *My American Girls*; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Shoreview Library, 4560 N. Victoria St., Shoreview.
- **March 19 – Behind Closed Doors: Parting the Curtain on Elder Abuse.** Speakers: Jackie Herron, Author/Advocate, Kristine Sundberg, President of Elder Voice Family Advocates; 6:30-8 p.m.; Location TBD.
- **April 11 – Immigration and Popular Culture (Becoming American Series).** Sixth in the six-part series of films and discussions co-hosted with the Shoreview Library and Do Good Roseville; *The Search for General Tso*; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Shoreview Library, 4560 N. Victoria St., Shoreview.
- **April 17 – Changes In Our Weather: What's the Big Deal?** Speaker: Dr. Kenneth Blumenfeld, Senior Climatologist, MN Climatology Office, DNR; 6:30-8 p.m.; Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 2561 Victoria St. N., Roseville.
- **May 7 – Annual Meeting.** LWV of Roseville Area League Annual Meeting; 5 p.m. social hour, 6 p.m. dinner, 7 p.m. meeting; Wakefield Park Community Building, 1725 Prosperity Rd., Maplewood.
- **June – Sustainability Field Trip.** Tour a LEED Platinum Certified building, the highest level certification for energy efficiency and environmental design; Markim Hall, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul.

Find the LWV Roseville Area Calendar at lwvrosevillearea.org/content/calendar

Find the LWV Roseville Area Events page at lwvrosevillearea.org/tags/events

October events are detailed on [page 1](#) and [page 8](#).

Rachel Geiser, editor
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October LWV Events Calendar

- **October 16 – Finding Common Ground on Gun Safety.** See the full event description on [page 1](#); 6:30 p.m.
- **October 18 — The Agitators Play.** Join other LWV of Roseville Area members and friends for a performance of *The Agitators* at Park Square Theater in St. Paul. The story is of the friendship between Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglas. To RSVP for tickets in the League block for a discounted \$30 rate or ask questions, email lwvrosevillearea@lwvmn.org ASAP; 7:30 p.m.; Park Square Theater, 20 W 7th Place, St. Paul.
- **October 20 – Wherefore the Metropolitan Council?** See the full CMAL event description on [page 3](#); 9:30 a.m.

The remaining 2018-2019 LWV of Roseville Area events are on the event calendar on [page 7](#).



The Voter Article Submission Deadline

Submissions for the next issue of The Voter are due 10 days before the end of the month. If you have any questions or information to submit for the newsletter, contact Rachel Geiser at rachelsoup@gmail.com.