

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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Website:
www.lwvrosevillearea.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/lwvRosevilleArea

Instagram:
www.instagram.com/lwvrosevillearea

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

LWV of Roseville Area 67th Annual Meeting

The LWV of Roseville Area Annual Meeting will be held on June 2, 2020, at 7 p.m. In these extraordinary times, when we can't be together, we have found the need to do things differently than we have in the past. Our annual meeting is no exception. This year's annual meeting will be held online, using the Zoom meeting tool.

By now you have received the Annual Report that will guide the Annual Meeting. Soon you will receive an email that will give detailed instructions on how to participate in the meeting. Access the meeting using your computer, tablet, smart phone, or with a regular telephone. After the meeting, we will send you a link to view a recording of the meeting, and an email to which you can reply in order to vote.

This is new for us, and we are all learning together. We hope you will be patient, and are willing to take this leap with us. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Barb Anderson (blanderson7@msn.com, 651-490-1871).

June Field Trip

Mark your calendar! Tuesday, June 23, from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m., will be the annual LWV of Roseville Area field trip. We will learn about the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD). At 9:30 a.m. we will gather at the RWMWD Office just west of the Little Canada water tower and City Hall Office. Sage Passi, who works with outreach projects, will tell us about the variety of ways storm water is managed and then we will go to Central Park Elementary School and the Maplewood Mall to see several projects at work. Depending on the state-recommended protocol at the time, people can drive their own cars to the project, and we will practice social distancing as well as wearing masks. If the weather is conducive, we can picnic afterward. Look for an email blast a week before the event for any change of plans.

It is helpful to know an estimate of how many will attend. If you are considering attending this field trip, please RSVP by June 15 to Donna Peterson (peter080@tc.umn.edu) or Anne Haugan (ahaugan@usfamily.net). For more information, call Anne Haugan (651-484-3856).



Example Rain Garden Project

(Source: rwmwd.org/cost-share-assistance-now-available-for-2015/)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

Officers:

President

Sherry Hood

Vice President

Barb Barany

Secretary

Mary Peterson

Treasurer

Jessica Holz

.....

Directors:

Action/Advocacy

Wayne Groff

Priscilla Morton

Communications

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Membership

Beth Reinhart

Program

Bonnie Koch

Voter Services

Grace Gee

Karen Lake

.....

Members-At-Large

Jim DeBenedet

Stephanie DeBenedet

Rachel Geiser

Karen Schaffer

It all seems so confusing, precarious, uncertain, definitely insecure...this unwelcome and unpredictable event in our lives. I suspect we have been mostly satisfied all of our lives and that COVID-19 is unimaginable. Maybe we refuse to accept this because it is way beyond our experience. But regardless, we need to step up! We need to live our lives following the best scientific advice. This year is extraordinarily critical for the United States of America! We do not want to forget this. The Census! The Elections! The Redistricting! Our League has already ventured forth to meet this crisis head on. We will have a virtual Annual Meeting on June 2. Karen Lake, head of the Voter Services committee, has presented links to webinars and websites that will help keep us informed and connected. Information, I promise, will become easier to access and more sophisticated as time goes on! And there will be more information about the Census!



Sherry Hood

Regarding that, this is my last President's letter as my term draws to a close after the June 2 Annual Meeting. I would like you all to welcome an exceptional person as our next League President: Barbara Barany. She dedicated the last two years to helping preserve our democracy by leading our League's participation in Minnesota's Census outreach. She is well-educated and qualified and has been on our Board for three years.

As for myself, I experienced two years as your President and I can't think of anything more gratifying than leading LWV of Roseville Area with you. It was a growing experience and well worth it. There are so many people to thank. I am grateful to June Stewart for giving me the peace to start on this adventure; to Barb Anderson, who knows more about our League and technology than anyone; to Donna Peterson, who I consider a friend and always knowledgeable about science and the environment; to the Board of the past two years, especially Joyce Briggs and Mary Peterson; to Mindy Greiling, who we are so fortunate to have in our League for her vast League and Legislative experience; and finally to my fellow Leaguer, who joined when I did and was always receptive to my calls for help, Karen Lake.

So once again, God, please bless us all!

Census Update

By Barb Barany

Census workers are now scheduled to begin door-to-door data collection in August. Help keep them and others safe by encouraging self-response among all your contacts—online (my2020census.gov/), by phone (2020census.gov/en/contact-us.html), or on the paper form that arrived at residences of non-responders in April.

To join LWV of Roseville Area members and others in Census outreach on the state of Minnesota phone-banking-from-home team, see the notice and attachments emailed with the digital copy of the Voter. Currently, phone bankers need to use both a telephone and a computer, but they are working on making the process computer-free.

Stir Crazy

By Florence Sprague

The young woman was quite literally sitting in the open window of her apartment, her legs and torso making an L that filled the window frame. This image accompanying the news report about the stay at home orders in many states triggered a thought. The image encapsulated the human need to move around in and interact with its environment, whether urban or rural; the need to socialize, to make choices. It also triggered the thought of the thousands (millions?) of incarcerated individuals for whom even sitting in the sun in a window frame is an unattainable pleasure for years at a time.



In this time of self-isolating, working from home, closing schools, and restricting movements in public there is massive evidence that most people find this frustrating, irritating, or aggravating. They are chafing quietly and yearning to once again be able to dash to Target at the first thought of a shortage of deodorant, or to the coffee shop for a café latte that cannot be made at home. But the limitations of sheltering in place, canceling group activities and working from home, are nothing compared to the restrictions of incarceration.

Anyone in the general prison population is isolated, yet never really alone. The environment is made of hard surfaces, noisy metallic sounds, and a potentially threatening community. In normal times meals are congregate; recreation is congregate; the schedule, often even the light or darkness, is imposed; family and friends are far away with no cell phones allowed and exorbitant fees are charged for landline calls. Oh, and that deodorant you might grab at Target will cost more at the commissary while work, if any, will be compensated far below minimum wage.

In 1975 I had the opportunity to tour Jackson State Prison in Michigan. (This particular prison is now closed and replaced by several newer facilities.) Knowing full well that I would be leaving in a short time without ever hearing those locks clang immutably behind me, without ever living with minimal independent agency on how I spent my days, without the claustrophobia of being locked in with possibly hostile strangers, I found it scary and dehumanizing.

It is so easy to think only that those in our jails and prisons deserve the punishment they are receiving for having violated laws and social norms and then think of them no more. It is easy to react negatively when learning of free college courses or free medical care. But hard time IS hard.

I am very fortunate to not have young children at home needing guidance with schoolwork and guidance, with healthy entertainment while separated from their friends and their regular activities. I am fortunate to not be working from home while caring for those children. My sisters and I live in four different states. I can say that I have seen their faces more frequently this spring than usual as we have held family Zoom gatherings rather than just email or phone exchanges. So, when I chafe at sitting home and eating in, I have to stop and remember. I could sit in my window any time.

These times make you think.

Did You Know?...Voter Services Update

By Karen Lake

According to LWVMN data, Minnesota Leagues hold more LWV candidate forums than any other state in the country! Last year, one-fifth of all forums nationwide occurred in Minnesota! Further, also according to LWVMN data, the reason most people do not vote isn't that they are not registered, but that they do not know enough about candidates. Preliminary plans are being made to conduct candidate forums this summer and/or fall without live audiences in venues that have recording capacity and sufficient space for social distancing of candidates and moderators. Updated training for current moderators will be offered via webinars. A decision will be made on training for new moderators. The previously scheduled event planning/moderator training sessions have been cancelled due to COVID-19.

Vote 411 is an electronic voter information system funded by LWVMN to provide information on state and local candidates in the 2020 elections. MPR is partnering with Vote 411.

The above resources are intended to offer voters opportunities to learn about candidates for public office. Apply for absentee ballots online at [MNVotes.org](https://www.mnvotes.org). See more information on absentee ballots on the following pages.

In a recent state League webinar, LWVMN Executive Director Michelle Witte raised the issue of a very low percentage of League members participating in requested actions in Action Alerts. Quite a difference could be made if more League people actually contacted their legislators concerning policies needing advocacy and made known in Action Alerts!

Absentee Ballot Voting

No excuse absentee ballot voting is allowed in Minnesota! The first step is to request an absentee ballot. This can be done for both the primary election on August 11 and the general election on November 3. Complete requests online at MNVotes.org after May 13 or by calling the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office at 651-215-1440 or your local elections office to ask that a paper application be sent to you. Ramsey County Elections Office's phone number is 651-266-2171.

On this page and the next is a detailed explanation of the process of voting by absentee ballot in Minnesota from the Secretary of State's Office, also available on this site: sos.state.mn.us/media/2313/mail-ballot-instructions.pdf

Instructions

How to vote by mail ballot

- You will need:**
- Ballot*
 - Tan ballot envelope*
 - White signature envelope*
 - Pen with black ink
 - Witness
Anyone registered to vote in Minnesota, including your spouse or relative, or a notary public, or a person with the authority to administer oaths

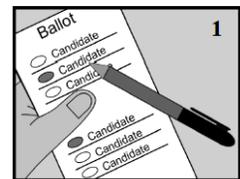
*If any of these items are missing, please contact your local election official.

1 Vote!

- Show your witness your blank ballot, then mark your votes in private.
- Follow the instructions on the ballot.
- Do not write your name or ID number anywhere on the ballot.
- Do not vote for more candidates than allowed.

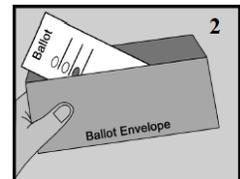
If you do, your votes for that office will not count.

See the other side if you make a mistake on your ballot.

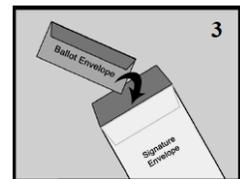


2 Seal your ballot in the tan ballot envelope

- Do not write on this envelope.

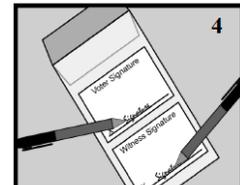


3 Put the tan ballot envelope into the white signature envelope



4 Fill out the white signature envelope completely

- If there is no label, print your name and Minnesota address.
- Read and sign the oath.
- Ask your witness to print their name and Minnesota street address, including city (not a P.O. Box), and sign their name.
*If your witness is an official or notary, they must print their title instead of an address.
Notaries must also affix their stamp.*
- Seal the envelope.



5 Return your ballot by Election Day to the address on the signature envelope

You have three options:

- Send it so it arrives by Election Day, using U.S. mail or a package delivery service,
- Deliver it in person by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, or
- Ask someone to deliver it by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

This person cannot deliver more than 3 ballots.

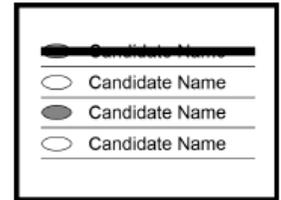


If you have questions, please call: (...) ...-.... .

See other side for special instructions if you have a disability

Correcting a mistake

- If time allows, ask for a new ballot from your election office. Contact your election office at [e-mail] or [phone number], or
- Completely cross out the name of the candidate you accidentally marked and then mark your ballot for the candidate you prefer (do not initial your corrections).



If you have a disability:

If you have a disability or cannot mark your ballot, your witness may assist you by marking your ballot at your direction, assembling the materials, and filling out the forms for you.

When signing the envelope, Minnesota law says you may:

- Sign the return envelope yourself, or
- Make your mark, or
- Ask your witness to sign for you in your presence. (Have the witness sign their own name as well.)
- If you have adopted the use of a signature stamp for all purposes of signature, you may use your signature stamp or ask your witness to use your signature stamp in your presence.

Minnesota Statutes, section 645.44, subdivision 14

Please note: Voting is not covered by power of attorney. A person with power of attorney may only sign for you in your presence, as outlined above.

Confidentiality Notice: The data you supply on your signature envelope are public information when used for elections, political or law enforcement purposes as part of a public information list.

Writing Letters to the Editor

By Karen Lake

Letters to the editor can be effective in influencing public opinion! They reach a wide audience! Legislators pay attention to them and are influenced by them, especially if it becomes obvious that many citizens care about a particular policy or issue. The tips that follow for writing effective letters for publication are from a training offered by Kevin Whelan of the MNVoice Coalition for Civic Engagement.

1. Keep it brief. Two hundred-fifty words or fewer. Discuss only one issue.
2. Get to the point. Start with a compelling introductory sentence and focus on clear, factual points.
3. Relate it to home. Issues impact readers or their families locally. And, if possible, connect it as a response to a previous newspaper article or letter.
4. Personalize the issue. Include an example of how the issue impacts a real person. Avoid form letters.
5. End with a call to action. Ask readers to follow up or policymakers to address the issue.
6. Be timely. Write a letter when it will be the most effective.
7. Be professional. Use respectful, but persuasive, language and follow submission rules of the newspaper.

Especially with local newspapers no longer in business, consider where you have connections to out state or at other newspapers, for example, your hometown or where you may have other personal contacts.

Phone calls and emails to elected officials and letters to editors are tools for advocacy at all times, even during a pandemic!

Did You Know...About the Plastics Industry and Plastics Waste Industry

By Anne Haugan

Did you know that an estimated 8 million tons of plastic pollution from our lands enter our ocean every year?

Petrochemicals, essentially oil and gas, are the raw materials for plastics. Plastic wastes have become a major societal problem. The quickly growing plastics industry has survived because society has focused on individuals to be responsible recyclers. Local governments have had to negotiate and manage recycling plans. Our country has focused on making recycling work instead of addressing the root problem of an industry that is making lots of money and causing a tremendous environmental plastic pollution crisis on our planet Earth.



What is the issue concerning plastics?

The value of plastics is that they are lightweight, see-through, and non-breakable. However, according to Good Housekeeping Magazine, 32% of plastic packaging (9 million tons) ends up in our oceans after littering streets, clogging up waterways, and finally choking marine life. According to the current National Geographic, 91% of plastics have never been recycled.

Recycling centers are dependent on manually sorting through mounds of collected recyclables. The industry is finally moving into mechanical sorting machines.

We can make a difference through conscientious sorting. Labeling symbols are very confusing and inconsistent, as well as difficult to locate. Some plastics are recyclable and can be transformed into new materials. Numbers 1, 2, and 5 in the triangular symbol (most plastic food and beverage containers) can be used for making such things as polar fleece, furniture, carpet, paneling, floor tiles, lumber, and detergent and shampoo containers.

For numbers 3 and 6 (e.g., styrofoam, disposable water bottles, plates, cups, utensils), there is no effective method to reuse them. These often go into the trash and become a huge problem as China doesn't want them anymore. Countries want to deal only with their own recycling problems. Single use plastic number 4 (e.g., toothpaste tubes, bread, food, and dry cleaning and shopping bags) have no future use. Plastic bags can clog the sorting machines.

It costs money to process and transport waste, and there is no demand for certain categories of waste. There are huge mountains of plastic waste on the edge of most cities and landfills.

The plastics industry, using oil and gas, wants to sell more plastics and make a lot of money. They keep coming up with more and more packaging.

What must we do?

Become a smart shopper! Ban or reduce buying plastics. Use reusable bags, paper, glass, or other types of packaging. What happened to wrapping meat in paper and reusing containers?

Ban single-use plastics. Sixteen countries have, including India. California and Hawaii have statewide-bans on plastic bags. Minneapolis and Duluth are now charging 5 cents per plastic bag. Single-use plastics cannot be sold or used in any manner. Mixing in unacceptable plastics contaminate the acceptable batches of suitable plastics. Sort carefully!

Producers need to improve labeling. More education is needed for the public to be wise recyclers. Whenever in doubt, throw the plastic into the trash. Recycling is broken. It is time to reinvent it!

We need to take on the plastics industry. Solutions to plastic waste are often described as what consumers can do to help. In mid-February, there was federal legislation introduced to shift responsibility back to the industries producing the plastic and hold the plastics industry accountable for dealing with the waste they create.

For now, reduce waste and recycle correctly!

Civic Engagement Networking

By Rita Mills

In January, Karen Lake and I participated in the first of the quarterly MNVoice Coalition Civic Engagement Network. The meeting had very youthful and diverse attendees with some 100 representatives from various non-partisan organizations including the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office (SOS). It has a mission and vision of registering 72,000 new voters with an emphasis on youth and people of color, the voiceless. That was then, pre-COVID-19.

Round two occurred on April 1 in a virtual meeting. Some 86 participants logged in for a two-hour review of various organizations and coalitions. While the mission and vision has NOT changed, there was a clear message that "...our current model will NOT work" for voter services and community outreach.

As the SOS and various organizations reported on various ways of reaching people digitally, Karen and I were somewhat overwhelmed with acronyms, platforms, and apps being tossed about. (e.g., working on an API with the SOS, using Thru Text, Van Database). We continued in the virtual meeting and debriefed after, heads spinning. Meeting with these engaged, passionate younger people gave us a dose of reality in the new normal. We know we need to brainstorm, think outside the box, learn, and implement new digital strategies; however, we call on the rich history and experience of the League of Women Voters to assist and guide our Voter Services team on a new journey.

To quote Governor Andrew Cuomo, who quoted Winston Churchill, "It's not enough that we do our best; sometimes we have to do what is required."

Check out the League Facebook Page

Check out and/or follow the LWV of Roseville Area Facebook page:
facebook.com/lwvRosevilleArea

Any posts on the page may be shared on your personal Facebook page!



Member Spotlight: Judy Stuthman

By Mindy Greiling

People who first meet Judy Stuthman are often impressed by her refined, genteel manner. Those who know her well don't think for a minute that they can pull anything over on this principled, velvet-hammered lady. She served as co-president of the Roseville Area League from 1998-2001 and co-president of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota from 2007-2011. She has received the Hope Washburn Award, the highest and most revered LWVMN award.

In a 2013 interview for the LWV of Roseville Area Memoir Project, Judy told her League interviewer, "League appeals to people who have strong interests. It's a good mentoring organization and can teach a person how to influence public policy. The League offers members the opportunity to pursue their passions."



Immigration is Judy's passion, an outgrowth of the Vietnam War and the influx of those refugees, many of whom she befriended. Immigrants know that voting is the best way to become engaged as a citizen, she says. Judy has coordinated the registration of new citizen voters at state-wide citizenship ceremonies for 20 years. To date, with the help of League volunteers, she has carried into the Secretary of State's Office over 100,000 new voter registrations. Her great reward in doing this is the appreciation expressed by the new citizens to the League members for helping them register to vote and then watching these new citizens become active in their communities. Judy often tells the story of a young woman who actually attended a citizenship ceremony five hours after giving birth with her IV needles still in her arm; the woman's husband brought her back to the hospital after the swearing in and after she filled out her voter registration.

In 2014, Judy was honored with a well-deserved award from the National Association of Secretaries of State for her exceptional work. Congratulations to Judy for that prestigious award and for giving 50 years of service to the League of Women Voters!

Selma Bridge Message: Vote!

By Rita Mills

Note: This event occurred on March 1, 2020, prior to the public closures due to COVID-19.

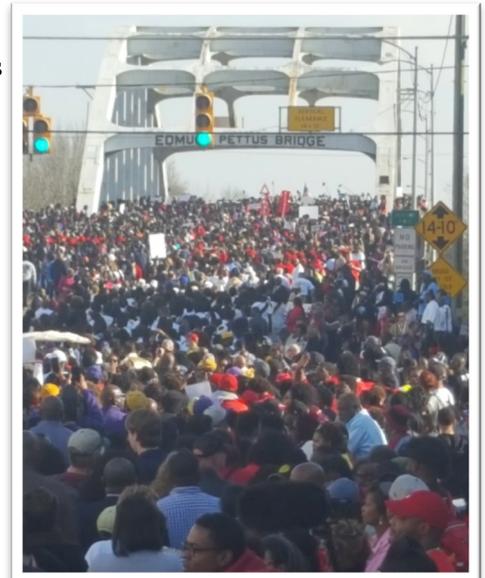
While doing a Civil Rights tour en route to warmer, sunnier weather, my husband and I visited the new (2018) National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, informally known as the National Lynching Memorial, commemorating the victims of lynching in the US. I have visited numerous monuments and memorials worldwide, however, this experience was particularly emotional and powerful. This six-acre site is located in the heart of Montgomery and warrants more than a quick walk-through. The memorial's intent is to acknowledge past racial terrorism and advocate for social justice in the future.

While trying to locate the names of victims lynched in Duluth in 1920 on one of the hanging steel boxes shaped like coffins, we met fellow visitors who encouraged us to go to Selma the following day, March 1, for the 55th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday." March 7, 1965, was the first attempt by African-Americans to make the 54-mile march for voter registration rights from Selma to the capital in Montgomery. When attempting to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the civil rights advocates were violently pushed back by local law enforcement, resulting in several severe injuries ([nbcnews.com/video/bloody-sunday-a-flashback-of-the-landmark-selma-to-montgomery-marches-1191243331868](https://www.nbcnews.com/video/bloody-sunday-a-flashback-of-the-landmark-selma-to-montgomery-marches-1191243331868)). Many of us may recall either watching the bridge violence on TV or reading about it in history texts. This is only part of the story. At the interpretive center outside of Selma, we learned that the violence continued for an additional 24 hours. This factoid is not in history texts. But voting rights advocates persisted and successfully completed the 54-mile march two weeks later, resulting in the passage of the Voter Rights Act.

This 2020 reenactment of the Selma to Montgomery March began at a service in the Brown Chapel AME Church. Most democratic presidential candidates were in attendance. We watched the service, listening to the speakers, outside the church on a jumbotron. When the participants emerged from the service, the numbers of marchers ballooned, and we walked along the side as they inched toward the Edmund Pettus Bridge. During this time I read t-shirts, signs, and banners advocating and encouraging everyone to use the power of the vote. Fifty-five years after Bloody Sunday...voter suppression, voter apathy, voter turnout...we continue to fight the good fight! Based on the thousands of marchers on March 1, 2020, with most carrying or wearing some type of voting message, hope is alive and well!



"A vote-less people is a hopeless people."
— Amelia Boynton Robinson



Pictures (by Rita Mills)

- National Memorial for Peace and Justice (top-left)
- Selma march (middle and bottom-right)
- Pettus Bridge (top-right)

Future League Events

Rides to events: If you would like to attend League events but need transportation, contact Sherry Hood at sherryhood@icloud.com or 651-633-1434. She will find someone in your area to provide a ride.

Event recording: Many of our events are recorded. If you would like to watch a recording of an event at home, go to our website, lvvrosevillearea.org. Click on the YouTube icon on the righthand side and choose from recorded events. See [page 1](#) and [page 10](#) for event details.

Earth Day Continues Each Day

By Barb Luck

Many of you know that this year's commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day (April 22) was largely online due to the virus pandemic. Earth Day Network, the international organization focused on educating and activating the environmental movement, hosted 12 hours of diverse, yet unified, voices about the need for climate action. Millions around the world including many participants from Youth Climate Strike tuned in to show their support. From the Pope to artists to musicians to government leaders, a call to action was loud and clear: our health and climate change are linked and we must work together to make progress. One example of the linkage is that our oceans, which help absorb CO₂, are in danger due, in part, to weakening circulation patterns. Basically, when less CO₂ is absorbed, temperatures rise more quickly.



According to Dotsie Bausch, executive director of the nonprofit Switch4Good, “Eating more plants and less animals is the single most impactful step that you can take as an individual to fight climate change. It reduces your personal carbon emissions by an average of 45% and land use by 55%.” If you're ready to try a plant-based recipe, check out this page: plantbasedandbroke.com/11-easy-plant-based-dinner-ideas/.

Here are a few of the many other actions you can take:

- Plant pollinator-friendly gardens and native plants. Avoid plants treated with neonicotinoids, pesticides suspected in the pollinator decline.
- Make your own disinfectants which are better for the environment than many commercial products. Earth Day Network suggests you mix 30% hydrogen peroxide and 70% alcohol in a spray bottle. Simply spray on a surface (test first) and let it dry.
- Use less single-use plastic, as much of it ends up in our waters. It doesn't breakdown and endangers water life.
- Participate in an environmental association such as Earth Day Network (earthday.org) or Sierra Club (sierraclub.org/minnesota).

Since the “stay safe, stay home” guideline has been in place for many countries in recent months, there is good news about reduced air pollution in large cities and benefits for wildlife. For example, endangered sea turtles in Florida are nesting on beach shores in record numbers, apparently spurred on by much less human activity and devastating waste such as plastics.

Former US Vice President Al Gore reiterated the urgent need to end burning of fossil fuels. His message offered hope and encouragement, “We've expanded opportunities for renewable energy and now we just need policy to follow. For anyone who is tempted to be discouraged, don't give into that temptation.”

What Are You Thinking? Future Meeting Ideas

After the Annual Meeting on June 2, the 2020-2021 Program Committee will meet to identify topics for monthly meetings. An ongoing list of future possibilities is kept throughout the year.

If you have an idea for a meeting that would be of interest to members from all of our five cities, please send it to Bonnie Koch, and it will be added to the list.

LWV of Roseville Area: May – June Event Calendar

- **June 2 – LWV of Roseville Area 67th Annual Meeting.** See details on [page 1](#).
- **June 23 – Field Trip.** See information on [page 1](#).



National Officers of LWV
Source: LWV Media Library

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.