

The Voter

The official publication of the League of Women Voters of Roseville Area
FALCON HEIGHTS, LAUDERDALE, LITTLE CANADA, MAPLEWOOD, ROSEVILLE

Volume 65, Number 8
April 2020



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Earth Day Anniversary	2
Study/ Meeting Input	2
President's Report	3
Member Spotlight	3
Windows/Mirrors for All	4
Voter Services Update	4
Recap: Civic 101—Judiciary	5
2020-21 Proposed Budget	6
Future League Events	7
Nominations Report	7
April Event Calendar	8

April Event Rescheduled: Hope in the Struggle

LWV of Roseville Area's April meeting featuring Dr. Josie Johnson and her co-author, Carolyn Holbrook, has thankfully been rescheduled to September 16, still at the Roseville Library. Their talk is part of our year-long celebration of 100 years of the League of Women Voters and features Dr. Johnson's book, *Hope in the Struggle*.

Dr. Johnson's remarks will feature stories from her book that include her role in the League and elsewhere advocating for voting rights, including making brave trips to the South to register voters during the heat of the Civil Rights movement.

The library is co-hosting the meeting.

Annual Meeting Update and Rescheduled Exhibit

Review the President's Letter on [page 3](#) for an update about the LWV of Roseville Area annual meeting and for information on the rescheduling of the LWVMN Centennial traveling exhibit.

June Field Trip

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, June 23, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. We are planning on holding the LWV of Roseville Area annual field trip at this time. On the trip we will learn about the work of the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District. We'll meet at the Watershed District Office at 9:30 a.m. (just west of Little Canada City Hall) to hear about the variety of ways storm water is managed and see a video of the projects undertaken. After the visit, we'll carpool to Central Park Elementary School and then to Maplewood Mall to observe several projects in action.

2020 US Census Update

By Barb Barany

Our LWV of Roseville Area cities are on track for high US Census self-response rates. Be sure to respond online, by phone, or fill out the paper form when it arrives at your residence—and remind your friends and relatives to respond as well!

Anyone living in assisted living/nursing homes, or similar locations, that did not receive a letter from the US Census, does not need to respond. Those responses will be done administratively. Anyone who did receive a letter from the US Census is required to respond, regardless of residence type.

Member Renewal Information

A gentle reminder that dues for League membership renewal are due April 1 unless you were a new member who joined since April 1, 2019.

Go to the LWV of Roseville Area website to renew:
<https://www3.thedatabank.com/dpg/601/donate.asp?formid=RosevilleMember>



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>

Did You Know...April 22 is the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day?

By Anne Haugan

Due to COVID-19, most in-person events for Earth Day have been cancelled, and some organizations are in the process of changing to online events. Let's take this time to reflect on how Earth Day began and has grown.

In 1970, the environmental issues were very different from what they are today. Such persons as Rachel Carson were sounding an alarm brought about by the severe decrease in the bald eagle population caused by DDT. Other issues that were part of the conservation movement were saving the whales, halting off-shore drilling, removing lead from paint, over-population causing depletion of natural resources, and rainforest destruction. People became aware that technology was creating problems for the environment.

Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin then conceived of the idea of Earth Day. The surprise was that 20 million Americans participated and forced the issue of environmental protection onto the national political agenda. Six months after the first Earth Day was established, progress was rapidly made by Congress. The Clean Water Act passed with one dissenting vote. After it became law, it was followed by the Endangered Species Act, the establishment of the EPA and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the banning of DDT, the removal of lead from gasoline, the passage of the Toxic Substances Control Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

A transformation has happened. Earth Day is now a global movement involving 200 nations and billions of people. The number one issue is transitioning from fossil fuels to clean energy. It is a **climate emergency — energy independence** issue!

Other current issues are the decrease in wildlife populations, ice depletion at our poles, severe loss of pollinators, hazardous waste disposal, and ecosystem destruction. Today, saving our planet needs to address issues such as food systems; transportation; city and regional planning; infrastructure issues such as roads, pipelines, buildings, and cables; corporate greed; and many cultural, economic, and justice issues.

We are grateful to Senator Gaylord Nelson and many others who created Earth Day which is now a worldwide day calling for action. How will this 50th anniversary be celebrated in Minnesota? For the most current information, check directly with your favorite organization or visit mnearthday.org.

How might each of us act differently and be environmental activists?
For more information, go to earthday.org. It is time to respond to our climate emergency!



What Are You Thinking? Future Studies and Meeting Ideas

At the Annual Meeting, when it is held, members will adopt a new study for the 2020-2021 year. Do you have an area of interest for our five cities that you would like to work on with other League members? Suggestions can be a new topic that we haven't looked at before or an update of something we have studied in the past. Send your ideas to Program Chair, Bonnie Koch (touray@aol.com).

Recent studies:

- 2015-2016: One-year policing study
- 2016-2018: Two-year affordable housing study
- 2018-2019: CMAL study and position update on the Metropolitan Council
- 2019-2020: Study was not undertaken in lieu of emphasis on and participation in the 2020 US Census

Already suggested possibilities:

- Study on how our cities are implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Study on the process for equitably filling representative positions on commissions in local government

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

Questions about the status of planned events?

Watch for updates from the LWV Roseville Area email or contact President Sherry Hood with any questions.

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

Barb Anderson

Membership

Beth Reinhart

Program

Bonnie Koch

Voter Services

Grace Gee

Karen Lake

.....

Members-At-Large

Jim DeBenedet

Stephanie DeBenedet

Rachel Geiser

Karen Schaffer

These are history-making times and the LWV of Roseville Area is probably further down your list of priorities than other issues. This is understandable, but I do want to inform you that we will continue to be in communication with you regarding cancelled events and offer you new information online about how our League can continue to support democracy and education on important issues in our communities.

At this point, all of the events in April and May have been cancelled. The LWV of Roseville Area Annual Meeting on May 5 was postponed by our Board on March 25. The annual report, however, will be sent out at its usual time (by May 1). It will be decided in the future when and how the Annual Meeting will be rescheduled. Meanwhile, the current Board will continue in their roles. (According to our by-laws, the new Board members cannot take office until their nominations are approved by members present at the Annual Meeting.) Our very important state traveling Centennial exhibit display at the Maplewood and Roseville libraries originally scheduled for April has been rescheduled to April 5-30, 2021. (There were no open slots available for the rest of 2020.) The April program with Josie Johnson was rescheduled to September 16; see [page 1](#).

To all of those who worked hard to plan the programs, Annual Meeting, traveling exhibit display, census outreach, and committee planning meetings, we thank you and hope you know that you are so very appreciated.

I know you all have many things to think about right now and the economy is in flux. However, I would like you to consider renewing your membership to our League. The response so far has been down this year. Given the pandemic that is occurring, this is understandable. Plus, this year, notices were sent by email for the first time. Those without email were mailed a letter. I do hope you continue to join us. See [page 1](#) for the link to renew online.

Finally, and most importantly, please stay safe, be inventive and resourceful, enjoy life the best you can, and support your fellow citizens whenever you can! God bless us all!



Sherry Hood

Member Spotlight: Carolyn Cushing

By Beth Reinhart

Mindy Greiling calls Carolyn Cushing “the quintessential Leaguer.”

In this time of the world being upside down, the Member Spotlight space this month turns to feature one of our treasured Lifetime League members. Carolyn Cushing joined League in 1963 just after moving to Roseville with her husband. While raising five children, she became active and involved in a variety of issues that surfaced for a developing community. Taking on some of the teaching roles with League, she once used her artistic abilities to draw copies of a dozen political cartoons for a presentation. Her skills and abilities as a leader led to two terms on the LWVMN board. One of the roles involved visiting Leagues all over the state, often addressing local problems or struggles.

One of Carolyn’s favorite experiences was the LWV national convention in Washington, D.C., during the week of President Nixon’s controversial strike into Cambodia and the events at Kent State. She especially recalls an impressive student speaker named Hilary Rodham. For the first time ever, the convention adjourned and moved directly to the Capitol to lobby.

Carolyn is truly a treasure. This Spotlight article merely touches the tip of a tremendously deep iceberg of experience, passion, and dedication. As we mark significant historical milestones while simultaneously confronting the extraordinary challenges of the current moment, it’s good to be reminded of the deep roots of solidarity from which we draw inspiration, strength and courage.



Survive or Thrive?

By Florence Sprague

Most people are aware that the distance between the top incomes and the bottom incomes today is phenomenal. They are also aware that their paychecks just don't go as far as they once did. But when I read a brief article recently that began, "The typical American man needs to work 53 weeks to pay for the basics of middle-class family life," I was still startled. This oblique way of saying that the median male income is no longer enough to support a middle-class family was jarring ([bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-02-21/a-year-s-too-short-for-a-u-s-worker-to-earn-a-middle-class-life](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-02-21/a-year-s-too-short-for-a-u-s-worker-to-earn-a-middle-class-life)). Are we thriving or just surviving?



Now you may quibble with how the author defines typical and what expenses he considers essential to be middle class, but the essence remains—30 years ago the median male wage earner could support a family of four in the middle class (as defined by Cass below) and today he cannot. Regardless of other racial, ethnic, or gender income divides, that is a startling fact. Yet, prior to the coronavirus collapse, the economy was seen as strong. And if it is not possible for the median male wage earner, just imagine how difficult things are for the 49% below him and all of the subgroups which, when statistically isolated, would fare even worse.

This is not the complaint of a liberal or leftist. This is from a report by Oren Cass, a conservative scholar at the Manhattan Institute, a conservative, corporate-funded think tank. He is, however, an unconventional economist, one who challenges the usefulness of traditional measures such as inflation. Cass has written an interesting and readable article about his report, full of—most people think apples are happening, but really what happens is oranges—explanations. Cass opines that conventional economic thought and real family needs and thinking diverge in three areas: quality adjustment, risk sharing, and social norms. His middle-class basket of needs includes auto transportation, renting a three-bedroom home, and saving for college. He calls his measure the Cost of Thriving Index, COTI. His choices offer a good jumping off point for making one's own list of important items ([americanaffairsjournal.org/2020/02/the-cost-of-thriving/](https://www.americanaffairsjournal.org/2020/02/the-cost-of-thriving/)). (Note, this is a subscription journal and only gives you one free article a month. If you hanker for all of the data in the complete report, go to [manhattan-institute.org/reevaluating-prosperity-of-american-family](https://www.manhattan-institute.org/reevaluating-prosperity-of-american-family) where you can download a 24-page pdf.)

Economics confuse many of us. For some it is math aversion, for others it is perceived oversimplification of concepts, or the feeling that it is counterintuitive. If you, like I, feel the need for a refresher course in economics, and this has whetted your appetite, the public radio show Marketplace has a project called Econ Extra Credit, which uses a free, online textbook ([core-econ.org/espp/](https://www.core-econ.org/espp/)). Their group has been running for awhile, but the book is still available. This could be a good activity while self-isolating this spring. Read, review, and consider, how well do these ideas fit with how real people behave? Does either way of modeling feel right to you? What factors best reflect how humans behave?

Note: This article was begun before the major social and economic upheavals in response to COVID-19. In these exceptional times, may this help us remember that while it is scary for some to watch the stock market fall through the floor, then the basement, then the sub-basement, the stock market is not synonymous with the economy. It is worse to have your place of work shut down or your small business forced to cease operations, your kids out of school, your reserves non-existent, and you and your neighbors social distancing as you face your unpayable bills. Those with the least financial resilience will be hurt the most by these major societal disruptions. That's the economic reality.

Voter Services Update

By Karen Lake

On March 2, two Voter Services Committee members, Teresa Wernecke and Marcia Cheney, supported the MNVoice Coalition effort in East St. Paul to GOTV for the Minnesota Primary Election. Subsequent to that, Voter Services has been mainly a story of cancellations, as is true for so many in light of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cancelled events include:

- Voter registrations at Rosedale on March 28-29 during the Women's Expo.
- Moderator/Event Planning training offered by LWVMN on March 28 (training will be rescheduled).
- Voter Services Committee meeting on March 30 to organize for the 2020 election year (rescheduled for May 14).

Recap: Civic Literacy 101 - Judicial Branch

By Mary Peterson

We are born with rights. The Minnesota judicial branch exists to protect our rights and freedoms and peacefully resolve disputes, thereby upholding one of the first promises of Minnesota's constitution: "Every person is entitled to...obtain justice freely and without purchase, completely and without denial, promptly and without delay."

Minnesota has a sizable justice gap—the difference between the number of people who need free/low-cost legal services and the number of volunteer/low-cost attorneys available to help them. As a result, Minnesota has seen a sizable increase in the number of self-represented litigants entering the court system. They receive a bit of help through in-person and remote services.

Mental health affects courts now more than 25 years ago. Treatment courts—drug, DWI, mental health, and veterans courts—target non-violent criminal offenders suffering from addiction to alcohol or other drugs, or who have mental health issues that played a role in their offense. These treatment courts have helped reduce recidivism, lower incarcerated time, increased gains in life skills, and saved taxpayer dollars. Unfortunately, spaces in these courts are often limited.

Second Judicial District Chief Judge John Guthmann shared these facts and many more at the February League meeting that was co-sponsored by Do Good Roseville and the Roseville Library. This was the final Civic Literacy 101 event. Guthmann was appointed Ramsey County Judge in 2008 and elected Chief Judge in 2016.

Minnesota's Court System - District Courts, Court of Appeals and Supreme Court.

In Minnesota's district courts, approximately 1.3 million cases were filed in 2019, including criminal, civil, family, juvenile, and probate/mental health. District courts are located in each of the state's 87 counties and divided among 10 judicial districts. There are currently 295 judges. Ramsey County has 29 district court judges.

The Minnesota Court of Appeals handles most of the appeals and is the final decision maker in 95% of all appeals. With 19 judges and cases heard in three-judge panels, 2,000 cases were filed in 2019. This court allows the Minnesota Supreme Court to spend time resolving difficult constitutional and public policy cases.

The Supreme Court, which reviews decisions of the Court of Appeals, is the highest court in Minnesota. With seven justices, 2019 saw 157 opinions released. Each year about 750 petitions for further review are filed and the court chooses which petitions to accept, based on the significance of the legal issues involved in the case.

Chief Judge Guthmann informed us at the beginning of his talk that he was the on-call judge that evening. As he was finishing his talk, his phone rang. He had a request for an application for a warrant for a blood draw. He excused himself and stepped outside the room and was able to grant the warrant using an e-charging system. Upon returning to the room, Chief Judge Guthmann extended an invitation to all of us to observe his courtroom when in session.



Pictures from event
(by Mary Peterson)

LWV of Roseville Area 2020-2021 Proposed Budget

By Barb Anderson, Mary Ann Palmer, Jessica Holz

The following LWV of Roseville Area 2020-2021 proposed budget will be voted on at the annual meeting when held.

	Proposed Budget 2019-20	YTD March 2019-20	Proposed Budget 2020-21
INCOME:			
Dues (120 pd members/\$70 dues)	8,400.00	12,170.00	8,400.00
Contributions (unrestricted)	2,500.00	4,475.00	3,000.00
Memorials			
Annual Meeting	1,100.00	928.00	1,100.00
Miscellaneous	200.00	40.00	200.00
Voter Services Grants/donations			
Special Events	850.00	3,040.00	850.00
PayPal Fees		(157.34)	(200.00)
Reserves	11.00		
In Kind			885.00
TOTAL INCOME	13,061.00	20,495.66	14,235.00
EXPENSES:			
Program Division			
Program	250.00	212.14	250.00
Special Events	850.00	2,628.00	1,000.00
CMAL Meeting			
Voter Services	675.00	349.76	800.00
Advocacy/Action	100.00		100.00
Communications			
Public Relations/Advertising	75.00	1,950.31	100.00
Publication Purchases	100.00		100.00
Voter Mailing	150.00	44.00	100.00
Archivist			
Printing	500.00	391.07	750.00
Website/Facebook	250.00	100.00	150.00
Miscellaneous			
Membership	150.00	58.57	150.00
Board Expense			
President/Vice President	100.00		100.00
Secretary			
Development Committee	150.00	128.84	150.00
Treasurer/fees	55.00		-
Board Expense	50.00		50.00
Sunshine Fund	50.00		50.00
Facility Honorarium	200.00	200.00	200.00
Delegate, Travel, Affiliation			
Delegates, Convention, Workshop	1,000.00	400.00	2,000.00
Miscellaneous			
Memorials			
Other Club Dues (Gavel Club)	20.00	20.00	20.00
Dues (Regional Water Interleague)	25.00	75.00	25.00
Annual Meeting	1,100.00	1,082.09	1,100.00
Miscellaneous	200.00	256.68	200.00
Youth Award			
In Kind			
Per Member Payments			
PMP National (\$30.00/120 members)	3,690.00	3,001.05	3,600.00
PMP State (\$27.00/120 members)	3,321.00	3,680.00	3,240.00
CMAL Dues (\$1.00/120 members)			
TOTAL EXPENSES	13,061.00	14,577.51	14,235.00

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, lwvrosevillearea.org. Click on the YouTube icon on the righthand side and choose from recorded events.

See [page 1](#), [page 2](#), and [page 3](#) for updates on canceled and postponed League events.

June 23 – Sustainability Field Trip. See details on [page 1](#).

LWV of Roseville Area 2020-2021 Nominations Committee Report

By Florence Sprague, Mindy Greiling, Karen Lake, and Lisa Scribner

The positions below are the officers and board members who will be voted on at the annual meeting when it is held. There is still room for you! **We still need someone to arrange the 2021 annual meeting.** We can always use people with technological skills to support our communications group. If you have an idea for a great program, we can build on your ideas for a great session with your help. Also, be on the watch in the Voter and e-blasts for ad hoc committees that may develop during the year—one that is coming is a local subgroup to present the state study on firearms. Most of all, come to as many events and activities as you can and bring a friend! We'll be seeing you!

- **President:** Barb Barany — 2 years
- **Vice President:** Barb Anderson — 2 years
- **Secretary:** Jim DeBenedet, with Mindy Greiling as backup
- **Treasurer:** Jessica Holz
- **Action Team Leaders:** Wayne Groff and Priscilla Morton, vice chair Sherry Hood
- **Communications Team Leader:** Barb Anderson, transitioning to Mary Peterson
- **Membership Team Leader:** Rita Mills
- **Program Team Leader:** Florence Sprague, vice chair Carol Marchel
- **Voter Service Team Leader:** Karen Lake
- **At-Large Board Members:** Stephanie DeBenedet, Rachel Geiser, Karen Schaffer
- **Finance, Budget, Examiner Team Leader:** Barb Anderson

The following positions and committees are members who have agreed to work on the programs, activities, and services for LWV of Roseville Area and don't need to be voted on at the Annual Meeting in May.

- **Action and Advocacy** — Members: Deb Alexander, Kerry Fine, Georgeann Hall, Elizabeth Hansel, Carol Marchel, Beth Salzl, Warren Wolfe
- **Environment Interest Group** — Chair: Donna Peterson; Members: Anne Haugan, Sherry Hood, Alana Howey, Barbara Luck, Tammy McGehee, Priscilla Morton
- **Communications** — Archive: Dan Salzl, working with Mindy Greiling, Bonnie Koch and Shirley Bradway to transfer to MHC; Nextdoor: Barbara Luck; PR: Merrie Zakaras; Social Media: Carrie Dickson; Video: Jim DeBenedet, Rob Reinhart; Voter: Rachel Geiser; Voter Distribution: Jo Waldron; Webpage: Barb Anderson
- **Finance, Budget, and Examiner** — Purpose: To divide up tasks of fundraising drive, budget and review of books; Members: Joyce Briggs, Bonnie Koch, Mary Ann Palmer, Faith O'Neill
- **Membership** — Members: Beth Reinhart, helping with transition, and Stephanie DeBenedet; Directory: Rita Mills; Data: Ann Thonet
- **Nominations** — Chair: Florence Sprague; Members: Mindy Greiling, Sherry Hood and Lisa Scribner
- **Program** — Committee: Shirley Bradway, Mindy Greiling, Sherry Hood, Carol Marchel, Connie Marty, Sharon McCord, Rita Mills, Lisa Scribner, and Val Swenson; Annual Meeting _____; Conversations with Constituents: Gladys Jones, Lisa Scribner, help from Rita Mills and Barbara Leary; CMAL: Karen Schaffer; Gavel: June Stewart, in a limited capacity; Holiday event: Sherry Hood
- **Voter Services** — Committee: Barb Barany, Marcia Cheney, Emma Duren, Sue Gehrz, Elizabeth Hansel, Sherry Hood, Alana Howey, Sheryl Malfeld, Rita Mills, Sharon Oswald, Suzanne Sancilio, Nancy Simpson, Florence Sprague, and June Stewart; Candidate forums: Teresa Wernecke, Cecelia Warner, and Grace Gee; New citizen registration: Judy Stuthman; On call to help with voter registrations: Lois Cunningham, Deb Heuwinkel, Brenda Himrich, Rita Lafferty, Diana Menanteau, Judy Marukami, Nancy Olson, Mary Peterson

LWV of Roseville Area: April Event Calendar

- **April 1 – US Census.** See update on [page 1](#).
- **April 22 – 50th Anniversary of Earth Day.** See information on [page 2](#).

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.



Board of Directors National LWV Chicago Convention — February 1920

Source: LWV Media Library