

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>

Conversations with Constituents — Minnesota's Recovery: Priorities for 2021

Minnesota's future will be determined by its recovery. COVID-19 has highlighted the challenges and inequities in our economic, criminal justice, healthcare, and educational institutions, among others. We have a unique opportunity to hear directly from our legislators and county commissioners during the annual Conversations with Constituents event on Thursday, January 21!



Pictured: Some of the officials who attended the 2020 event

As 2021 unfolds:

- What are the priorities of local elected officials for recovery from this pandemic?
- How do they plan to reach across the barriers of party affiliation, race, and divergent political agendas?
- Do state and local governments need new approaches for an equitable and just future?

This year's event will be hosted jointly on Zoom with Ramsey County Library Roseville. Moderators will ask questions submitted by League members and the Q&A will be open during the conversations. The best way to make sure **your** questions are fielded is to submit them in advance, no later than Sunday, January 17, to: lwvrosevillearea@lwvmn.org.

Invited guests include County Commissioners Nicole Joy Frethem (District 1), Mary Jo McGuire (2), Trista MatasCastillo (3), and Victoria Reinhardt (7) and state legislators from Districts 42, 43, and 66: Sen. Jason Isaacson, Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn, Sen. Chuck Wiger, Rep. Peter Fischer, Rep. Leon Lillie, Sen. John Marty, and Rep. Alice Hausman.

Event details: Thursday, January 21, 6:30-8 p.m.

6:30-6:35 p.m.: Welcome and Introduction

6:35-7:15 p.m.: Q&A Session with State Legislators

7:15-7:55 p.m.: Q&A Session with County Commissioners

7:55-8 p.m.: Program Wrap-Up

Register for this event at the Ramsey County Library Roseville website (rcldreads.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index/event/5fc65be85e8c0f2400fc4a87) or directly at zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_r5fqzcQbRV6NIs32MxdLjg.

LWV of Roseville Area January Board Meeting

The next meeting of the LWV of Roseville Area Board is Wednesday, January 27, at 7 p.m. For Zoom access, please contact Barb Anderson at lwvrosevillearea@lwvmn.org in advance.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

Officers:

President

Barb Barany

Vice President

Barb Anderson

Secretary

Jim DeBenedet
(Mindy Greiling, backup)

Treasurer

Jessica Holz

.....

Directors:

Action/Advocacy

Wayne Groff
Priscilla Morton

Communications

Barb Anderson, transitioning to
Mary Peterson

Membership

Rita Mills

Program

Florence Sprague, vice chair
Carol Marchel

Voter Services

Karen Lake

.....

Members-At-Large

Stephanie DeBenedet
Rachel Geiser
Karen Schaffer

I'm used to seeing big numbers when Voter Services Team Leader Karen Lake reports on new citizen voter registrations; so when she said there had been 6,564 registrations and assists from January through November 2, 2020, I took the number in stride. Then I tried to enter 6,564 in our online report to LWVUS. Not possible! There was a maximum of 5,000 registrations reportable. That's when familiarity turned to amazement. To better appreciate how we got here, we thank Judy Stuthman, who led a crew with Marcia Cheney and Florence Sprague at traditional larger ceremonies held pre-pandemic. When ceremonies resumed at the end of May, Judy registered new voters at small, "rolling" events, usually outdoors. See Karen's summary of LWV of Roseville Area Voter Service work and voter participation in our cities ([page 5](#)). It's great to see what experience, dedication, and flexibility can accomplish.

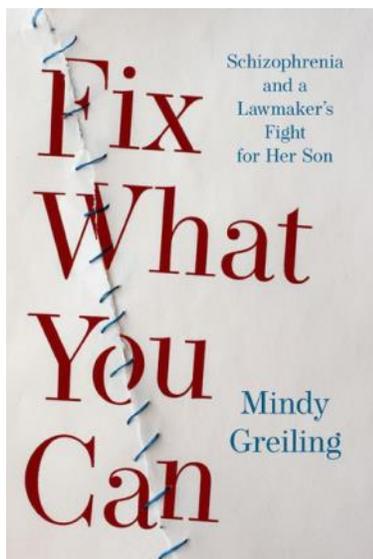
Also in the "continuing to be inspired by work our members have done" category is a recent interaction with LWV of St. Louis Metro Area regarding our 2015-2016 Police Study, chaired by Carrie Dickson, Mindy Greiling, and Rita Mills. The Missouri group, looking to carry out a social justice study of their own, was pointed to our study and contacted past presidents June Stewart and Rita Mills. Within a day, Bonnie Koch, a study participant, came up with the survey used, and shared it and her comments with the St. Louis League. It is always our intention for our studies to guide our advocacy. With the expansion of online sharing among Leagues, we are also able to support studies and advocacy within other local Leagues throughout the country.

Members are welcome additions to any of our committees at any time. The next, new, once-in-a-decade opportunity for engagement is working with LWVMN on redistricting advocacy with the People Powered Fair Maps Campaign. Be well!



Barb Barany

LWV Member Book Launch and Discussion



LWVMN is hosting a series of book discussions this winter and two LWV of Roseville Area League members will be featured in the first one.

League will host former Minnesota State Representative Mindy Greiling in a discussion about her new book, *Fix What You Can: Schizophrenia and a Lawmaker's Fight for Her Son*, on Thursday, January 28, at 6:30-7:30 p.m. The event is co-hosted by NAMI-MN and the University of Minnesota Press.

After a brief presentation, Greiling will be joined by Ramsey County Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire and a county mental health staff person. The discussion will also include racial disparities in the mental health system, audience questions, and free book drawings.

Watch the eBlast or LWVMN communications for registration details. In the meantime, please put this date on your calendar!

Americans Who Tell the Truth

By Florence Sprague



In the dark times of confusion, grief, anger, and fear after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, artist Robert Shetterly sought meaning. This search led him to create a series of portraits of Americans, contemporary and historic, whose vision cuts through the fog of spin to truth. From these he created a gorgeous book, *Americans Who Tell the Truth*, published in 2005, in which each portrait is paired with an incisive quote and brief biography of the speaker. He continued to expand the library of paired portraits and quotes, which now number more than 240; they can all be viewed online at americanswhotellthetruth.org/portrait-galleries. This website also supports a foundation. I encourage you to explore.

When I rediscovered his book on my bookshelf, I decided to create a Happy New Year article from some of the featured Americans and their visions, offering hope for the future. This proved more difficult than I had expected. It turns out that all too often clear-eyed Truth, with a capital T, is challenging not sunny, demanding that we give up our blinders. Here are the words of some amazing Americans. May they energize you as you enter the new year.

Lily Yeh Artist, social pioneer (born 1941): “When I see brokenness, poverty and crime in inner cities, I also see the enormous potential and readiness for transformation and rebirth. We are creating an art form that comes from the heart and reflects the pain and sorrow of people’s lives. It also expresses joy, beauty, and love. This process lays the foundation of building a genuine community in which people are reconnected with their families, sustained by meaningful work, nurtured by the care from each other and will together raise and educate their children. Then we witness social change in action.”

Frances Moore Lappé, writer, activist (born 1944): “What an extraordinary time to be alive. We’re the first people on our planet to have real choice: we can continue killing each other, wiping out other species, spoiling our nest. Yet on every continent a revolution in human dignity is emerging. It is re-knitting community and our ties to the earth. So we do have a choice. We can choose death; or we can choose life.”

Ralph Nader, public citizen (born 1934): “There can be no daily democracy without daily citizenship. A deep democracy...holds up for future generations the principle that the pursuit of justice is the condition for the pursuit of happiness.”

Judy Wicks, businessperson, activist (born 1947): “I’m helping to create an economic system that will respect and protect the earth—one which would replace corporate globalization with a global network of local living economies. Business is beautiful when it’s a vehicle for serving common good.”

Terry Tempest Williams, naturalist, writer, environmental activist (born 1955): “The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time.”

Walt Whitman, American poet (1819-1892): “This is what you shall do: love the earth and sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to everyone who asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown.”

Sue Coe, artist (born 1951): “We despair for the fate of animals, the senseless cruelties inflicted upon them by our species, their and our helplessness in the face of mass slaughter—all this is true. And if we could really see what we have done to the earth we would go mad. Alongside that is yet another truth: there is a palpable goodness all around us, even in the most terrible times, that all things point to, like the north star.”

Grace Lee Boggs, community leader, author (1925-2015): “People are aware that they cannot continue in the same old way but are immobilized because they cannot imagine an alternative. We need a vision that recognizes that we are at one of the great turning points in human history when the survival of our planet and the restoration of our humanity require a great sea change in our ecological, economic, political, and spiritual values.”

Becci Ingram, dramatist, disability rights activist (1974-2000): “I have a dream that can open your eyes. I believe that dream never dies. I dream of a world where all people can be free, Overweight people, and gay people, and people like me.” [Down Syndrome]

Paul Robeson, singer, writer, civil rights activist (1898-1976): “The talents of an artist, small or great are God given. They’ve nothing to do with him as a private person; they’re nothing to be proud of. They’re a sacred trust...Having been given, I must give. Man shall not live by bread alone, and what the farmer does I must do. I must feed the people—with my songs.”

Happy New Year. I wish you hope for the future. May 2021 offer you peace and opportunities to feed the people with your gifts.

Starting 2021 with Good News for the Environment

By Anne Haugan and Donna Peterson

Maybe you read that the following motion was passed at the National LWV Convention last summer with 1,091 “yes” votes and 21 “no” votes.



I move that the LWVUS calls for an immediate, wide-scale, mobilization by the United States, to restore, protect and fund an ecologically sustainable environment and climate, based on an interrelated approach that is environmentally sound, science based, just and equitable, dedicated to adequately addressing the scale and speed of the global climate change emergency.

This motion gives our LWV of Roseville Area energy and encouragement to proceed in addressing local environmental concerns. We hope to work with other organizations for greater impact.

Several other items of good news:

- Nationally in August, the “Great American Outdoors Act” became law. This will ensure that new, significant investments will be made in America’s public lands from national parks to hiking trails. The Land and Water Conservation Fund will receive \$900 million annually to fund long-needed maintenance projects on our public lands.
- Residents of Roseville who committed to Xcel Energy’s Windsource program received significant credits a few months ago for their investment. The reason: wind energy costs have declined so much that we can return the extra money not needed for funding wind projects.
- Wind turbines coming into the Duluth Port are setting another record year with over 525 tons coming through the port as of mid-November 2020; way beyond the record set in 2019 with 325 tons!
- The new Fairview Education Center in Roseville, under construction, is incorporating many initiatives identified in Leadership in Energy Efficient Design (LEED) which will cut energy use in building operations and lighting. In addition, solar panels are expected to be installed on the roof. Over 30% of the old Fairview building will be recycled when it is demolished!
- Target has made a significant commitment to installing solar panels on all their stores. Since 2015, 25% of the stores have solar arrays and our Target in Roseville is now one of them!
- New Flyer in St. Cloud is the largest transit and motorcoach bus manufacturer in the US. Orders for electric buses or buses with hydrogen fuel cells have made up an increasing percentage of the production. Metro Transit purchased 14 electric transit buses in October 2020.
- Alana Howey, one of our League members, and her husband Dale, own Green Rock Apartments in Minneapolis. With a focus on cutting energy costs, by taking advantage of many ways to improve efficiency, utility costs are less than 25% of what they were 10 years ago. In 2021, the savings from solar panels is expected to be close to \$30,000.

Sometimes it seems like nothing good for the environment or climate is happening. Be encouraged as the new year starts by knowing there is some good news for the environment as we continue to push for additional successes.

February League Event: Climate Change and Forests

On February 22, at 7 p.m., LWV of Roseville Area will co-sponsor a presentation by Dr. Lee Frelich, Director of the UM Center for Forest Ecology — Climate Change and Forests in Minnesota: Alternative Futures.

Dr. Frelich’s comments will address the impact of climate change on the treescape in Minnesota. He notes, “Forests in Minnesota have dramatically different futures depending on the CO₂ emissions scenario that we follow as a society. For the business as usual scenario, the state would lose all of the boreal forest (cold climate conifer and birch forests of northern Minnesota), and much of the state would support prairies rather than forests by 2070. For a low emissions scenario, forests would experience much smaller changes, with some boreal forest remaining in the north.”

Dr. Frelich is an international researcher and voice for climate change and forests. The presentation is co-sponsored by LWV of Roseville Area; Resilient Roseville, a local climate action group; the Sierra Club; Ramsey County Library; and Do Good Roseville.

Don’t miss this interesting and important event. Register through the Ramsey County Library website: rclreads.bibliocommons.com/events/5fce89251d94912f00a975f6.

Voter Services Update

By: *Karen Lake*

Minnesota, at 80%, once again was first in the nation in voter turnout out in the November election!

Barb Barany calculated the percent of registered voters casting ballots in the five cities that LWV of Roseville Area serves. From Ramsey County website data (including those registered on election day), voting percent by area is:

- Falcon Heights: 89.7%
- Lauderdale: 87.7%
- Little Canada: 84.4%
- Maplewood: 83.7%
- Roseville: 88.6%
- Overall: 86.1%

There were 19 volunteers for Voter Services activities from January through November 3, 2020. Volunteers contributed approximately 2,000 hours for Voter Services activities.

Headed by Judy Stuthman, this is the new citizenship ceremonies and voter registrations event data.

- January through March: Approximately 11 ceremonies
- May 28 through November 2: Approximately 209 “rolling ceremonies” (shorter ceremonies with fewer numbers of new citizens)
- Number of new citizens registered to vote: Approximately 6,564

Thanks to those LWV of Roseville Area members who committed to relational organizing during this past election season! According to a Medill News Service article, provided by Minnesota Secretary of State Outreach Specialist Michael Wall, family and friends may decide whether you vote or not, so relational organizing makes a positive difference in people voting! (See dc.medill.northwestern.edu/blog/2020/12/15/family-and-friends-may-decide-whether-you-vote-or-not-according-to-new-nonvoter-survey/.)

League Facebook Campaign — Update

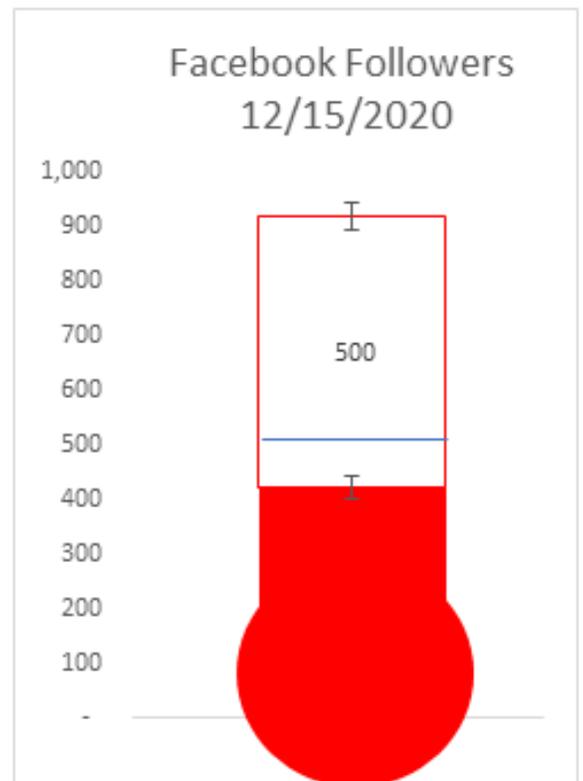
By *Barb Anderson*

We have made more progress in reaching our goal of 500 Facebook followers by April 1. In October we had 408 followers, and on December 15 we had 424!

Thanks to those of you who have followed us, and also those who have shared our posts. Please continue to help us extend our reach in the community by following our Facebook page (if you don't already) at facebook.com/lwvRosevilleArea.

Like and share our posts among your friends and followers. The more of our posts you like and share, the greater likelihood that we'll reach a broader audience.

Thank you for your help!



Recap: COVID-19 – Urgent Lessons for Public Health Reform

By Rachel Geiser

On November 17, three panelists, spoke at an event co-sponsored by LWV of Roseville Area and Ramsey County Library Roseville: Stella Obadiya, a registered nurse with over three decades of experience in both Nigeria and the US and an advocate against health care disparities and discrimination; Dave Dvorak, an emergency physician who is also a member of the Minnesota chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program; and John Marty, a Minnesota state senator and author of the Minnesota Health Plan, advocating replacement of the current system with a health system for all. League member Mindy Greiling moderated the event.

Obadiya began the session with her personal story about a medical emergency and wondering what people would have done in her situation without medical insurance. Obadiya lamented the fact that COVID-19 has widened the already existing racial health disparities, making it difficult for minorities and people experiencing poverty to get access to health care. She discussed Senator Marty's proposed Minnesota Health Plan and the benefits. Obadiya reiterated the fact that racism is a public health crisis here in America.

Dvorak explained how COVID-19 and the health care system crisis have intersected. He gave statistics on the number of underinsured persons in the country, the amount of money Americans spend on health care, and the dangerous reality of being underinsured, stressing that 67% of US bankruptcies occur due to medical bills. The pandemic caused many people to lose their employer-sponsored health insurance and the lack of federally-mandated sick leave created problems with sick people having to go to work. Dvorak said, "The virus treats us all equally, but our health care system does not." Dvorak stressed the importance of a unified single payer plan with comprehensive coverage for all; one unified, streamlined public payer, and centralized planning.

Marty spoke last to discuss solutions for many of the problems that Obadiya and Dvorak addressed. He recalled how the COVID-19 crisis seemed to initially head the nation in the direction of universal health care, but didn't continue down that path. The pandemic then exacerbated the crisis that already existed in health care (e.g., underinsurance, hospital locations closed due to private company interests instead of lack of need). Marty championed how a universal health care system would eliminate a bureaucratic insurance system, not only saving money, but stopping interference in the work of doctors and nurses.

Moderator Greiling then asked the panelists questions from the audience before each panelist gave their closing remarks. To watch a recording of the event on this important topic, go to the Ramsey County Library Roseville website here: my.nicheacademy.com/rc/adult/course/22069.



Speakers (bottom left, clockwise): Stella Obadiya, RN; Dave Dvorak, MD, MPH; and MN State Senator John Marty — Moderator (bottom right): League Member Mindy Greiling

LWV Pronoun and Gender Guidance

LWVUS is working to make a more inclusive space in League. To do this, LWVUS advocates that "League should engage in learning, educating, and advocating for the inclusive use of pronouns for all." This initiative aims to use the pronouns an individual prefers (e.g., she/her, he/him, ze/hir, they/them).

Though LWVUS knows that people not accustomed to inclusive pronoun use may struggle at first, it is important to respect people's identities and create a more welcoming and inclusive space within League for people of all genders. Here is an excerpt from the LWV Pronoun and Gender Guidance that elaborates on how the initiative helps makes the League more inclusive.

*Pronouns can sometimes be a signifier for someone's gender identity but not always. We do not want to assume people's gender identity based on their expression (shown through clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, etc.) **By providing an opportunity for people to share their pronouns, you're showing that you're not assuming their gender identity is based on their appearance.***

See the LWVUS Pronoun and Gender Guidance site for more information: lww.org/league-management/dei-resources/pronoun-and-gender-guidance.

Future League Events

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.

January events are detailed on [page 1](#), [page 2](#), [page 7](#), and [page 8](#).

- **February 16 – Redistricting.** Paul Huffman, from LWVMN, will speak on redistricting. More information will be shared later; 7-8:30 p.m.
 - **February 22 – Climate Change and Forests in Minnesota: Alternative Futures.** See event details on [page 4](#), 7-8 p.m.
 - **March – TBD.** Event topic is being finalized. Watch for more information.
 - **April – TBD.** Event topic is being finalized. Watch for more information.
 - **May 4 – LWV of Roseville Area Annual Meeting.** More information will be shared later.
 - **June – Field Trip.** Event details are being finalized. Watch for more information.
-

CMAL Panel on County Government

By Karen Schaffer

Tune in to the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters' (CMAL) Panel on County Government, held on Zoom on January 9, at 10 a.m.

Jan Callison (former Hennepin County Commissioner), Lisa Weik (Washington County Commissioner), and Matt Smith (Dakota County Administrator) will speak and answer your questions.

Join the meeting at the Zoom link

(zoom.us/j/93758148664?pwd=YVBtSWFpVi9JbGh4a2c0dHROeEhwdz09, Meeting ID 937 5814 8664, Passcode 975443) or dial in on the phone (312-626-6799).

Questions? Contact Karen Schaffer at schafferka@gmail.com. See you there!

New Member Spotlight: Teresa Miller

By Rita Mills

Teresa Miller, recently elected to the Little Canada City Council, has a passion for serving others. The oldest of three children, Teresa graduated from Forest Lake High School and went on to pursue communications at the College of St. Catherine.

While enjoying a career in advertising and hoping to continue as a working mom, those plans changed after her son was born, and it soon became apparent that at an early age he had some special needs. He was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder before he was three. "It became obvious that his disabilities were not minor, and with a divorce and his needs, I had to care for him full-time." Her career in advertising was cut short.

Teresa describes her reasons for joining League of Women Voters: "While I was aware of the League of Women Voters before I ran for City Council, I have to admit that I did not realize the extent of its value until I saw LWV in action. There are so many great resources that LWV puts together to educate voters in a non-partisan way about the candidates by hosting the LWV Forum, its Voters' Guide, etc. It's such an excellent resource that I'm sorry that it took me this long to get here!"

We are not concerned about how long it takes to find LWV; we are happy to have you as a member! Welcome aboard, and congratulations on your election to the Little Canada City Council!



LWV of Roseville Area: January Event Calendar

- **January 7 – People Powered Fair Maps Presentation and Discussion.** Learn about the 2021-2022 LWVMN redistricting strategy and opportunities to engage in those aspects that most interest you. Register for a Zoom presentation/discussion at [zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAvc-uuqjIuHddVVz21LjRMPiDD3Q9C9sQB](https://zoom.us/join/zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAvc-uuqjIuHddVVz21LjRMPiDD3Q9C9sQB); 7-8 p.m.
- **January 9 – CMAL Panel on County Government.** See details and access information on [page 7](#).
- **January 21 – Conversation with Constituents.** See details and registration information on [page 1](#).
- **January 28 – LWV Member Book Launch and Discussion.** See details and registration information on [page 2](#).



League Members and Vote Signs
(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.