

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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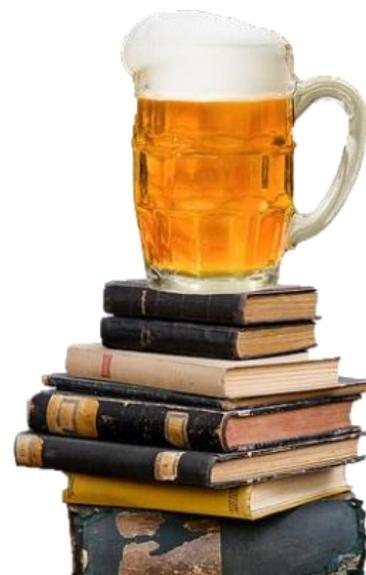
Brews and Book Reviews

It's turning into a tradition! Save the date! The 5th annual LWV of Roseville Area Brews and Book Reviews event is scheduled for **Wednesday, July 21, beginning at 6:30 p.m.** While we went virtual last year and had to raid our respective coolers for a brew, this year we have reserved a room for the event at **High Pines Brewing Company** (<https://www.highpinesbrewing.com>), located at 2704 Snelling Ave. North in Roseville (the former Joe's Crab Shack location). Craft beers and non-alcoholic drinks from the brewery and a variety of food items from **Tipsy Steer** (<https://tipsysteer.com/roseville/>) are available for purchase.

For those of you not familiar with this event, you and guests are invited to bring a book, or two, or a podcast suggestion to informally share in small groups. Physically bringing a book is not required! Come with just the title and author. A list of the books and podcasts discussed will be included in a future e-Blast and Voter. In the past, some participants have come to make personal reading lists for summer reading.

New this year, there will be a special drawing for participants: a **\$50 gift card for High Pines Brewing/Tipsy Steer!** So, invite a friend, relative, or neighbor who might be interested in League and come on over.

We understand and respect that all may not feel comfortable gathering in person, particularly indoors. We appreciate that all attending will be fully vaccinated.



Find us on our website and other social media sites!

Website:
<http://www.lwvrosevillearea.org>

Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/lwvRosevilleArea>

Instagram:
<http://www.instagram.com/lwvrosevillearea>

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

Reminder: LWV Summer Social

Mark your calendars for the social half of the LWV of Roseville Area Annual Meeting! Attend the Summer Social on July 27 for a fun outside event. Register and pay by July 19 if you want a box lunch at the event.

What: Summer social with in-person conversation, box lunches, and Rose Award presentations

When: 6 p.m., Tuesday, July 27

Where: Jaycees Shelter, Roseville Central Park, 2540 Lexington Ave. N.
If you would like a boxed meal at the event, follow this link to register and pay:
<https://www3.thedatabank.com/dpg/601/donate.asp?formid=RosevilleCalend&c=20210511204324836193>

LWV of Roseville Area August Board Meeting

The next LWV of Roseville Area Board meeting is Wednesday, August 25, at 7 p.m. For Zoom access, please contact Barb Anderson at lwvrosevillearea@lwvnmn.org in advance.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

Officers:

President

Barb Barany

Vice President

Barb Anderson

Secretary

Kathy Macomber

Treasurer

Jessica Holz

.....

Directors:

Action/Advocacy

Sherry Hood

Communications

Barb Anderson and Mary Peterson

Membership

Rita Mills

Program

Florence Sprague, vice chair Carol Marchel

Voter Services

Teresa Wernecke, vice chair Marcia Cheney

Budget and Development

Barb Anderson and Bonnie Koch

.....

Members-At-Large

Rachel Geiser

Wayne Groff

Sharon McCord

Karen Schaffer

While preparing to recount our successes as a local league to the LWVMN Convention, I reflected on what I considered to be major contributors to that success. (Convention goes likely already correctly assumed that our achievements had to do with the people in our organization, including Peggy Thompson award winner, Rita Mills, and newly elected LWVMN treasurer, Barb Anderson.) The following is taken from my speech at Convention, edited for our local membership.

During the time we haven't been able to meet in person, the Roseville Area League has been able to maintain membership, programming, voter services, and advocacy, and even are on the way to completing two studies. I think our success in these areas is due to two factors. The first is a continuing commitment by long-time members to both provide leadership and to mentor new leaders. The second is working with partners, sharing what we're good at, and making use of the talents of other organizations.

We have a strong, active, and committed board. Our nominating committee combines cycling in past board members with recruiting newer members to take on added responsibilities. The result is a supportive atmosphere, where the goal is for everyone to succeed. Then there are the non-board member experts—the people who mostly stay in the background, but answer our questions and fix our mistakes when they hear us yell “help!” Our new 2021-22 board members include board secretary Kathy Macomber, member-at-large Sharon McCord, and Voter Services Chair Teresa Wernecke. Kathy's other League involvement includes Programs and Voter Services. Sharon lends her talents to Programs. Teresa takes on Team Leader responsibilities, after successfully navigating the 2020 voter forums and 2020 US Census. We welcome past President Sherry Hood back to the board. This time she serves as Action/Advocacy Team Leader, where we know her passion for the environment will be front and center.

The COVID pandemic followed an earlier blow to our visibility, when our local newspaper folded in late 2019. Since the Roseville Review distributed to all households and some businesses in four of our five communities, we were used to easy access to local audiences for promotion of our programs, forums, and other events. Instead, we now rely even more on a committed, ongoing partnership with Ramsey County Libraries for programs. Our Communications team has expanded notifications in city newsletters, Next Door announcements, and Facebook and Twitter posts, and University of Minnesota student Elizabeth Hansel sends out Instagram posts.

At our June board meeting, we discussed adding to our current diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policy, to require that each of our activities be undertaken with an intentional DEI perspective. To help reach communities not well represented in our own organization, we are taking on opportunities to support organizations that include groups we lack. We joined the St. Paul-Ramsey County Complete Count Committee for census outreach, work with area high schools for voter participation, and, coordinated by Nancy Simpson, recently signed on to the successful Ramsey County Elections grant proposal from the International Institute of Minnesota. Our visibility and service to immigrant communities is enhanced by Judy Stuthman's long-time commitment to voter registration at new citizen ceremonies.

An ongoing goal, locally, statewide, and nationally, is to improve the diversity of our membership and leadership. Let's use our contacts made through partnerships, and our LWV of Roseville Area tradition of leaders mentoring leaders, to make that goal a reality!



Barb Barany

Census History

By Barb Barany

While those of us who worked for a full count in the 2020 US Census may have felt we were in competition with other states, the 1890 Census featured an intense rivalry between the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, including (gulp!) cheating! See the story as presented by MPR at <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2019/08/12/1890-census-competition-between-mpls-and-st-paul-was-once-fierce>. (Spoiler – Minneapolis won.)

A Place to Call Home

By Florence Sprague

"Fear is the cheapest room in the house. I would like to see you living in better conditions." Hafiz, Persian poet, 1315-1390

It's a long time since I have been a renter. There are plusses and minuses to renting versus owning, both in terms of finances and responsibilities. But those questions and choices are irrelevant to many low-income renters in America.

In 2017, sociologist Matthew Desmond won a Pulitzer Prize, and other recognitions, for his searing study, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. Though it was highly acclaimed, it did not make it to the top of my reading pile at the time. This year with pandemic related moratoria on evictions, news of gaps in those leading to loss of housing, the visible challenges of balancing the interests of landlords and low-income renters who may be essential workers, and more, it came to mind again.

Desmond did his study in Milwaukee, following the lives of multiple individuals and families, white and black, and two landlords. He did his research by living in the same poor neighborhoods and dilapidated housing as his subjects. These people came to poverty and repeated evictions from multiple directions—job loss, illness, addiction, family breakup. Just reading about the struggles of the people generous with their lives to Desmond was draining; I can't imagine living it. We often hear that housing expenses shouldn't run more than about 30% of one's budget. For many living on severely limited incomes in severely substandard housing, rent runs at 70% of income. Families that begin with little are left with hardly anything, and the children live lives of incredible instability due to multiple, unplanned moves.

Looking for a new place to live can be stressful for anyone, but when one's options are reduced by low income, eviction records, criminal records, children in the household, and more, it becomes impossible, and the quality of the choices is abysmal. Dozens of calls may lead to nothing. And yet, even apartments with no appliances, bad plumbing, broken windows, and other problems are not cheap. Rent does not decrease in proportion to the decline in quality of the housing. Landlords make money in even the worst neighborhoods; there just isn't enough housing to reduce demand and rent. Poverty is a relationship between rich and poor, and while neither side may be blameless, there is exploitation.

Evictions also destroy communities. The constant churn of residents reduces the cohesion of a neighborhood making it more vulnerable to bad actors and less able to create a supportive network for residents. A home gives a family stability. It is the basis for healing and growth. When the repeated loss of home and search for a home consumes all of a person's energy, what is left for parenting? For learning? For working? Children tossed about by repeated evictions cannot develop a sense of safety, security, control.

Federal housing assistance reaches only a small fraction of those eligible to receive it. While some landlords don't want to deal with the requirements it imposes, others learn to milk the system by increasing the rent—knowing that the portion paid by the tenant will stay the same and the government will pick up the increase. Dollars spent on affordable housing can prevent larger, more costly problems for society. Can we learn to think for the long term?

There are remedies to the eviction problem. More public attorneys for tenants who have good defenses would help, but mostly we need to address the shortage of housing. For more analysis, read the final chapter with Desmond's reflections on what his study revealed. Desmond is convinced that this country could afford to fix this problem if it chose to. Why doesn't it?

"Windows and Mirrors for All" has been a regular column in the Voter since 2004. The title is derived from an essay by Emily Style, "Curriculum as Window and Mirror," found in Seeding the Process of Multicultural Education. Style states that "education needs to enable the student to look through window frames in order to see the realities of others and into mirrors in order to see her/his own reality reflected." People of all ages need both mirrors and windows with which to view the world, but too often we only have mirrors.



Help Wanted: Student Awards

By Rita Mills

At the recent LWV of Roseville Area board meeting, a motion was made authorizing a short-term ad-hoc committee with the goal of establishing one or more high school student awards/scholarships. This committee would recommend monetary amounts, parameters around which students would be selected, and present selection process and timelines to the board. This would be a wonderful way to assist our League with a minimal time commitment. Please email Barb Barany (baran005@umn.edu) if you would be willing to participate on this committee. Barb and committee would also appreciate suggestions about the award process.

Recap: LWVMN Convention

By Karen Lake

Nine LWV of Roseville Area members (with one position shared) were delegates to the 68th LWVMN Convention, held virtually on June 11-12. A highlight of the event was LWV of Roseville Area member, Rita Mills, receiving the 2021 Peggy Thompson Award, which recognizes League members “who by their sustained efforts, have been instrumental in strengthening and/or stabilizing their local LWVs and affecting their communities through their enthusiasm, motivation of others, and innovative ideas.” Rita, who is our current League Membership Chair, was nominated for the Award by LWV of Roseville Area Program Chair, Florence Sprague, with input from other League members and family.

LWV of Roseville Area President, Barb Barany, was one of three LWV Presidents who presented an overview of the activities and accomplishments of their local Leagues. LWV of Roseville Area Communications Co-Chair, Budget and Development Co-Chair, and Vice President, Barb Anderson, provided the LWVMN Budget report. Barb will now also serve as Treasurer of LWVMN and as a member of the State League Nominating Committee. Other acknowledgements of LWV of Roseville Area members:

- Rita Mills: 2nd Century Task Force
- Karen Lake: Voter Services Task Force
- Elizabeth Hansel: Youth Engagement

A topic of discussion and vote, brought to the Convention by the Minneapolis LWV, was whether to concur with the LWV of Utah’s position on Death with Dignity and subsequently advocate for legislation in Minnesota. After speakers pro and con, the proposal was narrowly defeated. There was general support for the concept of Death with Dignity, but objection to the League broadening it’s focus at this time from attention to the priorities of dealing with voter suppression, advancing voter rights, voter registration and GOTV, and redistricting/Fair Maps. For more information on the LWV Utah study, see this site: <http://www.lwvbn.org/notices/DeathDyingConcurrence/A-Utah%20LWV%20Position%20on%20Aid%20in%20Dying.pdf> (information replicated on the [next page](#)).

The 2021 Peggy Thompson Award

By Florence Sprague

The League of Women Voters Minnesota has two long-standing member awards, The Hope Washburn Award and the Peggy Thompson Award. Each is named for its first recipient, who gave extraordinary service to this organization. The Hope Washburn Award, established in 1956, has, to date, recognized 54 women for their service, of whom four have been members of LWV of Roseville Area or one of its constituting suburban units. The Peggy Thompson Award, established in 1989, focuses more on service to a local League by “members who, by their sustained efforts, have been instrumental in strengthening and/or stabilizing their local LWVs and affecting their communities through their enthusiasm, motivation of others, and innovative ideas.”

LWVMN has recognized 22 Minnesota women, among them three from LWV of Roseville Area.

These Awards are given out at the biennial convention of LWVMN. We are so proud of this year’s recipient, from our local League, **Rita Mills**. Congratulations, Rita, and thank you for your service! This recognition is well deserved, even though [you or she?] protested, “There are so many others equally or more deserving...”

As noted in the nomination packet, “ever since Rita joined LWV of Roseville Area in January 2012, she has been deeply involved in multiple committees, projects, and activities every year...everywhere I turn, Rita’s participation can be seen, and whenever someone is looking for volunteers or asking for help, her name pops up.” Rita has worked in many areas, including program, membership, voter services, and more, always bringing, enthusiasm, creativity, diligence, and attention to personal outreach to the task at hand, inspiring others to also bring their best. She cares deeply about equity and inclusion both in her League work and other parts of her life. She has also contributed to projects and task forces at the state level of LWV.

Congratulations, Rita!





League of Women Voters
Of Utah

POSITIONS ON DEATH WITH DIGNITY

The League of Women Voters of Utah has released a two-point consensus position statement based on our recent study "Death with Dignity."

The [study](#) provides information about laws in the five states currently allowing terminally ill persons to request physician aid in dying, as well as a detailed history of death with dignity through the ages.

Our position states:

1. The League of Women Voters of Utah believes state laws should grant the option for a terminally ill person to request medical assistance from a relevant, licensed physician to end one's life.
2. The League of Women Voters of Utah believes such legislation should include safeguards against abuse for the dying and/or medical personnel.

[Death with Dignity](#) legislation has become of increasing public interest and concern. Currently five states have legislation allowing physician aid in dying - Oregon, Washington, Montana, Vermont and California. Additionally, interpretation of physician assisted dying legal standing is under review in New Mexico. It is anticipated that this issue will remain on legislative agendas not just in Utah, but many other states as well.

The League of Women Voters of Utah takes action to monitor and advocate for legislation that supports our position statements. For additional information please contact the study Chair, Vickie Samuelson, vsam0236@gmail.com.

Lola Britton
President
League of Women Voters of Utah

Recap: Study Consensus

By Rachel Geiser

On May 24, the LWV of Roseville Area members met to reach a consensus regarding the question brought forward by the Equitable Representation in City Commissions and Boards study committee: *Should LWV of Roseville Area recommend that our cities' boards and commissions broadly reflect the diversity of their population, including race, ethnicity, gender, income, age, and other aspects of diversity?*

Membership approved the consensus unanimously. On June 9, the LWV of Roseville Area Board met to vote to adopt the position as recommended by the membership consensus. Adoption was approved by the Board unanimously. The Board also voted to amend our Policies and Procedures to include a newly drafted advocacy policy, set for final approval at the next annual meeting, and approved advocacy on this new position before the vote at the annual based on the consensus by membership in May.

LWV UMRR ILO

By Sherry Hood

The acronym in the title stands for the League of Women Voters - Upper Mississippi River Region - Independent League Organization, which was organized in 2015. Our Roseville Area League has been a member since the beginning. It comprises 58 local Leagues from Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and four state Leagues in the Upper Mississippi Watershed from the headwaters in Itasca State Park to Cairo, Illinois. It focuses on the preservation of water resources, improving public understanding, and therefore informed citizens, about this national treasure, and promoting conservation and science-based stewardship of the natural resources of this region.

UMRR had their annual meeting in May and had an educational program on the Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative that is part of US Representative Betty McCollum's FY21 Interior bill. The bill was introduced on June 27. It directs the EPA to develop a strategy with federal, tribal, state, and local entities to improve water quality and resilience to natural disasters and improve and preserve native ecosystems. The initiative is to restore the vitality of the Great River for generations to come. The Great Lakes, the Potomac, and the Florida Everglades have benefited from Federal intervention like this these past three to four decades. This river is long overdue! Hopefully, LWVUS will have an action alert for this bill when voting is initiated. Please support it! Don't take for granted this river being what it has been traditionally and in our folklore. It is the source of city water and employment for millions of people along this magnificent waterway.

For more information, go to the LWV UMRR website (<https://www.lwvumrr.org/>) and read their blog on the MRR-RI bill.

Recap: Environmental Forum with Our Mayors

By Rachel Geiser



On June 3, LWV of Roseville Area and Ramsey County Library Roseville co-hosted the forum, "Doing All We Can for Our Cities Today to Make Them Sustainable Tomorrow." Anne Hunt, Sustainability Director for the state of Minnesota, was the moderator for the event and area mayors answered questions: Mayor Randy Gustafson, Falcon Heights; Mayor Mary Gaasch, Lauderdale; Mayor John Keis, Little Canada; Mayor Marylee Abrams, Maplewood; and Mayor Dan Roe, Roseville.

Each of the mayors answered questions posed to them, commenting on the priorities and progress their communities have made toward protecting the environment and making each of our area League cities more sustainable in the face of the effects of climate change.

To watch a recording of the event, access the Ramsey County Library website event recordings: <https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcladult/course/30980>

Recap: Insects and Climate Change

By Rachel Geiser

The Tamarack tree, once plentiful in Minnesota, is dying off in record numbers due to the rise in the Eastern larch beetle (ELB) population. Though ELBs were kept in check by Minnesota's colder climate, an outbreak in 2001 has grown exponentially through the years from an expanded life cycle thanks to longer warmer months due to climate change, now destroying the tamarack trees they infest. Research is happening to help combat this devastating infestation, working to prevent the extinction of Tamarack trees within the northern regions of Minnesota.

This stark warning and offer of research hope was explained through a lesson in ecological history by Dr. Brian Aukema, of the U of MN Entomology Department, on June 15, at the event, "Of a Larch Life Well Lived: How a Changing Climate is Facilitating Outbreaks of Tree-Killing Insects." The event was presented through the Ramsey County Library, co-sponsored by LWV of Roseville Area with Resilient Roseville and Do-Good-Roseville.

Watch the recording of Dr. Aukema's fascinating and sobering presentation through the Ramsey County Library website (<https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcladult/course/31771>).

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: <http://lwwrosevillearea.org/>. Click on the YouTube icon on the righthand side and choose a recorded event.

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

September and Beyond – Watch the eBlast and September Voter for new programs as the Program Committee sets the 2021-2022 LWV of Roseville Area event schedule.

Member Spotlight: Barb Anderson

By Rita Mills

Growing up in Maplewood, graduating from the Roseville schools, receiving her B.S. degree in education and MBA from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Barb Anderson is more than qualified in her knowledge of our League area. Barb has remained close to her extended family who also reside in the area.

After retiring from a 30-year career with Roseville Area Schools, first as supervisor of accounting, then assistant director for finance, before spending 15 years as the district's CFO, Barb joined the League of Women Voters. "I have always been interested in politics and equity issues (I have been a weekly viewer of *Almanac* on TPT since its inception). When I retired, I felt I needed to find a means to contribute in a meaningful way to our community, and League seemed the perfect place to do so."



In addition to accounting, Barb has put her many skills along with her extensive experience on professional organization boards to good use at LWV. Since 2016, Barb has been on our LWV of Roseville Area Board as team leader of Communications, where she has coordinated website, social media, print media, and initiated weekly e-Blasts. Barb is currently co-chairing this position with Mary Peterson. As Vice President, Barb will assume the President's position for 2022-2024. Additionally, she has put her finance skills to use with the LWV of Roseville Area finance team. That has led to her serving on the LWVMN Finance Committee. Most recently Barb was elected to a two-year term as treasurer on the LWVMN Board of Directors.

While Barb nurtured her professional career, she managed to balance her life with an interesting group of women friends who for 36 years have been part of a monthly book club that actually reads and reviews the books! "It's been a great way to broaden my literary horizons." The club occasionally traveled internationally. Barb also had the goal of visiting all the official Presidential Libraries—thirteen that are open to the public. "I finished off the last three in 2017. It was a great way to see the country and to learn more about the presidents and their presidencies in the context of their times. I would highly recommend this project."

In case you think Barb didn't or doesn't have enough to do, here's another interesting bit of her life experience: "I am also a dedicated oenophile, and visit various wineries in the Wisconsin and Minnesota (and sometimes other) areas. It's been fun to restart this hobby since COVID restrictions have been eased."

While LWV of Roseville Area and LWVMN have greatly benefited from Barb's myriad of skills, she claims to have benefited from League: "I feel a greater connection to my community since I joined League. I knew it was full of smart people, but I continue to be impressed with the articulate, knowledgeable, and caring people I have met in League, many of whom I now claim as friends. I have also learned much more about many issues than I would have on my own. League has provided a great growth experience."

Thank you, Barb! LWV is built on the likes of you and other dedicated members!

LWV of Roseville Area: July-August Event Calendar

- **July 21 – Brews and Book Reviews.** See event details on [page 1](#).
- **July 27 – LWV of Roseville Area Summer Social.** See event details on [page 1](#).
- **August TBD – LWV of Roseville Area Field Trip.** Planned field trip to the Minnesota African American Heritage Museum. Watch eBlasts for more information.
- **August 25 – LWV of Roseville Area Board Meeting.** See access details on [page 1](#); 7 p.m.

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 rachel-soup@gmail.com.

