

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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We're on the Web!

www.lwvrosevillearea.org

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www.facebook.com/lwvRosevilleArea

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Hausman



Goetz



Slade

League hosts housing panel at Feb. 21 meeting

The League of Women Voters of Roseville Area will host a panel of housing experts at the February 21 meeting. Speakers will discuss "How to have fair housing for all our community members." League members are studying affordable housing and its availability in the cities of Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maplewood and Roseville. The meeting is co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of St. Paul and Centennial Methodist Church.

Panelists are:

Dr. Edward G. Goetz, Director of CURA (Center for Urban and Regional Affairs) University of Minnesota

State Representative Alice Hausman, multiple awardee for her housing advocacy on the Capital Investment Committee

John Slade, Organizer, MICA (Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Housing)

The meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. at Centennial Methodist Church, 1524 W. Co Rd C-2 (corner of C-2 and Snelling) Roseville. The event is free and open to the public. There will also be a recorded viewing of the program at 9:30 a.m. at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 3115 Victoria St. N., Roseville.

Distribute this flyer!

The Roseville Area League of Women Voters has created a flyer to publicize the meeting above. Please consider printing and distributing it. It can be accessed at https://web.mail.comcast.net/service/home/~/?auth=co&loc=en_US&id=967653&part=2

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Marching is over (for now...) What's next?

I had been following both the Washington DC and Minnesota Women's March since early-December, ordered my shirt, and put little notes in my holiday cards to anyone who I thought might be remotely interested in participating. Like thousands of others, I am still reveling in the excitement of the day. While a shroud of fog hung over the Capitol in St. Paul, the air was electric...the seemingly endless stream of people weaving up toward the Cathedral, the creativity in the signage, the buzz of the participants, the inspiring speeches, the announcements of the numbers. All of this helped warm up wet feet and chilled fingers.

But the next day was, as today is, more sobering....Facing the reality....So we marched....What's next? How do we as Leaguers build

on the momentum of such historic marches? There is an abundance of guides "for making a difference" being shared via social media. With our work, personal and human limitations, how do we as individuals pick and choose what should be our focus and then what to do?

Lots of questions, but now LWV Roseville Area needs to come up with some concrete plans....no easy task. Please scour some of the suggestions, discuss them with friends, relatives, neighbors and pass them on to us to consider and implement.

LWV Minnesota has a "Wanted" flyer that might guide us in reaching out to our communities, inviting others to discussions, brainstorming ideas, and then persuading guests to join LWV-Roseville Area.

WANTED

The League of Women Voters Minnesota seeks passionate people who believe that an individual can make a difference in our political process, our democracy and our communities. Join us in taking action to Make Democracy Work.

What issues do you feel the Minnesota Legislature should address? What is Your idea to improve Your community? Your schools and Your state? What is it that motivates You to Contact Your Legislators or Write a Letter to the Editor?

PC -it's not just your laptop.

By Florence Sprague

All natural. Organic. Free range. Low fat. Low sugar. No artificial ingredients. New and improved. These terms and so many more lose their value when overused, and because there is no consistent definition of them. The consumer gets to give each her or his own definition and spin, depending on inclination and the marketer actively seeks terms that lead said consumer to make positive associations. A recent radio conversation about this problem by a group of foodies highlighted this conundrum.

Their conversation brought to mind other phrases in common usage which have lost, if they ever had, a commonly understood meaning, allowing them to become weaponized in conversation. Rather than elucidating a discussion, some phrases serve to confuse or distract the listener from the import of the underlying issue and even to denigrate ideas worthy of serious consideration.



One such phrase is “politically correct.” I believe that once upon a time it was created to identify actions or statements which were done to toe the line to an accepted point of view in an environment that tended to stifle freedom of thought or difference of opinion. It implied a hypercorrectness of position resulting from a coercive environment where some ideas were not open to debate, and yet still not fully accepted. One early use of it that I recall connected it to overzealous and illiberal objections to conservative ideas expressed at a liberal arts college. The stifling of divergent ideas in an academic environment should not be supported. We learn more by hearing and critically studying a wide variety of ideas.

Politically correct has morphed into a phrase that can be used anytime someone says or does something that favors a philosophy or belief that the one making the charge of political correctness disagrees with. It implies that the original speaker or actor could not truly believe in the idea, but is only doing something to look “correct.” It also implies an underlying faultiness of the concept being supported and denigrates those who believe in it.

Boy, this is tough to write about, because there are multiple speakers, perspectives and ideas. Also, the misuse of this phrase is not limited to one side of the political spectrum, so bear with me and let me know what you think about the use of this term.

Too often I find that instead of being used to defend freedom of opinion and open debate, this expression is used to dismiss efforts to promote and sustain equity. It is used to put down things which I think are just correct, not politically correct. But those who are uncomfortable with the social change may charge the supporters of social change with being “politically correct,” supporting a popular idea, which the challengers do not want supported.

For example, as we get farther from the heyday of the Women’s Movement if one were to insist that females be called women rather than girls, there might be a charge of ‘political correctness.’ This is no longer considered a substantive distinction in many circles. While I agree that equal pay, the mommy track, sexual assault culture, and many other issues are more pressing, I still find careful and respectful use of language to be foundational to other changes.

Some might think that giving women equal opportunity to apply for all jobs in the military to be “only” politically correct. Think back to when the eligibility standards for police and fire departments, and many other jobs were challenged. The goal was to make sure that the requirements were truly relevant to the job. Fitness and strength levels should be realistic and based on the actual equipment used, not arbitrarily set, or at times even intentionally set to exclude women. Now we have women meeting the requirements and serving in a much wider variety of positions. That can happen in the military, too. Men and women vary greatly within their gender in strength, risk taking, judgment, and so many traits. Whatever the job, we need to try to set eligibility requirements that are truly relevant. We already have both men and women in the military, and speaking as the parent of a son in the Army Reserve, our sons and daughters are all precious. Policy should seek to minimize military actions, not minimize who can serve.

(Continued on page 4)

Council of Metropolitan Area League of Women Voters (CMAL) presents:
Emergency Management in the Metropolitan Area
Focus on public health:

Immunization/Zika/Ebola/Influenza

Hear from public health officials how state and local government work to keep metro area residents safe. Janice Maine (MN Dept. of Health) and Gina Adasiewicz (Dakota County Public Health Dept.) will speak and take questions.



Saturday March 18

10 a.m. Sign-in and coffee

10:30 a.m. Presentations and questions

Free and open to the public.

Autumn Grove Park Gathering Center

1365 Lydia Avenue West, Roseville

Windows and Mirrors

(Continued from page 3)

I'm sure that you can think of other, and likely better, examples of "politically correct" being abused to dismiss important ideas. And this is why we all need to be prepared to defend our positions with clarity and calmness and not let ideas be spun and diminished. Likewise we need to defend the right for all positions to be expressed and encourage all sides to state their differing points of view without derogation of the opposition.

Think things through and be prepared to express and defend your beliefs as correct, plain and simple.

Editor's note: Florence Sprague is a member of the League of Women Voters of Roseville Area.

"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.



‘Conversations with Constituents’ focused on affordable housing

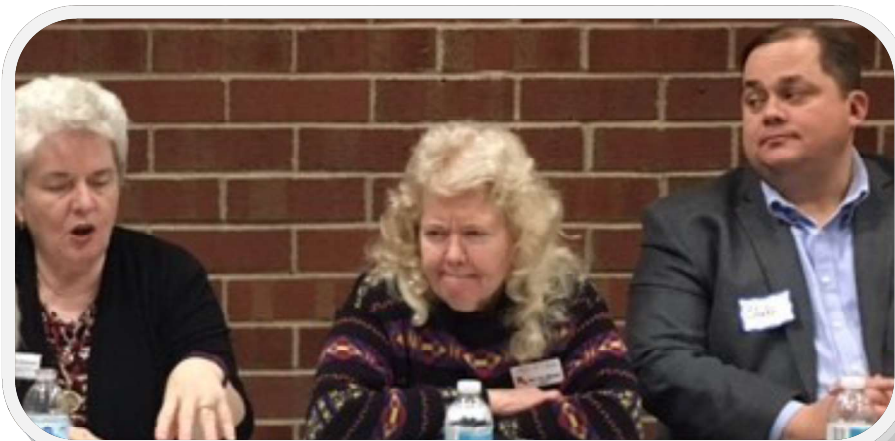
How are our communities and schools dealing with affordable housing, poverty, homelessness? Those questions were the focus of this year’s “Conversation with Constituents” event Jan. 18 at Falcon Heights City Hall.

Above, school board members and homeless liaisons from Districts 621, 622, 623 note that the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch ranges from 45 to 55 percent in their districts. Percentages in individual schools can be much higher. What gives them hope is collaborating with each other and agencies who care.

Pictured at right are Ramsey County Commissioners Victoria Reinhardt, Janice Rettman and Blake Huffman, who, with Mary Jo McGuire, discussed the challenge of affordable housing in the suburbs, citing a need for good jobs and mass transit.

Below, Tara Beard of the Metropolitan Council discusses affordable housing challenges facing the region.

(Photos by Gladys Jones)



Judy Berglund, editor
2075 Farrington St.
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Calendar

February

- 21** Housing panel: John Slade, MICAH;
Dr. Ed Goetz, CURA; Rep. Alice Haus-
man; 6:30 p.m., Centennial Methodist
Church, 1524 County Road C-2 W.,
Roseville.

March

- 18** Council of Metropolitan Area
Leagues focus on public health
10 a.m., Autumn Grove Roseville Parks
building.
- 21** Community Psychological First Aid,
Molli Slade, Roseville Human Rights
Commissioner and community mental
health worker, 6:30 p.m., Autumn
Grove Roseville Parks building.

