

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>

Brews and Book Reviews...or BYOB&B

Back by popular demand is the 4th annual Brews and Book Reviews, however with a different look. BYOB&B might be a more appropriate description: Bring Your Own Beverage and Book!

LWV of Roseville Area will be hosting this event via Zoom on Wednesday, July 15, at 7 pm in your residence. Beverages will be available from your refrigerator! Details (Zoom link) will be emailed to you a day in advance. To get the link, RSVP by sending an email to lwvrosevillearea@lwvmn.org.

While you are invited to share a book, it is not required. In the past, some participants have come to get personal reading lists. In addition to not being physically at a brewery, we will begin the evening with some prepared quick reviews of books on racism, anti-racism, and history of the black experience, after which the Zoom room will be open to individuals sharing favorite reads. Mark your calendars now, and remember to RSVP to participate!



Voting in the Time of COVID-19



August 18, 2020, 6:30-8 p.m. / Zoom webinar co-hosted by Ramsey County Library-Roseville and LWV of Roseville Area

Both national and local elections are being held in November 2020, but this is no ordinary election year. The health and safety demands of the coronavirus pandemic are affecting both voters and those planning and administering elections. Secretary of State Steve Simon will speak to the practicalities of administering an election in the time of COVID-19. What is the status of voting by mail in Minnesota? How do municipalities recruit and protect election judges? What accommodations and adjustments are being made this year? Listen and learn. Questions can be submitted by chat.

Census Update

By Barb Barany

Please help keep census workers and the community 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. A full count will assist public health officials in responding to future crises.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

Officers:

President

Barb Barany

Vice President

Barb Anderson

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backup)

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Peterson

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vice chair Carol
Marchel

Voter Services

Karen Lake

.....

Members-At-Large

Stephanie DeBenedet
Rachel Geiser
Karen Schaffer

A giant thank you to all those who were able to attend our June 2 annual meeting on Zoom. Although we missed chatting over dinner, members did contribute to a lively discussion on League studies for this year, as well as offering a request for the League to further address racial equity issues in a meaningful way. The studies approved by membership include one led by Stephanie and Jim DeBenedet, with the goal of examining how our five cities comply with the American with Disabilities Act. A second study, looking at the diversity of membership on local government commissions within our area, is led by Patricia Hoffman and Barb Luck. At our June 17 meeting, the Board started a discussion of guidance we might give to a potential ad hoc committee on racial equity. The discussion centered around how our League can make our most meaningful contribution, taking into consideration both the demographics of our membership and our resources as an organization. We will continue the discussion at our next Board meeting on July 22. League members are invited to share their thoughts, as well as their willingness to serve on a resulting committee, with any Board member.



Barb Barany

It will be a busy summer as we promote our core mission of voting rights, voter education, and accessibility for the 2020 elections. Fortunately, Vice President Barb Anderson continues to work her magic with virtual resources and social media, supporting the continuing efforts of Karen Lake's Voter Services committee. The related issues of completing the decennial Census and redistricting need our attention as well. Florence Sprague's Program committee is busy at work, defining programming for the year. As we balance a desire for in-person interaction with the need to keep us all safe, the committee is looking to Zoom and joint sponsorships with CTV and the Ramsey County Library for virtual programming, with the possibility of a few in-person events consistent with state guidelines.

Thank you to Sherry Hood for her able leadership over the past two years, including navigating the challenges of our current environment. As we all navigate our own challenges, please continue to read Rachel Geiser's Voter and the weekly email blast for opportunities to learn, and to help with what matters to you most at whatever level you are comfortable with, working for our community, and supporting each other.

LWVMN Action Recommendation

By Sherry Hood

Michelle Witte, executive director of LWVMN, said that local League members throughout the state responded dismally to the State League's Action Alert a few weeks ago regarding police and racial justice legislation. Only 70 members responded out of 2,000 statewide members. Even if League members think they are "preaching to the choir" and why bother because their representatives advocate for the League's position, she said it is very important that representatives know where their constituents stand. Find more information about reshaping policing and public safety in Minnesota on the LWVMN website (lwvmn.org/league-news/2020/6/12/reshaping-policing-and-public-safety-in-minnesota) and consider responding to the Action Alert here: lwvmn.org/take-action.

No Pain, No Gain: Notes from a Week in Spring

By Florence Sprague



“[What should you do?] Educate Yourself!” Ava Duvernay, *PBS Newshour Special*, June 5, 2020

You don’t really need me to tell you this. It is everywhere these days. It being discussion of inequities, disparities, misunderstandings, being ignored, or glossed over. But white people really must educate themselves and begin acting. Our collective future depends on it, as well as our souls.

It will not be comfortable. I have worked, read, and tried to grow for years and yet I still feel dismayed, even dumb-founded at times, by my own ignorance. There is always so much more to grapple with. So, don’t quit just because it is uncomfortable. Pause...then return. Discomfort is good; it can lead to insight if you let it. Think about athletes—they know that hard exercise can result in physical pain but lead to stronger muscles and greater endurance. The same can apply to attitudes—if we sit comfortably inside our old attitudes without testing and challenging them, we don’t grow.

This is a sampling from about a week in the spring—ideas for reading and listening to the perspectives and emotions and needs of black Americans. The internet is our friend here; you can find these things and so much more, there. Look for curated or edited cites, not rant.

- Through Minnesota Public Radio, listen to the discussion moderated by Angela Davis on Friday, June 5. Also try the interview by Kerri Miller with Ibram Kendi, author of *How to Be an Anti-Racist*.
- NPR offers too many interviews and discussions to itemize. They also have great blogs, like *Codeswitch*.
- Check out the op-ed pages of the New York Times or other papers. Keep in mind: op = opinion. Opinions are important and can be very insightful.
 - “I Don’t Need ‘Love’ Texts from my Friends” by Chad Sanders on June 5 ([nytimes.com/2020/06/05/opinion/whites-anti-blackness-protests.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/opinion/whites-anti-blackness-protests.html))
 - “Call it what it is: Anti-Blackness: When black people are killed by the police, racism isn’t the right word” by kihana miraya ross ([nytimes.com/2020/06/04/opinion/george-floyd-anti-blackness.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/04/opinion/george-floyd-anti-blackness.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article))
 - Opinion by Mitch Landrieu, former mayor of New Orleans ([nytimes.com/2020/06/03/opinion/george-floyd-protest-racism.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/03/opinion/george-floyd-protest-racism.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article))
 - “Check in on your black employees, now: Between the pandemic and the killings of George Floyd and others, the mental health of black people is floundering” by Tonya Russell ([nytimes.com/2020/06/02/opinion/police-killings-black-mental-health.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/02/opinion/police-killings-black-mental-health.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article))
- In the Star Tribune, three authors of color reflect on family, community, and need for change—Michael Kleber-Diggs, Junauda Petrus-Nasah, and Shannon Gibney on June 7.
- If you like to listen and watch, try TED talks (ted.com/talks), there are many good talks. For longer form journalism try *The Atlantic*. Look at your favorite news source and compare it to your least favorite.
- Want something direct from an athlete you may know? Look for Emmanuel Acho’s “An Uncomfortable Conversation with a Black Man” on Twitter. Clear, to the point.
- On Public Television, watch the special “Race Matters: America in Crisis” hosted by Judy Woodruff. The public television website has lots of other resources, too (pbs.org/newshour/nation/watch-live-race-matters-america-in-crisis-a-pbs-newshour-special).
- Review the LWVMN June 8 “All member News” June 2020 Item #2 Get educated for more resources.
- Thinking about finances? Read the essay by the black President of the Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank, Raphael Bostic (frbatlanta.org/about/feature/2020/06/12/bostic-a-moral-and-economic-imperative-to-end-racism).
- If you can tolerate crude language, don’t miss *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* from June 7.

Read, watch, think, and yes, squirm, along with me, but then look for your place in the societal overhaul needed. On the one hand, the problems sound so overwhelmingly large as to freeze our ability to act. On the other hand, the immensity of the problem also means that every contribution to change and improvement is needed and needed now.

Two quotes I saw or heard this week particularly stuck with me. In an image from the George Floyd Memorial in Minneapolis, “This is our collective PTSD.” And a woman protesting in Ohio defending the public outrage sometimes turning violent, “YOU broke the social contract!”

We have an opportunity. Don’t let it slip away. Throw open the curtains and look through as many windows as you can and SEE.

New Member Spotlight: Patricia “Patti” Hoffman

By Rita Mills

Patti Hoffman, having retired from a long and diverse career in education, is moving full-steam ahead by co-chairing a League study with Barb Luck on a “process for equitably filling representative positions on commissions in local government.” Most recently Patti worked with the professional development of faculty at MSU as the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Patti comes to our League with a PhD in Second Languages and Cultures and has worked with various diversity initiatives that will provide backgrounding for tackling this current League study.



While Patti and her family once lived in Bogota, Colombia, she grew up in Roseville. Patti and her husband were drawn back by four precious grandchildren! She loves to garden, focusing on vegetables and pollinator plants, and still manages to volunteer in various environmental and social justice organizations at United Church of Christ in Falcon Heights.

Patti joined LWV because she feels very committed to establishing lines of communication across and within all political parties and governmental entities. As a former school board member for eight years in New Ulm, Minnesota, she appreciated the forums and informational work sponsored by the League. Patti is looking forward to learning more about local governments in our five cities. “I am also interested in meeting committed women and men who care about educating voters and themselves on specific issues that affect government and the political process.” Welcome Patti!

League Statements on the Death of George Floyd

- **LWV of Roseville Area statement:** The League of Women Voters of Roseville Area stands in solidarity with our fellow Minnesotans who grieve the loss of George Floyd and condemn the horrendous circumstances of his death. We join with the Leagues of Women Voters of Minnesota and the United States in calling on law enforcement officials to provide transparency during this investigation and to seek justice for George Floyd, his family and our community. We stand ready to work with our government officials in Falcon Heights, Lauderdale Little Canada, Maplewood and Roseville to pass meaningful reforms that will address systemic racism, the heart of these tragic killings that disproportionately target Black people. Our League studied policing in our communities in 2015-2016 (see full study at [here](#)) and called for police training and data collection in order to avoid racial profiling. Now would be a good time for community education on our progress in those areas and more. We must all advocate for anti-racist policies at every level of government.
- **LWVMN statement:** The League of Women Voters of Minnesota stands in solidarity with our fellow Minnesotans who grieve the loss of George Floyd and condemn the horrendous circumstances of his death. We call on our law enforcement officials to provide transparency during this investigation, and to seek justice for him, his family, and his community. And we stand ready to work with our government officials and the community to pass meaningful reforms that will address systemic racism, the heart of these tragic killings that disproportionately target Black people. Elected officials must be responsive to the calls for change that have gone unheard.
- **LWVUS statement:** The League of Women Voters grieves the murders of George Floyd and the countless other Black lives that have been tragically taken at the hands of rogue law enforcement officers who are rarely held fully accountable for their actions.

We also mourn those who have lost their lives or been harmed, mentally or physically, as a result of America’s pervasive culture of anti-blackness. The systems of oppression that have perpetuated the myth of white supremacy in our country must be dismantled if we are ever to become the nation we pledge to be—indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

As an organization whose mission is to empower voters and defend democracy, we stand in solidarity with all Black communities. The League shall do so not only by speaking out against racism in all forms, but by doing the work required of us to be anti-racist. We are committed to listening to and amplifying Black voices, and educating ourselves and our children on the historic and ongoing systemic racism that plagues this country.

The League acknowledges, painfully, that America is a nation founded on racism. Therefore, all who live in this country must contribute to and participate in organizations actively working to achieve full liberation and inclusive freedom. We must all advocate for anti-racist policies at every level of government.

We join the League of Women Voters of Minnesota in calling on law enforcement officials to provide transparency during this investigation, and to seek justice for George Floyd, his family, and his community.

Finally, we echo the call of our partners at the NAACP: we must all vote in November – the road to change lies at the ballot box.

Recap: LWV of Roseville Area Annual Meeting

The LWV of Roseville Area 67th Annual Meeting was held virtually this year on June 2 due to the COVID-19 social distancing recommendations. See new LWV of Roseville Area President Barb Barany's Presidents Letter on [page 2](#) for a recap of the meeting and decisions made.

See below for the Rose Awards that were announced during the meeting and the very deserving recipients.

LWV of Roseville Area 2019-2020 Rose Awards

By Sherry Hood

The Rose Awards are presented to members who have exceeded expectations in their service to the League this past year. Here are the recipients and why they were recognized.



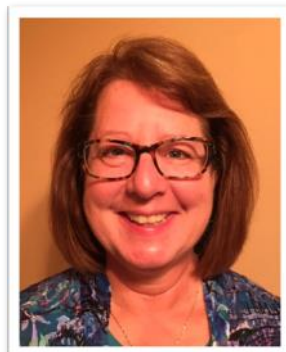
Beth Reinhart has spent three to five years, maybe more, providing her ideas and support to sustain and increase membership in our League and further our mission. She has been behind the scenes, but she can't hide her very significant contributions to our League on the Board and Membership.

Cecilia Warner has spent many past years arranging and providing many candidate forums for Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Roseville, Little Canada, and Maplewood for its citizens to become better informed about the issues that confront our local communities. What she has done is so appreciated!



Barb Anderson must have a bookcase of awards that have been presented to her. We do not give a Rose Award to someone who has received one within the past three years but this person cannot be ignored this year. She has created a new video that visually highlights our League, shown prior to our programs. And she has very successfully engineered online meetings for our League since the beginning of COVID-19.

Ann Thonet came onboard LWV of Roseville Area when we immediately needed someone to help us with our data work. She put her toe in the water and so wonderfully supported us with her commitment and expertise to manage our membership data. This has involved a new state membership registration program. She has done this so well!



Did You Know...Is It Time to Rethink Your Diet?

By Barb Luck

Have you been frustrated by not knowing how to help address climate change? Summer is a good time to begin to eat more plant-rich foods such as vegetables, lentils, whole grains, and nuts. You are likely noticing increased availability of more plant-rich food options in grocery stores along with more news and promotions about alternatives to meat-intensive diets. One of the biggest drivers of deforestation is to provide more land for beef farming. While there are many cultural connections with traditional foods, it is easy to cut back on meat consumption. You can transition as much as you wish without the need to become a vegan or vegetarian.



Better for You and the Planet

Plant-based eating is healthier overall and reduces chronic medical conditions. The American Heart Association cautions individuals that beef, pork, and lamb have higher levels of saturated fat than chicken, fish, and vegetable proteins. Individuals with heart disease are especially at risk for resulting high cholesterol. Plant-rich foods are also the strong foundation of the Mediterranean diet, which is recommended by the Mayo Clinic as a nutritional diet. Moderate amounts of dairy, poultry, seafood, and eggs are favored over red meat.

Eating less meat is also a huge bonus for our planet. Paring down and favoring plant-based foods versus meat-based diets reduces land clearing, fertilizer use, burping cattle, in addition to greenhouse gas emissions. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, total emissions from global livestock represent 14.5% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Also, the Project Drawdown website indicates, “If 50%-75% of the world’s population restricts their diet to a healthy average of 2,250 calories per day and reduces meat consumption overall, we estimate at least 43-68 gigatons of emissions could be avoided from dietary change alone.” There are many organizations citing statistics and regardless of their respective numbers, their findings show that diet has a significant impact on climate change. Granted, changing eating habits is a large challenge, but it is one of the main changes needed to save our earth.

Ease Into a Change

Suzy Amaris Cameron, environmental advocate and author, promotes the idea that choosing just one plant-rich meal/day a week instead of meat-based is a place to start. It’s the answer to the question, “What can just one person do?” After one year, you’ll have saved 200,000 gallons of water and the pollution equivalent to driving from Los Angeles to New York City.

Try different recipes which are easily accessible online by searching for “plant-based recipes.” From lasagna to pizza to black bean burgers, you may be surprised at the variety.

Watch The Voter in the fall for a related food article on how to reduce food waste.

CMAL Summer 2020 Update

By Karen Schaffer

The Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues (CMAL) Board has decided to re-establish the splendid tradition of the CMAL Newsletter. From its founding in 1962 until the late 2000s, CMAL published a quarterly newsletter (by US mail) to local Leagues and interested policy leaders. The first volume of the new issue should come out in June 2020.

In January 2020, CMAL delegates voted to undertake a study of county government in the metro area to determine whether CMAL’s current position should be amended or updated. CMAL Director Holly Jenkins (Dakota County LWV) will host a Zoom meeting on July 25 at 10 am for anyone who’d like to learn about the study and decide whether and how to participate in it. If you’d like to attend this virtual meeting, email Holly Jenkins (hollyc.jenkins@gmail.com) and she will send you the link along with relevant documents.

Voter Services Updates

By Karen Lake

- **Talking Points: Countering Attacks Related to Vote-by-Mail** (LWVUS – lww.org/league-management/talking-points-templates/talking-points-countering-attacks-related-vote-mail)

With the increased popularity of vote-by-mail in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, use the following messages to counter attacks on vote-by-mail and pivot the conversation to solutions. (Avoid saying the words “voter fraud” when interacting with voters, the general public, or media. Even the mention of potential fraud has a negative impact on voters’ confidence in our elections.)

- All states administer elections by mail through the absentee voting process.
- All states have systems in place to deter and detect irregularities or violations in the voting process, both by mail and in person.
- Vote-by-mail does not favor one party over another.
- There is no record of massive or serious election manipulation via mail-in voting (even Fox News anchor Chris Wallace has attested to this).
- (PIVOT) With an expected increase in vote-by-mail in 2020, now is the time for election officials to make the investments in ballot access and protect the integrity of our elections.
- Like all voting systems, vote-by-mail benefits from risk-limiting audits, which allow election officials to double-check the vote count, identify irregularities that need to be resolved, and issue strict penalties for tampering with the process.

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- **Receipt of Unsolicited Voter Registration Form or Absentee Ballot Application**

Have you received an unsolicited letter which includes a voter registration form or absentee ballot application? Other national organizations, which may be legitimate, are encouraging people to register and/or to vote by absentee ballot by mailing letters to citizens and enclosing voter registration/absentee ballot applications which may comply with Minnesota requirements or may be more generic. Letter recipients can always register or confirm their voter registrations and apply for absentee ballots at MNVotes.org.

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- **Absentee Ballot Application**

Remember! No-excuse absentee ballot voting is allowed in MN! Go to MNVotes.org to apply online or to download and print an application for an absentee ballot. And, if you have moved since you last voted, you must re-register with your current address. MNVotes.org is the site to access for registering or re-registering also.

Access an online Minnesota absentee ballot application by using the QR code below. Scan the QR code image with your smart phone QR scanner. After doing so, a pop-up will ask if you want to go to online application.



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- **Learning About Candidates for Public Office During a Pandemic**

Vote411.org is the site for answers to voting and election questions as well as a source of information on candidates running for local Minnesota and state-wide public office. Sherry Hood is the LWV of Roseville Area member in charge of soliciting and submitting candidate questions. All are encouraged to use Vote411.org for learning about candidates and to become better informed voters.

Candidate forums are in the process of being scheduled. They will occur at sites where social distancing of the candidates and moderator can occur and the forums will be recorded live. The Governor’s public health and safety guidelines will be followed as to whether any audience or a limited audience will be allowed in person. Systems for audience questions to be submitted will be announced. Teresa Wernecke and Cecilia Warner are in charge of organizing LWV of Roseville Area candidate forums.

Helpful Sites for Voting Resources

- Vote411.org: Find answers to questions about voting and elections and information on the candidates running for office
 - SOS.state.mn.us/elections-voting: Minnesota Secretary of State elections and voting page
-

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!



Recap: LWV of Roseville Area Environmental Field Trip

By Anne Haugan

Nine brave souls with masks and social distancing participated in the annual field trip sponsored by our League's Environmental Committee on June 23.

The weather cooperated as we learned about the work of our Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District. Sage Passi, project coordinator for the RWMWD, led the field trip which began at Central Park Elementary School. There we viewed the educational rain garden in front of the school. Drive into the parking lot on the parallel road to Co. Rd. B-2 to view this school children's project.

We next traveled to the Willow Pond Area north of the Roseville Area School District Center. This is the beginning of the water drainage through the RWMWD area. We were much impressed with the area on the SE/E side of Grace Community Church which has a huge rain garden and native plantings. To view this project, take a hike or drive along the intersection of Co. Rd. B-2 and Dunlap. It is worth it.

We then hiked the trail along Willow Pond where we met homeowner, Jan Daire. She showed us eight invasive plants which she had uprooted that morning. We continued to the new filtration system which Sage explained had been built last summer, 2019. Then on to Lee Bauer's home where Lee gave us a handout of fifteen suggestions to support clean water and pollinator habitats, and we learned of the 60 neighbors of the Willow Pond Community who meet as water steward activists every other Saturday for the purpose of improving the health of Willow Pond. We took the trail along the East Shoreline to view the East Shoreline Restoration and even saw a floating rain garden.

Sage engaged five water steward activists in the field trip presentations and used several educational handouts. This is just a small sampling of the projects of our Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District.

The field trip ended by having a picnic lunch on Cecilia Warner's patio and viewing her native plant gardens. We thank Cecilia for not only hosting, but also for being the photographer. Cecilia noted that a grant from the Watershed District helped significantly with the project focused on native plants. Cecilia says she will be glad to show anyone her backyard at 459 Centennial Ave. Anne Haugan has a rain garden which is also a grant project of the Watershed. Stop by to see it on the northeast corner of Oakcrest and Dunlap – one block west of Lexington's Central Park entrance.

See images from the field trip, taken by Cecilia Warner, on the next page.

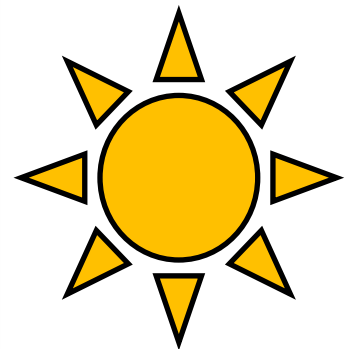
- Top image: League members attending the field trip
- Middle image:: Willow Pond Park Trail
- Bottom image: Sage Passi presenting the work of the Watershed in building the rain garden at Central Park School

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

See [page 1](#) and [page 10](#) for event details. Watch for more 2020-2021 League event details soon!



LWV of Roseville Area: July – August Event Calendar

- **July 15 – Brews and Book Reviews.** Virtual event. See details on [page 1](#).
- **August 18 – Voting in the Time of COVID-19.** Virtual event. See details on [page 1](#).



LWV Members with President Truman (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.