

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

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

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

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

Growing Diversity in Local Leadership

What happens after the "Equitable Representation on City Appointed Boards and Commissions" LWV of Roseville Area study has been completed and distributed to our five area cities? How can we continue to share experiences, ideas, and opportunities with others? Developing this follow-up program is one of the ways.

Learn how other communities are fostering inclusion during a panel discussion, "How to Pull in Missing Voices in Local Government," led by U of M Extension Leadership and Civic Engagement Program Leader, Holli Arp. Panelists will share their experience with non-profit organizations and other Minnesota cities. Successful, practical tips such as involving youth and partnering with other community organizations can help cities start conversations, be more welcoming, and encourage diverse involvement. Co-hosts include Ramsey County Library and Do Good Roseville. Register in advance for this November 16, 6:30-8 pm, Zoom program at https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qT6YN_aGQqikQXvpYQI0lw. Consider distributing the event flyer attached to the emailed version of this newsletter.



Holli Arp

On a related note, check out an MPR program about the most rapidly diversifying county in Minnesota, Nobles County, including their challenges and hopes, at <https://www.mprnews.org/episode/2021/10/22/welcome-to-nobles-county-minnesotas-most-rapidly-diversifying-county>.

League Youth Engagement Event

On November 9, LWV of White Bear Area is sponsoring a presentation of young adult engagement activities (presented by youth) and a discussion on how to better engage youth in voting.

Attend the event at Century College at 6:30 p.m. Find the event on the West Campus, Room 1420.

LWV of Roseville Area November Board Meeting

The next LWV of Roseville Area Board meeting is Wednesday, November 17, at 7 pm. For Zoom access, contact Barb Anderson at lwvrosevillearea@lwvmn.org in advance.

LWV of Roseville Area December Social

Brighten the dark December days! On December 9, 5 pm we plan to gather at the beautiful Cederholm Community Building to celebrate the year.

A catered buffet meal with a seasonal menu including beef roast or a vegetarian option will be available. There will be a cash bar for beer, wine, or soft drinks. We have a surprise speaker who will provide a short but entertaining talk. At the dinner, we will collect charitable money donations for the Northeast Youth and Family Services organization (<https://www.nyfs.org/>).

The cost per person is \$32.00. Registration and payment must be received by November 26. Options for registration and payment:

- **Preferred option:** Go directly to the LWV of Roseville Area registration site at <https://www3.thedatabank.com/dpg/601/mtglistproc.asp?formid=RosevilleCalend&caleventid=6466>. Complete the online registration form, and submit your payment via our PayPal system. You can also pay by check by following the instructions on the site.
- If you cannot go online, make a check payable to LWV Roseville Area, and indicate on the memo line if you want a vegetarian meal. Send checks to Jessica Holz at 1885 Fernwood St., Roseville, MN 55113.

Covid precautions: In an effort to keep the gathering to a safe number, Only League members are invited to attend. Also, attendees should be vaccinated.

In the era of Covid, we've had a few unusual years. We know it is difficult to predict how December will be. We will monitor the situation, understanding that circumstances may require us to cancel the event or put it on hold for another time. Right now, we hope to be able to gather together in December. Please join us!



Environmental Subcommittee Update

By Environmental Subcommittee

We would like to acknowledge the LWVMN Climate Change Task Force, which was formed about two years ago. LWVMN Executive Director Michelle Witte leads the group, and Sherry Hood of our LWVRA Environmental Subcommittee is a member. Task Force members help build long-lasting and collaborative partner relationships with LWVMN so that we can maximize our impact on the very important work of climate change in Minnesota. Membership is open to all League members via a request to Michelle Witte, mwitte@lwvmn.org. Several prominent environmental advocates who are also LWV members serve on the task force, including: Kathleen Doran-Norton of LWV of Northfield; Gretchen Sabel, President of LWVABC and Communications chair of UMRR ILO, and longtime environmental advocate, Gwen Myers of LWV of Minneapolis.

This Task Force and the State League have an official partnership with Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP), an umbrella advocacy organization for many environmental groups in our state. We rely on them for lobbying on environmental issues, plus other guidance. Please check out the LWVMN website, lwvmn.org, under What We Do and then Climate Change Task Force to find upcoming events and great resources for our local League, our communities, and ourselves (recycling, composting, etc.). Please join the next meeting. The Task Force is partnering with Upper Mississippi River Region Independent League Organization (UMRR ILO) to present the event. Our League has been a member of UMRR ILO since its inception in 2015.

PFAS in Minnesota—The Blueprint for Action; November 10, 11:30 am: LWVMN's Climate Change Task Force will host MPCA Assistant Commissioner Kirk Koudelka, talking about PFAS in Minnesota and the state's response to this wide-spread contamination of our land and water. For more information and to join with the Zoom link: <https://www.lwvumrr.org/blog/pfas-in-minnesota-the-blueprint-for-action-zoom-program-on-november-10-at-1130>.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

Officers:

President

Barb Barany

Vice President

Barb Anderson

Secretary

Kathy Macomber

Treasurer

Jessica Holz

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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

October's program, *Real Life Mr. Rogers Part II*, moderated by LWV of Roseville Area Program Committee Vice-Chair Carol Marchel, spoke directly to the League diversity, equity, and inclusion priority. Inclusion requires us to be curious to learn about differences, and proactively welcome, support, and inform our racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse neighbors. I was particularly struck by panelist and LWV of Roseville Area member Marquita Stephens noting that there exists an urban/suburban divide, with substantial differences in how a neighborhood works. What do that and other neighborhood differences mean for another Minnesota and national League priority: the decennial redistricting process?

Redistricting is about political inclusion; knowing that one's interests are represented in government. Led by full-time volunteer, Paul Huffman, LWVMN promotes identification of communities of interest and proposing maps to decision makers. As detailed in our February program, *The Census, Redistricting, and Reform*, (<https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcladult/course/25721>), Minnesota has few requirements for map drawing, and these do not include the common interests of constituents. Given our divided state government, the congressional and legislative maps will be drawn by the courts, whose tendency has been to adjust existing districts for changes in population. The hope is that the presentation of alternative maps will nudge the courts toward maps that give communities of interest more voice. County commission districts will be decided by the county commissioners, and alternative maps could be effective here, as well.

Cities are one example of communities of interest. As first-ring suburbs, our five cities are easy targets for redistricting based on balancing population, either with urban Saint Paul or with surrounding suburbs. When residents are a minor part of a legislative or county district that doesn't coincide with their school district or library system, or is split from their fellow residents within a city, we may be less than represented.

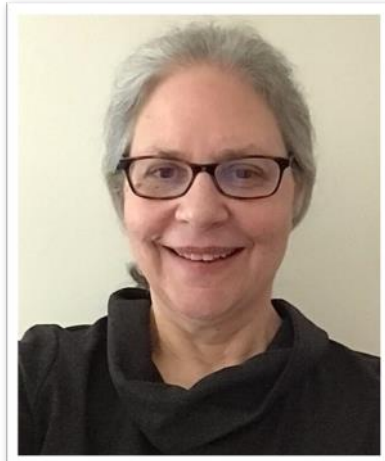
Then why hasn't LWV of Roseville Area formed a redistricting committee to advocate for community representation in maps? The short answer is that our cities and other included communities in many cases have conflicting interests. Our school districts don't follow city boundaries, and areas such as the Rice Street corridor, home to substantial immigrant populations, cross city boundaries as well. Keeping one city intact, and with suburban neighbors, means splitting another of our cities. You can still advocate for your community as an individual. Contact Paul Huffman (phuffman@lwnmn.org) for further information. Advocacy for changing the redistricting process by legislation will be an ongoing concern.

Finally, kudos to Voter Services Chair Teresa Wernecke, moderator Florence Sprague, forum assistants Rita Mills and Nancy Simpson, and Nine North for a smooth and informative Roseville Area School Board forum on October 7. You can also find the Mounds View School Board candidate forum, sponsored by LWV of New Brighton, and capably moderated by LWV of Roseville Area member Linda McLoon on October 18. Access local candidate forum and speak out videos through the links on [page 6](#).

Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

Advocacy Training with LWVMN

Be on the lookout for information on training to participate in LWV lobbying and observer corps opportunities, sponsored by LWVMN in December.



Barb Barany

Two Should Be Greater Than One

By Florence Sprague

English, English, English. It is the language of common parlance in the United States and is traditionally considered beneficial for economic success worldwide. But there is another aspect for immigrant families. When learning English comes at the cost of not learning the language of your parents and grandparents, there is profound loss. Loss of connection to elders, culture, identity, history, community...

In Europe it is not uncommon for people to be bilingual, or multi-lingual. English is often the second or third language. It does not erase the other languages, nor does speaking German, French, or Czech as a first language prevent the learning of English. In Africa many people speak multiple languages, a mix of local and colonial. It is not an inherent limitation of the human brain to speak or understand only one form of communication. What is it about the United States that makes bilingualism so difficult to sustain?

The US is comparatively isolated both geographically and psychologically. Much of the nation is far from any geographic need or natural opportunity for using a second language. Attitude also plays a role. In Europe languages other than the national language are granted validity and respect and routinely taught and used. The perspective of “American exceptionalism” has made it easy to accept that at this time English has become the lingua franca of much of the world and give a sense of entitlement to Americans to be able to speak English wherever they go. Language learning is also often seen as too difficult; there is less fear of learning and using another language in other places, it is just normal.

A recent column by Laura Yuen in the Star Tribune “The grief of losing your parents’ language” (<https://www.startribune.com/yuen-the-grief-of-losing-your-parents-language/600100533/>) explores the loss to individuals and community when youth cannot speak the language of their parents and grandparents.

She opens with an anecdote about Olympic gold medalist, Sunisa Lee. When a journalist asked Sunisa a question in Hmong she was unable to give her response in Hmong and appeared uncomfortable and embarrassed. Embarrassment when not fluent often leads to reluctance to speak, both at home and in public and exacerbates the problem.

For immigrant families, as the generations become more Americanized and more fluent in English, the family’s first language and culture are difficult to maintain. Sometimes parents intentionally decline to teach the language, tying their child’s success in life to English; other times, the loss just seems to happen organically.

Then when, as for Sunisa, young people are expected to speak their cultural language they are flummoxed. A similar phenomenon occurs for transnational adoptees. Visiting the country of their birth may bring joy at being in a place where they do not visually stand out, but dismay because they cannot communicate.

So how does Sunisa’s generation stay connected to elders, community and heritage?

We are all enriched when we learn another language; it is the key to another culture. For the children of immigrants English is the key to assimilation and assimilation is a complex mix of gain and loss. What can we all do to support multi-lingualism?

Addendum: No sooner than I had submitted this article to the Voter than I heard a moving and informative discussion of this very topic on MPR News with Angela Davis. For many personal stories and insights from Minnesotans of many ethnicities and ages listen at <https://www.mprnews.org/episode/2021/10/18/losing-your-parents-language>.



Remembering Virginia Sykes, 1935 — 2021

By Judy Stuthman

If you have been in LWV of Roseville Area for more than 40 years, you probably met Ginger when you joined. She was active for many years and served as president. Though she ran for Mayor of Little Canada (she lost) she was not particularly interested in partisan politics. She was interested in studying issues, and policies.

Years ago, she moved to Hopewell Junction, New York, to be near her daughter and family. She hoped to find a local League in her area. She had many interests, and continued to do what she enjoyed: handicrafts, gardening, playing bridge, and traveling. She never forgot her friends in Minnesota and stayed in touch with her Minnesota book club by reading the same books they were reading.

Ginger passed away on September 28, following a long illness. Her family requested that in lieu of flowers, contributions should be made to League of Women Voters of Roseville Area.



Recap: Good Neighbors Part II

By Marcia Cheney

The two-part series, *Beyond Mr. Rogers Neighborhood*, concluded in late October. The series was designed to explore on a personal level racial issues in our communities. In all about 75 people attended the programs held via Zoom. More are expected to watch the recordings. Access the recordings through the Ramsey County Library website (Part I: <https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcladult/course/37255>; Part II: <https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcladult/course/38660>).

The League thanks its co-sponsors Do Good Roseville, Shoreview Human Rights Commission, and Ramsey County Library.

The October panel assembled presenters from a variety of backgrounds who shared both deeply personal insights from their personal experiences of how others' perceptions impact them and professional expertise, as they discussed "Welcoming Neighbors." The panelists were: Tamara Gray, Executive Director, Rabata; Miriam Itzkowitz, Director, Center for Trauma Informed Care, Hamline University; Marquita Stephens, Director of Education and Policy, Minneapolis Urban League; and Nelsie Yang, Council Member Ward 6, City of St. Paul.

The frank discussion was wide ranging, providing so much information and food for thought. For example, Dr. Gray recounted that when she wears a hijab, she can feel her privileges being stripped away. Even those who watched the initial presentation will find the content merits an additional review. Panelists addressed a wealth of strategies to bridge barriers (e.g., cake and cookies are always good), dealing with the inevitable problems, and addressing an egregious event if it occurs. I'll be watching the recording to see which panelists summed things up saying, "Put in the love and the work" and "Start somewhere and do it again if it was effective." Show compassion when there are challenges and check your assumptions. Don't be shy, we're all in this together.



(Clockwise from top left: Moderator Carol Marchel and panelists Miriam Itzkowitz, Tamara Gray, Marquita Stephens, and Nelsie Yang)

Be Informed: Resources for November 2 Election

City Council and School Board Candidate Videos:

- Falcon Heights City Council forum: <https://ninenorth.org/videos/falcon-heights-city-council-candidates-forum/>
- Falcon Heights City Council speak out: <https://ninenorth.org/videos/candidates-speak-out-city-of-falcon-heights-2/>
- ISD623 Roseville Area forum: <https://ninenorth.org/videos/roseville-area-623-school-board-candidates-forum/>
- ISD623 Roseville Area speak out: <https://ninenorth.org/videos/candidates-speak-out-roseville-area-623-school-board/>
- ISD621 Moundsview Area forum: <https://ninenorth.org/videos/mounds-view-621-school-board-candidates-forum/>
- ISD621 Moundsview Area speak out: <https://ninenorth.org/videos/candidates-speak-out-mounds-view-621-school-board/>

Local School Boards with Levies on the Ballot:

- ISD622 North St. Paul has two questions to vote on: existing operating levy and capital programs (<https://www.isd622.org/Page/15529>). See the website for voting information including dates and time.
- ISD623 Roseville Area has two questions to vote on: existing operating levy and increased operating levy (<https://www.isd623.org/our-district/district-services/operating-levy-2021>)

League Members In Action

League members helped register people to vote at the opening of the new Fairview Education Center building in Roseville, Anpétu Tēca Education Center. Below left, LWV of Roseville Area member, Nancy Simpson, with Hallie Finucane of Do Good Roseville, working the registration table. Below right, LWV of Roseville Area member Marcia Cheney helps with the spinning wheel as part of the table attractions.



LWV of Roseville Area member, Mindy Greiling, was one of the speakers at the LWVMN Civic Saturday kickoff at the Minnesota History Center. Below, from left to right, event speakers Michelle Witte, LWVMN Executive Director; Rose McGee, Minnesota Humanities Center; Peggy Leppik, former legislator; Mindy Greiling, Julie Blaha, State Auditor; Laura Helmer, LWVMN President; and Kate Roberts, Minnesota Historical Society, Senior Exhibit Developer of Extraordinary Women.



(Photos by Rita Mills)

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://lwvrosevillearea.org/>), click on the YouTube icon on the righthand side, and choose a recorded event. If the event was held virtually through the Ramsey County Library, a link to the recording will be provided in an eBlast and in the Voter in the month following the event.

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

- **January 21 – Conversations with Constituents: Representation in City Governance.** Join LWV of Roseville Area to discuss opportunities and challenges of changing demographics of our communities and more with our local city leaders. Do leadership and outreach efforts reflect greater diversity in our communities? Are we addressing the diversity of constituents' needs in areas such as housing, employment, transit, business development, education, and community programs and events? The event is co-hosted by Ramsey County Library; 6:30 -8 pm; Zoom. More event details and registration to come!
- **January Date TBD – Firearms Study Update.** Many changes have occurred around gun policy since LWVMN's 1990 study and resulting positions on firearms. In January members will consider current and proposed policy positions. Current positions can be found at <https://www.lwvmn.org/our-positions>. A new report will help guide member discussion. It will be available later this fall. Watch the eblast and January Voter for details, then join the meeting to cast your votes on positions on this timely and complex topic.
- **January 15 – Metro County Study Update, Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters (CMAL) Quarterly Meeting.** CMAL's county position was adopted in 1975, before webpages and social media. Does our position need updating? A CMAL study committee has been working to find out. They have reviewed county webpages and interviewed key county players, with a focus on county visibility, accountability, civic engagement and intergovernmental relations; 10 am; Zoom.
- **February Date TBD – ADA Compliance Study Report.** ADA Compliance Study Committee will share its findings with members. What have we learned and what comes next?

Member Spotlight: Ann Thonet

By Rita Mills

The name and face behind the numbers...the data...that's Ann Thonet. Keeping track of 130+ members as the data manager for LWV of Roseville Area is just one of Ann's volunteer activities. Recently she helped plan the LWV two-part "Good Neighborhoods/Welcoming Neighbors" webinar.

On Ann's volunteer resume one can also find: CCD teacher, classroom parent, church choir, Twin Cities Women of Today, and Peace Maker Minnesota. "I am a volunteer at heart. I've jumped in 'over my head' a number of times but that doesn't seem to stop me. Learning new things is key to keeping one's mind alert and aware."

Yet with all this activity, balance is important to Ann. "Part of my well-being comes from spending time alone in nature. I need time to think in the quiet that nature offers."

Growing up, Ann always wanted to be a teacher, playing "school" as a child, enlisting her siblings as students. Yet in college she questioned if teaching was her calling. After taking a hiatus to raise children, Ann returned and earned her elementary education degree at age 38.

Ann's interests are many and varied. While family and friends are central, she especially likes spending time at the family cabin. In her free time she enjoys crafting, quilting and gardening. Currently she is organizing a neighborhood watch. She is also a steward of a Little Free Library.

When asked why she joined League, Ann says she wanted to work with other women on women's causes and concerns in addition to becoming more knowledgeable about local issues and politics.



Ann, we are so happy you chose to join our chapter as your energy and contributions advance the core mission of the League of Women Voters! And, thank you for keeping track of all that data!

LWV of Roseville Area: November-December Event Calendar

- **November 2 – Election Day.** See resources on local candidate on [page 6](#).
- **November 9 – League Youth Engagement Event.** See event details on [page 1](#); 6:30 pm; Century College.
- **November 10 – Climate Change Task Force Event.** See event details on [page 2](#); 11:30 am; Zoom.
- **November 16 – Growing Diversity in Local Leadership.** See event details on [page 1](#); 6:30-8 pm; Zoom.
- **November 17 – LWV of Roseville Area Board Meeting.** See access details on [page 1](#); 7 pm; Zoom.
- **December 9 – LWV of Roseville Area December Social.** See event details on [page 2](#); 5 pm; Cederholm Community Building.



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.