

The Voter

The official publication of the League of Women Voters of Roseville Area

FALCON HEIGHTS, LAUDERDALE, LITTLE CANADA, MAPLEWOOD, ROSEVILLE

Volume 67, Number 3

October 2021



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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>

Welcoming Neighbors: Beyond Mr. Rogers Part II

Peace is the creation of an environment where all can flourish – Nelson Mandela

The murder of George Floyd and its aftermath continue to alter our world. The second of two programs developed in response to Floyd's murder, Welcoming Neighborhoods, will be presented October 21.

An exceptional and diverse panel has been assembled for an exploration of the role of each individual in sustaining a welcoming neighbor in a polarized climate. The panelists will address the varied responses when neighbors of differing backgrounds join our immediate neighborhoods and communities.

What happens when neighbors are not welcomed? How do stereotypes and imbedded beliefs affect our interactions? What are practical strategies we can use to become welcoming neighbors? How do we bridge cultural differences to build and sustain strong and vibrant communities?

A question-and-answer session will follow.

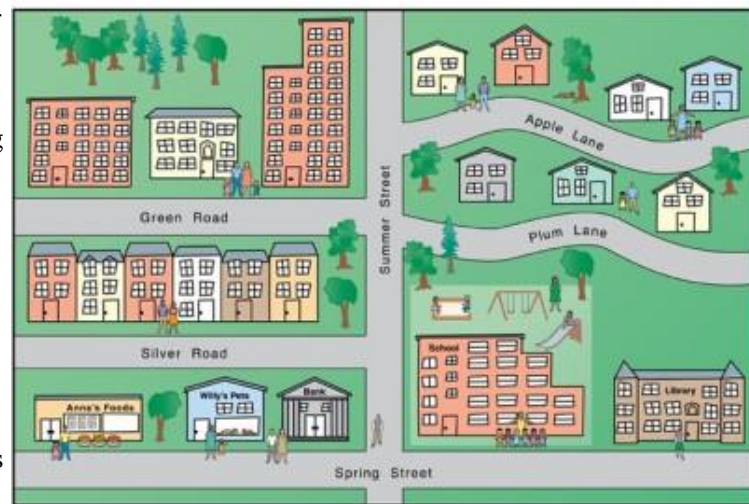
Date: October 21, 7-8:30 pm via Zoom

Panelists:

- Tamara Gray, Executive Director, Rabata
- Miriam Itzkowitz, Director Trauma Informed Care Institute, Hamline University
- Marquita Stephens, Director of Education, Policy & Programming, Minneapolis Urban League
- Nelsie Yang, St. Paul City Council Member, Ward 6

Register at https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_sP9cADvuSCKO-OQoW90AZA or through the Ramsey County Library website. If you registered for the September Part I program, you are registered for Part II. Consider distributing the event flyer attached to the emailed copy of this newsletter. This event is co-sponsored by LWV of Roseville Area, Do Good Roseville, and Ramsey County Library Roseville.

Neighborhood Map



LWV of Roseville Area October Board Meeting

The next LWV of Roseville Area Board meeting is Wednesday, October 27, at 7 pm. For Zoom access, contact Barb Anderson at lwvrosevillearea@lwvmn.org in advance.

Candidate Forum: ISD 623 Roseville Area Schools

The ISD 623 Roseville Area Schools Candidate Forum is scheduled for Thursday, October 7. The forum will be moderated by League member Florence Sprague. Due to COVID-19 precautions, there will be no in-person audience. The forum will be broadcast by NineNorth on cable channel 15 or 859 HD, and live streamed and available for playback on <https://ninenorth.org/speak-outs/>. Send questions for the candidates by Wednesday, October 6, end of day, to lwv-rosevillearea@lwvmn.org.

Should You Drink That? The Unfolding Story of PFAS in Our Lives

The LWV Upper Mississippi River Region hosts this online event on October 4 at 6 pm. Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) are “forever chemicals,”—compounds that never break down but build up in our bodies. We are exposed to PFAS in our clothing, food packaging, drinking water, and more. In this program, we will discuss what federal and state governments are doing to set standards and regulate PFAS uses, and present information on what we all can do to limit exposures and advocate for change. Register at <https://www.lwvumrr.org/blog/should-you-drink-that-the-unfolding-story-of-pfas-in-our-lives>. Also, review the flyer and PFAS background information included with the emailed version of the newsletter.

Protecting the Metro Area Water Supply

The Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters (CMAL) is presenting Protecting the Metro Area Water Supply environmental program on October 16, 10-11:30 am via Zoom. Lanya Ross, geologist and environmental analyst from the Met Council, will “set the [water] table” with basic information about the metro area water supply. Paul Gardner, administrator for the Clean Water Council, will discuss water governance, clean water funding, water reuse, and what you can do. Co-sponsored by CMAL and LWV of Woodbury/Cottage Grove.

Find Zoom access links and additional program information on the LWVMN website: <https://www.lwvmn.org/league-calendar>. All LWV members and the public are welcome to attend. Contact Karen Schaffer (schafferka@gmail.com) if you have questions.

Voter Registration Volunteer Opportunities

See volunteer opportunities below to help LWVMN and Do Good Roseville with voter registration events.

- LWVMN submitted 2,020 completed voter registration forms to the Secretary of State's office from citizenship ceremonies on August 25-26. Approximately 1,200-1,400 people became citizens on each of these days. Future ceremonies will be one day each month from October 2021 through September 2022 at the St. Paul RiverCentre (175 W. Kellogg Blvd). Numerous 15-20 minute ceremonies on those days will accommodate about 65 citizens each. LWVMN will have eight tables for voter registrations for new citizens as they exit following their ceremony. If you are able to help on any of the dates below, please email Judy Stuthman (jastuthman@aol.com).
 - **Thursday, October 14:** Morning session 8:30-11:30 am, afternoon session 11:30 am-12:30 pm
 - **Tuesday, November 23:** Morning session 8:30-11:30 am, afternoon session 11:30 am-12:30 pm
 - **Tuesday, December 14:** Morning session 8:30-11:30 am, afternoon session 11:30 am-12:30 pm
- Do Good Roseville has the following voter registration event volunteer opportunities. Sign up by sending an email to Hallie Finucane (hafinucane@gmail.com) or using the SignUpGenius link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090e44aca82fa1fe3-dogood>.
 - **October 5:** Anpétu Téça Education Center (1910 County B Rd W, Roseville, MN), 4:30-7 pm. The group is participating at the Grand Opening of the Anpétu Téça Education Center (formerly Fairview Community Center). Volunteers will provide voter registrations and a spin wheel game for kids.
 - **October 9:** Rice Street Gardens Potluck (1958 Rice St., Maplewood, MN; on Rice St, near McCarrons Blvd N), 11 am-1 pm. The group will provide voter registrations and the spin wheel game for kids. The event is for the people growing food in the gardens. This is an area that Ramsey County is focusing on for more voter engagement. Do Good Roseville will provide some catered appetizers

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

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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

We've called our working groups both "committees" and "teams." I think team is the more descriptive term, and applies both to the working groups themselves and to our local League as a whole.

The Voter Services team becomes especially visible each fall, even in an off election year. In September, chair Teresa Wernecke worked with Falcon Heights staff, NineNorth staff, and candidates to help voters choose their new city council representatives via an LWV of Roseville Area-sponsored candidate forum. Finding that her usual source for printing names on cardstock tents was unavailable, Teresa reached out to our communications team for help. Voter editor Rachel Geiser contacted Jim DeBenedet, who graciously volunteered to provide the printing. Problem solved in forty minutes! But that turned out to be only one of the issues in bringing the forum to a successful conclusion. Lacking a live audience due to

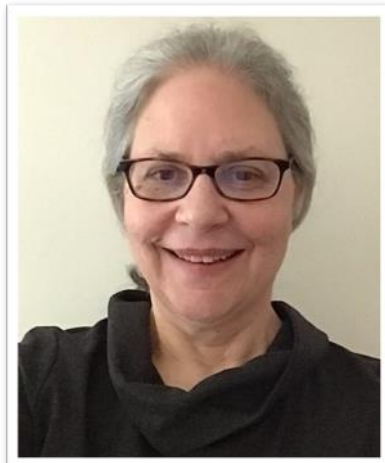
COVID-19, the council chambers became even emptier when it was learned that two of the five candidates were unable to participate in person. One of the two opted to provide opening and closing statements for the moderator, Florence Sprague, to read. Maureen Anderson, from NineNorth, made it possible for the other absent candidate to participate via Zoom. From there, Teresa, Florence, and timers Jim and Stephanie DeBenedet facilitated a lively hybrid forum, where the candidates shared their qualifications, goals, and priorities for meeting Falcon Heights' needs. See a link to a recording of the forum on [page 6](#).

Two study teams continue their work. Following our membership's approval of a position statement on equitable representation on appointed city boards and commissions, the study team began planning advocacy to our cities. Guided by team member Rita Mills' well-received presentation to the Little Canada city council in August, team chairs Barb Luck and Patty Hoffman, along with team members Megan Dahlberg and Karen Schaffer, planned for advocacy at each of our other cities. See a picture of presenting to Maplewood on [page 6](#). They have the goal of completing the outreach in September and October, ahead of November's Growing Diversity in Local Leadership program. In preparing their presentations for a particular city, team members take into account the current status of city commissions at each.

The team studying compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was busy this summer. Team chairs Jim and Stephanie DeBenedet, along with members Ann Cleland, Rachel Geiser, Bonnie Koch, and Mary Peterson divided up both the tasks of inspecting the city halls, parks, and voting locations in our five cities, and examining the ADA for requirements. Coordination among members is essential for this team, since consistency in interpretation and reporting among sites is required. Preparation of recommendations and a final report will culminate with a presentation to membership in February, and a vote at our annual meeting in May.

I was able to work with the Student Awards group and see teamwork on a short term project in action. Organized through Zoom meetings and emails, the team of chair Karen Lake and members Anne Haugen, Suzanne Sancilio, June Stewart, and I discussed approaches and criteria for the award, and then divided up tasks—like coordinating with school personnel or writing up criteria—according to interests and availability. A side benefit of this project was establishing, or re-establishing, contacts at Fairview Alternative High School, Tartan High School, and Roseville Area High School. The roll-out phase of this project will be complete when LWV of Roseville Area representatives present the awards in May and June.

Contributions at every level of time-commitment make a difference. One of our challenges is to find ways to include the views and experience of those with busy schedules in both our membership and in our work. Your suggestions are welcome!



Barb Barany

Willkommen, Bienvenue, Salâm

By Florence Sprague

One of my sisters taught German at a private school for decades. She is a fluent speaker of German and knowledgeable about the minutiae of German grammar. In retirement, and particularly during the COVID-19 lockdown, she has been trading German lessons for Spanish lessons with another retired colleague who taught Spanish. They meet on Zoom to speak, and give one another practice exercises and options for exploration on Duolingo. I admire her for even taking on this enterprise.

What is interesting is that despite being an expert at one foreign language, and despite having had some Spanish in high school, she often complains that she just can't seem to remember all of the new vocabulary she is supposed to be learning. Not long ago she remarked that she has a new sympathy with older immigrants trying to learn English and struggling. Ahhh.

Lack of English proficiency is often a touchpoint when people are not comfortable with immigration. Many seem irritated when an accent is unfamiliar or the grammar or word choice is awkward. It is easy for current generations to forget—or never to have realized—that during the major waves of European immigration to the upper Midwest and Minnesota there was a profusion of newspapers, churches, schools, and voting information in German, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and other languages, not just for a brief time, but for many years.

This is worth recalling today as we anticipate welcoming a new wave of immigrants from Afghanistan, to join the Karen and other Burmese, the Somali, the Ethiopian and Oromo, the Hmong, the Vietnamese, the Mexican and Salvadoran, the Liberian, and so many others already enriching our community.

Leaving your home country is wrenching. Garrison Keillor said it well when he wrote:

*"Heroes, all of them – at least they're my heroes, especially the immigrants, especially the refugees. Everyone makes fun of New York cabdrivers who can't speak English: they're heroes. To give up your country is the hardest thing a person can do: to leave the old familiar places and ship out over the edge of the world to America and learn everything over again different than you learned as a child, **learn the language that you will never be so smart or funny in as your true language.** It takes years to start to feel semi-normal. And yet people still come – Russia, Vietnam and Cambodia and Laos, Ethiopia, Iran, Haiti, Korea, Cuba, Chile, and they come on behalf of their children, and they come for freedom. Not for our land (Russia is as beautiful), not for our culture (they have their own, thank you), not for our system of government (they don't even know about it, may not even agree with it), but for freedom. They are heroes who make an adventure on our behalf, showing by their struggle how precious beyond words freedom is, and if we knew their stories, we could not keep back the tears."* (emphasis added)

Welcome to the neighborhood.



Alternative News Sources

By Barb Anderson

Are you getting most of your local news from mainstream news sources? You might be interested in two online sources that focus on diverse communities and underreported stories. Below are excerpts from their websites that describe their missions. You might want to try getting local news from one or both of these sites.

Sahan Journal is dedicated to providing authentic news reporting for and about immigrants and communities of color in Minnesota. We aim to chronicle the struggles, successes and transformations of Minnesota's immigrants and communities of color, whose stories are often overlooked by traditional news organizations. As Minnesota becomes more diverse, Sahan will bring the stories of immigrants and communities of color to the mainstream, with the skill and deftness that they deserve. Sahan Journal is celebrating its second anniversary. Find it at <https://sahanjournal.com/>.

The **Minnesota Reformer** is a long-established, independent, nonprofit news organization dedicated to keeping Minnesotans informed and unearthing stories other outlets can't or won't tell. We're in the halls of government tracking what elected officials are up to—and monitoring the powerful forces trying to influence them. But we're also on the streets, at the bars and parks, on farms and in warehouses, telling you stories of the people being affected by the actions of government and big business. Minnesota Reformer is part of States Newsroom, a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit supported by grants and a coalition of donors and readers. Minnesota Reformer can be found at <https://minnesotareformer.com/>.

Remembering A Beautiful Spirit, Judy Florine

By Mindy Greiling

I most remember League member Judy Florine, who died August 25 from sepsis, for her cheerful, ready willingness to help with civic and political projects. During any endeavor, her wonderful laugh would permeate the air, even as we discussed weighty topics of the world. She loved being a member of League, where she could attend meetings and fuel her lifelong love of learning. I worked along side her when our League studied and advocated for affordable housing, and she represented her church.

Judy was an exceedingly independent person who didn't let life challenges get in her way. By the time she was eighteen, she had lost both her parents. A diagnosis of multiple sclerosis ended her teaching career early in the North St. Paul, Maplewood and Oakdale Schools, but she continued to live her life with a sense of adventure. She became a worldwide traveler, visiting five continents. When she contracted renal disease, she stoically scheduled dialysis appointments, even in far flung locations she planned around her continued travel, until she received a new kidney.

As her MS progressed, Judy drove a van from which she could unload her scooter, maintaining her independence. She was an avid supporter of the arts, with season tickets to the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Opera, the Minnesota Ballet, and the Guthrie Theater. She was a skier, political activist (including serving as president of her local teachers' union), a reader, and an active leader in her faith community.

Throughout her life, Judy enriched others by forging deep and lasting friendships. I was proud to count her as a good friend. We enjoyed long and deep phone conversations. At her funeral service, I found that all her friends enjoyed those same conversations. She will be greatly missed.



Recap: Good Neighbors Part I

By Marcia Cheney

Good Neighborhoods: Beyond Mr. Rogers Part I, presented September 23, was well received by those attending. If you missed the program or would like to watch it again, access the recording on the Ramsey County Library website: <https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcldult/course/37255>.

Panelists agreed on qualities that comprise strong neighborhoods but that expectation of good neighborhoods have evolved. They stated that expectations of a good neighborhood while varied should be consistent with the needs of residents. They reviewed the wide-ranging impact of perception (accurate or inaccurate) on neighborhoods. Each panelist also went over the multiple steps their organization is taking to increase equity. Every practice is being scrutinized for impact on residents. Building relationships and gathering feedback from residents, they observed, is essential in this process.

The panel also provided a solid segue to the October program, Welcoming Neighborhoods Part II, scheduled October 21 (see description on [page 1](#)). One characteristic of good neighborhoods is where people know each other. In times where the opportunities for interaction can be limited, events like Night to Unite or programs offered by Do Good Roseville were cited several times for their positive impact. The October program will extend that concept, looking at perceptions of others different from ourselves, as well as actions large and small each of us can take to become welcoming neighbors.

If you registered for the first program, you are also registered for the October 21 program. If not, see the event description on [page 1](#) for details and registration information. We look forward to seeing you there!



From top left, clockwise: panelist Wayne Groff, panelist Erika Schneider, moderator Florence Sprague, panelist Curtis Johnson, and panelist Thomas Brooks.

LWV of Roseville Area Student Scholarships Offered This Year

By Karen Lake

A Student Scholarship Ad Hoc Committee was formed at the direction of the LWV of Roseville Area Board to identify area high school contact people for proposed student scholarships, decide an amount to grant, and to develop the criteria for award recipients. The overall goal of League in offering the scholarships was to increase visibility with young people, especially those from underrepresented communities. A \$500 scholarship, with an optional complimentary student membership in LWV of Roseville Area, will be provided to a 2021-22 graduating student at Roseville Area High School, Fairview Alternative High School, and Tartan High School, which are schools who have worked with our League chapter in the past on voter registrations. Each schools' Scholarship Committee, using the LWV of Roseville Area guidance criteria, will select the winner at their school and announcements and check presentations will occur in the Spring. Members of the Committee are: Barb Barany, Anne Haugen, Suzanne Sancilio, June Stewart, and Karen Lake.

Advocacy In Our Cities

Barb Luck and Karen Schaffer make a well received report to the Maplewood City Council on September 27 on behalf of the LWV of Roseville Area Equitable Representation Study Committee.



Watch: Falcon Heights City Council Candidate Forum

LWV of Roseville Area sponsored a candidate forum for the Falcon Heights City Council on September 15.

If you would like to watch a recording of the forum, go to the Nine-North website under their Extra Content / Speak Outs section:

<https://ninenorth.org/speak-outs/>.



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.

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

- **November 16 – Growing Diversity in Local Leadership.** LWV of Roseville Area recently looked into who is participating in local governance boards, and exploring how well these groups reflect the makeup of our communities in its study “Equitable Representation on Appointed City Boards & Commissions.” As a follow-up to this study, Holli Arp, Leadership and Civic Engagement Program Leader with the U of M Extension Services, will lead a panel discussion with two colleagues and Extension Educators, Jocelyn Hernandez Swanson and Lisa Hinz, asking, “How do we encourage and support more diverse and inclusive leadership in our local governments?” This Leadership and Civic Engagement team has been working with communities across Minnesota as they grapple with inclusiveness, cultural competence, and exploring new pathways to diversify leadership. Join the conversation! 6:30-8 pm; Zoom.

Member Spotlight: Wayne Groff

By Rita Mills

Wayne Groff learned early that “strong women's voices are needed at all levels of community service and in government.” So in 2016 he joined our chapter of the League of Women Voters. “I hope to become a more informed citizen through being a League member.”

Along with six sisters, Wayne was raised on a family farm in North Dakota, where all helped from an early age. His parents valued education, expecting that all would get some sort of education and further a chosen career. Providing a beautiful, quiet retreat from the worries of the world that farm is still owned by Wayne and his siblings.

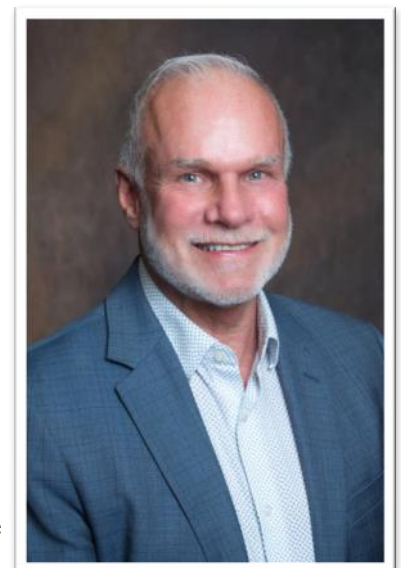
From that bucolic farm, Wayne moved on to North Dakota State University, getting a degree in landscape architecture. He continued his education with graduate work in Scandinavian Studies at the University of Minnesota. Drawn to problem solving elements of housing (finding the right fit for income and lifestyle) led Wayne to a career as a real estate agent. “I am interested in housing as my career but also in the bigger picture in society. We are reaching a housing crisis with homelessness. All types of housing must be considered.”

Wayne has and continues to be highly involved in civic and volunteer activities. He currently serves on the Roseville City Council where he focuses on housing and environment. “There is a bit of tension between those two issues. More housing requires development or re-development. The environment requires reducing our carbon footprint, saving trees and green spaces. So there is always a balancing act of how to accommodate both goals.”

In addition to volunteering with the Roseville parks for clean ups and removal of invasive species, Wayne serves on the Board of Arts Roseville, which supports a range of music to sculpture to painting, all with Roseville connections. He also serves on the board of Northeast Youth and Family Services (NYFS), an organization with counselors and programs assisting youth and families experiencing a variety of problems: educational, behavioral, and mental illnesses.

Believing that making voting available to all eligible voters in the United States is the bedrock of a successful democracy, Wayne joined League. Because it is non-partisan, Wayne believes League provides a safe place to share all ideas with members coming from various backgrounds and work experiences.

Thank you, Wayne, for your support and all you do for our community!



LWV of Roseville Area: October Event Calendar

- **October 4 – Should You Drink That? The Unfolding Story of PFAS in Our Lives.** See event details on [page 2](#); 6 pm; Zoom.
- **October 16 – Protecting the Metro Area Water Supply.** See event details on [page 2](#); 10-11:30 am Zoom.
- **October 21 – Welcoming Neighbors: Beyond Mr. Rogers, Part II.** See event details on [page 1](#); 7-8:30 pm; Zoom.
- **October 27 – LWV of Roseville Area Board Meeting.** See access details on [page 1](#); 7 pm; Zoom.
- **October – Equity & Accessibility in Voting: Young and Generation Z Voters.** Watch the eBlast for date and registration details.

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.



Right: Mrs. Fortune, President of the LWV of District Columbia, wipes away a tear at the League's reception for Congress held in connection with its National Council. Sign reads, "Good Grief! No vote!"