

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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In Search of Unity

The world is in turmoil. War, hunger, natural disasters, climate change, human rights, racism, sustainable development—challenges abound and the geopolitical situation is immensely complex. We all need to work together to better face these challenges, and yet these very challenges often seem to divide us more than unite us. Smack dab in the middle of all of these issues and crises sits the United Nations. What is the contemporary role of the United Nations? How can citizens support its work?

October 24 is United Nations Day. It marks the anniversary of the day in 1945 when the UN Charter entered into force. We will recognize it a week earlier at our meeting on Tuesday, October 18.

Yes, we are meeting in person.

When: Tuesday, October 18

Time: 6:30-8 pm

Where: Ramsey County Library Roseville, Meeting Room

Join us for light refreshments and conversation followed by a presentation by a speaker from the Minnesota Chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of America. Gather your thoughts and your questions for an interesting discussion. We're all in this world together!



UNITED NATIONS

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>

Are Our Metro Elections Secure?

The Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters (CMAL) presents, "Are Metro Area Elections Safe?" on Saturday, October 15, at 10 am via Zoom. Our speaker is Paul Linnell, Deputy Elections Director for the Minnesota Secretary of State, former Elections Manager for Anoka County. You will have direct access to Linnell to ask him about the security of voter registration data (including the poll pads), absentee ballot procedures, mail-in ballot verifications, security of ballot counting machines, post-election audits—and whatever else you can think of! The meeting is open to all LWV members and members of the public at this link: <https://lwmn-org.zoom.us/j/88315612153?pwd=bDBWYjRvMEM5dW5vWTFXamZMUWR2Zz09>

Questions? Email Karen Schaffer at schafferka@gmail.com.

LWV of Roseville Area October Board Meeting

The next LWV of Roseville Area Board meeting is Wednesday, October 26, at 7 pm. For Zoom access, contact Mary Peterson at lwvrosevillearea@lwmn.org in advance.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LWV of Roseville Area Board Members

Officers:

President

Barb Anderson

Vice President

Rachel Geiser

Secretary

Jen Peterson

Treasurer

Kathy Macomber

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Directors:

Action/Advocacy

Sherry Hood

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Mary Peterson

Membership

Rita Mills,
vice chair Mary Kay
VonDeLinde

Program

Florence Sprague,
vice chair Carol
Marchel

Voter Services

Marcia Cheney,
Nancy Simpson,
Teresa Wernecke

CMAL

Karen Schaffer,
Lisa Scribner

.....

Members-At-Large

Lisa Scribner
Wayne Groff

You may not have noticed in recent mailings from LWV of Minnesota that there are many new resources available to League members that can be useful for many of us.

- The August Academy offered sessions on such diverse topics as Defending Democracy, Climate Change Task Force, and Nonpartisanship. Recordings of the August Academy sessions can be found at <https://www.lwvmn.org/august-academy-2022>
- There is a new page called Elections 411 that contains information about how elections work in Minnesota, including voter registration, voting in person and by mail, and public tests, audits, and recounts. Find this page at <https://www.lwvmn.org/elections411>
- There is a new page dedicated to naturalization ceremonies, which also contains a tribute to our own Judy Stuthman, and where you can sign up to register new citizens at naturalization ceremonies. Find that link at <https://www.lwvmn.org/naturalization-ceremonies>
- Finally, the League is looking for volunteers to join the County Observer Corps. Volunteers are needed to observe at Ramsey County board meetings and be present if necessary to dispel election disinformation when misinformed members of the public make allegations of voter fraud. It doesn't take much time, and training will be provided. Please contact Sam Streukens, Civic Engagement Director, for more information: ssstreukens@lwvmn.org



President Barb Anderson

As I write this, we are in the thick of candidate forum season. I have been fortunate to participate in three forums so far. I am so impressed with the care and planning taken with these events, led supremely by Teresa Wernecke, and assisted by a myriad of League volunteers. Kudos to Teresa as well as all of the Voter Services team for all the work they do to make these events a success. They demonstrate why the League is such a respected organization when it comes to election information. Watch our website <https://lwvrosevillearea.org/> for recordings of the candidate forums. They are posted there as soon as the videos are available.

I hope you were able to see the Ranked Choice Voting program on September 20. If you missed it, you can find a recording of it on the Ramsey County Library's website. See an event recap and a link to the recording on [page 5](#). The library has been a vital partner for LWV of Roseville Area, especially since the start of the pandemic. We hope to continue this partnership going forward.

Make sure to check out the Future Events Calendar and October Calendar at the end of this newsletter to find out about upcoming League events.

Talking About Race Series — Postponed

The earlier announced discussion series, "Talking About Race," co-sponsored by LWV of Roseville Area and Do Good Roseville, has been postponed. It is hoped that the series can be offered at a later date. Stay posted. Contact Kathy Ramundt at kramundt@hotmail.com or 612-221-5451 (cell) with questions.

Environmental Question

Trees have many benefits (and an effect on the climate). They clean our air, water and soil; produce oxygen and take up carbon dioxide; provide habitat, shelter, and nourishment for birds, insects, and animals; beautify our community; provide tree canopy to reduce the temperature; and lower energy costs. What impact do trees have in reducing energy use?

(See [page 7](#) for the answer to this environmental question.)

Generating Generational Voting?

By Florence Sprague

Do you vote? I hope that sounds like a silly question to ask of an LWV of Roseville Area member. How do you think of voting? Is it a right...a privilege...a responsibility...a duty...an opportunity...a power...a burden? Pointless?

Minnesota is proud of its high voter turnout in general elections. (You can view lots of voter data at <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/election-administration-campaigns/data-maps/historical-voter-turnout-statistics/>) About 80% of eligible voters voted in 2020. But when one looks at the numbers by age, it is clear that we cannot stop promoting voting. While in 2018, over 80% of senior citizens in Minnesota voted, only 37% of the newest eligible voters, 18–19 year olds, voted. Maybe that is not as bad as it looks at first glance; it can be hard to learn new habits, but it won't happen unless it is meaningful to them. On the other hand, that 80% is of a diminishing group; it is losing its power.



The much-flogged truth is that we all live in a world created by those who came before us. Sometimes it is easy to forget that we have the power to change the direction for those that follow us.

The demographics of this country are in constant flux. It has been said the Millennials are the most diverse generation, and it is likely that the named generations following them are still more diverse (<https://www.bentley.edu/news/power-millennials-dont-know-they-have>). Why should this matter? It provides challenges and opportunities in many areas. You have likely observed that on many touchy social issues that feel like major shifts in attitude to Boomers, the millennials and followers see the norm. They expect a different degree of inclusivity. The younger a generation, the more DIEB (diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging) is not just a cluster of letters, but a normal way of life.

But whatever their political bent, younger generations have a lot of power at the polls if they can use it. For some years the voting turnout of youth has been low (<https://iop.harvard.edu/low-midterm-turnout-likely-conservatives-more-enthusiastic-harvard-youth-poll-finds>). But while the percentages may be discouraging, in absolute numbers, beginning in 2018, the younger generations have begun to outvote the Boomers and their elders (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/29/gen-z-millennials-and-gen-x-outvoted-older-generations-in-2018-midterms/>).

Ben Wessel, executive director of Nextgen America, has said, “The goal of a democracy should be that the people who are participating in it look a lot like the people who live in it. Right now, the electorate is older, Whiter, and wealthier than the population writ large.” Looking toward the future, the Millennials and the alphabet generations have a major stake in this country. Our task is to help them see their role and their power and influence via voting.

It often seems that it can be more difficult for young and BIPOC (black and indigenous people of color) voters to access the system. For some the question is whether to vote at home or at college? For others, how to get off work and get to the polls? Do I have ID, and on and on (<https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/02/politics/voting-rights-bill-millennials-generation-z/index.html>). There has even been a whole book (which I have not read; no endorsement intended) written about getting the under 50s engaged in voting (*Millennials and Generations Z Guide to Voting: What No One Ever Told You About the Importance of Voting*, by Jennifer P. Wisdom.)

I have an LWV bumper sticker on my car that says My *Power* is My Vote. Pass on the message!

Voter Services Report

By Voter Services

September saw the start of candidate forums, 10 in all. Three were partnerships with LWV of St. Paul and LWV of White Bear. Teresa Wernecke coordinated the multitude of details to ensure the forums took place and were conducted professionally. Behind the scenes, Teresa invited candidates, identified and secured locations for the forums, completed recording arrangements, worked with the five moderators, secured questions, directed volunteers at the forums, etc. Nancy Simpson worked with candidates to ensure their data and statements appear on <https://www.vote411.org/>. Out of 47 contested candidates, 23 have responded with their bio and/or answers, and 24 have not yet responded. Nancy also created a SignUp Genius site for members to volunteer for set-up and timekeeping. The Communications Team is promoting the forums and sharing recordings of them for future viewing.

Outreach efforts continued with participation in the September 9 Festival for Change sponsored by Roseville Lutheran Church. Several new voters were registered and guidance provided to others regarding updating their registrations because of address changes. Information was shared about upcoming candidate forums, voter resources, and the importance of encouraging others to vote.

The Festival for Change, created to celebrate cultural wealth and togetherness, included multiple performances, a display of some of the plywood panels created in response to the murder of George Floyd, and information tables staffed by organizations working for justice. BIPOC food trucks were present throughout. Networking with the participants, voter education and registration programs were offered.

Plans for Youth Ambassadors at Roseville Area High School continue. Marcia Cheney continues to work with staff at the school, eliciting applications for two positions. Interest by students is reported by staff. LWVMN is currently accepting grant applications for Youth Civic Engagement Fellows. The application, requesting funding for two students, will be submitted in the immediate future.

August Event Recap: Be SMART— A Conversation About Kids and Guns

By Carol Marchel

On August 18, the League of Women Voters of Roseville Area and Ramsey County Library co-hosted “Be SMART: A Conversation about Kids and Guns.” Be SMART was developed by the Be SMART for Kids campaign in an effort to reduce gun-related deaths and injuries in the home. The program encourages safe gun practices, and avoids the politicization of the gun control debate.

If you missed this event, it’s not too late! The library recorded this program and it can be found at: <https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcldadult/course/53764/lesson/154719>

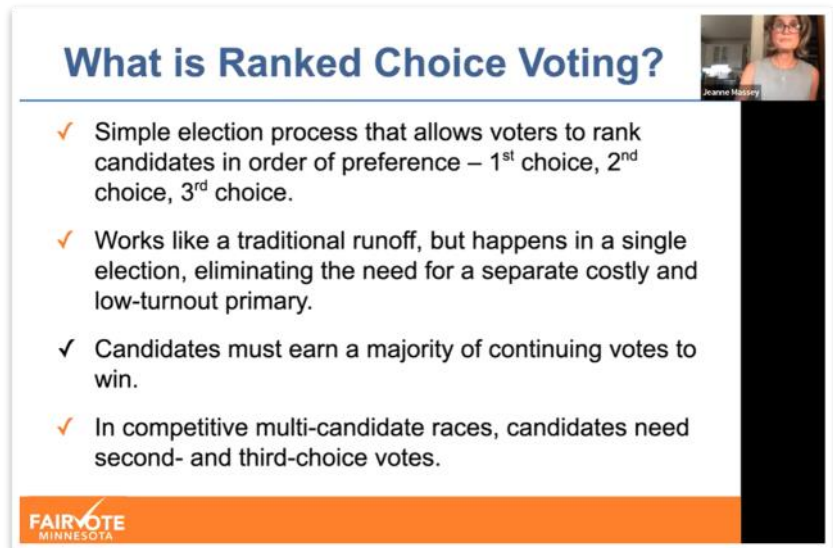


September Event Recap: Ranked Choice Voting — “A Fix for Democracy”

By Mindy Greiling

What increases voter turnout, the number of BIPOC and female candidates, bipartisanship, and lessens negative campaigning? Presenters at the September 20 LWV of Roseville Area meeting told attendees that Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) does all this and more.

Jeanne Massey, Executive Director of FairVote Minnesota (<https://fairvotemn.org/>), a national leader in the movement for RCV, also said, “RCV is a fix for democracy. Major democracies around the world use it and are more stable because of it. For example, Northern Ireland. RCV incentivizes candidates to build broad coalitions so they can win.”



What is Ranked Choice Voting?

- ✓ Simple election process that allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference – 1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice.
- ✓ Works like a traditional runoff, but happens in a single election, eliminating the need for a separate costly and low-turnout primary.
- ✓ Candidates must earn a majority of continuing votes to win.
- ✓ In competitive multi-candidate races, candidates need second- and third-choice votes.

FAIRVOTE MINNESOTA

Jeanne Massey

Massey credited the League of Women Voters for cities currently using RCV. Minneapolis started using it shortly after LWVMN studied the issue in 2004, which resulted in this position: <https://www.lwvmn.org/voting-electionadministration>. LWV of St. Louis Park led the successful effort in their city, and Leagues in St. Paul, Bloomington and Minnetonka worked in coalitions to initiate RCV. The key to passage is voter education.

All Minnesota cities that use RCV are charter cities; they can initiate RCV by unanimous Council vote or by ballot measure. Cities that are not charter cities must look to the Legislature to pass pending enabling legislation (HF89 Elkins and SF218 Eken). None of our League’s five cities (Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maplewood, or Roseville) are charter cities. Some cities have passed resolutions in support of RCV, but none of our cities have.

Mary Hartnett, Executive Director of Clean Elections Minnesota (<https://cleanelectionsmn.org/>), a group dedicated to election reforms, stated, “Of all the issues we advocate for, RCV has the most traction. It is close to passing next year.” Hartnett discussed her role in chairing a city council campaign and how RCV helped with civility. Voters at doors expressed thanks for RCV.

The main concern about RCV is that it appears confusing. Massey said that is a non-argument that is due to lack of knowledge. Once voters have a bit of education they are overwhelmingly supportive. Eighty-eight percent of Minneapolis voters found RCV easy to use and 76 percent want it to continue. Eighty-seven percent of voters in Bloomington are satisfied with RCV.

Other RCV points:

- Elections become more transparent.
- Because voters have more choice and power, turnout is higher.
- Cities that eliminate low-turnout August primaries save money and garner more (and more diverse) candidates, because they don’t need to get through the primary hoop.
- RCV ends with a clear winner having a majority, using second and third votes if necessary, so there is no need for run-off elections, and recounts are less likely.
- The RCV time lag could be lessened if Minnesota certified existing software.

Ramsey County Library Roseville co-sponsored the Zoom meeting and handled registrations and technology. League member Karen Schaffer moderated. You can watch a recording of the program at this link:

<https://my.nicheacademy.com/rcladult/course/53766/lesson/154720>

Spotlight: Voter Services 2022



Future League Events

Event recording: Many events are recorded. To watch a recording, go to our website (<http://lwvrosevillearea.org/>), click or tap on the YouTube icon on the right side, and select a recorded event. If the event was held virtually through the Ramsey County Library, a recording link is provided in an eBlast and Voter following the event. Recorded library events are also posted on their website.

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

- **November TBD** – Discussion and consensus questions on the LWVMN Firearms Study. Study materials and event details will be forthcoming.
 - **January 19 – Conversations with Constituents.** Annual conversations with local elected officials. Event details forthcoming.
 - **February TBD** – Session on juvenile justice. Event details forthcoming.
 - **March TBD** – Tour of Muslim center, Rabata, led by a panelist and LWV of Roseville Area member, Tamara Gray. Event details forthcoming.
 - **May TBD – Annual Meeting.** Event details forthcoming.
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2022 Candidate Forums

By Voter Services

- **Postponed until October TBD** – 7-8 pm; **Ramsey County Commission District 3.** LWV of St. Paul and LWV of Roseville Area are partnering. Rachel Geiser is moderating. **Questions should be sent to office@lwvsp.org by date TBD; include D3 in the subject line.** Live access for this forum is via Cable Channels 15 and HD859 or online at: <https://www.ninenorth.org/>
- **October 6 (Thursday)** – 7 pm, **Lauderdale Mayor and Council.** Candidates will be in-person; no in-person audience. Kathy Macomber will be moderating. **Send questions to lwvrosevillearea@lwvmn.org by Tuesday, October 4; include L in the subject line.** Live access for this forum is via Cable Channels 15 and HD859 or online at: <https://www.ninenorth.org/>

With the 2020 Census, several election related maps have changed.

- **Congressional District 4:** <https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/redist2020/Congressional/C2022/maps/4.pdf>
 - **Senate Districts:** <https://sos.state.mn.us/election-administration-campaigns/data-maps/minnesota-senate-maps/>
 - **House A & B:** <https://sos.state.mn.us/election-administration-campaigns/data-maps/minnesota-senate-maps/>
 - **Ramsey County Commissioner Districts:** <https://www.ramseycounty.us/sites/default/files/About%20Ramsey%20County/CountyCommissioner2022.pdf>
-

Environmental Answer

Planting the correct varieties of trees that are properly placed around, particularly around one to two story buildings, can reduce air conditioning needs by 30% and save 20-50% in energy costs used for heating.

To learn more go to <https://www.americanforests.org/>

(See [page 2](#) for the Environmental Question to accompany this answer.)

LWV of Roseville Area: October Event Calendar

- **October 15 – Are Our Metro Elections Secure?** CMAL event on election security. See event details on [page 1](#).
- **October 18 – In Search of Unity** LWV of Roseville Area event on United Nations and related topics; in person at Ramsey County Library Roseville Meeting Room, 6:30-8 pm. See event details on [page 1](#).
- **October 26 – LWV of Roseville Area Board Meeting.** See access details on [page 1](#); 7 pm, Zoom.

