



Annual Board Report 2019-2020

**This report provides a look at all that was accomplished
by our dedicated member volunteers this year and
recognizes those who have been members for more than 50 years!**

Join Us in Celebrating Our 50 Year Members who joined in 1970!

- ❖ Janet Midtbo*
- ❖ Joan Niemiec*
- ❖ Ann Pugliese*

And all of our 50 Year Members

<i>Barbara Perry</i>	<i>Grace Joyslin</i>	<i>Nancy Witta</i>
<i>Marion Wardell</i>	<i>Harriet Johnson</i>	<i>Karen Michael</i>
<i>Shirley Ungar</i>	<i>Laura Weinberger</i>	<i>Marilyn Moon</i>
<i>Barbara Flanigan</i>	<i>Vivian Mason</i>	<i>Patricia Scott</i>
<i>Ruth Premer</i>	<i>Geraldine Sell</i>	<i>Jane Starr</i>
<i>Dorothy Lilja</i>	<i>Ann Jaede</i>	<i>Margit Berg</i>
<i>Gwen Myers</i>	<i>Alice Moormann</i>	<i>Karen Ringsrud</i>
<i>Sally Sawyer</i>	<i>Sue Verrett</i>	<i>Mary Duffy</i>
<i>Marion Hall</i>		

We are grateful to each and every one of you!

2019-20 Board Member Reports

Alice Moormann, Co-President

As Co-Presidents, Anita and I worked cooperatively in managing the office of President. Since Anita had developed the impressive voter registration project and managed, and was currently familiar with, the additional Voter Services portfolios last year, she was willing to continue. I agreed to take on the Program aspects of our work. I worked closely with our Program Co-Chairs, Anne McLaughlin and Dyan Venters, as they found speakers for Civic Buzz, developed discussion content for the unit meetings, and tried some new ideas.

One of my goals was to update the bylaws. With a wonderful team we retained both the Education and Advocacy Bylaws. Articles from the latter, such as insurance coverage and how delegates to conventions are selected, were moved to the primary (Education) bylaws. Adding participation by remote phone and internet became more important as the coronavirus prohibited group gatherings. We clarified the Annual Meeting program process while retaining the voice of the membership in the final decisions.

I joined the Nominations Committee, being unable to recruit a required fifth member. This committee also is wonderful and are presenting an exciting slate for the coming year.

My one regret is not being able to keep the DEI Committee active but plan to be on it as I continue for 2020-21 as Past President.

Anita Newhouse, Co-President

Unprecedented is the popular word to describe the happenings of 2020, but reflections on the preceding year reveal league accomplishments that were equally momentous. A declared focus and commitment to exploring principles to make us more inclusive as an organization, a clear emphasis on process and board discipline, and an expertly crafted and well attended 100 year anniversary celebration along with a solid fundraising effort are just some highlights of a busy and highly productive year. My focus has been on developing and pursuing connection points, both within our League and in our community, that provide potential for growth of individual members and of LWV Minneapolis as an organization. I felt compelled to accept the Co-president role, serving together with Alice Moormann, because we share a vision of the kind of inclusive and vibrant organization I think we all want to be a part of and one that will assure sustainability for our rich 100 year legacy.

LWVMpls adopted “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” (DEI) as a thematic framework for planning and program in 2019-20. Topics arising from our grassroots program planning process fit easily within this framework and a DEI committee formed to develop both membership education resources for units and a public film screening and discussion. DEI principles guided board members in adopting the board year goals for our league.

While a board gets tasked with the job of steering and protecting the organization, individual board chairs bring skills and expertise for the benefit of the organization and we were very fortunate in that respect. Beginning with a thorough and well planned orientation, our league's 2019-20 board committed to a high level of procedural discipline in order to accomplish an ambitious list of goals and projects over the year. Personnel, Nominations, Bylaws, Policy and Procedures, Budget, Membership and Communications committees convened under board member leadership in addition to continuing work of the Parks Committee. Operational and finance matters were brought into industry compliance and policies and procedures were updated through board action. A defined communication plan has been put into motion after a careful examination of the various methods we as an organization use to engage one another and the public. Membership researched proposals for refining our membership offering through a DEI lens. This hard working and talented board will leave our league secure and heading in a good direction.

The division of work Alice and I assumed at the beginning of the board year allowed me to continue guiding voter service. While our coordinators skillfully managed and even expanded their portfolios, I maintained the network of partnerships that give our league access to targeted, low voting groups across the city. The annual Minneapolis Community Connections Conference was a network building, community engagement success where radio interview spots got us broader exposure. Board action put into place a voter service volunteer statement of nonpartisanship and mission for all LWVMpls volunteers going forward.

Tremendous work went into the production that was the 100th Anniversary Celebration event. I think we can all agree that it was worth it! Working from a novel playbook for our league, the event committee accomplished a double feat of a memorable event and successful fundraiser. We invited the community and they showed up giving testament to the legacy we're known for: Educate, Advocate, Empower. Repeat.

Looking forward into the great uncertainty we're saddled with due to the pandemic, we've weathered the transition to meeting and working online. I embrace the idea that adversity presents opportunity. My goals for the coming year are to continue the work of integrating principles of DEI into the work we do and the relationships we enter into and collaboratively build a path to a more sustainable legacy, one that includes the friends and members we have yet to meet.

Marie Schwartz, Secretary

This year as Secretary has certainly been one of learning for me. It was an exercise in careful listening to and focusing on deep, thoughtful, and energetic discussions by a board committed to collaboration. As a board, we wanted to make sure the basics of a well-run organization continued to be followed, so we undertook updating the bylaws for both the Education Fund and the Advocacy Fund (in addition to the Policies and Procedures), and also reinstated the work of the Personnel Committee. So, in addition to recording the Board and Executive Committee meeting minutes, I spent a lot of time on both the Bylaws Committee and the Personnel Committee. I look forward to grounding the next Secretary in some of the best practices which were passed on to me.

Carrie Lichtenberg, Treasurer

My year as Treasurer/Operations Director was a year of staff transitions. Thanks to my co-members of the Personnel Committee (Rosemary Lawrence, Marie Schwartz and Anita Newhouse) for support to recruit, interview, and hire our new Office Coordinator. We welcomed Traia Thiel to LWVMpls, replacing Kathi Marks. Traia handles our internal financial and operational processes and controls and is the main liaison to our contract Accountant, Dennis Albrecht. Recently, Traia has assumed additional responsibilities supporting League communications. The expertise, dedication, and support of Carla Jacobson were instrumental in the hiring and onboarding of Traia, while assuming additional responsibilities as her Supervisor. Carla ensures office administration activities do not miss a beat, regardless of changes or adversities. Beginning in mid-March the Sabathani offices closed in response to COVID-19 guidelines. The Office/Finance Team has continued to support the organization's needs while working remotely.

Other activities included providing budgeting support to the Fundraising Team who managed within their expense targets and successfully raised funds to support the sustainability of the League. Well done! At the Board's request, I performed a review of our insurance coverage and we obtained D&O insurance. I also participated as a member of Committees to review and update both our Bylaws and Policies & Procedures documents.

I continue to provide the Board a monthly analysis of our financial results.

Dyan Venters and Anne McLaughlin, Program Co-Chairs

LWVMpls started the year rather abruptly. Anne and I were eager to get going with programming for October 2019, and then there was a change. The September Civic Buzz was still going forward. Being that we were asked to proceed, we ventured forward.

We spent many hours reviewing the information from the members on topics that were of interest, per our by-laws. We held a meeting with our Board Co-President Alice Moormann and based on these conversations we decided that a program addressing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was where we should begin our year since it was identified as a guiding focus for LWVMpls.

Our goal was to present programs that represented the interest of the members, as determined from Program Planning from last year, and to provide historical context for furthering the conversation around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. How do we ask the questions of ourselves and what can we do differently to make changes in our own cognitions and emotions about issues that affect our city?

September: Diversity Equity and Inclusion Our first Civic Buzz established the basis for our year going forward. After meeting with Alice Moormann to discuss our platform of DEI we wanted to bring a program that would set the tone for the year. How could we do this with such short notice? How do we set the context for the year?

Well, after many discussions between the two of us we settled on a video of Carol Anderson, the Charles Howard Candler professor of African American Studies at Emory University and author of several books. In the video, she discussed her best seller, "White Rage." In her book and her presentations she provides some historical patterns of discrimination that led to where we are currently. It was food for thought and contemplation.

October: Immigration October provided an opportunity for education on the issues surrounding immigration and immigrants in our city.

We had a robust team of presenters: Justin Hollis, Research Specialist for the Wilder Center. Justin provided us with a demographic and statistical foundation for our discussion. Michelle Rivero, Director of the Office of Immigrants and Refuge Affairs provided information on the city's policies and procedures around immigration, and how her office interfaces with other agencies. Hennepin County Commissioner, Marion Greene, also joined us for an update on the county position regarding our immigrant community. Lindsey Greising, Staff attorney for the Advocates for Human Rights, provided information on the legal issues facing immigrants and their involvement. There was a robust engagement and a very good turnout.

November: No Civic Buzz - We celebrated our 100th Anniversary

December: Medical Aid in Dying: The December topic for LWV Minneapolis was Medical Aid in Dying, also called Death with Dignity or End of Life Options. The Utah LWV studied this topic and adopted a position in 2016. Throughout the month of November until mid-December, LWVMpls members reviewed the Utah position materials. Discussions were held at unit meetings in November and at the December Civic Buzz where our speaker, Thaddeus Pope, JD, PhD, Director of the Health Law Institute and Professor of Law at Mitchell Hamline University School of Law spoke to the issue. All members were encouraged to become informed and respond to the concurrence statement.

The LWVMpls Board of Directors voted that League undertake a process for concurrence with the Utah position. Materials for study included: the Utah Study, Utah Position statement, an Addendum of update information since 2016 including links to House File 2152 and to Star Tribune articles, and this Overview along with Discussion Questions.

Required consensus to concur with the LWV Utah position was two-thirds of those voting. The results from the polling follows: A total of 80 (31%) of members voted, 76 (95%) agreed to support the LWV Utah position, 3 (4%) did not support the LWV Utah position, 1 (1%) abstained. From these results, LWVMpls members support the LWV Utah Medical Aid in Dying position. The position was approved by the Board of Directors and has been added to our Program for Action.

The issue is now being brought to LWVMN with a recommendation that it be a part of LWVMN's positions. Approval at the state level will require 2/3rds of delegates to the 2020 State Council to approve it. Materials have been shared with the Leagues throughout the state, insuring they had the required two months to study the issue.

January: Voting in the Presidential Primary Election January presented a great opportunity for the Minneapolis League to partner with the St Paul League focusing on the process for the Presidential Primary election that took place in early March. Claudia Dieter, Program Chair for St. Paul, had engaged the Secretary of State, Steve Simon, to be the speaker, so what an opportunity. The meeting was held in St. Paul at St. Paul Neighborhood Network and the partnership was a success. This timely event was taped and posted on our website for those not able to attend.

February: 2020 Neighborhoods Plan This was an exciting topic for our members and the community as a whole. The Neighborhoods 2020 plan topic brought a large turnout. Our speakers were C. Terrence Anderson, Director of Community Based Research/CURA and Robert Thompson, a consultant. Terrence presented the results of the study that he and his team were commissioned to do by the City of Minneapolis. C. Terrence's team was charged with looking at the past policies through a

racial equity lens and to make recommendations to the City in order to make the programs more equitable. Robert Thompson presented another statistical point of view that showed that the neighborhood organizations' funds were currently more equitable. A robust question and answer period followed their presentations. We are always pleased when the community comes out and participates. This was one of those times.

March: Public School Redesign, or Comprehensive District Design, or CDD This topic created a great deal of ongoing "Civic Buzz." The members were sent written materials and links to videos that showcased town hall meetings where the architects of this plan were holding community listening sessions. The Minneapolis School Board will voted in support of the plan on May 12, 2020. Catherine Shreves also interviewed Superintendent Ed Graff on "We the People." The conversation continues.

April: There was not a Civic Buzz or unit meeting due to the statewide shut down. We moved the Affordable Care Act discussion to May.

May: Changes to the Affordable Care Act Links were sent to the Units for review and discussion. The links included information on the ACA and the general state of health in Minneapolis. We reached out to Gretchen Musicant, Health Commissioner for the City of Minneapolis for information on the health of the city. She responded by sending her recent presentation that we shared with the units. Units were to decide if they would have online meetings to discuss the materials.

Of course now we are now at a place where we will need to decide how to move forward due to Covid-19. We are reviewing structures and platforms that could be used to bring these educational seminars to our members, as well as the community.

Program Plans for 2020- 2021: **The final plans for next year's programming will be determined at the annual meeting.** Moving forward to September, we will be making some changes due to COVID-19.

We want to thank those who supported us and allowed us to lean on their experience. Julaine Heit, former Program Chair, Joan Niemiec, Civic Buzz Coordinator, Alice Moormann and Anita Newhouse, Co-Presidents. We could not have done it without your support and historical perspective.

Katie Fournier, Membership Chair

Our membership as of April 30th stands at 246 members, up from 223 members at the same time last year. The increase appears largely due to people's interest in being involved with our Voter Services and Voter Registration activities. As usual, a certain number of members were dropped from membership on January 31st for non-payment of dues. This year it was 31 members. (This date is used because it is the date when LWVMpls must make "per-member-payments", or PMPs, for every current member to LWVMN and LWVUS. We do not want to make PMPs for people who aren't current in their dues.)

Your Membership Committee has continued the practice started in 2018 of calling all new members (or writing them if no phone number) to welcome them to LWVMpls. In these contacts we also offer to answer any questions they may have about LWV membership.

In October and November committee members also continued the annual practice of calling all members who hadn't paid their 2019-20 dues to remind them they would be dropped at the end of January if their dues were not current. Reminders about dues were also included in the Thursday

Update and The Voter. This did result in a number of renewals, as well as some good conversations about LWVMpls.

The committee has wrestled with concerns over the high cost of membership (\$90, of which \$59 goes to LWVMN and LWVUS in PMPs). We are aware that \$90 poses a barrier to many who might be interested in joining LWVMpls. We were pleased to have had the participation and advice of member Sue Hnastchenko, LWVMN membership chair, as we investigated other possibilities for structuring our dues. Sue pointed us to innovative examples in LWVMilwaukee, LWVMadison, and LWVAnoka, Blaine, Coon Rapids for structuring dues to be more attractive to younger or less-affluent people. LWVDuluth is another example that offers possibilities.

We had hoped to develop a lower-cost plan for the many non-members on the Voter Registration action list, but have not been able to meet to work out the details of what that might be. Other possibilities for recruiting new members, if we had such a plan, could be found in starting student units. The Somali population on the West Bank has also expressed an interest in starting a unit. Their interest was piqued by conversation with LWVMpls volunteers at a neighborhood election. We trust that the 2020-21 Membership Committee will continue to explore this question.

Marion Hall, Voter Assignment Editor

Our newsletter, The Voter, saw changes in 2020, not only in its new look designed by Communications Chair, Katie Heit Gardner, but also in its frequency. Instead of coming out eight times a year, it will now be issued four times. The Communications Committee saw that other media vehicles could bring information that is more up to date. The information included in each issue is meant to inform readers and serve also as a public record of League activities. Thanks to the work of writers, editors, and proof readers who insured a quality publication.

Katie Gardner, Communications Chair

I joined the Board in 2019 as the Communications director. One of the board's main initiatives for 2019-2020 has been to examine and refine our communication channels, so it's been a busy year!

Last fall, we put a lot of energy into promoting our 100th Anniversary. We promoted the celebration event through email blasts, social media, our website and postcards. It was well attended and a great success (50% of attendees were not members!). Deborah Jindra and I created a 100 -year historical timeline of women trailblazers of Minneapolis, along with corresponding Minneapolis suffragist series cards, highlighting a handful of these prominent women. This timeline was also showcased at the Open House for Minneapolis Election and Voter Services' new facility in October 2019 and the Minneapolis Community Connections conference in February 2020.

Our goal for 2020 is to reach a broader audience and increase awareness and visibility of the great programs we have, by promoting Civic Buzz and We the People in social media and in local neighborhood journals and newspapers. And, now with the new shelter-in-place world we are finding ourselves in, it has proven even more important that we make sure our online communication channels are working well for the public and our members. We will utilize our website and social media to their fullest potential so that everyone has a place to find what they need. We also plan to put energy into communicating the importance of voting this fall!

Successes of 2019-2020 for our communications efforts include:

- Educate, Advocate, Empower. Repeat. Our new tagline/vision statement
- Updated Membership brochure
- Branded T-shirts and Buttons to promote organization pride, and visibility
- 100th Anniversary celebration promotion and materials
Twelve foot long 100-year Minneapolis timeline of women trailblazers, with corresponding Minneapolis Suffragist Series cards
An updated weekly email newsletter, formatted and organized for easier reading
- An updated Voter newsletter, now published quarterly

Goals for 2020 include:

- Increase awareness and visibility into all that LWVMpls has to offer the community
- Promote Civic Buzz and We the People via website, social media and local journals/newspapers
Reach a broader and more diverse audience
- Utilize our website to it's fullest potential by using this platform to tell our story better, and keeping it up-to-date, and easier to use
- Do all that we can to communicate how important it is to Vote this fall!

Saralyn Romanishan, Community Engagement Chair

Late in 2019, I joined the LWVMpls Board with a goal of increasing outreach, engagement, and inclusion among current and new members. In line with this goal is my strong support of accountability and in increasing our Observer Corps. In correlation with these ideals and utilizing my knowledge of Neighborhood Associations, I was also able to assist with the Neighborhoods 2020 Civic Buzz.

Over the past year, in my capacity as Neighborhood Elections Coordinator, I coordinated Neighborhood and Condominium Association Board Elections and Annual Meetings and, until the recent sunset of the NCEC, LWVMpls also worked their elections. These elections expand the outreach of LWVMpls and earn us honorariums that help support other LWVMpls programs.

2020 is a very different year. We had several neighborhood elections in January and February. As with everything else, unprecedented disruptions started in March and all in-person elections were cancelled. We were asked for advice on remote elections. Unfortunately, we did not yet have the capacity to assist neighborhoods in their remote meetings as LWVMpls was also undergoing similar transitions.

A lot of changes will need to be made. I am in the process of reaching out to the neighborhoods to see how LWVMpls can assist them in the many changes they face with the inability of holding in person elections, large annual meetings, and community events. By-law changes and special provisions need to be passed and research needs to be done for new ways of conducting elections and non-profit business *inclusively*.

We have a lot to do but we, as League of Women Voters, are the most capable group to meet them head-on. I look forward to working with you on the challenges of 2020 and beyond.

Pam Telleen, 100th Anniversary Committee Chair

Educate Advocate Empower Repeat 100 years and Counting!

LWV Minneapolis held a fund raiser for their 100th Anniversary. The event was the culmination of over 400 hours of volunteer time and included many new ideas for our organization. There were no tickets sold and no silent auction. Rather, envelopes and pledge cards were available for all attendees and the entertainment, The Theater of Public Policy, pitched the idea of donations throughout the evening. The selling of merchandize commemorating the historic year as well as a cash bar were used to supplement the donations.

The Celebration theme was present in decorations and menu. One special highlight was the “history wall” which included a visual time line poster and many artifacts from years past. Large banners, created for the event and available for future projects, were in the corners of the room. A voting booth and Voter Registration materials were available for guests to visit. Balloons and many posters lined the walls and were educational as well as entertaining.

The event was held at the Lake Calhoun Event Center and food was catered by Broders’ Cucina. All of the drinks and birthday cakes were donated by various establishments.

Our goal was to get 150 people to attend but we had over 250 responses and over 220 people ended up attending. Many guests from the community and friends of members attended the event, perhaps a first for many. Even if they didn’t donate, they learned about the many programs and goals of the organization.

The committee members were: Karlynn Fronek, Katie Gardner, Marion Hall, Deborah Jindra, Carrie Lichtenberg, Anne McLaughlin, Janet Midtbo, Joan Niemiec, Anita Newhouse, Binky Rockwell, Pam Telleen, Rebecca Thoman, Dyan Venters, Judy Walter.

Janet Midtbo and Rosemary Lawrence, Election Night Services

LWV Mpls Election Night Project 2019-2020

After 2019, a year without an election, 2020 is a completely different and unique year. In March 2020 Minnesota held its first presidential primary election in decades and LWV Minneapolis resumed its work with Minneapolis’ Elections & Voter Services as part of the city’s CORE (Charitable Organizations Recruitment for Elections) project providing staff election night at two drop-off locations: Bethel Lutheran Church in south Minneapolis and Minneapolis’ new Elections and Voter Services’ facility on East Hennepin Avenue.

In March eighty dedicated and enthusiastic LWV members, relatives, and friends were trained and sworn in as election judges to perform the very specific election night work of checking for signatures, making sure everything was turned in, and sorting over a dozen items by ward and precinct from each of Minneapolis’ 134 precincts. With accuracy and efficiency they again earned the appreciation of precinct election judges and Minneapolis’ Elections and Voter Services staff. Through the donation of each volunteer’s time LWV Minneapolis received \$8,000.

Although a March Presidential Primary Election was unusual for Minnesota, the August Primary and the November (Presidential) General Elections may prove to be even more exceptional. City, county, and state officials are working to determine how to provide voters safe access to the ballot as well as a safe work environment for people involved in the elections during this year of the COVID 19 influenza

Rosemary Lawrence and Janet Midtbo co-chair the project and take their hats off to the dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers who support the city and the league in this important good government endeavor.