

THE VOTER

News for League of Women Voters Minneapolis Members and Friends



Preserving Democracy: Focal Point at Local and National Meetings

BY DEBORAH JINDRA

After several years of pandemic, climate and financial anxiety, political upheaval and attacks on our democratic institutions, it can be tempting to throw up one's hands in despair. However, after more than 100 years of tackling really big issues, the League of Women Voters continues to attract dedicated optimists who envision a better future. Gatherings may still be virtual sometimes but the work is getting done. The June 16 LWVMpls Annual Meeting was an opportunity for reflection along with getting the business of LWV accomplished. Thank you to those members who were able to attend. For those of you who might have missed it, please check the Member Resources section of our website where the video of the meeting is posted (www.lwvmpls.org). Background materials for the meeting are still available there as well.

The meeting began with a presentation from Jill Burcum, editorial writer for the *StarTribune*, who offered thoughts on how to receive and share words that substantiate truth and enhance understanding. Great discussion during the meeting encouraged us to reflect on the importance of learning from and following the lead of community when doing our work.

In addition, the necessary business of the meeting was accomplished. We have updated our bylaws, and approved the LWVUS and LWVMpls programs for 2022-23, a budget, and the slate of nominees. Julaine Heit was nominated from the floor and has agreed to serve as past president. We'd like to express our appreciation to all of those who contributed to the successes of 2021-22 and truly welcome all who have stepped up to guide our 2022-23 efforts. Our work is cut out for us in the coming year.

The LWVUS Convention was held from June 23-26 in Denver, Colorado, with 1000+ members from all 50 states joining both virtually and in person. Notably, the 2022 convention coincided with the Supreme Court's decision

to overturn the constitutional right to abortion. In her opening remarks, LWVUS Board President Deborah Ann Turner reflected on her experiences as an obstetrician/gynecologist and the LWV's dedication to reproductive justice.

"We hold the power to create a more perfect democracy. Women's rights are human rights, and we will continue to fight until the right to abortion is restored," Dr. Turner stated. "This is the work that the League of Women Voters does.... We fight for our freedom. And that's why we are here today at Convention."

Dr. Turner closed by announcing the LWV's next "moonshot" goal: abolition of the Electoral College. LWV has long supported this goal due to the college's racist history and many shortcomings.

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From the President

COLLEEN MORIARTY, PRESIDENT



This has been another year of extraordinary events for LWV Minneapolis. Our LWV has been active in the community with new and emerging issues, moderating debates, making presentations, and working on election days to assure the solemn responsibility of a secure vote. This past year we

took a stand on a charter amendment that called for the reform of the government structure in the City of

Minneapolis. This was a subject that we had a long and rich history of debate and study. I was so proud of the manner in which we showed up in this debate.

We are gifted with an organization of strong, intelligent women who are members, volunteers, board and staff members.

I am honored to be asked to serve again as your board president. I will make every effort to meet your needs and act in a respectful manner.

Civic Buzz Kicks Off Season

BY ELLEN VAN IWAARDEN

I hope you have all had a wonderful summer. We've been working on our fall programs and I want to let you know about our September *Civic Buzz*. It is going to be an interesting talk from two dynamic local leaders from the Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement.

We hope to expand the reach of the *Civic Buzz* further this year. With COVID and the switch to the Zoom format, it's been mostly LWVMpls members who attend these very informative events. We could use your help to spread the word — both to your units and to your friends and neighbors.

The Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement (CLNE) works effectively with groups seeking diversity in their membership and action. If you are like me, you are in more than one group that could use some of that expertise. So please pass the word along about this month's interesting program.

Rev. Kelly Chatman and Deacon Dan Bielenberg of the Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement (CLNE) will share their expertise on helping individuals and organizations increase their cultural competency, strengthen their leadership, and forge partnerships for action. CLNE is a local leader in mobilizing groups and individuals into neighborhood-based agents for positive social change.

CLNE partners with community organizations to provide access to coaching, training, programming and immersion experiences that teach:

- Cultural competency
- How to engage neighbors through asset-based community development.



Rev. Chatman is a nationally sought-after teacher of the church in the areas of multi-cultural leadership, community engagement and congregational revitalization. Prior to launching CLNE, he served for 20 years as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church and as executive director of Redeemer Center.



Deacon Dan brings years of experience in learning and leadership development into his call to service in the church and community. Prior to joining CLNE, Dan was a leader in corporate learning and leadership development, specializing in innovation skills. Dan recently completed his Master of Divinity degree; he is new to Minneapolis and learning to love the neighbors and neighborhoods.



Wednesday, September 7 at 7 PM
(note Wednesday date)

**CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP AND NEIGHBORHOOD
ENGAGEMENT: CULTURAL COMPETENCY**

Zoom link:
<https://lwvmn-org.zoom.us/j/82861428958>

Community Connections Conference

BY SHEILA O'DOUGHERTY

LWVMpls exhibited at the Community Connections Conference held May 21, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. As one of approximately 200 exhibits, the LWVMpls display provided information about elections and voting. Volunteers spoke with 60-70 conference participants. The Community Connections Conference, which is an annual event, comprises both exhibits and program events (seminars and panels). It connects city government with community groups and residents. The City of Minneapolis hosts this free conference so residents, community groups, neighborhood organizations, City of Minneapolis departments, and decision-makers can connect. All communities are invited to get involved in local decision-making, and residents can learn about programs and policies that affect them.

The LWVMpls booth invited conference participants to provide input in the form of sticky note answers to two questions:

- *Why I Vote*
- *Ask Your Candidate (obtaining input for candidate forums)*



Alice Moormann and Judy Zaunbrecher with a conference attendee.

The submissions from *Why I Vote* fell under the themes of caring for our democracy and using your voice to elect someone to represent and help you. The responses to *Ask Your Candidate* focused on planning or protecting specific policies, priorities, and programs including public safety, police misconduct, gun violence, education, wealth inequity, reproductive rights, youth opportunities, and better communities for children and families.

LWVMpls volunteers also visited other exhibits to make connections, engage in outreach, and identify ideas about how to collaborate to mutual advantage.

LWV will follow up on a variety of connection ideas that emerged. These include enhancing candidate forum links to neighborhood associations, better leveraging of public programs and services, and providing election and voting information to community organizations as well as to groups who represent specific constituencies or deliver services to support underserved populations.

Some of the responses received -

Question: Why I Vote

- *Because I care about future generations*
- *Because my vote counted*
- *Improve my daughter's education*
- *Democracy depends on all of our votes*
- *Community's interests at heart*
- *Because I care for our democracy*
- *Because I want my voice to select people who will help me*
- *Because my father served to protect my vote*
- *I care about my fellow humans*
- *Because I can't complain if I don't*

Question: Ask Your Candidate

- *How do I know I can trust what you say?*
- *How do you plan to increase education funding?*
- *What will you do about wealth inequity?*
- *How do we make our communities safer?*
- *Your view on public safety?*
- *What's your plan to reduce gun violence in our communities?*
- *How will you make communities better for children and families?*
- *State Legislator: What approach/how would you fund education?*
- *Hennepin County Attorney's Office: How will your office invest in youth diversion opportunities and work to limit collateral consequences?*
- *County Attorney: How will you address police misconduct?*
- *Sheriff: How would you provide education and social services for inmates?*
- *If politicians are representatives, why do they advertise their own views rather than consider majority views on each topic from their constituents? If you're a representative, aren't you the voice for your peeps? And if so, your stance doesn't matter, you should vote how your peeps want you to, you represent the public, not speak your own ideas for us*

Savvy Voting

BY DEBORAH JINDRA

It seems like everyone is suddenly interested in the voting process but those of us in LWV know that this is our bread and butter mission. During the pandemic, many states adjusted their rules on absentee ballots and early voting spiked in 2020. Those who didn't want to wait in line on Election Day were able to avoid possible exposure to COVID by voting from home. According to a *StarTribune* article (June 24, 2022), Secretary of State Steve Simon said that the campaign of 2022 will be a "test of how much affinity voters gained for the early voting process during the last cycle."

We have all heard outlandish claims about voter fraud with no evidence. It is pretty apparent that some people haven't done their homework about election processes. In Minneapolis we have a very secure system with back-up paper ballots. Election officials do their very best to make sure everything is nonpartisan and strictly by the book.



LWVMpls members are usually up on the latest ins and outs of voting but just to refresh:

- Apply for an absentee ballot on the Secretary of State's (SOS) office website. You must be eligible to register and vote in Minnesota. You must provide a valid email address and either your Minnesota issued driver's license, state ID card, or the last four digits of your Social Security number. (You can also print the application and mail it to your local election office.)
- You need a registered Minnesota voter or notary to act as a witness as you complete your ballot. Witnesses sign the signature envelope and list their addresses. Notaries write their names and titles and sign the signature envelopes.

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Secretary of State Offers Election Education

BY DEBORAH JINDRA

The Minnesota Office of the Secretary of State is ramping up education and outreach leading up to the November midterms. Information about election and voting topics will be offered at Lunch and Learn webinars held monthly over Zoom on Wednesdays from noon-1 PM. Registration is required for webinars. Contact LWVMN at info@lwvmn.org for the link.

SAVE THE DATES FOR WEBINARS

Wednesdays, noon-1 PM

- September 21
- October 19
- November 2

For those who prefer another option, the Office of the Secretary of State will present Virtual Fireside Chats. These 2-way conversations with staff are informal sessions, with a brief election topic presentation followed by an open forum to ask questions and exchange ideas.

Virtual Fireside Chats will be held over Zoom weekly on Fridays from noon-1 PM. There is no need to register for these. The first chat was August 5. Check with the Secretary of State's office secretary.state@state.mn.us or (651) 215-1440 or LWVMN for the Zoom link to join. (An email was sent from LWVMN July 28 so check your inbox if you subscribe to emails from the state organization.)

SAVE THE DATES FOR FIRESIDE CHATS

Fridays, Noon-1:00 PM

- September 16
- September 30
- October 14
- October 21
- October 28
- November 4

Savvy Voting (continued from p. 4)

- Mail the ballot anytime during the 46-day window before the election, as long as it is received by Election Day. Give USPS adequate time to deliver it.
- Alternatively you can drop off the ballot at the office that sent it to you up until 3 PM on Election Day. Do not drop it off at your local polling place. It must go to the local election office.
- If you make a mistake on your ballot, contact the election office and ask them to send a replacement.
- Check the status of your ballot on the Secretary of State website:
<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/>
- You can change your vote as long as your ballot has not been counted. If you vote in person on Election Day, your mail-in ballot will be invalidated because each mail-in has its own ID number. This prevents anyone from voting twice.
- You can also vote early at your local election office. Most are open during their normal business hours but many offer extended hours closer to the election.
- You can register in person at your early voting location (or polling place on the day of the election) if you bring proof of residence.

The Facts on Voter Fraud

BY DEBORAH JINDRA

As we head into the midterm elections, democracy seems to be under attack, and our election systems are being questioned. If voters no longer trust the systems that are in place, we may struggle to maintain free and fair elections. Some politicians question the integrity of election workers or fail to recognize the many safeguards built into the process. Many of us have heard claims of voter fraud but few actual cases have been proven.

After the 2016 election, the Brennan Center for Justice found just 30 incidents of suspected noncitizen voting that were referred for further investigation out of 23.5 million votes tabulated in 42 jurisdictions.

Justin Levitt, a constitutional law scholar and professor at Loyola Law School found 31 credible instances of impersonation fraud from 2000 to 2014 out of more than one billion votes cast.

In December 2021, the Associated Press looked for cases of voter fraud in the six states that former President Trump challenged in the 2020 election. Eleven reporters talked to 340 election officials in Arizona, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Nevada, and Georgia. These reporters asked officials to identify any potential instances of voter fraud they had flagged during post election certification. They found 475 out of millions of votes cast in the six states.



A handful of cases could not have changed the outcome even if they were all cast for one candidate, which they were not. Election officials indicate that in most of the cases, the ballots were never counted in the first place because election workers did their jobs and pulled them before they were tabulated.

FactCheck.org, a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, has checked on numerous claims of voter fraud and found them to be false. One recent example: "An illegal ballot cast on behalf of a deceased voter is rare, and we could find no examples of it occurring in Michigan in 2020 or 2016. Yet, a Republican gubernatorial candidate in Michigan falsely claims in a TV ad that 'dead people always vote Democrat,' and misleadingly suggests it is a widespread problem in his state."

As campaigning for the fall election progresses, we all should be aware of fact-checking claims and calling out those who seek to spread misinformation.

In Recognition of Carla Jacobson

BY ROSEMARY LAWRENCE

League of Women Voters Minneapolis has had some interesting and challenging experiences in the past few years, and it is always important to take time to notice, appreciate, and recognize people who have worked so hard to make things happen. Carla Jacobson, Minneapolis League Administrator is one of those people who helps LWVMpls run well. Since May 2015, she has been a “person to go to” for answers to questions. She supports board members and volunteers by giving them background knowledge and information to help them do their work. She stays on top of organizational needs including training office staff, communicating with units, living within budgets, and keeping track of elections, projects, and programs. At our annual meeting in June, instead of presenting a Bess Mlnarik award to one of our members, we gave a special shout out to Carla Jacobson.

It has been easy to gather information about Jacobson because so many people have great things to say about her. Here are some of those thoughts:

Former president Marion Hall was the first LWVMpls president to work with Jacobson when the Personnel Committee hired her in May of 2015. Hall recently commented that Jacobson has been “a guiding force all the way through her time with LWV. She was a whiz at technology even then, and she knew so much and caught on so fast. This has been especially helpful when the coronavirus changed member needs and office procedures.”

Nancy Albrecht, former Membership Board chair, noted that Jacobson is “helpful with so much information in her brain. She knows how to handle things, recalls LWV history and is a solid reference for information.” Albrecht added that she connected with Jacobson on a personal level over a knitting discussion at the LWVMpls office and that this pleasant experience with her provided one more positive reason for Albrecht to stay connected to LWV and join the board.

Alice Moormann, former board president, commented that Jacobson “always makes decisions based on what is best for LWVMpls” rather than on individual requests or needs.

Colleen Moriarty, current president of LWVMpls, stated that Jacobson is “welcoming to all new members.” She is stalwart, loyal, reliable and hardworking, as well as always there for others. Moriarty added, “Carla is respectful and helpful as she connects with LWVMN as well as when she works with LWVMpls.”

When Jacobson talks about her life and her family, she describes one daughter as her pride, another daughter as her sunshine, and a son as her heart. It is easy to see that Jacobson has brought pride, sunshine, and heart to raising her family, living her life, and doing her job at LWVMpls. She has been a valued part of our team for seven years and we all look forward to growing together and moving forward in the future.

Preserving Democracy (continued from p. 1)

Thoughtful action remained a focus throughout the Convention. A panel of women leaders in the voting rights and social justice movements spoke to the ways in which women can power democracy. MSNBC political analyst Joy Reid reflected on the essential nature of our work in her keynote address. On Friday evening, convention attendees joined Denver activists in marching to the Colorado State Capitol Building and rallying for abortion justice.

The LWVUS also presented its 2020-2022 biennium report, which showcased the LWV's impact over the past two years. Throughout three days of plenary sessions, delegates elected the 2022-2024 LWVUS Board of Directors. Dr. Deborah Ann Turner was once again

elected as board president, a role she has held since 2020. Delegates also voted on several motions, including the LWVUS budget and various bylaws amendment proposals. Delegates had the opportunity to attend dozens of workshops and caucuses throughout the convention on topics as diverse as mis- and disinformation, activating young voters, using OutreachCircle, and more.

The 55th convention was a time of community, action, and inspiration, and it reminds us of both the urgency of our work and the power of our members to create a more perfect democracy. The next two years will determine the course of our nation. As Dr. Turner said, we will “keep on keeping on.” And we will win.

Introducing New Directors

Andrea Bredow: Communications Director, 2022-24

Andrea Bredow, a new member, is a native Minnesotan who loves calling the Land of 10,000 Lakes home. Being near, on, or in water is one of her biggest joys. She is collecting a fleet of vessels and is often spotted kayaking, sailing, or simply walking around the lakes in her Linden Hills neighborhood. When on dry land, Bredow can be found playing pickleball, brunching, and developing her career in social media. She serves as director of digital enablement for talent marketing at UnitedHealth Group. She is currently serving as a board member on the City of Minneapolis Workforce Development Board and is leading the reopening of the Southside CareerForce Center. She has previously served as a Senate District chair, and as president of the Junior League of Minneapolis.

Libby Bottem: Membership Director, 2022-24

Libby Bottem is a Twin Cities mom of two, hailing from Michigan. She comes from a sociology and women's history background with work experience in at-risk youth in residential settings, domestic survivor assistance, and reproductive justice. She has taken on the passion of volunteerism serving most notably with the Racial Justice

Committee and as endowment chair at her church. She served as chair of LWVMpls Unit 1, assisted with arrangements for Program Planning and Civic Buzz events and is on the DEI Committee. Her previous experience with member retention for Girl Scouts Dakota Horizons and Do It Green! Minnesota will serve her well as LWVMpls membership director.

Katherine Schweikart: Treasurer, 2022-24

Katherine Schweikart, a new member of the League of Women Voters, is the daughter of a long-term member of the LWV in Detroit, Michigan. After retiring from a 35-year finance career with General Mills in 2019, she has been able to pursue more volunteer activities. Besides the LWV, she participates on the boards and serves as treasurer of several nonprofit and church organizations. She graduated from the University of Michigan with undergraduate degrees in accounting and finance and earned a master's degree from the University of Minnesota in industrial relations. Married and the mother of two young adults, she has been a resident of Minneapolis since college. She looks forward to supporting the organization with finance skills and through other opportunities.

Positive Activity on the Public Safety Front

BY JANE LANSING

After the scathing investigative report on the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) released by the MN Department of Human Rights in April and a continuation of tragic crimes in the city, there is a bright spot on the public safety front. The Mayor's work group on community safety, one of three work groups Jacob Frey created after he was re-elected, released the results of their work on June 27, 2022. Their report outlines a path to sustainable police and public safety reform.

The approach and recommendations within the report are aligned with the public safety positions LWVMpls adopted one year ago. The Reimagining Public Safety Committee, along with community members and local organizations, provided input to the work group, who also heard from city, state and national experts. The resulting report is clear and actionable, to the point of defining the budget and headcount to accelerate recruiting and identifying the training and disciplinary programs that should be adopted. A recent *StarTribune*

editorial called it "the level of detail and planning that was missing from last fall's failed [police] referendum."

The work group focused on the practical and what could be implemented within Minneapolis. Mayor Frey said some of the changes are already underway (like the co-responder and violence prevention programs) but the enhancements will take time and funding in future budgets. As LWV members, we need to work together to hold all our leaders accountable for implementing the recommendations of this report.

More good news: At the LWVUS National Convention in June, the motion to adopt a concurrence with the LWV California's Criminal Justice position passed. So we now have, nationwide and statewide, a comprehensive position on criminal justice to align our voices for action.



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MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

2022-2023 LWV Minneapolis Board of Directors

- Colleen Moriarty, President
- Julaine Heit, Past President
- Lisa Reed, Secretary
- Katherine Schweikart, Treasurer
- Kitty Westin, Advocacy and Action Director
- Libby Bottem, Membership Director
- Rebecca Thoman, Development Director
- Judy Zaunbrecher, Voter Services Director
- Ellen van Iwaarden, Program Director
- Andrea Bredow, Communications Director
- Sheila O'Dougherty, Community Engagement Director

Welcome New Members (March 2022 - June 2022)

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Andrea Bredow | Alina Muller |
| Katherine Mohn | Lisa Pogoff |
| Ann Mosey | Caroline Sweeney |

Important Dates

for August 2022

LWVMpls Board of Directors Orientation
 Thursday, August 24, 2022, 7-9 PM
 To be held remotely.

Units will meet at their regularly scheduled times beginning again in September 2022. For full information visit our website www.lwvmpls.org.

Thank You to Donors (March - June 2022)

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Alice Moormann | Colleen Moriarty | Jean Beccone | Katherine Schweikart | Nancy Albrecht | Sheila O'Dougherty |
| Alina Muller | David M Waterbury | Jennifer Anne Johnson | Linda Bormann | Nancy Schaefer | Sue Hnastchenko |
| Andrea Bredow | Deborah Jinda | Jennifer Johnson | Lisa Pogoff | Pam and Bill Telleen | Susan and Charles Reinhart |
| Ann Mosey | Deborah Sugerman | Judith A Preston | Lisa Reed | Parker Trostel | Susan Dragsten |
| Ann Pugliese | Dyan Venters | Judith and Richard Zaunbrecher | Lisa Weisman | Patricia Mack | Susan Gray |
| Anne McLaughlin Drake | Ellen Archibald | Judy and Bill Walter | Margaret Walters | Peggy Pluimer | Suzanne Bross |
| Barbara Rockwell | Ellen Hughes | Julaine and David Heit | Margret Forney | Polly and Bill Keppel | Vicki Olson |
| Caroline Sweeney | Ellen Gavin | Karen Michael | Marie Schwartz | Rebecca Shedd | Virginia McAninch |
| Carolyn Trevis | Glenna Case | Katherine Mohn | Marilyn Cantisano | Rebecca Thoman | Foundation grants |
| Catherine Shreves | Hope Esparolini | Katherine Gardner | Mary Katherine Johnson | Robert Henderson | Mary's Pence |
| Chris Sigurdson | Jaime Gearhart | | Mary Teresa Downing | Rosemary Lawrence | |
| Clara Ueland | Janet Day Midtbo | | Nance Duffy | Sally Sawyer | |
| | Janet Gendler | | | Sharon McLaughlin | |