

# THE VOTER



News for League of Women Voters Minneapolis Members and Friends

## Program for Action News

BY ELLEN VAN IWAARDEN

Program planning is an important part of the work of LWVMpls. With its mission to Educate, Advocate, and Empower its members, LWVMpls has educational programs throughout the year. The topics of those programs are chosen in a process that encourages the grass-roots participation of LWVMpls members—this means you!

This year’s Program for Action meeting, where possible program topics for the 2022-23 program year will be selected, is scheduled for Saturday morning, February 12, from 9:00 – 11:30 AM. It will be held as a Zoom meeting, so that members at home can stay cozy and members in warmer places at that time of the year can attend. There will be some innovations to the format, especially around welcoming new members to the process, and as always when you get members together, great conversation. Please plan to attend to promote the topics you’d like to see the League act on.

Looking back on the fall programming helps demonstrate the importance of the LWVMpls’ educational work. In September and October, LWVMpls presented a Civic Buzz on each of the three ballot questions that appeared on the Minneapolis municipal elections ballot. Experts from LWV and elsewhere educated members and the general public about each of the questions, and the ballot questions were the subject of LWVMpls unit meeting discussions.

The passage of Ballot Question One, which asked the voters to approve a proposed reorganization of responsibilities between the Mayor and the City Council, was due in large part to the leadership and work of LWVMpls members. As LWV member Patricia Kovel-Jarboe excellently outlined in her September 2, 2021 op-ed for the StarTribune, LWVMpls had worked for over 100 years to make changes like this. Kovel-Jarboe, along with LWVMpls member Catherine Shreves, presented the topic at a September Civic Buzz. Congratulations to all in achieving this long-held goal.

The Reimagining Public Safety Committee Co-chairs Jane Lansing and Jennifer Wilson presented at a Civic Buzz on LWVMpls’ study of the Minneapolis Police Department. That study’s identification of the complexities of police reform, existing reform initiatives, and critical work that still needs to be done was important information for members and voters considering Ballot Question Two. Although that ballot question did not pass, Minneapolis leaders agree that substantive police reform work still needs to be done. The Civic Buzz presentation on this topic is also a roadmap to possible further LWVMpls education and action.

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# From the President

COLLEEN MORIARTY, PRESIDENT



It is the time of year to pause and reflect. We have all been tested in many ways these past two years with the COVID 19 virus and social isolation that came with it.

Despite all these challenges we have over-performed in community service!

- 10 candidate forums with over 14,000 views on our Facebook live site
- 39,000 increase in voting
- Increase in votes in Wards 4, 5 and 9
- 7,000 Voter Guides distributed. (We ran out of guides and could have distributed more.)
- Another smashing success working on the election night returns project

This is just a snapshot of all of your arduous work and dedication.

I am so honored to chair the board and have the privilege of working beside such an amazing group of women. Thank you.

## Here is a brief list of some of the amazing work done by LWVMpls members.

- 3,000 hours (about 4 months) of volunteer outreach
- 49 volunteers sent 3,200 postcards reminding people to vote

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## Editor's Note

BY DEBORAH JINDRA



As many of you know, I no longer live in Minneapolis but have stayed active in my unit and try to keep up on issues in the municipality where so many friends reside. What happens in this great city has such an impact on the entire state, and after living there for over 35 years it

is hard to break its spell. During this past election I volunteered, along with a non-LWV member friend, to post get-out-the-vote information in north Minneapolis. We travelled around Ward 4 and visited hair braiding salons, barber shops, bakeries, coffee shops, and a couple of libraries on a beautiful fall day.

We skirted construction signs and torn-up roads and at one point got caught in a traffic jam due to a social justice protest on a main thoroughfare. Our reception at each stop, once we identified who we represented and why we were there, was so overwhelmingly positive that I wanted to share it with the readers of this newsletter. We had a chance encounter with one of the city council candidates who thanked us and gave us some good suggestions

about where to bring our posters. We talked with small business owners who enthusiastically offered to put up our materials. One gentleman who runs a convenience store said he would do anything for the League of Women Voters because we are so helpful with his neighborhood organization's elections. While we did talk with a few folks who didn't know about the election, most people seemed to be aware of the issues and were ready to do what they could to get people to the polls. I am proud of the work our members, friends, and city residents put in to make this fall's important exercise in democracy so successful. After several wrenching years of upheaval and disease, quarantines and economic disruption, it was a positive sign that we can still disagree on policy and the best way to instigate change, but we agree on the best way to make our voices heard - through the ballot box.

# Election Night Project 2021

BY ROSEMARY LAWRENCE AND JANET MIDTBO – ELECTION NIGHT PROJECT CO-CHAIRS



The 2021 election turned out to be a banner year. Minneapolis voters turned out in record-breaking numbers to vote in a municipal election. LWVMpls volunteers stepped up with equal enthusiasm to be LWV CORE (Charitable Organizations Recruitment for Elections) volunteers, providing a valuable service to Minneapolis' Elections and Voter Services, while donating their time to earn over \$7,000 for LWVMpls.

Seventy-two volunteers staffed two locations where 16 items (including voted ballots) from each of Minneapolis' 134 precincts were carefully and efficiently checked-in and sorted. The process seemed to run even more smoothly than in past years thanks to well trained and hardworking precinct election judges and the efforts of LWV's volunteer CORE election judges.

Many aspects of COVID protocol were still in effect. All volunteers wore masks and had sanitizer near their work areas. Shields and gloves were provided to those who wanted them and as much social distancing as possible was maintained.

A big thank you goes to everyone who participated and to those who were on standby in case they were needed election night.

We look forward to working with the City of Minneapolis and the dedicated LWVMpls volunteers in 2022 when

there will be an August primary election and a November general election for state offices.

We're proud to be part of this project that plays a small but valuable part in our democracy.

FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Terrell Daniels, Kathy Schweikart, Anne McLaughlin and a city staff member check in electronic poll books; Alice Moormann, Susan Dean, and Jeff Dean sit ready at check-in station #6; Polly Keppel and Susan Reinhart work as sorting leaders; Candice Bijmagte leads precinct judges to a check-in station; Margaret Purcell Alberg works as our queue master, keeping check-in flowing smoothly; Chip Alberg, Hugh Dean, and Marilyn Dean at check-in station #1.

## Honor an Unsung Heroine

BY DOT LILJA

When you think of the Bess Mlnarik Award, does the name of a Minneapolis LWV member pop into your head? Tell us who that unsung heroine is. Nominate her before the Annual Meeting in May/June. Watch for the Spring Voter! Meanwhile share ideas with others and seek information about her contributions to LWVMpls and the community for her nomination.

# Election Services 2021

BY MARILYN CANTISANO

**The 2021 Municipal Election in Minneapolis is over and what an election cycle it was!** A Mayoral race with 17 candidates, 13 City Council seats, Park Board seats, Board of Estimate and Taxation seats and three ballot questions, one of which drew national attention! But the Voter Services Committee (really the League of Women Voters Minneapolis as a whole) was up to the task of registering and educating voters in the Minneapolis community.

**Just a few facts:**

- A total of 145,337 people cast a ballot in 2021
- 39,409 more people voted in 2021 than in the previous local election in 2017
- 54% of registered voters voted in 2021 - compared to 42.45% in 2017
- In every ward the turnout was higher in 2021 than in 2017

**Over 285 volunteers from LWV made this a successful election year. There are many I would like to thank.**

First, I recognize the extraordinary work of the Voter Services Committee with their hours and hours of donated time and creative ideas. Thank you to Susan Dragsten, Ellen Gavin, Jan Emerson, Jaime Gearhart, Erin Harvey, Teena Keiser, Barb Kimer, Anne Kruger, Whitney Larson, Patricia Mack, Sheila O'Dougherty, Jane Olmstead Papageorgiou, Kirsten Ragatz, Binky Wood Rockwell, Saralyn Romanishan, Chris Sigurdson, Deborah Sugerman,

Nancy Schaefer, Pam Telleen, Rebecca Thoman, Meg Walters, and Judy Zaubrecher. Thank you to Janet Midtbo and Rosemary Lawrence for overseeing another successful Election Night Project (see accompanying article for details).

Thank you also to all the other LWVMpls Committees, especially Communications, Program, and Public Safety, for their ongoing support and coordination. A big thank to the office staff (Carla Jacobson, Elisabeth Hansen and Anna Treimer) for their help and support. Thank you to Margit Berg and the Park Board observers for providing a candidate questionnaire to Park Board candidates and helping to guide the creation of a questionnaire for all candidates. A heartfelt thank you to the League of Women Voters Minnesota, especially Paul Huffman, for helping us find moderators throughout the state to preside at many of our candidate forums. A special thank you to the MCN6 network for providing generous support and excellent production of the forums. Thank you to all our partners throughout the area, especially to Minneapolis Elections office and the hard working, committed neighborhood associations. A huge thank you to every LWV member and non-member who helped in any way.

*(continued on p. 5)*

Minneapolis 2021 Municipal Election  
Percent Voter Turnout: Wards 4, 5, and 9



*(Election Services, continued from p. 4)*

### **Here is a quick rundown of the accomplishments.**

**Voter Guides** — Seven thousand (7000) print copies were distributed throughout the city and the PDF was available on our website. New this year was the addition of three additional languages guiding readers to resources in their preferred language. Thank you to the organization A Mother's Love for distributing so many guides while door knocking in Ward 5. Thank you to Thomson-Reuters for subsidizing the printing of the guides.

**Candidate Questionnaires** — These were sent to all candidates and responses were posted on the LWVMpls website and on Vote411 so voters could determine each candidate's stance on issues of importance to the voters.

**2021 Municipal Election Articles** — A series of six articles on voting were written and distributed to 37 local newspapers and neighborhood associations.

**Get Out the Vote** — Voting reminders (3000 postcards and 1000 text messages) were sent to Ward 5 registered voters; 100 posters were distributed to target wards; and ads encouraging community members to vote were sent to six targeted local newspapers.

**Candidate Forums** — Ten candidate forums (including a mayoral forum with 12 candidates) were held and one issues forum on Ballot Question 2 (public safety) were held. Over 14,000 people viewed these forums, either by attending live or by watching virtually.

**Voter Registration Trainings and Voter Registration** — Seven trainings were held to train 75 registrars, and 247 voters were registered to vote.

**Youth Engagement** — LWVMpls engaged with nine Minneapolis high schools, where 88 students were



Anne McLaughlin handing out the Nonpartisan Voter Guides

registered to vote. We secured an LWVMN Schumer grant to work with two high school student fellows in 2022. Students from Roosevelt HS have been identified and will continue work with the LWV for the 2022 election. A relationship was formed with MCTC and Augsburg College in hopes of beginning a Student Ambassador program.

### **Neighborhood Elections — The following neighborhoods were given support and guidance for their neighborhood election.**

- Whittier Alliance
- Northside Residents Redevelopment Council (NRRC)
- Phillips West Neighborhood Organization
- Little Earth (postponed)
- Cedar-Riverside Community Council

Looking ahead to the 2022 mid-term elections, the Voter Services Committee will continue to encourage voter engagement by providing voter registration and education. Please join us at our next Zoom meeting on January 12 at 7PM. Contact Marilyn Cantisano, Voter Services Chair, if you would like to be involved.

*(Program for Action News, continued from p. 1)*

Finally, the October Civic Buzz brought together experts on both sides of Ballot Question Three, the proposal that would give the Minneapolis City Council the power to enact rent control in Minneapolis. With the passage of Ballot Question Three, a review of that presentation will give members an idea of what we might expect to see from the City Council if the newly elected Council takes up the topic. All the Civic Buzz presentations are recorded

and available on the LWVMpls website. If you have topics you would like considered for the 2022-23 year, please attend the Program for Action meeting on Saturday, February 12 at 9:00 AM.

The Zoom link for this meeting is:  
<https://lwvmn-org.zoom.us/j/83531614292>.

# Accomplishments: Voter and Election Services

## VOTER MOBILIZATION



MAILED

**3,000**

Get Out the Vote (GOTV) reminders to Ward 5 voters

SENT

**1,000**

texts to Ward 5 voters reminding them to vote

PUBLISHED

**13**

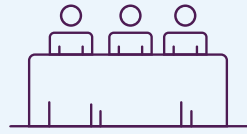
GOTV print and online ads



DISTRIBUTED

**100**

GOTV posters in Wards 4, 5, and 9



HOSTED

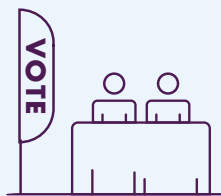
**10**

Candidate Forums  
City Council Wards 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13  
Mayor,  
Minneapolis Parks & Recreation,  
Board District 6

ATTENDED

**34**

voter registration events



## VOTER EDUCATION

REACHED

(in-person & online)

**1200+**

people at candidate forums

and

**2200+**

people at the  
Ballot Question 2  
Issue Forum

HOSTED

**3**

Civic Buzz Events  
Public Safety,  
Government Structure,  
Rent Control

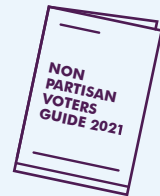
PUBLISHED

**6**

articles in community news outlets

## VOTER SERVICES

- art festivals
- farmers markets
- high schools
- Juneteenth celebrations
- Minneapolis Public Libraries
- MCTC
- National Night Out
- neighborhood festivals



DISTRIBUTED

**7,000**

voter guides

## ELECTION SERVICES



**72**

volunteers

who

VOLUNTEERED

**300+**

hours securing,  
tabulating and transporting  
ballots on election night

# New Member Spotlight: Jaime Gearhart

BY NANCY ALBRECHT, MEMBERSHIP



We want to welcome Jaime Gearhart, a new member of the League of Women Voters, who got involved right away, working with Voter Services and the Communications team.

Gearhart grew up in Biwabik, Minnesota, on the Iron Range. She is the only child of two

teachers. Her father was an elementary teacher focusing on computers, and her mother taught interpersonal and intercultural communications at Mesabi Range Community College in Virginia. Both parents worked hard to make sure Jaime took an active part in her school and community.

While attending Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ, Gearhart met her future husband, Kyle. They moved back to Minnesota, where he attended the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry; he currently practices at Southdale Dental Associates in Edina.

Once in Minnesota, Gearhart started her career in public relations and then transitioned into working with students as an academic advisor and enrollment coordinator at the University of Minnesota. She always loved the start of school in the fall with all of the renewed energy on campus. In 2016, after 16 years at the U of MN, she left her position

to focus on volunteering and philanthropy and has done everything from building a house in North Minneapolis through Habitat for Humanity, to assisting with the Special Olympics events. Gearhart joined the League of Women Voters during the pandemic, where she started volunteering with Voter Services. Her first assignment was representing LWV at a naturalization ceremony, providing new citizens with information about how to register to vote, which was “a very powerful experience.”

Along with LWV, her current volunteer commitments include ongoing work in the development office at the MN Landscape Arboretum, serving as co-chair for their annual fundraising gala, as well as working in the Visitor Experience department at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. Her special interests are social justice and racial issues. The political and social upheavals of the past few years have inspired her to recommit to service within her neighborhood and community and have revived her interest in politics. She would love to see the League of Women Voters expand their membership to better reflect our population and advocate for more diverse voices in the room.

We welcome you, Jaime. Thank you for choosing the League of Women Voters to enhance our organization with your talents and energy.

## Thank You to Donors (August - November 2021)

Elizabeth Allis	Sheryl Erickson	Veronica Johnson	Peggy Lucas	Elizabeth Olstad	Heather Thoerner
Nancy Anderson	Hope Esparolini	Nancy Johnston	Bruce Lunning	Margie Paller	JoAnne Tomczak
Doris Baylor	Katie Gardner	Virginia Jordan	Mary Brooke Maher	Carla Pardue	Dyan Venters
Betty Beier	Mary Grina	Barb Kimer	Patricia Marks	Susan and Charles	Grace Wachlarowicz
Libby Bottem	Anna Claire Hall	Emily Koski	Marcia Marshall	Reinhart	Erin Warsaw
Suzanne Bross	Katherine Hanson	Patricia Kovel-Jarboe	Virginia McAninch	Esther Schak	Janice Whitney
Helen Cleveland	Janice Heasley	Kathy Kugel	Elizabeth	Katherine Schweikart	Elaine Wilson
Robin King Cooper	Elisabeth Heefner	Vicki Kunerth	McCambridge	Anne Seltz	Jennifer Wilson
Virginia Craig	Susan Hellstrom	Patrice Kunesh	Janet McGee	Dorothy Sinha	Susan Woulfe
Fran Davis	Carolyn Hendrixson	Rita Lederle	Barbara Mohr	Lynn Slifer	
Carol Dines	Rebecca Howes	Jennifer Lee Martin	Julie O'Brien	Kitrina Stratton	
Susan Doherty	Hamblin	Jane Lonnquist	Ruth Olson	Katelyn Streeter	
	Ellen van Iwaarden		Vicki Olson	Mary Sumpmann	



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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.

**2021-2022 LWV Minneapolis Board of Directors**

- Colleen Moriarty, President
- Alice Moormann, Past President
- Lisa Reed, Secretary
- Carrie Lichtenberg, Treasurer
- Kitty Westin, Advocacy and Action Director
- Nancy Albrecht, Membership Director
- Rebecca Thoman, Development Director
- Marilyn Cantisano, Voter Services Director
- Ellen van Iwaarden, Program Director
- Deborah Sugerman, Communications Director
- Saralyn Romanishan, Community Engagement Director

**Welcome New Members (August - November 2021)**

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Nancy Anderson      | Julie O'Brien        |
| Suzanne Bross       | Vicki Olson          |
| Helen Cleveland     | Elizabeth Olstad     |
| Hope Esparolini     | Katherine Schweikart |
| Janice Heasley      | Dorothy Sinha        |
| Elizabeth Heefner   | Kitrina Stratton     |
| Virginia Jordan     |                      |
| Kathy Kugel         |                      |
| Patrice Kunesh      |                      |
| Jennifer Lee Martin |                      |

## Important Dates

for January 2022 - February 2022

### Civic Buzz

#### Death With Dignity

Tuesday, January 4, 2022, 7 PM, via Zoom.  
Presenter: Rebecca Thoman

### Redistricting

Tuesday, February 1, 2022  
Presenter: TBD

### Annual Program Planning Meeting

Saturday, February 12, 2022, 9 AM, via Zoom

### LWVMpls Board of Directors

Thursday, January 20, 2022, 6 PM

Thursday, February 17, 2022, 6 PM

To be held remotely

*Units will meet at their regularly scheduled times in  
January and February 2022.*

*For full information visit our website [www.lwvmpls.org](http://www.lwvmpls.org).*