



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

Voter Newsletter

April/May 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We hope this newsletter finds you staying well both emotionally and physically. We know that these are difficult times for many in our community and the situation with COVID-19 is changing each day in Minnesota and around the globe. In an effort to protect the health and safety of our members, volunteers and board we have cancelled all book club meetings in April to June. Sadly, our April program at Macalester College is also cancelled. We know several of our board members and partners at Macalester worked very hard on this event and we thank you for your planning and dedication.

At this point, we are not planning to postpone our annual meeting, scheduled for Monday, May 18th, but holding it as a virtual meeting on a web meeting platform from 7:00pm–8:30pm. Details will be forthcoming! One of the agenda items that we will be voting on is combining the 501c3 and 501c4, by making the c4 dormant. As some of you may know, the LWVSP has a dual organization structure. Organizations usually opt for a c4 status if they either want to endorse a candidate or do a significant amount of lobbying. LWVSP does not endorse candidates nor do we lobby. The dual organization structure is confusing to members, donors and board members. Combining organizational assets under the c3 would ensure that most, if not all, membership dues paid by members were tax deductible. It would also streamline accounting and make the structure less confusing.

If this motion carries, under the combined c3 the LWVSP could still spend up to 20% of its overall budget lobbying. Since the state league lobbies on state issues, LWVSP would only lobby local government issues. LWVSP would rarely, if ever meet this 20% threshold. If a referendum ever came up where we would want to spend additional funds, we could reactivate the c4. It is worth noting that the state league successfully went

through this process a few years ago.

We hope that you will support this motion. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. All materials for the Annual Meeting will be shared by email before the meeting.

With best wishes for safety and health,

Amy Mino, Amy Perna (co-presidents) and Nichole Fairbanks (treasurer)



Secretary of State Steve Simon discussed the new MN Presidential Primary at SPNN in January in a joint program with LWV Mpls

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Find us at www.facebook.com/LWVSP and
Twitter [@LWVStPaul](https://twitter.com/LWVStPaul)

LWVSP YOUTH VOTE TEAM UPDATE

The LWVSP Youth Vote Team has regrouped to revise our plans in light of COVID-19. We anticipate that St. Paul high schools and colleges will remain closed for the remainder of spring semester and are very aware of the huge impact this COVID-19 “new normal” of “stay at home” and social distancing has on all of us, including students, especially seniors, whose graduations and other related celebration plans have dramatically changed.

We also recognize that civic engagement and our democracy *must* continue. In fact, there is even a keener need to enhance voter registration and turnout in creative ways. Our LWVSP Youth Vote Team Liaisons met via an online Zoom meeting on March 21 and are in the process of contacting our Student Leaders and Lead Teachers to ask how we can best support their voter registration (VR) work and broader civic engagement education opportunities during this temporary period of remote e-learning.

Prior to the COVID-19 directives, the LWVSP Youth Vote Team held two meetings on Saturday, February 1, 2020. The first was a breakfast and training session for our fabulous high school Student Leaders (SLs). The SLs asked for waffles and bagels, so that is what the Youth Vote Team liaisons served up! Our Youth Vote Project Coordinator, Morgan Hess (senior student at Macalester College) and Heidi Kloempken (Youth Vote Team Co-Chair) provided an excellent training on how best to engage all high students and register them to vote while remaining non-partisan. Immediately after the training, the Youth Vote Team held a regular meeting to continue planning for VR work in the schools during the spring and fall semesters. The immediate focus at the time was on VR and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) work in schools in preparation for the recent Presidential Nominating Primary (PNP) held March 3rd. Thanks to LWVSP board member Cheryl Bailey and her family for opening up their home to host both meetings!!

We are pleased to announce that the LWVSP has recently been awarded two grants to help support our Youth Vote program. The first is from the U.S. League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) and the second is from the League of Women Voters Minnesota (LWV Minnesota) for their student Fellowship program. If you want to join the team and help work with high school students, contact Youth Vote Team Co-Chair Dan Krivit (612-616-7739; Dan.Krivit@Outlook.com).



BOOK CLUB NEWS

To comply with social distancing rules and because the public libraries are closed, Book Clubs will be cancelled until June. However, feel free to continue reading and come discuss it at our next meeting!

Morning Book Club will be reading: *Call Me American: A Memoir* by Abdi Nor Iftin and *Empire of the Summer Moon* by S.C. Gwynne. Evening Book Club will be reading: *Hope in the Struggle: A Memoir* by Josie Johnson and *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future* by Mary Robinson.

Call Me American: A Memoir

Abdi Nor loved the U.S. so much he became known around Mogadishu as Abdi American, but when the radical Islamist group al-Shabaab rose to power in 2006, Abdi was forced to flee to Kenya. He won entrance to the U.S., though his route to America did not come easily. Now a proud resident of Maine, his dramatic, deeply stirring memoir is truly a story for our time: a vivid reminder of why America still beckons to those looking to make a better life.

Empire of the Summer Moon: Quanah Parker and the Rise and Fall of the Comanches, the Most Powerful Indian Tribe in American History

The first story traces the rise and fall of the Comanches, the most powerful Indian tribe in American history. The second entails one of the most remarkable narratives ever to come out of the Old West: the epic saga of the pioneer woman Cynthia Ann Parker and her mixed-blood son Quanah, who became the last and greatest chief of the Comanches.

CYBER SECURITY & ELECTIONS

On a cold February night 41 hearty souls ventured out for a D3 (Democracy, Discussion and Drinks) at the Summit Brewing Rathskeller to hear Bill Ekblad, Cyber Navigator at the MN Secretary of State's Office (OSS), and Dave Triplett, Director of Elections, Ramsey County, speak to the issue of security of Minnesota's elections.



Mr. Ekblad, who joined the OSS last December, spoke to his new role and efforts to collaborate with the 87 counties in the state. He discussed the range of information technology resources that the counties have for election security. Larger counties may have multiple staff members while smaller counties may not have any, relying instead on outsourcing. He talked about competing priorities that the

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We give a big League "welcome" to new members who have joined since November 15, 2019.

Linda Clark	Marianne Ludwig
Beverly Ferguson	Mada Morgan
Julia Gartzke	Mary Morris
Jill Gunderson-Gernes	Cindy Nelson
Amanda Humpage	Kay Pope
Mary Jackson	Donna Rockette
Ross Jackson	Anne Sexton
Jenny Keyser	Marion Wittenbreer

A new membership directory is being published this month and will be distributed to members by email for review. If you would NOT like to have your personal contact information in the published directory, please let us know by emailing to: office@lwwsp.org.



LWVSP Board Members Joann Ellis and Helen Losleben with panel members Bill Ekblad and Dave Triplett

jurisdictions' IT staff have (taxes, human services, public safety, etc.) and how he is working to bring elections to the top of the list. Mr. Ekblad stressed the need to build relationships with the counties and between them. A focus now, and in the future, is addressing perceptions - getting ahead of the social media spin.

Mr. Triplett echoed the impact of public perceptions and how Ramsey County has, and will continue to, address these perceptions by continuously evaluating and improving its processes to ensure the security of the data and the voting process. This ranges from ensuring tight security access to the Statewide Voter Registration Service (SVRS) and physical equipment, and the access and design of voting locations. Security can be something as "simple" as ensuring that all ports in electronic equipment are plugged, so a thumb drive can't be inserted and infect the system or data.

Both speakers indicated that, in a contest between perception and reality, perception will win every time which is why methods and communications must be in place to demonstrate security and combat the perception. They also acknowledged that there is a need to balance security efforts with freedom and liberty. Risk assessment is an ongoing task, as is the development of internal controls to adapt to new challenges.

LWV Minnesota's 2020 Council is scheduled for **Saturday, April 25th**. Due to efforts to contain the coronavirus, Council will be changed to fit current circumstances. Members can get updated information on Council at the state league website:

<https://www.lwvminn.org/council-2020>

The LWVUS 54th National Convention, celebrating the Centennial year, is planned for **June 25-28** in Washington, DC and, thus far, is on as scheduled.

<https://www.lwv.org/registration2020convention>

LWVUS's first priority is the health, safety and well-being of everyone involved with Convention, it is taking all developments concerning the Coronavirus (Covid-19) very seriously and all impacts and changes to

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

LWVSP Annual Meeting

Monday, May 18, 2020

Due to the coronavirus epidemic, LWVSP will be practicing social distancing for its Annual Meeting, and plans are to hold the business meeting on a web meeting platform from **7:00pm–8:30pm**. Details on accessing the meeting will be shared by email.

We will miss our social time together and will be planning a League social event this summer to bring us together when restrictions are lifted.



Have you responded to the U.S. Census? Responses needed now! A complete, accurate census count is necessary for equal political representation,

fair distribution of federal and state funding, and sound planning and investment in infrastructure, real estate, business development and public policy. There is no citizenship question on the 2020 Census. You can respond by email or online with your participation code at:

<https://my2020census.gov/>

BECOME AN LWVSP BOARD MEMBER

Join the leadership and make a difference!

LWVSP is currently recruiting board members to fill new terms on the Board for the 2020-21 League year (July 1-June 30). We are an all-volunteer-run organization, and our board members lead our committees to plan and coordinate our events and initiatives. Board participation might seem daunting in this current atmosphere of COVID-19, but it is during crises like this that our civic organizations are needed most!

Qualifications: Individuals (of all genders) from the St. Paul area who are passionate about helping Saint Paul citizens "Make Democracy Work." Board members must commit to a one- or two-year term, which includes attending monthly board meetings, working in a particular area (program, membership, voter service, etc.). Previous board experience is not required.

If you are interested in learning more, please email office@lwvsp.org by April 15, 2020. We'd love to hear from you!