

# The Voter

February 2021

## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

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### Happy New Year, members and supporters.

We hope this finds you well. Here at the League, the board has been reflecting on 2020 and planning for 2021. We have a slate of wonderful programs coming up and we are already looking forward to candidate forums. We hope to see you!

Youth Vote Team chair Dan Krivit is stepping down from this position at the end of February. We will miss his leadership and are delighted that he has chosen to stay involved as the Como High School liaison. Dan has been the chair of Youth Vote for the over three years. He started engaging students along with the late and wonderful Judy Sreaton. After Judy passed, Dan stepped up and filled the leadership role brilliantly. He helped to develop the team and increased outreach through the Student Leader program. He reached out and maintained connections at several St. Paul high schools, collaborated with Ramsey County Elections and is a passionate and energetic leader. A huge thank you to Dan for all that he has done to further democracy and engage youth in St. Paul!

If recent events have left you wondering what you can do to help, we have a few opportunities to suggest:

- The state League is working on an updated firearms study and needs league members to interview the Ramsey County Sheriff and St. Paul Police Chief. A script and questions will be provided and each interview won't take more than 1.5 hours. Once complete, interviews will help inform the LWVMN's position

on firearms. If you are interested please email [lwvgv@lwvmn.org](mailto:lwvgv@lwvmn.org).

- If engaging high school students in the civic is process appeals to you, join the Yout Vote Team! We are looking for more league members to help us with this essential work. If you are interested or have questions please reach out to [Heidi Kloempken](mailto:heidi.kloempken@gmail.com) (heidi.kloempken@gmail.com).

We're grateful for the fresh start that 2021 offers. This year, as always, don't hesitate to reach out with questions, concerns or ideas. We'd love to hear from you and look forward to seeing you this year—perhaps even in person.

— Amy Perna & Heidi Kloempken

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## PROGRAM PROFILE

### Empowering Students Through Youth Vote

Pop quiz: What's the most effective way to encourage 18-year-olds to vote?

- A. Get middle-aged adults to tell them about the importance of voting
- B. Engage students to rally their peers on why and how to vote

It's kind of a no-brainer, isn't it?

The LWVSP Youth Vote team has been working "answer B" for three years. Under the guidance of Dan Krivit, the team has supported 48 student leaders who've registered hundreds of new voters at 11 St. Paul high schools.

Dan, who's stepping down as Youth Vote chair this month, is as enthusiastic about the program as ever and looking forward to new, young leaders stepping up.

"It's taken a lot of time, but it's a passion of mine," says Dan. "It's really cool to see students engaged and excited, reaching out to their peers, putting their own spin on things. They're on the front lines of making positive change in our society."

Dan and other LWVSP volunteers hatched the idea in early 2018. After partnering with a Minnesota Secretary of State online voter registration effort that spring, the St. Paul team received its first funding from the U.S. League, which put Dan and his collaborators in touch with similar programs elsewhere in the country. Then the volunteers, including Joann Ellis (at Johnson High School) and Joette Hamann (at Harding), established relationships with teachers, who identified candidates to become Youth Vote student leaders. Each semester, beginning in fall 2018, a new cohort of students has received training to register their



Focus Beyond students and teachers during Youth Vote's November 2018 Tour to the Polls

peers and launch projects about voting and civic life.

"We decided to pay student leaders a minimal stipend," said Dan. "That helps create a worker/employer relationship. It also makes it easier for recruitment."

This past year at Washington Technology Magnet, Anas Mohamed created YouTube informational videos on voter registration and the census, in both English and Somali. Jaeden Sims surveyed her friends on Instagram to discover who had not registered and why. She then contacted them individually to address their specific concerns.

Youth Vote reaches beyond high schools, too. The team has engaged college students to support voter registration drives at Macalester College, University of St. Catherine, and University of St. Thomas. Macalester students Morgan Hess, Lia Pak, and Grace Reardon have helped train and support the high school student leaders.

Another offshoot was Youth Vote's 2018 Tour to the Polls, where volunteers accompanied students from the Focus Beyond program to the Ramsey County Elections office for same-day registration and early voting.

*Youth Vote continued on page 5*

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

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### Big Issues on Deck for Winter & Spring

Here are dates for upcoming programs, pending speaker confirmation. [Check the website](#) for details closer to the events

**February 23:** “Civics in Our Schools: What’s Going On?” will cover information on the proposed social studies standards, with a focus on civics education.

**March 30:** “Redistricting: The Good, the Bad, and the Dirty Work”

**April 27:** Discussion on rebuilding University Avenue after the destruction last year following the death of George Floyd.

**June 28:** Homelessness and what Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul are doing to address it.

Programs will continue to be virtual for the near future. All will be recorded and available for later viewing. Watch for links in future newsletters and online.

The Program Committee continues to meet, most often on the first Tuesday of the month, via Zoom.

—Claudia Dieter

## BOOK CLUB NEWS

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### Timely Topics, History & More

Pithy topics, consistent monthly meetings and plenty of reading lead time! Here’s the scoop on what’s ahead.

#### Evening Book Club

[Email Heidi](mailto:heidi.kloempken@gmail.com) (heidi.kloempken@gmail.com) for the Zoom information.

**February 1,** 6 p.m. *The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here* by Hope Jahren

**March 1,** 6 p.m. *Twilight of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of Authoritarianism* by Anne Applebaum

**April 5,** 6 p.m. *Her Honor: Rosalie Wahl and the Minnesota Women’s Movement* by Lori Sturdevant

**May 3,** 6 p.m. *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All* by Martha S. Jones

**June 7,** 6 p.m. *Turnout: Making Minnesota the State that Votes* by Joan Anderson Grove with Lori Sturdevant

#### Morning Book Club

[Email Mary](mailto:mgp22@msn.com) (mcp22@msn.com) for the Zoom information.

**February 10,** 10 a.m. *The Populist Explosion: How the Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics* by John Judis

**March 10,** 10 a.m. *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi

**April 14,** 10 a.m. *American Harvest: God, Country, and Farming in the Heartland* by Marie Mutsuki Mockett

**May 12,** 10 a.m. *Twilight of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of Authoritarianism* by Anne Applebaum

# MEMBER AND DONORS

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## Welcome, New Members!

Thanks to those who've joined since December:

Joan Kuzma Costello  
Elizabeth Cummings  
Freya Ebbesen  
Nora Fairbanks  
Mera Kachgal  
Laura McDermott  
Grace Reardon  
Jane Riba  
Angela Wolf Scott

Claudia Dieter  
Trudy Dunham  
Elizabeth Dyson  
Joanne A. Englund  
Dianna Erickson  
Shirley Espeland  
Margaret Gadiant  
Pat Gavan-Gordon  
Holly Green  
Jill Gunderson-Gernes  
Beverly Jones Heydinger  
Cynthia Hill  
Mark Holle  
Phyllis Hollihan  
Ruby Hunt  
John and Ruth Huss Fund  
Sigrid Johnson  
Heidi Kloempken  
Steve and Ione Kloempken  
Carol and Tom Kramer  
Peggy Lynch  
Beatrice Magee  
Jeanne Matross  
Janet Mayer  
Roberta Megard  
Beth Mercer Taylor  
Greta Michaels  
Amy Mino (in memory of Marion Watson)  
Jaime Modiano  
Olivia Mulvey  
Deborah A. Nelson

Joan and Richard Newmark  
Mary Ann Ogden  
Carol Ogren  
Thomas Findlay & Missy O'Neil  
Jan Ormasa  
Beatrice Owen  
Sally Patterson  
Amanda Perna  
Amy Perna  
Mary K. Peterson  
Pat Peterson  
Diane Power  
Deanna Sande  
Arline Satrom  
Christine Schnieders  
Meg Simon  
Lucy Wade Shepard  
Janice L. Snyder  
Evan Stanley  
Gail Stremel (in memory of Billie Young)  
Kristin Tyborski  
Jane Ulmann-Bester  
Mary Vik  
Mr. and Mrs. James Watson  
Jean West  
Lorna G. Williams-Wyche  
Lois Yellowthunder  
Robin Young and the Young Family (in memory of Billie Young)

## St. Paul Education Fund Donors

Thank you to members and others who have made additional donations since June 1:

Anonymous (five donors)  
Margie and Roger Anderson  
Cheryl Bailey and Dan Humes  
Antoinette Baker  
Nona Beining  
Bonnie Benson  
Denise Blakenship  
Colleen H. and Patrick Bollom  
Dianne Brooke  
Ellen Brown  
Barbara Burleigh  
Jon & Anne Cieslak

If you made a donation and we missed you in this list, we apologize. Please let us know: Email [office@lwvsp.org](mailto:office@lwvsp.org) or call 651-718-7216.

The Voter is published every other month by the League of Women Voters St. Paul. To submit suggestions or news, [contact Diane Hellekson](mailto:dianereally@hotmail.com) (dianereally@hotmail.com).

## EVENT RECAP

### Journalists' Perspectives on the 2020 Election

On January 26, a 51-member Zoom audience heard journalists Bill Salisbury (Pioneer Press), Briana Bierschbach (Star Tribune), and Hana Ikramuddin (Minnesota Daily) share their experiences covering the 2020 election.

As pandemic restrictions cramped their reporting techniques, smaller staffs made it difficult to cover all the races. With few opportunities to observe candid moments with candidates or voters, the

reporters had to find other ways to measure voter enthusiasm, such as length of lines for early voting and absentee ballot data. Several wished that they had conducted more interviews via Zoom, so that they could have seen the interviewees' facial reactions to questions.

Despite the challenges, the panelists all said they feel more called to their profession than ever.

—Claudia Dieter

### Youth Vote continued from page 2

Dan sees young voters as “under-served and underrepresented,” and knows the value of getting them to vote as soon as they are first eligible. He cites research from Tufts University CIRCLE project indicating a simple barrier to 18-year-olds getting registered: No one has ever asked them or shown them how to vote. Eighteen- to 29-year-olds have typically had the lowest voter turnout of any age group. (This may be changing; see box below.)

“Some people accuse youth of being apathetic, and that’s not the case,” says Dan. “They don’t understand if it’s immediately relevant to them, and whether it will make a difference. Working through those discussions is a big part of the effort.”



Focus Beyond students at the 2018 Tour to the Polls

### Youth Voting on the Rise?

Voting by young people (ages 18 to 29) may have risen 5 to 11 percent from 2016. That’s the estimate of the Tufts University [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement](#) (CIRCLE), a trove of election insights and research.

Check out the center’s recent articles on [the 2020 election](#) and learn about its work on [equitable K-12 civic learning](#).



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