



### **November speaker is Minnesota's Director of Census Operations and Engagement**

**Andrew Virden, Director of Census Operations and Engagement** at the Minnesota State Demographic Center, agreed to talk with League of Women Voters White Bear Lake Area (LWVWBLA) members about the 2020 Census process, its importance, and how LWVWBLA members might help obtain an accurate population count. Hopefully, Mr. Virden will discuss possible activities interested members can undertake in anticipation of Census Day on April 1, 2020, and the demographic groups at risk of being undercounted in our somewhat homogeneous community - e.g., renters, community college students, and senior citizens. **The LWVWBLA November General Meeting, which is a public meeting, is scheduled for**

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Thursday, November 7, 2019 7:00- 8:30 PM

WBL City Hall, Main Floor Council Chambers

4701 Highway 61, White Bear Lake, MN 55110

### **Volunteers needed for November program on 2020 Census**

Volunteers are needed to help develop questions for the speaker, publicize the program, and staff the council chambers room the day of the program. Please contact Lisa Larson at

[Larson.lisa.f@gmail.com](mailto:Larson.lisa.f@gmail.com) if you are willing to help with the program. Thanks!

### **2020 Census Overview**

The federal constitution requires all U.S. residents to be counted every decade. The decennial census count helps ensure:

- people are fairly and effectively represented in government
- states get their fair share of federal funds

(Continued on page 2)

- public and private sectors make informed, long-term plans for such things as housing, transportation, health services, and investment and development.

The 2020 census is the first census residents can complete online. Census Day is April 1, 2020; census workers work on census responses through September 2020.

State government must provide enough funding for an accurate population count and local governments must support census taking. Census data determine how many representatives each state has in the 435-member U.S. House of Representatives. Minnesota may lose a House seat because the state population is growing more slowly than in other states. An accurate count is the best way for Minnesota to try to keep its eight Congressional seats. Census data also determine the number of votes Minnesota has in the Electoral College. Many federal programs use census data to distribute federal funds for Medicaid, student loans, highways, housing, and other things.

A population undercount can occur due to:

- Language Barriers.
- Mobility.
- Distrust of Government.
- Technology Barriers.

Historically undercounted communities are often called “hard to count” communities. In Minnesota, these communities are called “historically undercounted communities” and include:

Young children, Renters, Highly mobile persons, Young adults (ages 18-24, especially those in college), Racial and ethnic minorities, Native/Indigenous people, Non-English speakers, Low income persons, Persons experiencing homelessness, Persons who distrust the government, Persons with mental or physical disabilities, Persons who do not live in traditional housing, Persons born outside the United States, including green card holders and undocumented immigrants, Snowbirds, Individuals without internet access.



For members interested in learning more about the 2020 Census, the LWV MN has a Census Action Kit available at <http://www.lwvmn.org/census-action-kit>

Andrew Virden is the Director of Census Operations and Engagement since April 2018. In his role, Andrew’s work applies his knowledge of the Census, including recruiting and field operations, as well as experience community organizing to help ensure Minnesota gets an accurate count for Census Day on April 1, 2020.

Note: LWVWBLA plans to record the program - entitled "Community Counts in 2020" - and disseminate it on our LWVWBLA web page and elsewhere.

## May I Recommend?

This “new” section of The Bear Facts offers members a chance to suggest books, movies, podcasts, plays, articles, exhibits, and more which they think League members will find interesting or worthwhile. Keep your eyes and ears open and write up a short description along with the details of how to access whatever caught your attention.

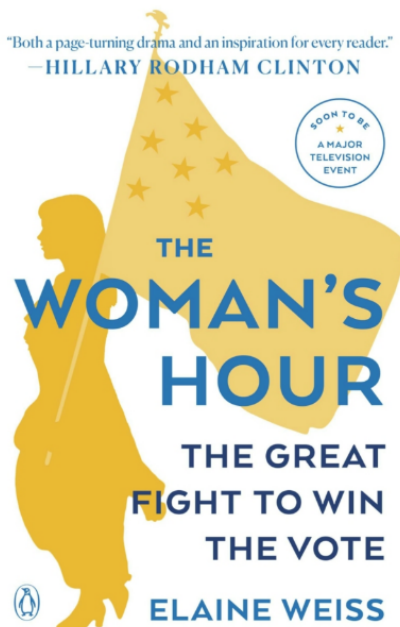
As you know, The 2020 Census is our topic for November, and it will be an important topic in the news for months to come. To get more background before coming to hear our speaker on November 7th, Jeanne Hartle recommends this radio program featuring Alberder Gillespie, 2020 Census Project Coordinator for the city of Minneapolis:

<https://www.mprnews.org/episode/2019/08/15/davis-census-2020-historically-undercounted-communities-determine-funding-representation>

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If you find yourself discouraged by increased polarity among American voters, take heart! Lisa Larson recommends this short article from Axios, an American news and information website. It details an initial experiment which indicated that “most Americans would move toward the center on policies including health care, immigration and the minimum wage if Republican and Democratic voters spent more time together face-to-face”.

<https://www.axios.com/the-limits-of-political-tribalism-america-one-room-f23c22e0-7ab2-4aef-9358-4f4e603ffc24.html>



Many members were enthusiastic about learning details of the women’s suffrage movement during our September unit meetings. This coming year marks the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote. If you were intrigued by the presentation and materials at the opening meeting of the year, you would enjoy this book by Elaine Weiss. It focuses on the fight to win ratification of the 19th amendment in Tennessee. It details the strategies employed by the Suffrs, led by Carrie Catt; the Women’s Party, led by Alice Paul; and the Antis, those women who opposed allowing their sisters the right to vote. Alongside those political creatures are the male legislators and the current president, Woodrow Wilson, and those who hoped to replace him - all calculating what type of influence they dare proffer. The book contains a couple sets of photos which help you visualize the main characters. Although I have always been interested in visiting Nashville to check out the music scene, I now know that I want to see the Hermitage Hotel and the statue in Centennial Park celebrating Tennessee’s role in securing the 19th Amendment. - Lori Delahunt

## President's Column by Liz Lauder

As League members, we know the importance of the decennial census. We know the connection between population and congressional districts and reapportionment. But, what can we do about it except to be sure to fill out our own census form every ten years? Well, the LWV of Minnesota has chosen the 2020 Census as the one issue that all local Leagues can take action on in the coming year.

Similar to everyone in a community reading the same book, this one action item is something every local League member in the state can participate in. How do we do that? According to the LWVMN website, (<https://www.lwvmn.org/census-action-kit>) first, we become better informed about the Census ourselves. Attending our November 7th general meeting featuring Andrew Virden of the Minnesota State Demographic Center (MSDC) is a great place to start! The MSDC (<https://mn.gov/admin/2020-census>) also has maps of undercounted areas, and videos

(<https://mn.gov/admin/2020-census/tools-resources/videos>) that explain what the census is and why it's important.

LWVMN has also collected valuable census information and links all in one place on its website.

We can reassure people that, by federal law, their personal information will not be shared with immigration or other federal agencies, nor with any outside groups. Answers to the online form will be encrypted, and access to the information will be secured through two-factor authentication.

Another action we can take is to join a Complete Count Committee. These groups help raise awareness and motivate community members to complete the census. According to the map (<https://mn.gov/admin/2020-census/involved/ccc/find>) here is a committee in White Bear Lake and one in Mahtomedi. Or you can start your own!

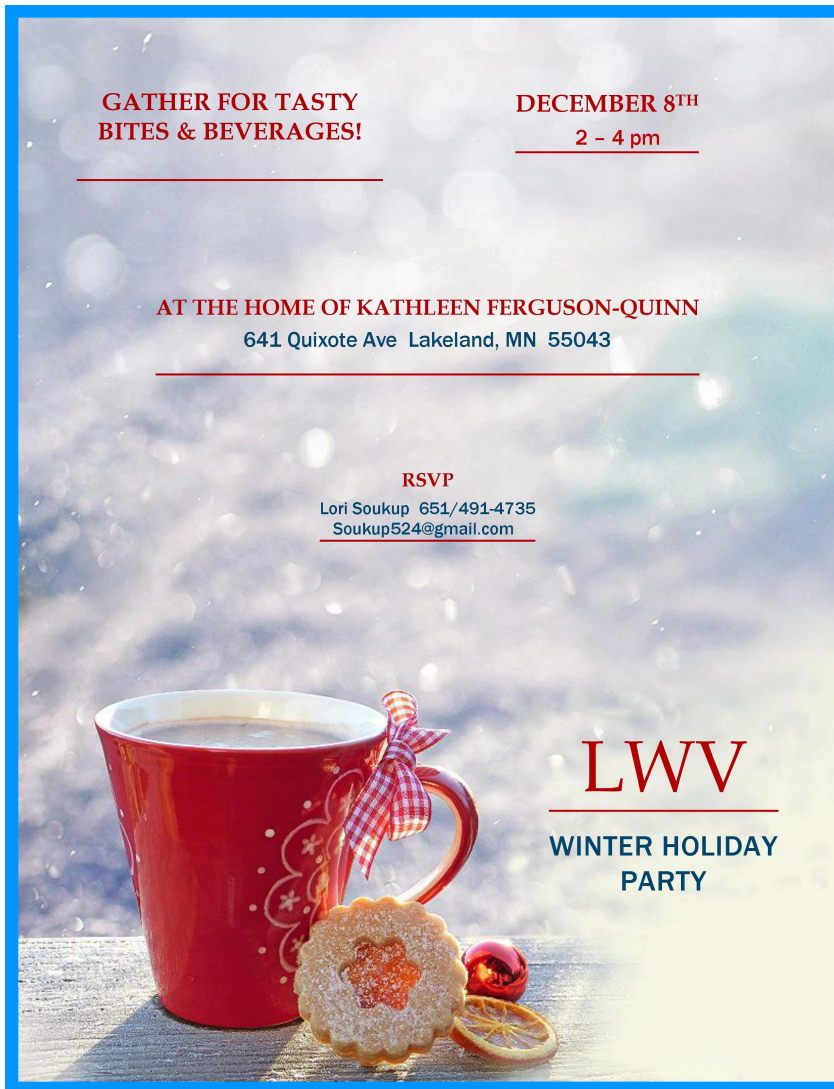
Next, write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Templates and guides can be found on the LWVMN website listed above.

Finally, share this information with other people in our community. Invite non-League members to the November meeting; share the websites with members of other groups you belong to, and on social media.

April 1, 2020 is National Census Day. Every person counts in our community, and there's something we can all do to make sure everybody gets counted!







There are no unit meetings in December.

Instead we will gather together to celebrate the holiday season.

Please RSVP to Lori Soukup by Dec. 1st!

Hosted by the St. Croix Valley Unit.

You don't want to miss it!



Looking for a way to get involved? **Serve on the Membership Committee!**

Do you like meeting new people and getting to know them?

Would you like to make new members feel welcome and tell them more about the League and how to get involved?

Then the Membership Committee needs you!

We are looking for a few more folks to join us and help us make our local League stronger by encouraging new members.

We would especially appreciate hearing from those who are talented organizers!

Contact one of the committee members to find out more:

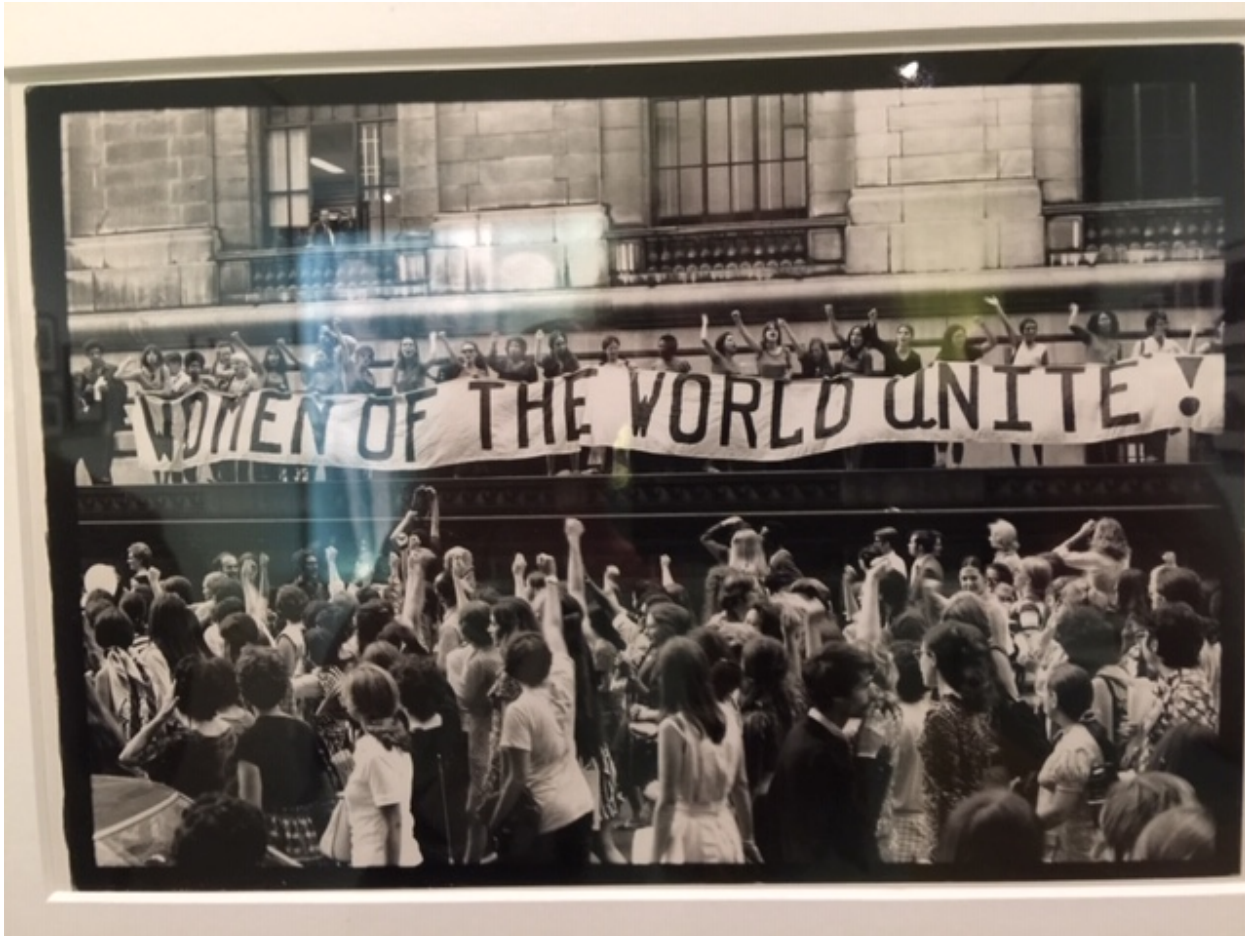
Liz Lauder ([lizlauder@gmail.com](mailto:lizlauder@gmail.com)); 651-357-8519

Mary Johnston ( [marjohnston@comcast.net](mailto:marjohnston@comcast.net)); 651-426-6778

Carolyn Folke ( [cbwf40@gmail.com](mailto:cbwf40@gmail.com)); 651-414-9503

Mary Santi ( [santi004@umn.edu](mailto:santi004@umn.edu)); 651-426-5151

Margaret Westin ([marg.westin@gmail.com](mailto:marg.westin@gmail.com)); 651-485-1998



Women march along Fifth Avenue for the 50th Anniversary of woman suffrage in the United States - August 26, 1970

### History Buffs Wanted!

The LWV Minnesota Traveling History Exhibit is coming to the White Bear Lake Area, not once, but twice, in 2020! This display of 100 years of LWVMN history is showing up at different venues around the state, and the Stillwater library and White Bear Historical Society are each hosting it at different times.

**This is an opportunity for the WBLA LWV to add some of OUR history to the exhibit.** We need some history buffs to collect the photos, newspaper articles, publications, and other objects and use them to tell visitors our story. We'd also like to host/co-host a community event to kick off the exhibit. If you're interested, contact Liz Lauder ( [lizlauder@gmail.com](mailto:lizlauder@gmail.com)), or 651-357-8519.

## *Redistricting and Gerrymandering: Recap of October Unit Meetings*

Thursday evening October 10th 2019 about 10 League members met on the 2nd floor of WBL City Hall to discuss what the League of Women voters can do about redistricting and its nemesis-gerrymandering.

After the 2020 census, everyone will have been counted and grouped into population areas; each district will have one representative-and the outcome is 1 person-1 vote.

But a man named Eldridge Gerry stirred the census pot and created a stew called gerrymandering! Since 1980, In Minnesota, the courts have been in charge of redistricting. However, for years people in power have been rearranging or gerrymandering legislative districts to create favorable election outcomes for their own parties.

They did this in a couple ways:

First they used "cracking" which was spreading voters of a different type into different districts. Racial divide is illegal but the top political party can decide how districts are formed.

Second "Packing" is done by packing more similar voters into a district.--Both political parties are guilty of this tactic, but there are distinct instances showing Republicans are often more skilled at this activity as evidenced in district maps in Wisconsin where the whole state flipped from DFL to GOP when Walker became Governor. This changed the whole political climate including the school districts which suffered lower teacher pay, benefits and pensions.

We want to know how we can start changing this districting process to a more equitable system where all peoples' votes count .

WHO should decide who does redistricting after the census?

(1) should we change the law(new statute)?

(2) should we start a constitutional amendment(a very long process!)

(3) Should we set up an independent commission?

--But what process should we use to screen and select applicants for this commission?-(partisan or nonpartisan)

(4) How can we draft proper maps?

Should the maps include communities of interest --agriculture, ethnic origin?

Should districts match the numbers of people in communities of interest?

(5) Should we endorse bills to create a commission and if we do, what will this commission do?

(1) Advisory role only?

(2) Actually draw district lines?

(3) How many people to serve?

(4) Can the public have input?

BUT -whatever we do--we agreed that our bottom line is: ALL PEOPLES VOTES SHOULD COUNT!! - Submitted by Fran Knothe, WBL Unit

LWV Mahtomedi Unit 10/14/19

Unit members heard a presentation on Gerrymandering and Redistricting by four league members, Lisa Larson, Mary Santi, Liz Nordling and Gretchen Davidson.

The history of gerrymandering was explained and the way in which parties in power are able to create districts to their advantage and to the disadvantage of the minority party. Presenters emphasized how crucial an accurate census is to gaining fair representation.

Presenters shared “egregious” examples of gerrymandering in states such as Wisconsin and North Carolina. In these states, the party in power shares a lower percentage of the vote but a greater share of the representatives in the U.S. House and state assemblies. Unit members shared comments and concerns that this results in lower voter turn-out and the realistic belief that one’s vote doesn’t count. For example, in the case of Wisconsin, the minority assembly leader has stated that the Republican Party has built an “impenetrable fire wall” around themselves.

In Minnesota the state legislature has to agree on legislation to create districts. When it has not been able to agree, the decision defaults to the courts.

Proposals for reform of this process in Minnesota were discussed by presenters and the unit members. The discussion revolved around creating a redistricting commission but the members wrestled with questions on how this could be done. A constitutional amendment could be attempted but this is very difficult to do and may not be advisable. A commission would need to be independent in nature, include citizen participation and have clear criteria for map drawing and funding. The appropriate number of commission members was discussed and whether or not it should have an advisory role or authority to make decisions.

Finally, LWVMN positions were discussed. The League recommends independent special commissions to determine districts. In addition, redistricting plans must be enforceable in court, represent racial and linguistic minorities, promote partisan fairness and respect boundaries of municipalities and counties. The position of LWV rejects protection of incumbents and preferential treatment for a political party. Unit members discussed supporting the 2020 census process and fair representation.

Mahtomedi Unit members are grateful to Liz, Lisa, Mary and Gretchen for this in-depth, scholarly and understandable presentation on gerrymandering and redistricting.

Submitted by Theresa Casey-Wolf, Mahtomedi Unit



**MANY THANKS TO:****Gretchen Davidson, Lisa Larson, Liz Nordling, Mary Santi!**

Like the other units, the North Oaks unit discussed redistricting and gerrymandering at our October meeting. Redistricting happens every ten years after the census is completed. States then delineate districts so that they are equally populated. It sounds simple enough, but, humans being humans, those in power tend to skew the lines so that they remain in power. There is evidence of gerrymandering going on as far back as 1812. This practice effectively steals power away from voters. In the event that a party controls the governorship, the house and the senate of any state, that party has complete power to draw the lines in redistricting.

The League of Women Voters is a plaintiff in law suits in various states where clear abuses of the redistricting process are taking place. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court has decided that they will not hear these cases. The one instance when courts do seem to step in reliably is in the instance of lines that are drawn clearly due to race.

The fact that so many democrats and minority voters tend to concentrate in urban areas allows lines to be configured that guarantee those districts to have reliable democratic representation but other districts to be guaranteed Republican. If districts are designed this way, they are much less competitive and incumbents can become complacent.

As in other units, we talked about the characteristics of an effective redistricting commission and the Leagues position that it would have to be carefully designed and encourage discussion and compromise.

Lori Delahunt- North Oaks Unit

Kudos to the October traveling program presentation committee! You did a fine job distilling a fairly complex issue, redistricting and gerrymandering, into understandable concepts.

Two SCV members, Mary and Ron Nelson, are retired educators from Wisconsin who still have children teaching there. They spoke of the effects gerrymandering has had on the public unions in WI and the difficulty of making changes.

We're all looking forward to the November public meeting with the speaker, Andrew Virden!

Lori Soukup- St. Croix Valley Unit

COMING AT JANUARY UNITS:  
NIGHT OF CAMP DAVID

For our January Units we are reading Night of Camp David, a novel written in 1965 by Fletcher Knebel. It has the premise of a U.S. President who begins to act dangerously paranoid and hatches unhinged ideas about remaking the international order. The men around him, and they were all men, struggle with what to do about that.

After a short discussion of the book we will delve into the issues the book raises, like power and keeping it, and examine what the 25th amendment has to say about presidential succession.

Many members ordered books at the October Unit meetings and are already reading it. The book is also available in local bookstores and at public libraries. Hennepin County has many copies. Some libraries also have the title on e-books so you can read on your Kindle or iPad.

2020

# JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 <small>New Year's Day</small>	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 <small>ML King Day</small>	21	22	23	24	25 <small>Chinese New Year</small>
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEB Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

https://www.vertex42.com/calendars/2020.html Calendars by Vertex42.com © 2018 Vertex42 LLC. Free to print.



*Don't forget to check out our Facebook page. You will find it if you search for League of Women Voters White Bear Lake Area. This is where we post and discuss our day-to-day happenings. Our page has a calendar for upcoming events. We post replays from our forums that have already taken place. Check out our page, "like" it, "share" it and post your own comments on it.*

[www.lwv-wbla.org](http://www.lwv-wbla.org)

*LWV White Bear Lake Area also has a Website.*

*You will find it at [www.lwv-wbla.org](http://www.lwv-wbla.org). It includes an events calendar, back issues of The Bear*

*Facts, board information and an invitation and*

*instructions on how to join. We have recently updated and improved our website, so check it out!*



*Thank you to our WBL League members who helped with the two candidate forums in October. We have found new partners, the Shoreview Rotary Club members, who helped at the Ramsey County Commissioner forum and are willing to assist in the future. Check our Facebook page and website for links to the forums. This interesting bill was found in our donation basket!*



## Treasurer's Report

October 9, 2019

Margaret Westin, Treasurer

		Current	YTD
Income:	Dues	\$	\$2280.00
	Donations	\$	\$ 110.00
	Memorials	\$	\$
	Meetings (socials)	\$	\$190.00
	Service	\$	\$
	In-kind donation	\$	\$
	Voters Service	\$	\$
	Calendars	\$	\$
	NOHOA	\$	\$
	Bank interest	\$	\$0.28
Total:		\$0.00	\$2480.28
Expenses:	Meetings (socials)	\$	\$130.49
	LWVMN PMP	\$	\$
	LWVUS PMP	\$	\$2,248.00
	Meeting site	\$	\$350.00
	Voters Service	\$127.55	\$127.55
	Program (includes publicity)	\$	\$32.38
	Bear Facts copying/printing	\$	\$
	Calendars	\$	\$267.31
	Membership	\$	\$270.24
	(communication, recruiting & recognition)		
Total:		\$127.55	\$3,425.97
Opening balance from Sept. 11, 2019:		\$2889.26	
Income		+	\$
Expenses:		-	\$127.55
Current balance:		\$2,761.71	
Ed fund CD:		\$5040.68	
2019-20 Paid Members: 45 @ \$60 10@ \$75			
Total: 67 (including our 3 lifetime mem			