



President's Column

In a year full of unprecedented happenings, you can add this to the list: **there will be no WBLA LWV Annual Meeting in 2020.**

The corona virus has put a halt to large gatherings, and many of our members are in a vulnerable age group, so the risks outweighed the benefits of being together to conduct business and reflect on the year.

What an anti-climactic ending to an otherwise terrific year! We began 2019-2020 by making posters to celebrate 100 years of white women being fully enfranchised. We had other programs and presentations about voting, redistricting, presidential power, the media, and the census. We registered voters at high schools, Century College, and senior centers. We held a candidate meet and greet for Ramsey County Commissioner and forums for city and school board elections. We even hosted the LWV Minnesota traveling history exhibit at the Stillwater Library. We don't know how the 2020 election will play out amidst this global pandemic, but the LWV of Minnesota is raising the alarm about the safety and security of elections during this time of social distancing. So, even during a public health crisis, our thoughts turn toward potential threats to free and fair elections.

I hope that, as Spring and Summer unfolds, the threat posed by the virus diminishes, but that your commitment to protect the vote does not wane. Stay informed and stay involved! And above all, be well!

-Liz Lauder

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There will be no in-person annual meeting this year. The June Bear Facts will contain our proposed budget, slate of candidates and local program positions for you to review and vote on electronically. We need a quorum of members to make the vote official. Please be on the look out for your June Bear Facts - due out in late May - and cast your ballot!

Annual Reports

Last month, we featured the annual reports from the Publicity, Social Media and Program committees. This month, we have the remaining reports from the two divisions of Voter Services and the Treasurer.

Forum recap

The Voter Service group sprung into action last July to hold a "Meet & Greet" when eight candidates filed for the Ramsey County Commissioner vacancy. We then hosted a candidate forum in October for the two finalists. In October we hosted a forum for the candidates for ISD 624.

The upcoming candidate forum season may turn out to be a bit unconventional but somehow, someday we'll figure out how to get reliable information to the voters. Stay tuned.....

-Lori Soukup

Voter Registration

Voter Registration was quite busy this past year. We hosted spring registration events at Stillwater High School, Forest Lake High School, White Bear Lake High School and Mahtomedi High School. The fall again saw events at our area high schools with a lot of interest from students. So far in 2020, we have hosted events at the YMCA in Forest Lake and a very busy voter registration event at Shoreview Senior Living. Not only did we aid in getting residents registered, but we assisted in requesting numerous absentee ballots for the presidential primary. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak our spring efforts have been sidelined but we hope to pick up where we left off this summer.

-Sarah Wombacher Amundson

The annual report from our treasurer, Margaret Westin, is on the final page of this newsletter. Margaret wants to advise members that while dues remain the same for this year, the Board may have to raise dues or add a fundraising activity in subsequent years to increase our revenue.

MAY UNIT MEETINGS CANCELLED

Probably as no surprise to you, we will have to cancel the May unit meetings focused on Metro Council Governance due to the Covid-19 virus. Our plan is to get together next as a group at the annual picnic, slated for late August, at which time we will discuss plans for the year and introduce new members.

Honoring a member of the LWVWBLA with The Revolving Bear Award has been a tradition for over 25 years. It represents commitment, dedication and leadership within our local League. Typically, the bear is awarded by the current holder and previous winner (in this case Heidi Boyd) to the new recipient at the annual meeting. Due to the cancellation of our annual meeting, the bear will be awarded to a new recipient at the annual picnic at the end of the summer. Stay tuned!



We are hoping for less virus and more socializing in the coming year! Here is a graphic depicting which units are responsible for various upcoming gatherings:

Event	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Picnic	White Bear Lake	Mahtomedi	St. Croix Valley	North Oaks
Holiday	North Oaks	White Bear Lake	Mahtomedi	St. Croix Valley
Annual	St. Croix Valley	North Oaks	White Bear Lake	Mahtomedi
Free Year	Mahtomedi	St. Croix Valley	North Oaks	White Bear Lake

SENDING A BIG

Thank You!

TO THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE PAID THEIR DUES TO OUR TREASURER, MARGARET WESTIN.

BECAUSE WE WILL NOT BE HOLDING OUR ANNUAL MEETING, DUES SHOULD BE MAILED TO :

MARGARET WESTIN, TREASURER
200 WILDWOOD AVENUE,
BIRCHWOOD, MN 55110.

DUES ARE \$60 PER INDIVIDUAL OR \$75 PER HOUSEHOLD.



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. And don't forget to visit our website!

www.lwv-wbla.org

May I Recommend?

Although we cannot conduct our usual meetings, there are so many topics relevant to the LWV available to explore!

The League of Women Voters Minnesota hosts Wine and Webinar on Wednesday evenings from 5:00-6:00 PM

April 22, April 29 and May 6

Register at: <https://www.lwvmn.org/league-calendar>



Kathy Tomsich, Action Chair, recommended this article from the Minneapolis Star Tribune which chronicled a victory for voter privacy:

<https://www.startribune.com/state-supreme-court-allows-voter-data-withheld-from-public/569474962/>

I found this article about studies on voting by mail interesting, especially since there is more discussion about that possibility due to the novel coronavirus.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/04/16/universal-vote-by-mail-doesnt-benefit-any-political-party-study-finds/>



And, finally, a recommendation that has nothing to do with League business, but rather with simple joy and entertainment, I suggest you check out

<https://jazzatlincolncenter.squarespace.com/>

for the many free concerts on the site. I find that cleaning a closet or chopping vegetables is much more pleasant while listening to these premiere musicians share their passion.

Check it out!

-Lori Delahunt

Treasurer's Annual Report 2019-20

Margaret Westin, Treasurer

Income:	Dues	\$2880.00
	Donations and Memorials	\$ 296.00
	Meetings (socials)	\$ 190.00
	Service(North Oaks Home)	\$ 300.00
	Calendars	\$ 365.00
	Bank interest	\$ 0.43
Total:		\$4031.43

Expenses:	Meetings (socials)	\$ 130.49
	LWVMN PMP	\$2000.70
	LWVUS PMP	\$2248.00
	Meeting site	\$ 350.00
	Voters Service	\$ 336.01
	Program (includes publicity)	\$ 538.18
	Bear Facts copying/printing	\$ 154.22
	Calendars	\$ 267.31
	Membership	\$ 270.24
	(communication, recruiting & recognition)	
Total:		\$6,295.15

Opening balance from April 1, 2019:	\$4,477.93
Income	+ \$4,031.43
Expenses:	- \$6,295.15

Current balance: **\$2,213.38**

Ed fund CD: **\$5040.68**

2019-20 Paid Members: 56 @ \$60
10 @ \$75
Total: 96 (including our 3 lifetime members)