



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS – RoMaFH  
ROSEVILLE, MAPLEWOOD, FALCON HEIGHTS  
*Also serving the communities of Little Canada and Lauderdale*

# VOTER

September 2008

Web site: [www.romafh.org](http://www.romafh.org)

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## Fall 2008 "KICK OFF" Membership Meeting — Open to the Public

### ***Administrators Address Challenges to Our Cities***

**Tuesday, September 16**

6:30 p.m. Social Time/Refreshments  
7:00 p.m. Meeting

### **Willow Room, Roseville City Hall**

2660 Civic Center Drive  
(County Road C just west of Lexington Avenue)

We have asked administrators for the cities we serve to speak to us regarding the most challenging issues facing their respective communities in the near future.

Invited city administrators:

Falcon Heights:	Justin Miller
Little Canada:	Joel Hanson
Maplewood:	Chuck Ahl (acting)
Roseville:	Bill Malinen
Shoreview:	Terry Schwerm

### ***PLAN TO ATTEND!***

Bring along neighbors and friends!  
This is an opportunity to introduce them to our League.  
The Membership Committee will help "meet and greet" attendees,  
along with Program Committee members.  
Board members will provide the treats.

**2008-09 Board  
& Off-Board Positions**

**Co-Presidents**

Teri Kysylyczyn & Ann Cleland

**Secretary**

Anne Haugan

**Treasurer**

Joan Stark

**Program Division**

Ann Berry, Georgeann Hall,  
Diane Nystrom, Florence Sprague  
(& coordinator of Diversity Subcom-  
mittee), Judy Rosenblatt, *ex officio*

Lorraine Fischer, rep. to Council of  
Metropolitan Area Leagues

**Public Relations**

**Volunteer still needed**

**Action Chair**

**Volunteer still needed**

**Observer Program**

**Reorganized; unit volunteers will  
observe at city council & school  
board meetings**

**Voter Service**

Linda McLoon & Julie Helwich

**Membership**

Karen Schaffer & Gale Pederson

**Units / Administrative Assistant**

Nancy Browne

**Newsletter**

Judy Rosenblatt, editor  
Diane Nystrom, mailings

**Finance Committee**

Georgiana Sobola, Anita Mayfield,  
& Joan Stark

**Off-Board Responsibilities**

**Nominating Committee**

Carolyn Cushing, Georgeann Hall,  
& Julianne Johnston

(cont'd on next page)

# Co-president's Letter



The biennial LWVUS national convention was held in Portland, Oregon, June 13–17. I represented our chapter at this meeting. Thank you for allowing me to attend on behalf of LWVROMaFH. Among the highlights:

There was a long discussion on whether the national position on redistricting should be lengthened. Both Ohio and California delegates strongly objected to this because both states have positions on redistricting that would conflict with the proposed national position. Many other state delegates (including Minnesota's) argued that redistricting is a state issue because every state has different redistricting laws; therefore in the end this concurrence item failed.

Two new national study items were adopted. One will be on climate change and the other one will be on national popular vote for the election of the president. New York State already has done a great deal of study on the national popular vote. When they were just about ready to finalize their findings, they received notice from the national office saying that they were unable to do the study at the state level because it is a national position. So the thought with this study is that it should not take up a whole lot of resources or time because all the study committee has to do is to look at what New York State did. (See the article in this issue on page 4 for more on this mini-study.)

There was only one resolution brought to the floor and it was that the fundraising and membership letters sent out by the national office should be mailed out separately. There has been confusion, with some people who have sent money to the national office figuring that it was only a donation being put on membership lists. The hope is that keeping the mailings separate will eliminate this confusion.

The body voted to increase the per member payment for the 2008–09 year to \$28.00 and the PMP for the 2009–2010 year to \$29.20. LWVROMaFH pays this PMP to the national office out of member dues and donations (we are a grassroots organization, not top down).

The other exciting news is that for the first time in LWVUS history, a man was nominated and elected to the National Board, Norman Turrill from Oregon.

The legislative priorities for 2008 are as follows: Campaign Finance Reform; Civil Liberties; DC Voting Rights; Election Administration; Ethics and Lobbying Reform; Global Climate Change; Health Care Reform; and Tax Policy. These are the issues that will have highest priority for lobbying and other action at the national level.

For daily reports on the specifics of everything that happened at convention, go to the LWVUS Web site at <[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)>; they are listed under the Members Only section.

*Teri Kysylyczyn, Co-president*

Women's Equality Day, August 26, 2008, marked the 88th anniversary of the day that the U.S. Constitution was amended to grant women the right to vote. {Everyone who watched the Olympics knows that 8 is a lucky number!}

*Off-Board*, cont'd from p. 2

**Coordinator for Rosefest Parade /  
Rep. to Gavel Club**  
Barb Yates

**Records / Directory / Web site**  
John Kysylyczyn

**Book Sale Coordinators**  
Joyce Blomquist & Nancy Irsfeld

**Annual Meeting Coordinators**  
Carole Erickson & Mary Ann  
Palmer

**Coordinator for VIP Meeting**  
(discuss issues with legislators)

**Volunteers needed**

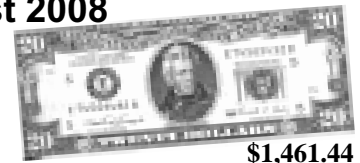
**Voter Service Coordinator  
Needed for Election Activities  
— Paid Position!**

**Volunteers needed, too**

LWVRoMaFH has been awarded a \$1,400 “pass through” grant by LWVMNEF (from the Martin & Brown Foundation) for voter service activities this fall. We need a coordinator, who will be paid a \$700 stipend from the grant. Between now and the November election this person will work on activities, including public forums for our communities to learn about their area’s candidates and distribution of voters’ guides. This is a great opportunity for our League to provide election information (in our usual nonpartisan way).

If you are interested in this position, contact Linda McLoon, Voter Service co-chair, at <linda.mcloon@gmail.com> or 651-636-1744, as soon as possible. Also contact Linda if you can volunteer to help with the League’s voter service activities this fall. Many helpers are needed.

## Treasurer’s Reports, June & August 2008



### Treasurer’s Report – June 25, 2008

**Previous Checking Balance – May 28, 2008**

**\$1,461.44**

**Income:**

Dues: (3) Individual @ \$55.00 \$165.00  
Ed Fund Reimbursement: 746.00  
2/3 cost of updating Web site – \$500.00  
1/3 cost of 4/07–3/08 *Voter* – \$246.00

**Total Income:** \$911.00

**Expenses:**

#4190 - Barbara Yates, \$705.34  
2,000 American Flags (Rose Parade)  
#4191 - Judy Rosenblatt, 35.98  
*Voter* Stamps \$32.80, Labels \$3.18  
#4192 - Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 75.00  
facility honorarium  
#4193 - Ann Berry, gifts for 2007–08 Co-Presidents 40.00

**Total Expenses:** \$856.32

**Checking Account Balance June 25, 2008**

**\$1,516.12**

**Savings Account Balance May 30, 2008**

**\$2,982.14**

**Education Fund Balance June 9, 2008**

**\$5904.95**

### Treasurer’s Report – August 27, 2008

**Previous Checking Balance – June 25, 2008**

**\$1,516.12**

**Income:**

Dues: (4) Individuals @ \$55.00 \$220.00  
“In Kind” copying, Nominating Committee 4.25  
Ann Berry  
North Suburban Community Foundation Grant 1,000.00

**Total Income:** \$1,224.25

**Expenses:**

“In Kind” copying, Nomination Comm. \$4.25  
Ann Berry  
#4194 – Terry Kysylyczyn, 627.24  
LWVUS 2008 Convention lodging, registration  
#4195 – George Bednar, provided convertible and 50.00  
drove for RoMaFH, 2008 *RoseFest* Parade  
#4196 – LWVMN Ed Fund, 2008 *Voter Guides* 106.50  
#4197 – LWVUS, 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr. PMP 2008–09 631.50

**Total Expenses:** \$1,419.49

**Checking Account Balance August 27, 2008**

**\$1,320.88**

**Savings Account Balance July 31, 2008**

**\$2,986.20**

**Education Fund Balance July 11, 2008**

**\$5,979.95**

### 2008 Finance Drive

We are continuing to receive Finance Drive contributions. Thank you, Le Matts, Barbara Yates, Janelle House, and Shari Dion.

## LWVUS adopts National Popular Vote Compact mini-study

Also see *Co-president's Letter*, page 1

Delegates at the June LWVUS Convention in Portland adopted a fast-track study of the National Popular Vote Compact, looking at the feasibility of using it among the states as a method for electing the US president. The LWV has long had a national position on abolishing the Electoral College and electing the president according to the popular vote.

Carolee Mullan (TX), former co-chair of the LWVUS Immigration Study Committee, has been appointed to the 2008–10 LWVUS Board to chair this study. A study committee has been formed and will produce background materials to be posted on the LWVUS Web site in the next few months.

Because the study will be proceeding on a compressed schedule, the deadline for submitting consensus forms will be May 1, 2009. LWVUS is amending its 2008–09 calendar to include study and consensus on this topic.

*(adapted from the 7/3/08 and 8/14/08 LWVUS Leaders Updates)*

### **Presidential Debates?**

Many delegates at the LWVUS Convention expressed a strong desire that the League attempt to participate again in the presidential debate process (that it started). LWVUS Executive Director Nancy Tate and President Mary Wilson have been exploring ways that the League might do this. A detailed account of these efforts is planned via the Leaders Update soon. In the meantime, everyone should be aware that the National Board shares the interest in reclaiming a role in the debates and that LWVUS is exploring various avenues to do this.

*(adapted from the 8–14 Leaders Update)*

## *Windows and Mirrors for All*

# Redefining the Problem of Race

by Florence Sprague, Diversity Subcommittee Coordinator

“How does it feel to be a problem?” In 1897 W. E. B. Du Bois identified this question as at the heart of his relationship with the white “other world” (“Strivings of the Negro People,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1897). **1897!** Now, more than a hundred years later, the relations between black Americans and white Americans continue to be uneasy and, despite many legal victories, the groups do not act as one in a society still struggling with institutional racism.

“Race is so deeply embedded in our lives it appears to be the natural order of things. We must challenge that notion with all the power of our science and society.”

*Yolanda Moses, anthropologist*

Today there is a new perspective from which to examine the damage of racism and the entire concept of race that can help us all move forward. Anthropologists have gathered scientific data to demonstrate how the visible differences between so-called races truly are just skin deep. There is more genetic variation within a “race” than among them; and there are rational, statistically sound explanations for apparent racial characteristics. Race is a social construct, not a biological one. Sadly, the discrimination tied to this construct has caused, and continues to cause, immeasurable harm to individuals, families, communities, even countries. Racism is also a social construct, a destructive one.

“[Racism] is not about how you look, it is about how people assign meaning to how you look..”

*Robin D.G. Kelley, historian*

The American Anthropological Association has developed a fascinating exhibit, “RACE: Are We So Different?” to explain this information to the public. The exhibit is replete with scholarly studies and documentation and also with the stories of individuals and groups whose lives have been deeply affected by our notion of race. The unifying theme of the exhibit is that of race as a social construct, not a biological one. This is supported with scientific analysis and statistical data on the development and distribution of certain genetic traits, the migrations of peoples, the functions of physical characteristics, and more.

Striking photo montages that show the continuous gradations of skin pigmentation visually demonstrate the beautiful ambiguity of persons of mixed heritage. On the other side of the problem, the exhibit documents how the cultural construct of racism has played out over the centuries, dividing, excluding, and scarring people. So-called racial minorities suffer the most and the most directly from racism by far, but we are all harmed by it.

Sometimes I date myself. In the spring of 2007, after attending this magnificent exhibit at the Science Museum of Minnesota, I went into the gift shop and asked if there was a companion book, as I wanted to reread the essays and view the photos again at greater leisure. I was disappointed when the answer was no. This dates me because, although I use the Internet all the time, it did not immediately occur to me that rather than a companion book there is a companion Web site, where one can view video clips, engage in interactive features, access a bibliography, and explore the data any time.

This wonderful and provocative exhibit will be touring the country through 2011; St. Paul was just the first stop. I hope that millions of people will use it to challenge themselves on the topic of race, which so haunts this country. I hope that you can be one of them, and if you cannot, I hope that you will explore the Web site, <<http://www.understandingrace.org/home.html>>.

(cont'd on page 5)

## **VOTE411.org the place for election info**

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org) is a “one-stop-shop” for election-related information. It provides nonpartisan answers to the public, with both general and state-specific information on the following aspects of the election process:

- Absentee ballot information
- Ballot measure information (where applicable)
- Early voting options (where applicable)
- Election dates
- Factual data on candidates in various federal, state, and local races
- General information on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye
- ID requirements
- Polling place locations
- Registration deadlines
- Voter qualifications
- Voter registration forms
- Voting machines

An important component of [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org) is the polling place locator, which enables users to type in their address and retrieve the poll location for the voting precinct in which that address is located.

If anyone in the country asks you for voter information, or you have questions yourself, go to [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org) for answers.

## **Contributions always welcome**

Just make out a check to *LWVROMaFH* (for the operating fund, not tax deductible) or to *LWVROMaFH Education Fund* (tax deductible), and send it to:

Joan Stark, Treasurer  
LWVROMaFH  
1009 Parker Ave.  
Roseville, MN 55113-6458



## **Membership Dues**

To join or renew, send a dues check to membership co-chair Karen Schaffer:

	Karen Schaffer, LWVROMaFH Membership Co-chair 2100 Fairview Ave. N Roseville, MN 55113-5452
Individual membership – \$55	
Household membership (two or more) – \$80	
New member, special 1st year discount – \$40	

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## **Redefining, cont'd from page 4**

Do you find yourself wanting to reject the premise that race is a social construct because you cannot accept that it does not exist? Then please, go to the Web site and learn more than this cursory overview has to offer. Read, look, listen, and ponder.

Try the sorting quiz. In this “quiz” you are given a long list of nationalities and asked to categorize them. Your choices are white, not white, and not sure. You won’t get a grade, but you will have to think about how you are assigning peoples to groups. Is it just a matter of skin pigmentation? Quickly you can see that nationality has little to do with even a skin color-based race concept after centuries of migration, both voluntary and forced, between continents.

Is a Cuban white? How about a Moroccan? A person from southern India may have skin as brown as a Kenyan’s, but her nose may be thinner and her hair straighter. She won’t seem as “black” to a white American, but to the British, she may seem just as “black” because each culture is taking into account the social history of slavery or colonialism that thrives on the concept of race, and vice versa.

Racism is also a social construct, one that pervades our history and our contemporary institutions. It suffuses our language, our stories, and our expectations. It shapes our stereotypes and our assumptions and, too often, our opportunities. Science and statistics can be used to deconstruct the concept of race. They can be used to expose the historical and ongoing reality of racism. But only education can deconstruct racism. Only thoughtful self-examination can stop the generational transfer of racism. Only conscious evaluation of policies and practices can alleviate institutional racism. This will take a lot of hard work by all of us. It is the right thing to do, for fairness and for survival. What will be your role?

“A fully functional multiracial society cannot be achieved without a sense of history and open, honest dialogue.”

*Cornel West*

\*This article was first written for use at a diversity workshop at the June 2008 LWVUS Convention. I know that many LWVROMaFH members were able to see the exhibit referred to when it was in St. Paul. The topic bears revisiting for all of us, and opening for those who did not get to the exhibit.

## Preliminary 2008–09 LWVRoMaFH Calendar

### September 2008

Tue, 16 – General Meeting at Roseville City Hall in Willow Room (lower level). *See details on page 1.*  
Wed, 24 – Board Meeting – place TBA

### October 2008

Wed, 8, 7 p.m.– Candidate Forum: Roseville City Council, Council Chambers, Roseville City Hall  
Wed, 15, 7 p.m. – Candidate Forum: MN Legislative Districts 54A & 54B, Council Chambers, Roseville City Hall  
Additional candidate forum dates TBA  
No general or unit meetings are planned so members can concentrate on nonpartisan Voter Service forums and other election activities. Be sure to contact Linda McLoon to volunteer your help (*see page 3*).

### November 2008

Tue, 18 – Evening Unit, “Alternative Transportation: Biking, Walking, Roseville Circulator, Senior Shuttle”  
Wed, 19 – Day Unit (same topic)  
Wed, 19 – Board Meeting. Note: moved up one week because of Thanksgiving

### December 2008

? – Holiday Charity Party (designated charity: Women’s Advocates). Date, time, and location TBA

### January 2009

Tue, 20 – Evening Unit/General Meeting: “World Population Balance,” David Paxton, speaker  
Wed, 21 – Day Unit (same topic, videotaped)  
Wed, 28 – Board Meeting

### February 2009

Tue, 17 – VIP General Meeting, “Questions and Answers with Elected Officials,”  
location TBA.  
Wed, 25 – Board Meeting

### March 2009

Tue, 17 – Evening Unit Meeting; Topic: “Code Enforcement: Rental Housing”  
Wed, 18 – Day Unit (same topic)  
Wed, 25 – Board Meeting

### April 2009

Sun, 19? – Fund-raising Book Sale, 7:30am – 1:30 p.m., at Fairview Community Center, accompanying Golden Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast.  
Tue, 21 – Evening Unit - Topic: “Diversity” Health Care/Store to Door  
Wed, 22 – Day Unit (same topic)  
Wed, 22 – Board Meeting in Fireside Room at the Roseville Oval

### May 2009

7? – Annual Meeting at Falcon Heights City Hall  
Unit Meetings – “Do Your Own Thing” Unit Activity  
Wed, 27 – Board Meeting

### June 2008

Mon, 22 – Rosefest Parade  
Wed, 24 – Board Meeting

#### **NOTE:**

**Board meetings** are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 4th Wed at the Roseville Oval, Raider Room (except in Sept, TBA, and April, Fireside Room).

**Third Tuesday evening unit meetings** in Nov, Jan, Mar, & April will be at Grumpy’s Bar and Grill Restaurant (formerly Major’s & Lido’s), Snelling Avenue north of County Road C, at 7:00 p.m.; social hour and dinner optional at 5:30 p.m. Minimum dinner cost is \$15.00 (to cover private room).

**Third Wednesday day unit meetings** are held at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 2561 N. Victoria, Roseville, at 9:30 a.m.

**National Popular Vote Compact mini-study** will be added to the calendar. See more about the study on pages 2 & 4 .

*Revised calendar will be in Oct Voter*

## “Speaking of Home” Exhibit and Programs Highlight Immigrant Experience - FYI

A series of free talks and an exhibit in downtown Minneapolis ask a cross-section of our new American community and communities of color from Minneapolis and St. Paul the question “What does home mean to you?” The series explores issues and ideas connected with the exhibit, such as the function of public art, immigration to Minnesota, affordable housing, and art and design in downtown cityscapes. The exhibit “Speaking of Home” is activated 24 hours a day by 23 individuals—immigrants and other new Minnesotans—with whom the project director collaborated, as well as the general public who pass through and below. It shows family photographs and portraits from these newcomers’ native homes, accompanied by their stories, as presented by the artist.

For details, click on “about” at <[www.speakingofhome.org](http://www.speakingofhome.org)> and be sure to read all the way to the end for information on the programs. The exhibit will be on display in the Minneapolis Skyway between Macy’s and the IDS Tower through October. All presentations take place in the Macy’s Skyroom on the 12th floor of the downtown Minneapolis store, 700 Nicollet Mall, 11 floors above the exhibit.

## LWVUS Position on Immigration

Following is the League’s position on national immigration policy, based on the recent study and consensus.

The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S. on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the U.S. To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status

The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

### Criteria for Legal Admission to the U.S.

The League supports the following criteria for legal admission of persons into the United States:

- Family reunification of spouses or minor children with authorized immigrants or citizens;
- Flight from persecution or response to humanitarian crises in home countries;
- Economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.;
- Education and training needs of the U.S.;
- Educational program opportunities; and
- Lack of a history of serious criminal activity.

### Administration and Enforcement

The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment.

The League supports:

- Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee status;
- Verification documents, such as status cards and work permits, with secure identifiers;
- Significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers;
- Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies;
- More effective tracking of individuals who enter the United States; and
- Increased personnel at borders.

The League also supports programs allowing foreign workers to enter and leave the U.S. to meet seasonal or sporadic labor needs.

### Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the U.S.

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.

## Judicial seats on September 9 primary ballot

Open judicial seats always draw a lot of contenders. This year, eight candidates have filed for the open seat in Ramsey County created by the impending retirement of Judge John Finley. The September 9 primary will whittle the field down to only the top two vote-getters, who will be on the November ballot. Two MN Supreme Court seats will also be on the primary ballots. Remember to vote!

According to *Minnesota Lawyer*, “While the race looks to be hotly contested, it does not appear it will become overtly political, as judicial races have become in some states. (In Minnesota, judicial races are supposed to be nonpartisan, and historically have been.) Candidates for Finley’s seat plan to use traditional methods such as lawn signs, door-knocking and leaflets. None have expressed a partisan or special-interest-driven agenda; all said they are committed to public service and the administration of justice.” (excerpted & adapted from *Minnesota Lawyer*, 8/1/08 article online, which briefly profiles the eight Ramsey County candidates. Check out the bios at <[www.minnlawyer.com/article.cfm/2008/08/04/A-primary-primer-Eight-lawyers-in-Ramsey-County-vie-for-one-seat](http://www.minnlawyer.com/article.cfm/2008/08/04/A-primary-primer-Eight-lawyers-in-Ramsey-County-vie-for-one-seat)>.

## Members visit state crime lab in St. Paul

On the morning of May 22, a group of 14 members, most from the Wednesday morning unit, “did their own thing” by visiting the state Bureau of Criminal Analysis Crime Lab in St. Paul for a tour. It was conducted by Don Peterson, a retired employee who enthusiastically volunteers his time to show off the building’s various laboratories for analysis of

crime evidence. This “real CSI” has an excellent reputation for its work, including assisting police departments around the state (and it has some very nice art works inside and outside the building that were included in the tour). The group topped off the visit by eating lunch together at a nearby restaurant.



Photos courtesy of Diane Nystrom

League of Women Voters of  
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