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## Senior Issues



## Editor Notes

Welcome to the October issue of your Senior News, the final issue of the year to be published prior to the November 3 election, no doubt one of the most important and telling in term of what we Americans want America to be like for generations to come.

DFL Senior Caucus Chair Don Bye tells us how important our vote is.

President Trump wants to defer collection of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) in order to help the economy, i.e. translated to mean making people think that they were making more take home pay thanks to Trump and therefore increases the chances of them voting for him. This latest "MAGA" effort is still only all about Trump's desire to be elected to a second term, nothing more and nothing less. See Call to Action by Jim Reed on page 3.

Julianne Johnston, retired public health nurse, provides another update on the COVID-19 pandemic that is currently affecting us all and that will likely continue to do that for a long-time to come. Note: Julianne has made it clear to this editor that the White House has not interfered with what she has written even though such interference appears to happen frequently in our very important national public health agency, the CDC. This article begins on page 4.

Do you remember the GOP (Grand Old Party), also known as the Republican Party, before it became the Party of One, the Party of Trump? Read about some of the major differences between the two parties that are affecting public policy development in the United States. The article begins on page 5.

Jeri Sparling, from the DFL Biden-Harris Campaign, provides information regarding volunteer opportunities and Cindy Spellman provides information about the next Senior Caucus. Book Club Meeting via Zoom on October 19. Meet Senior Caucus Board Member and East Central Chapter Chair Bonnie Lokenvitz in the summary of the telephone interview that we recently had with her. Her article is on page 7.

We are very privileged to have the Capitol Corner provided for this issue by United States Senator Tina Smith. This is the first time a U.S. senator has graced the pages of your Senior News. Capitol corner is on page 9.

Don't miss the information provided by Kay Hendrikson, chair of the Technology Committee, and also the contact information for the eleven chapters across the state. Of course, check out the calendar of coming events on the last page.

Catch-up on the activities and decisions made by your Board of Directors during the third quarter of 2020. Look for the first of a series of articles on the important Political Involvement Committee (PIC) beginning in our January 2021 issue in the Senior News.



Social Distancing in  
the back yard



**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** If you change your address or email or add an email that you did not have before, please contact **John Larva**, Treasurer of the DFL Senior Caucus, at 1424 Woodhill Drive, Burnsville, MN 55337. Or, email **Kay Hendrikson** at [dflseniors@gmail.com](mailto:dflseniors@gmail.com) as soon as possible so you can continue to receive this newsletter on a quarterly basis. If you do not wish to continue to receive this newsletter, please contact Larva or Hendrikson using the same contact information. Thank you.



Don Bye

## From the Chair

### Don Bye

We have rounded the final turn of this presidential race and are coming down the final stretch. We are subject to surprises every remaining day, but the finish line is in sight.

Many have already voted. You might do the same and then encourage every friend, neighbor, and acquaintance to vote as soon as they can, piling up the ballots for

### **BIDEN! BIDEN! BIDEN!**

Let me list a few of the hundreds of reasons why you should.

First and foremost, Joe Biden is a very moral man: one who has devoted most all of his life to public service. He has spent a lifetime helping others, particularly those who are most in need.

In contrast, we have a current president who has gone through his life as one of the most selfish and manipulative of men. He was born rich, inheriting millions, and grows richer by taking advantage of others through hundreds of unscrupulous acts. He has deliberately bankrupted businesses, hidden personal assets and left thousands of employees without jobs, and, suppliers and trusting contractors without payment.

We have a Democratic Party candidate who works hard and can admit his mistakes. He gets along with almost everyone, shares credit and, overall, operates on a "we" basis. He does not take singular credit for every positive and blame others for every negative like our current president.

Joe and Jill Biden begin every Sunday in attendance at the church of their choice in Delaware. On the other hand, our erstwhile President spends most every Sunday, and many Saturdays, playing

golf at one of his ritzy golf courses in Florida, often leaving his wife and young son in Washington D.C. or New York.

To exhibit his false piety, Trump coerced army generals of the United States to clear the streets with accompanying military in order to carry a bible under his arm for a photo-op on the steps of a church with which he has no connection.

Last fall he was convicted in court for stealing from his own family foundation to acquire paintings and artifacts for his Florida mansions and golf courses.

It is said that the only thing worse than a liar, is a liar who is also a hypocrite. Our current President surpasses all other political figures in both aspects, by a wide margin.

His word is worthless. He promised to detail a greatly improved and detailed health plan before the 2016 election. Again, in mid-June of this year he promised to present a detailed health care plan within a couple weeks. Ho Hum. We're still waiting and in this month before election day there is still nothing.

So, for all of you who are able, it is full speed ahead to November 3.

### **PERSUADE! PERSUADE! PERSUADE!**

**YOU CAN EITHER  
VOTE BY VOTING OR  
VOTE BY NOT VOTING.  
IF YOU DON'T VOTE,  
SOMEONE ELSE'S  
VOTE COUNTS MORE.  
IT'S MATH.**



Occupy Pragmatism: www.occupypragmatism.com

## **SENIOR NEWS**

The DFL *Senior News* is published at least four times a year by the DFL Senior Caucus, 255 E. Plato Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55107, to provide news items of DFL Senior Caucus events and other items of interest to Minnesota seniors. Readers are encouraged to submit articles for publication on subjects of interest to Minnesota DFL seniors. Accepted articles may be edited to meet these goals and space requirements. Submit articles and comments to: Norm Hanson, Editor 651-484-8926 or norsan45@hotmail.com or Julianne Johnston 651-486-7120 juliannetj@msn.com. Thank you in advance for your participation in this goal.



## **The FICA deferral A CALL TO ACTION FOR SENIORS**

Jim Reed

President Trump has announced a deferral of Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) collections starting September 1. Presumably, this deferral is to help the current stumbling U.S. economy. He did so through an executive order because Congress has been unwilling to touch taxes that pay for Social Security and Medicare, two federal programs that most seniors expect.

***Seniors: the deferral is a short-term fix; are you willing to risk your Social Security and Medicare for a short-term fix?***

The original FICA tax was passed in 1935 along with Social Security solely for collection of employer/employee contributions to retirement benefits. Currently, employers pay FICA taxes along with employee withholding taxes. The announced deferral means that employers are not required to pay the employee contribution for Social Security in 2020. Of course, that reduces payments to the Social Security trust fund, the fund that pays for Social Security retirement checks and could put that fund at financial risk.

***Seniors, are you happy that the fund that pays for your retirement is now threatened?***

And maybe it is all for naught! Many employers have refused to follow this deferral as the tax implications of a FICA deferral are complex. Should the deferred FICA taxes become due in 2021, then employers will have double the FICA deduction from the employee paychecks, a significant reduction in employee net pay when economic prospects may not yet be favorable. If FICA taxes are further delayed, deferred employee contributions become subject to federal withholding taxes, an even larger reduction in employee net pay. Also, what should employers do for employees who change jobs? Therefore, most employers may continue collecting FICA employee contributions and save them in escrow accounts. Still, Trump's executive order puts cuts to Social Security and Medicare directly on the debate table.

***Seniors, don't you think your long-term opposition to cuts to Social Security and Medicare should have counted?***

Rebuffed by private industry, Trump has issued a second executive order requiring that government agencies and the military apply the FICA deferment. The federal government and military amount to about a sixth of the U.S. economy so this reduced deferment is still a significant loss to the trust fund.

***Seniors, should government agency and military policy be used against you?***

President Trump has strongly suggested that should he win a second term, he will make the FICA deferment a permanent policy. Some analysts believe such a policy could bankrupt the Social Security trust fund in three to five years. In response, Trump has proposed recovering the deferments and funding future Social Security and Medicare costs through the general government fund. That policy puts Social Security and Medicare in competition with all other government services: defense, homeland security, interest on debt, agriculture, education, infrastructure, international business support and so on. Likely, Social Security and Medicare will be rolled under the "welfare" part of the budget where cuts are justified to reduce "government dependency".

***Seniors, should your Social Security retirement and Medicare health insurance, for which you contributed your whole working life, be reduced to nothing more than a government welfare program?***

Trump enacted the FICA tax deferral through an executive order, a mechanism by which the President can temporarily bypass Congress. Congress gave Presidents such latitude because some events, like a hurricane disaster, require quick government intervention before Congress can convene. But that mechanism was not intended for long-term domestic policy. Indeed, the Constitution limits the President to just "faithfully execute the laws" from Congress for such policies. (Constitutional authorities claim those four words are the most important in the entire Constitution.) Others claim that President Obama, through Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) gave Trump cover for his use of executive orders, but DACA overlaps with U.S. foreign policy, an arena that the Constitution gives the President wide latitude and authority. Trump claims "I am the law" for all policy, domestic and foreign, a stance that the authors of the Constitution would claim as harkening to dictatorship.

***Seniors, are you willing to leave to your children and grandchildren a federal government run by executive dictatorship?***



Seniors, isn't it time to defend our democracy and the programs, Social Security and Medicare, that so many seniors depend on? Isn't it time to say no to a President who subverts the Constitution through executive order? Isn't it time to say no to a Trump party (once known as the Republican party) that has long campaigned to end Social Security and Medicare? In 2005, you stood up when President Bush tried to privatize Social Security. Isn't it time to stand up again?

## Viral Diseases and You

Julianne Johnston, PHN retired

First let me address the flu (influenza) virus season which begins in late fall each year and ends in the spring. This year the flu season will occur during the current coronavirus pandemic. Since the flu viruses mutate (change slightly) each year, the vaccine for the flu changes to adapt to those anticipated changes. Everyone from age 5 and older should get the flu vaccine this year. The vaccine will prevent the flu in about fifty percent of the people who are exposed to the flu viruses and will dramatically reduce the severity in those who come down with the disease. However the COVID-19 disease and the flu begin with similar symptoms but require quite different treatments. It is important to have a way for physicians to determine how to diagnosis and treat persons affected by these viruses. **It will be possible to have both diseases at the same time**, but the flu vaccine will reduce the complications that would result. Get your vaccine in October. The immunity it provides will begin to decrease in about six months after it is received, Usually after the "flu season."

**The bad news** about COVID is that as of September 2020, we will have 207,000 plus deaths in the U.S. due to this disease. With four percent of the world population, the U.S. accounts for 21 percent of the COVID deaths. People over the age of 55 are more likely to have serious cases of this virus and to die from it. And yes, children are dying too, however their death statistics are much lower. Some folks who survive the disease, at all ages, continue to have debilitating conditions known as "long haulers." Scientists are searching for treatment to control their lingering and disabling symptoms.

Many countries are developing and testing vaccines, including the U.S., however the effectiveness of the vaccine and the potential side effects are not yet known. There are three vaccines in the third stage of development in the U.S. and two must be given in two doses separated by a specific number of weeks apart. The second dose must come from the same vaccine as the first one. It takes two weeks to develop a significant response from a dose of the vaccine and for these two vaccines, one dose is not sufficient to develop what is predicted to be an effective immunity of about 50 to 70 percent. Masks, hand washing, and social distancing will still be required to ensure protection since we will not know what an individual's response will be without further testing. Nor

## SENIORS, STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS!



*Ginsburg was a passionate, astute and outspoken advocate of women's rights, civil liberties and the rule of law.*

do we know how long the immunity will last. None have yet been approved for the public. In addition, the distribution of vaccine for mass immunizations is incredibly complicated in order to ensure the vaccine is handled properly to maintain potency.

In the meantime, please remember that infected people including children do not exhibit symptoms for several days or more and will still be capable of spreading the disease. There is still so much we do not know about this virus, but scientists are on a fast learning curve. Scientists around the world are collaborating their work at breakneck speed and 24/7. Many nations are sending their top scientists to working together to develop an effective vaccine. **The U.S. is not joining with any of them.**

The **good news** is that top scientists say that wearing a well-fitting mask, washing your hands frequently and maintaining social distancing as well as staying away from groups of people in enclosed spaces indoors, is effective in limiting exposure to the disease and also from spreading it to others. Testing and tracking infected people is key to learn where and how the disease is being spread.

**What you need to know:** Vigorously wash your hands with soap and water for twenty seconds or about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday to You." The soap dissolves the fatty layer surrounding the virus and the friction helps to remove it from your hands if you rinse thoroughly. Your mask should be firmly surrounding your nose so that when you breathe, you breath through the mask and not from air entering from the top or sides of the mask. A wire inside the mask or a clip that fits over the top of your mask can ensure that you breathe through the mask. Wash the mask at least daily in hot soapy water for at least five minutes and provide the mechanical friction a washing machine would provide. Rinse thoroughly in hot water and hang to dry or use a hair dryer.

Use disinfectant hand sanitizers that are at least seventy percent alcohol when handwashing is not possible. Do not use sanitizers that contain ethanol alcohol as that form of alcohol is absorbed into the skin and is toxic.

Stay safe everyone. The end is in sight but it is still a long way off for now.

## The Republican Party?

Norm Hanson/Julianne Johnston

Ripon, Wisconsin was founded in 1849, and is located far north of Milwaukee and twenty miles to the west of the Fox Valley in the heart of the Badger State. It is the home of Ripon College, a small liberal arts college founded in 1851.



Party of Lincoln

It is also known to be the birthplace of the Republican Party on March 20, 1854, primarily out of concern about the Kansas-Nebraska Act that provided for the expanding of slavery, something that the party founders were against. Instead, they favored the Missouri Compromise (1820) that prohibited the expanding of slavery beyond Missouri. The Whig Party was breathing its last and people opposed to slavery were looking for a new political party to push back against that concept in some areas of the economy. Generally, the Republican Party was in favor of a strong central government at that time. It now, however, favors smaller government with less regulation and socially conservative public policies. The Republican Party (aka the Grand Old Party or GOP) supported the civil rights of African Americans following the end of the Civil War hostilities during Reconstruction. The Republicans were opposed by many “White Folks” who were pushing the “Deep South” to the Democratic side of the aisle for generations to come. Note: our own Hubert H. Humphrey encouraged some new thinking for the Democrats in this public policy area in his famous speech at the 1948 National Democratic Convention that led to the walkout by Strom Thurmond and other delegates from the South and the formation of the “Dixiecrats!”

Ah, but the GOP of 1854 has changed greatly since its inception largely in its opposition to the expansion, let alone the existence, of slavery in the United States of America (U.S.A). President Reagan ran successfully with a push for a smaller federal government, i.e. “The worst words that can be heard are ‘We’re from the federal government and we are here to help!’ ” or words to that effect. He engineered huge tax cuts and championed “Reaganomics” as well as aid to the Contras in Nicaragua which was of questionable legality relative to the public policy at the time making Ollie North famous for a while. Not surprisingly, those policies began to have negative effects on our U.S. economy that made it difficult for George H. W. Bush to stay around for a second term.

Now, however, the GOP has become the **Party of Trump** or **The Party of One**. That is, it is now all about and only about Donald J. Trump, a very

insecure, ignorant, arrogant, and narcissistic man. A man who favors isolationism over international alliances with our allies and defenses against the enemies of the U.S. A man who favors high tariffs on imports from countries that have been major trading partners in many areas including grains, hogs and soybeans. A man who essentially wants to prevent new immigrants from coming into the U.S. (his current wife and in-laws being exceptions, of course), especially those immigrants who do not look or speak “right” or who do not worship the “right way.” He is a man who denies the fact that the climate is changing, “Trust me, it will get cooler. You just watch!” A man who claims that he is smarter than everyone and does everything that he can to denigrate the information provided by public health and epidemiological experts regarding the COVID pandemic and its effect on U.S. citizens. A man who, with great help and assistance from Senator McConnell, has assured that the Supreme Court of the U.S. will be populated by very conservative justices for decades to come. A man who is determined to rid the health coverage system of Obamacare as well as any other public policies that have Obama’s handprints on them, as the best example of an extreme fetish on the part of the current president.

Fortunately, many prominent Republicans have publicly stated that they will not be supporting Trump this time around even though most of them but not all, i.e. Vermont Governor Phil Scott, former president, George W. Bush, and former secretary of state Collin Powell supported “You’re fired!” in 2016. Some of them have publicly stated that they plan to vote for Joe Biden including former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, former Ohio Governor John Kasich, former New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman, former New York Representative Susan Molinari, and former Pennsylvania Representative Charlie Dent. Some other prominent Republicans have made it clear that they will not be voting for Trump in 2020 although they have not said that they will be voting for Biden. Not voting for Trump could help Biden. However, if they vote for a third party or just write in the name of another conservative Republican like John Bolton or just don’t say other than that they do not plan to vote for Trump like Senator Mitt Romney, it will help Trump, of course. Most of these prominent Republicans who have made it very clear that they will not be voting for Trump this time around, including those who did not vote for him in 2016, all expressed concern over the direction that Trump is leading the country to his poor and very political response to the COVID-19 pandemic; concern over his behavior as the commander-in-chief of the men and women who serve in the military forces of the U.S., (you know, those whom he has frequently

described as “losers and suckers!”) and his behavior and actions taken against our long-time allies. Trump’s personal behaviors, actions and statements are designed to divide the good citizens of our land by highlighting the differences between us and making that a bad thing rather than celebrating those differences as a strength of our country. Recognizing how those differences have played a large role in making the U.S. a great nation in the family of nations! This is a man who clearly would be king if he could!

It is so good to see and hear these prominent Republicans publicly come out against Trump because they indicate how the Party of Trump is so much different than the GOP that many of them have

belonged to, and worked for all of their political lives. Will it be enough to give Joe Biden the keys to the big white residence on Pennsylvania Avenue come January 20, 2021? We do not know but we can hope that will prove to be the case!



## Senior Volunteer Opportunities for the DFL Biden/Harris Campaign

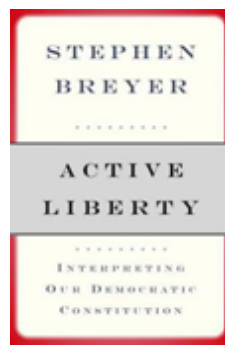
### Jeri Sparling, Coordinator

I am reaching out to you since I believe you may have interest in joining the newly formed MN Seniors for Biden Council. The plan for the council members for Biden includes a weekly Zoom meeting to get updates from the campaign, information about events, policies on issues impacting seniors, and ways people can help the Biden/Harris ticket win. Ways folks can become involved might include:

- Sharing with friends & family why you are supporting Biden/Harris;
- Sharing voter education information with friends & family;
- Writing a letter to the editor;
- Sharing feedback and ideas about the campaign with campaign staff;
- Phone banking; and Encouraging others to join the Senior Council.

***I am hopeful you will find this opportunity to volunteer for the campaign exciting and rewarding. If you are interested in getting on the e-mail list, please contact Jeri by sending an e-mail to: [jsparling@dfi.org](mailto:jsparling@dfi.org) including your name, e-mail, phone number and mailing address.***

*“I just try to do the good job that I have to the best of my ability and I really don't think about whether I am inspirational. I just do the best I can.” Ruth Bader Ginsberg*



### Senior Caucus. Book Club Zoom Meeting

***Active Liberty***—Justice Breyer premises his approach on the writings of a French political philosopher, Benjamin Constant who, writing in the early 2005’s compared what he called the “liberty of the ancients” with modern liberty. Ancient liberty consist of the people sharing in the sovereign authority of the government and what that means in an active liberty. For meeting information contact:

Cindy Spellman, [rooskie0825@gmail.com](mailto:rooskie0825@gmail.com)

For Zoom information and training contact: [dfiseniors@gmail.com](mailto:dfiseniors@gmail.com)

*“Reading is the key that opens doors to many good things in life. Reading shaped my dreams, and more reading helped me make my dreams come true.” Ruth Bader Ginsberg*



## **Meet Bonnie Lokenvitz**

Norm Hanson and Julianne Johnston

Bonnie Lokenvitz, was raised on a small farm in Northeastern Iowa along with five brothers and two sisters. The farm raised Brown Swiss and Jersey cattle in part for the high butterfat content, in the three to five percent range, in their milk, and in part due to the preferences of her grandfather who was an immigrant from Switzerland. They sold the milk to a local creamery where it was made into butter. The family also raised pigs and chickens and sold eggs. The farm was sold because none of her siblings wanted to stay on to operate the farm. Her father, a carpenter, built many of the Butler crop storage buildings in the area. Her family members were mostly Democrats and held strong opinions regarding the public policies of the day.

Sports for women, when she was growing up, were limited and women were not allowed on the sports and activity buses that brought student athletes home following their practices. She remembers that women played half-court style basketball which women and girls played in Iowa for many years.

Bonnie graduated from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, the home of the annual Nordic Fest and the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum and Heritage Center which houses thousands of artifacts and has twelve historic buildings that reflect the Norwegian heritage of many residents in northeastern Iowa. She graduated with majors in French and English and a minor in education thanks to support from the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). The NDEA was adopted in 1958 under President Eisenhower in response to the Soviet acceleration of the space race to “insure trained manpower of sufficient quality and quantity to meet the national defense needs of the United States.” The NDEA provided fellowships and loans to students and bolstered education in the areas of science, mathematics and modern foreign languages for the next seven years.

Following one year of teaching, Bonnie moved into the IT (Informational Technology) area and continued for 50 years until her retirement. Many companies which she worked for provided on-the-job-training and sent her to more formal training. She worked for Capp Homes (later, Martin Homes), a company well known for its self-built homes.

Bonnie has traveled for businesses throughout the U.S. and Canada during her professional working



Bonnie Lokenvitz

career and she has often been able to work from her home.

She expressed her concern for her eight year old granddaughter because of how COVID-19 will affect her education. Her son, who recently moved his family to Las Vegas, might also be having problems with this transition because of the virus.

Not involved much in party politics until she moved to Kanabec County, she became acquainted with Lila Skramstead who encouraged her participation in the DFL and with the DFL Senior Caucus. Bonnie is the current chair of the East Central Chapter (Mora-Cambridge areas) and serves on the Senior Caucus Board of Directors. Bonnie is also a very welcome member of the DFL Senior Caucus Technology Committee where she puts her experience and skills to work for all of us.

Bonnie notes that some of the leadership in the East Central Chapter has “aged” out and finding new leadership is a challenge. The East Central Chapter holds its bi-monthly meetings over lunch time making it difficult for working seniors and other interested parties to attend. Bonnie was able to attend the meetings during her lunch hour while still working. But not everyone can do that.

There is difficulty with broadband internet access in her area so she sends out post cards prior to every chapter meeting to remind members of the event. She said there is a big challenge in finding speakers to come to their meetings to talk to them about issues of interest and concern. Several speakers have sent substitutes who have not been well prepared to speak about the topic or subject of interest. Attendance is usually 10-12 people at each meeting.

There are many important public policy issues affecting all seniors and especially seniors living in the rural areas of Minnesota. These include issues with public transportation and broad band internet access. Bonnie said that, although she has a good internet access, access in the area is spotty and sometimes far too expensive for many. There has been some recent improvement because the local schools have had to convert to on-line learning for their students thanks to the impact of COVID-19. She said that it is not unusual for students and farmers to try to access the internet in libraries or to be driven to local “hot spots” in some cases or to sit in their cars in the parking lots of businesses who have paid for private access. Cold weather could soon affect using these types of internet access.

Lokenvitz said that there is an “on demand” bus service that can be scheduled to take residents to

medical appointments, and shopping. While the bus service is subsidized, people do pay a fee to use it based upon their income. She noted that there are issues related to the shortage of volunteer drivers and the level of mileage reimbursement for those who do volunteer. Liability issues for these volunteer drivers are also a concern that affects the available pool of volunteer drivers. She said that residents who utilize the food pantry can only carry one box on the bus even though they are allowed to leave the pantry with two boxes of foodstuffs to take home.

Bonnie thinks that the annual Senior Caucus Day-on-the Hill is very important, not only to hear legislators and others speak on issues and topics important to seniors, because the event also provides the opportunity to meet with legislators about those issues. Bonnie is also a member of the DFL Rural Caucus and finds it to be another effective voice for rural seniors. She thinks that it is important to have

## Early voting

### Important information for mail-in ballot

Read the instructions that come with your ballot carefully.

1. Your signature envelope might have a box for a witness to complete and sign. Due to COVID-19, **there is no witness requirement for registered voters** for the November 3, 2020, State General Election. Non-registered voters will still need a witness to indicate their proof of residence.
2. Mail the ballot and forms back right away after you finish. Your returned ballot must be postmarked on or before Election Day (November 3, 2020) and received by your county within the next seven calendar days (November 10). You may also drop off your ballot envelope in person at the election office (not your in-person polling place)
3. Returning your ballot in person:  
You can also return your ballot in person no later than 3 p.m. on **Election Day** to the **election office** that sent you your ballot. You can drop off ballots for up to three other voters. You will need to show identification with name and signature when returning a ballot for someone else. You may *not* drop your ballot off at your polling place on election day.
4. To check on the status of your mail in ballot allow for application-processing time. If you submitted your absentee ballot application within the last several business days, election officials may still be processing your request. Until a request is processed, a record of your absentee ballot will not be available through this service. Give your first and last

more rural senior residents serving on the Senior Caucus Board of Directors and committees and consideration should be given to using Zoom for its meetings allowing folks from across the state to participate in meetings without leaving their homes. She also thinks that Zoom technology could be used long after the COVID pandemic has been brought under control so that participation with the board and with its committees can readily be available to interested and engaged DFL seniors from across the state.

Bonnie predicts that Joe Biden will win in November and will be aided, in part, by the derisive comments that the president has made about veterans for so many years both before and after he avoided the draft himself and because he declared service men and women “suckers and losers” if they were injured, captured or killed when serving in the military!

name exactly as they appeared on your voter registration or absentee ballot application.

Election Phone Numbers  
Metro Area; 651-215-1440  
Greater Minnesota 1-877-600 8683  
Relay 711  
Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### In-Person Early Voting

All **county election offices** have in-person absentee voting. The municipalities and service centers listed below are also offering in-person absentee voting in the days before the November 3, 2020 state general election.

**City Of Maplewood**, 1830 County Road B E,  
Maplewood, MN 55109

**New Brighton Community Center\***, 400 10th St,  
New Brighton, MN 55112

**Ramsey County Library - Roseville\***, 2180 Hamline  
Ave N, Roseville, MN 55113

**St Anthony City Hall**, 3301 Silver Lake Rd,  
St Anthony, MN 55418

**Ramsey County Elections\***, 90 Plato Blvd W, Saint  
Paul, MN 55107

*\*issues ballots for all precincts in county*





## Capitol Corner

Tina Smith, former businesswoman, and Minnesota Senator since 2018. Smith has also served as the 48th lieutenant governor of Minnesota from 2015 to 2018 before being appointed to the United

States Senate seat vacated by Al Franken. She won the 2018 special election to fill the remainder of Franken's term through January 2021.



U.S. Senator  
Tina Smith

Hello DFLers, Senator Tina Smith here. I hope you're all staying safe and healthy, and I am grateful for the chance to update you all on what I have been doing in the Senate, and on the campaign trail.

The coronavirus pandemic has been like an earthquake shaking the foundations of our health, our economy, and our well-being. But this crisis is hitting some of our communities more than others. COVID-19 is not the great equalizer—it lays bare inequities and injustices that leave some families and neighbors without a safe place to live, without a good job that pays enough to take care of their families, and without good health care.

During the pandemic, I have gone to work in the Senate and helped pass legislation to expand telehealth services, secure free diagnostic COVID testing, and provide aid to farmers. And I've been campaigning across the state—both virtually and in-person with socially distanced events—to talk about how we build forward, and how we build back better and stronger.

There is so much more work to do, but under Mitch McConnell's leadership, the Senate has become a place where good ideas go to die. While I have been able to work across party lines and successfully get over two dozen of my bills and provisions signed into law by President Donald Trump, I think about how much more we could accomplish if we flip the Senate and take back the White House.

We need a president and lawmakers, who understand just how important it is to protect and expand Social Security, while making sure that it remains solvent in the long term. Meanwhile, our current President has called to gut the program. My opponent, Jason Lewis, supports undoing Medicare, and he is also advocated for raising the retirement age, and for changes that would reduce Social Security benefits. That is unacceptable, and we can

send a strong message in November that Minnesotans and Americans deserve better.

As your Senator, I have strongly opposed Social Security benefit cuts and privatization, and I opposed the Republican tax law that added \$1.5 trillion to our national debt which largely benefited the wealthy, and risked major cuts to Social Security and Medicare.

We need to make sure that after a lifetime of work, Social Security is available for you once you retire. That means making sure Social Security benefits are easily accessible to recipients, and that people are not unfairly penalized for earning benefits later in their career. I have supported legislation that would make sure all of this can happen. I have cosponsored the bipartisan *Social Security Fairness Act*, which would make sure firefighters and other state employees are not unfairly penalized by earning Social Security benefits later in their careers. I also support the *Preserving Social Security Act*, which would ensure that Social Security benefits reflect the increasing costs faced by seniors and improve the long-term solvency of the Social Security Trust funds.

I have also been focused on taking steps to lower health care costs and prescription drug prices, which is the number one issue I hear about when I'm meeting with folks across the state. I support giving Medicare the power to negotiate drug prices so prices are lower and I worked across the aisle with Republican Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana to pass a law to help lower the price of insulin. I have also worked on rural health care legislation with Republican Senator Mike Rounds of South Dakota. That is my approach to the job of Senator—listening to what is going on in peoples' lives, and then going to work across the aisle to get results.

DFLers, I am asking for your support in my re-election. With your help, we will keep the Minnesota Senate seat that I am so proud to hold. We will win the White House and send a strong message to Mitch McConnell by flipping the Senate.

When we vote, we say no to a politics that divides us. When we vote, we build a sense of hope and optimism. When we organize, organize, organize—we win in November.

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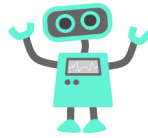
*"Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception."* Ruth Bader Ginsberg

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## Technology Committee

### Newsletter Report

Members: Chair Kay Hendrikson, Earl Bower, Jim Reed, Bonnie Lokenvitz, Linda Hopkins, John Martin, and John Larva.



<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/dfl-senior-caucus---40993---the-number-is-state-registration-1>

#### Note the following:

Please check your spam folder for emails from Senior Caucus. Set your spam/junk folder to accept those from the Senior Caucus.

Chapters should add items to Calendar on the website and Facebook regularly.

Let the newsletter editors know if you want to send us your current email address and postal address.

We are requesting people to donate and/or renew their membership by using the following link.

#### Facebook:

We are formalizing Senior Caucus Facebook activities. In the near future, only Senior Caucus members will be able to post on Facebook.

#### Website:

Visit and enjoy the new Senior Caucus website soon at [dflseniors.com](http://dflseniors.com) and [dflseniors.org](http://dflseniors.org). The new Website should go live this month.

#### Backup Assistance:

Please contact Kay at [dflseniors@gmail.com](mailto:dflseniors@gmail.com) if you would like to be a backup for Earl on the new website or Kay on the MailChimp blasts.

## Third Quarter Board Meetings 2020

### Summary

- 231 members as of September 15, 2020.
- Plans are being made to restart the Friends of the Caucus with names of donors to be listed on the website.
- Membership: considering membership cards; request for waiver of dues should call Josey Warren.
- Chapter Committee to meet monthly via Zoom – if interested in attending contact Josey Warren.
- Recruitment issue of *Senior News* in hard copy being distributed at DFL locations around the state.
- All in-person meetings cancelled.
- Annual meeting via Zoom being planned with Jules Goldstein as featured speaker.
- Political Involvement Committee (PIC) interviewed and recommended 40 plus candidates for endorsement to the board and they were endorsed for election by the board.
- PIC planning on developing videos on senior issues which can be shared at meetings.
- Policies Committee gathering information on committees and work groups to be written up for the Caucus.
- Board approved Facebook policies: decision made that only paid members can enter information on Facebook.
- And all information on Facebook will be accessible for general viewing.
- Only information on endorsed candidates can appear on our Facebook.
- New website going online at the end of September.
- Senior Caucus has a Zoom account available for all Senior Caucus meetings – contact Earl Bower or Kay Hendrikson.
- Book club meetings via Zoom are well attended – see October meeting information in this newsletter.
- Documents committee needs a new chair.
- November and December combined meeting on December 3 to avoid holiday season events.



### A tribute to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg

Ruth Bader Ginsburg stood only about five feet tall, but she has been called a giant for the rights of liberty, equality and the expanding and evolving the idea of what our country could and should be. She helped to build the promise of a better world for all of us. “You can’t have it all at once. Who—man or woman— has it all, all at once? Over my life span I think I have had it all. But in different periods of time, things were rough” she said in 2014.

Her steadfast work toward her goals have been an inspiration for all of us. May her legacy continue as we face difficult times in this country. Thank you, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg!

## **DFL SENIOR CAUCUS**

255 E. Plato Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55107

### **CONTACTS**

Email-dflseniors@gmail.com

Website-<http://www.dfl.org/seniors/>

#### **Board**

Don Bye Chair 218-568-5530

byelawoffice@hotmail.com

Karla Sand Vice Chair 651-739-7397

karlaviolets@hotmail.com

### **Committees**

#### **Documents**

Karla Sand Coordinator

karlaviolets@hotmail.com

#### **Events**

Chair Roger Gehrke, 952-412-7171,

rogergehrke@yahoo.com

#### **Membership**

Josey Warren 763-786-3591

joseywwaren@gmail.com

#### **Political Involvement**

Coordinator Karla Sand

karlaviolets@hotmail.com

#### **Technology Committee**

Kay Hendrikson dflseniors@gmail.com

### **SENIOR NEWS**

The DFL *Senior News* is published at least four times a year by the DFL Senior Caucus, 255 E. Plato Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55107, to provide news items of DFL Senior Caucus events and other items of interest to Minnesota seniors. Readers are encouraged to submit articles for publication on subjects of interest to Minnesota DFL seniors.

Accepted articles may be edited to meet these goals and space requirements. Submit articles and comments to:

Norm Hanson, Editor 651-484-8926

norsan45@hotmail.com

or Julianne Johnston 651-486-7120

juliannetj@msn.com

### **JOIN THE SENIOR CAUCUS**

Membership dues are \$10 annually. Join online or

Send your check made out to

DFL Senior Caucus and send to:

**John Larva, Treasurer**

**DFL Senior Caucus**

**1424 Woodhill Drive**

**Burnsville, MN 55337**

For waiver of dues please contact

Josey Warren, Membership Director at

joseywwaren@gmail.com or call

763-786-3591 and leave a message and she will call you back.

## **DFL Senior Caucus Chapters October 2020**

**Note:** Chapter meetings are being held as Zoom Meetings.

**Persons without computers or cell phones can join with a landline phone. Contact the chair to get further information about joining a meeting**

Anoka Chapter - Anoka County

Chair Mel Aanerud 763-434-3809 Aanerud4@comcast.net

East Central Chapter - SD 11, SD 15 & Isanti County area

Chair Bonnie Lokenvitz 320-679-8202 blokenvitz@gmail.com

East Metro Chapter - Maplewood and east

Chair Kay Hendrikson 651-739-1080

dfleastmetrocaucus@gmail.com

Mankato Area Chapter

Chair Richard Chambers 507-420-4030 gdthdr@aol.com

Minneapolis Area Chapter

Chair Kenneth Vreeland 612-722-8017 borderlord\_one@yahoo.com

North East Minnesota Chapter - Duluth area

Chair Gary Westorff 612-709-5342 nemndflsrs@yahoo.com

North Metro Chapter – Northern Suburban Metropolitan area

Chair Norm Hanson 651-484-8926 norsan45@hotmail.com

St. Paul Chapter - St Paul area

Chair Lyn Burton 651-336-4493 lburton612@aol.com

South East MN Chapter - Rochester area

Chair Patricia Mann Mannpal@charter.com

South Metro Chapter - CD 2 and Dakota County area

Chair Roger Gehrke 952-412-7171 rogergehrke@yahoo.com

Tri-County Chapter – Washington County, Chisago County and Kanabec County areas

Chair Sandra Trudeau 651-492-1149 wmsandy@comcast.net

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Julianne Johnston, design and layout editor, juliannetj@msn.com, 651-486-7120

**Columnists:** Norm Hanson, Kay Hendrickson, Julianne Johnston, Jim Reed, Tina Smith.

**Photographs:** Julianne Johnston, **Reviewer:** Sandy Hanson



**DFL Senior News**

**255 East Plato Blvd.**

**Saint Paul, MN 55107**

Attend DFL Meetings via virtual media,  
Complete your 2020 Census. Form,  
Apply for an absentee ballot from the  
Secretary of State Office  
**VOTE**

**First Class**



**DFL Senior Caucus. Calendar 2020 Events**

**All Events are Handicapped Accessible**

**Social Luncheon - On Hold** due to the COVID-19

**Senior Caucus. Board Meeting** - Meetings will be held via Zoom at times determined by the Board. Contact Vice Chair Karla Sand 651-739-7397 or karlaviolets@hotmail.com

**Senior Caucus. Book Club** - Meetings are being held by Zoom. Contact information: [www.dflseniors.com](http://www.dflseniors.com) or Cindy Spellman 651-728-0575 or rooskie0825@gmail.com. Next meeting on October 19.

**Annual Meeting:** To be determined

**Annual Picnic:** Cancelled

**Gala:** Cancelled

**National Election Day on November 3, 2020**

**Contact U.S.:**

**Facebook** at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DFLSeniorCaucU.S./>

**Email:** [dflseniors@gmail.com](mailto:dflseniors@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.dfl.org/seniors/](http://www.dfl.org/seniors/) Check out the calendar on the website for scheduled meetings and events.

**Standard:** The *Senior News* has the luxury that every newsletter would like to have and that is having more information submitted and ready than can be published in a ten to twelve page newsletter. It is a challenge as we have to decide which articles and photos to include in each issue, which ones to defer until the next issue and which ones that we have to save for a later issue. We thank all of our readers for their continued support for their newsletter and the luxury as well as the challenges that this gives to U.S.. However, we always welcome more articles from our readers to be sure we cover all the interests and concerns of DFL seniors.