Welcome to the April 2020 issue of your Senior News produced this time “sheltered in place” thanks to COVID-19. You will find a commentary from the DFL Senior Caucus Chair Don Bye and an update from Kay Hendrikson, the DFL Senior Caucus Representative on the State DFL Party’s Executive Committee.

Don’t miss the chance to get acquainted with Kay Hendrikson and Earl Bower, members of the Senior Caucus Board of Directors. Kay heads up the DFL Senior Caucus Technology Committee and Earl is one of the founding members of the DFL Senior Caucus and Website Administrator.

Feeling a little uncertain today in view of everything including your health, the economy and the irresponsible “leadership” in the front office? You must read the featured article on Fear Itself and how Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) and Trump have dealt with this issue. FDR tried to assuage the fears of his fellow citizens during his first inaugural address at the height of the depression. Trump tries to exploit the fears of his fellow citizens in the effort to convince them that only he can save them. Also read the article on the COVID-19 and what you can do to protect yourself.

And you certainly will want to read the article on the importance of the U.S. Census that is provided by Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt. The decennial census is very important because the results will affect us all in terms of the number of representatives that we have in Congress and in funding for programs that we deem to be important for the next decade.

Read the report from Josey Warren, Membership Chair, and a summary and photos of the 2020 Senior Caucus Day-on-the-Hill. Are you happy with the Electoral College and its most recent decision that brought us Donald Trump? Read what Karen Schafer has to say about this issue and about some alternatives which are not black and white and have some downsides.

Find the chapter contact information on page 11 and the calendar on page 12 to see if there is a chapter near you that you might want to join or an event that you will not want to miss once the flu gets under control.

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 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.
Hello fellow Vulnerables!"

We know Seniors are getting ever more vulnerable each passing day: more vulnerable to illness and more vulnerable to injury. Old age takes its toll. COVID-19 has kicked in and increased our vulnerability, fears and concerns exponentially. We can sit around (we have a lot of time in our forced seclusion) and fuss and worry about COVID-19. Or, we can be thankful for all we have going for us each passing day. Let’s do the latter.

On politics, we should now be on to our general election mode. Unless something totally unforeseen happens, Joe Biden will be our Democratic nominee and standard bearer in 2020. Our remaining choice is clear. It is either Joe Biden or another four years of Trump, if we could even hang on to any semblance of democracy that long.

We DFLers are full of contradictions, whether we admit it or like it or not. Some claim to be purist, but there really ain’t no such thing. Through a lifetime of politics, I’ve followed a pathway of supporting, campaigning and voting for candidates as far left as I thought would get elected. This year that pathway led me to Joe Biden.

Thankfully, as of now, most of the last unsuccessful presidential candidates have not only dropped out of the way but have expressed complete support for Joe. Hopefully, by the time you read this the remaining will have done the same.

However, as we sit around home in our coerced seclusion, we are not completely stymied from campaign activity. You senior “techies” can still text, and twitter, and tweet, or whatever you do. Those of us older seniors with slower growth, or concession to the new world, can still talk, and telephone and email. It’s time for persuasion in a dozen different remaining ways. You are welcome to persuade our good Bernie folks to join the march to November.

Take every opportunity to tell anyone and everyone how good and decent and capable and experienced Joe Biden is. Take every opportunity to remind everyone what the blankety blank jerk we now have in office is like; what he’s lied about; where he has failed; what he has done to others, and overall, who he has been.

Do everything you possibly can to ensure that, as of November 3, Donald Trump becomes a “has been.”

From the Chair
Don Bye

DFL Reminder: Technology updates:
• New website rollout; January 1 is the goal
• Media Center can record videos for us and robocalls for local districts for free

Executive Committee met and approved state of emergency measures designed to combat the spread of COVID-19. These measures include: All conventions scheduled from March 14th – May 28 are postponed.

DFL Reminder: State of emergency measures designed to combat COVID-19

Kay Hendrikson,
DFL Senior Caucus Representative to the DFL Executive Committee

Convention Dates:
DFL State Central Committee and the
State Convention May 30-31
National Delegate Selection 5/2/2020 - 5/29/2020
National Convention/Milwaukee 7/13-16/2020

Chatter (through google email blasts)
Almost all of the discussions were around resolutions to the Precinct Caucuses;
Most Community Caucus sent resolutions through the google email blast;
Excitement about rolling out the new software for the primary.
“My retirement time is like money and I want to spend it wisely!”
Norm Hanson and Julianne Johnson

Kay Hendrikson explained in a recent interview for the Senior News why she thinks that her involvement in the Senior Caucus is money well spent. Kay was asked to help start what has become the Northeast Metro Chapter of the DFL Senior Caucus. As a new chapter chair, she became a member of the Board of Directors and heads up the Technology Committee for the Senior Caucus.

Kay’s father was a government contract employee. Her family lived in many parts of our country including the states of Washington, California and Pennsylvania. Her family has not been politically involved although its family members lean toward the conservative side of the aisle. Kay’s husband died from cancer early on in their marriage and she became a single mom looking after her young daughter. Her daughter has succeeded well and recently completed law school, is married and has taken up adventures including learning to become a trapeze artist.

Hendrikson matriculated at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she earned a Bachelor of Social Work in Special Education. She continued her education earning a masters and doctorate in Education Policy and Administration from the University of Minnesota. Her focus for her final thesis was on improving the effectiveness of the staff that work directly with persons with disabilities.

Kay utilized her training and interest in the special education area in many ways during her career. Initially, she served as the Head Start Handicap Services Coordinator in Wisconsin and also as a special education teacher in Colfax in the Badger State. Hendrikson also served as a manager at the Lake Owasso Residence run by Ramsey County where she practiced and promoted her initial theories regarding the management of direct care staff that led to her PhD thesis.

Hendrikson joined the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) as an internal advocate for adult “wards of the state.” She transferred to the Information Technology (IT) area at DHS. Kay had a good understanding of how IT worked and how it could be used in her area of expertise in DHS. She noted that it did take her awhile to understand the technical language used by the IT folks and DHS sent her to many IT courses to help her in that process. While at DHS, Kay helped create the first internal internet program used in that agency.

Later Kay became the Chief Information Officer for the small IT department at the Metropolitan Health Plan (MHP), a small health maintenance organization for Hennepin County. She has also worked for the City of Minneapolis as the IT director for all its software applications and software.

Hendrikson noted that her objective has always been to bring her management experience, theory and personal education to all her IT related jobs. Her goal is and always has been to treat everyone involved with respect because they do work hard and have expertise that she believes to be important. She has served as an adjunct faculty for Metro State for ten years teaching undergraduate and graduate students in the management of health care software including implementation, maintenance and internet applications.

Because she loves this country and this state, she decided to run for office so she could get some things done for constituents with special needs. She felt that the House incumbent in her district did not have an interest in doing anything in that area. She gained the DFL endorsement during her run for office but she lost the election.

Kay indicated that she is very impressed with the work the DFL Senior Caucus founders did in getting the Senior Caucus started. She is committed to continue that leadership as she heads the Technology Committee bringing her incredible expertise to the work of the Senior Caucus for senior issues and concerns. Kay believes that the Senior News produced by the Hanson-Johnston team is a great example of a product that promotes the Senior Caucus. She would like to see the Senior Caucus grow to be “a force to be reckoned with” for seniors at the state legislature.

Retirement has given her time to take up boxing as a hobby. (Please note that boxing is a non-partisan sport, of course, as it involves both lefts and rights!) Kay said
she had been to a veteran’s funeral where Taps was played on a recording and she did not think that was the proper respect for veterans. So, Kay is learning to play the trumpet so she can play Taps at the funerals of veterans in the future. She is spending her retirement wisely – how about you?

It all began with a free hot dog!
Norm Hanson and Julianne Johnston

Earl Bower is one of the charter members of the DFL Senior Caucus. We wanted to find out why he did that more than a decade ago.

Earl Bower spent his early years growing up on a subsistence farm in central Wisconsin where his family raised much of their own food including meat, poultry and garden vegetables. Earl’s father was a millwright in the local paper mill and his mother was an elementary school teacher in a one-room school. Health issues kept Earl home from school for long periods of time so he enrolled in an electronics correspondence program with DeVry University. After high school he was accepted into the army where testing confirmed his interest and skills and he became a military electronics specialist.

After his service in the Army, Earl began working for General Electric (GE) traveling widely around the world. He later joined Control Data. Both GE and Control Data sent Earl to school for further education in electronics and training at Marquette University and the University of Minnesota. Earl was employed as a computer expert, a manager, an engineer and as a teacher and mentor at Control Data sharing his knowledge of electronics with his fellow employees. When Control Data ceased operations. Earl owned a real estate office in Apple Valley which supported himself and his wife, June, and their children who were still in college.

Earl said his generic family was never interested in politics when he was growing up on the farm. They tended to be rather conservative voters and skeptical about programs that appeared to provide support to folks who probably could do okay on their own without such support. Earl often cast his votes based upon how a candidate looked, spoke and presented himself. He voted for the person and not for a particular party. He has, however, come to think more deeply and has modified his opinions over the years.

We asked Earl how he became involved in the DFL Senior Caucus and DFL politics given his previous view of the world. Bower told us he went down to a city park for a walk and noticed a display for a local DFL candidate running for the state house that offered a free hot dog to folks who stopped by to talk to the candidate. Earl said that he enjoyed the hot dog. More importantly, after talking to the candidate, he got involved in her campaign and although she lost her initial bid, she did run again and won with the help of Earl and others. That experience generated the interest in DFL politics for Earl. (Ah, such is the value of a free hot dog. Very effective!)

Sometime later, Earl received an email from Linda Feist inviting him to an informational meeting of seniors to determine if there was interest in forming an organization that could achieve a large membership with clout with the legislature on senior issues. A major initial issue of interest to Feist and others was the Medicare Part D program and the large “donut hole” for prescription drug coverage. Note: that gap is being phased out thanks to ObamaCare which will reduce drug costs for all Medicare recipients, unless Trump and his Senate Republican allies stop that from happening. Earl wanted to do something for seniors in Minnesota so he signed on as a charter member of the Senior Caucus.

The decision to organize and form the DFL Senior Caucus was shepherded by Feist, Bower, Georgiana Ruzich, Jackie Stevenson, Karla Sand, Phil Castronova, Joycelyn Swanson and others. Initially, Earl rode around the state with Linda and Roger Feist to increase Senior Caucus membership. The idea of having chapters around the state was initiated by Earl when he encountered the concept in the support organization for his wife’s chronic illness. Together with Dwayne King, Earl again traveled throughout the Gopher State to establish chapters in all areas of Minnesota. This is an effort that continues today and supports the DFL Senior Caucus. In Earl’s judgment, “chapters are mystical groups!”
Initially the marketing focus for the new Senior Caucus was to “put in your two-cents everyday” with initial annual dues of $8. Dues have subsequently been increased to the current $10 annual dues which support the efforts of the Senior Caucus including the Senior News newsletter.

Earl thinks that the Senior Caucus has not changed very much since he helped to organize it many years ago and he would like to see it become more focused on advocating for issues important to seniors. He is concerned that while many Senior Caucus meetings are “clipboard and pen perfect,” members are often still fighting about unimportant stuff and not really getting important things done. Bower noted that in terms of getting things done, he especially liked the way that the Forest Lake chapter (Tri-County) focused on the licensure of assisted living facilities (ALF) working with other groups to secure the passage of a preliminary ALF licensing bill in 2019. Perhaps the Senior Caucus could select an issue important for seniors to focus on for a year—an action plan for a specific issue. Once the focus has been determined for the year, the Caucus would connect directly with legislators.

Earl currently manages the Senior Caucus Website and he is looking for someone to work with him on that important Senior Caucus information site and to eventually assume full responsibility for maintaining the website. Earl places a lot of importance and significance on the Senior News, the official newsletter of the DFL Senior Caucus believing strongly that it is what holds the organization together on a statewide basis. It is a significant means for seniors to remain informed about Senior Caucus activities and includes specific information about chapters and locations in the state.

Norm Hanson
Julianne Johnston

“We have nothing to fear but fear itself” said Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) in his first inaugural speech in 1933 at the height of the Great Depression that had been raging since the collapse of the stock market in October 1929. The winds were continuing to create the Dust Bowl and unemployment rates of 25 to 30 percent and more were seen throughout our country. Steinbeck’s Grapes of Wrath tells the story of a family trying to find a new life by leaving the blowing dust and sand behind and hoping to find a better life in California. FDR tried to calm the fears, insecurities, and worry facing his fellow Americans when he offered that line during his first inaugural speech.

FDR borrowed upon similar early reflections by Henry David Thoreau, “Nothing is so much to be feared as fear itself” and earlier by Sr. Francis Bacon, “Nothing is terrible except for fear itself.” FDR understood the dire circumstances that so many of his fellow citizens were dealing with and tried to assuage the fears, uncertainty and worry caused by the Great Depression both with his statement and later with his fireside chats.

Trump on the other hand, being an insecure man afraid of the unknown and people that he is not comfortable with, works extremely hard to exploit others who have similar fears as a way to divide the good citizens of this land. Thus facilitating the creation of suspicion and hatred of anyone that he doesn’t like and his supporters shouldn’t accept as fellow citizens. Trump’s actions and words give them cover, let alone empowerment, to act on their fears. They act by harming or even killing others that they don’t think are good Americans and, or are in their view of things, trying to prevent Trump from his pledge to “make America great again” whatever that really means!

As humans, most of us prefer certainty and strongly dislike uncertainty and the unknown. While we develop mechanisms to generally keep the fear brought by uncertainty in our lives under control, sometimes we cannot. It is like the “Law of Supply and Demand,” always seeking equilibrium. That means that the supply of uncertainty is equally balanced by the need to control that uncertainty.

Fear can be caused by so many things such as a loud and unexpected noises or an ominous individual getting into our personal space. Fear invokes the “fight or flight” response in all of us until the we figure out what happened and quickly determine whether to flee or not.

Fear can also be caused by change that is occurring beyond our control like a new boss or a new computer system at work after you had just mastered the previous system. For a former state employee like me working in regulatory programs (compliance assurance in public
health), fear can result because of a change in administration from the election of a new governor from a different political party than the previous governor who could make changes affecting jobs as we knew them. Or it could be triggered by introducing new technology. Even though Benjamin Franklin claimed that “when you are finished changing, you are finished,” he no doubt was correct in his assessment. We still get nervous and fearful about the uncertainty created by impending changes like the COVID-19.

Politicians have exploited the use of fear for many years and on both sides of the aisle, although Trump has taken such exploitation to a new high! Why, for example, did Senator McConnell publicly state during the recent impeachment “trial” that he was in constant communication with the White House so that “they were on the same page” when he was supposed to be an open and objective juror? Did that have anything to do with the good senator facing a challenging bid for re-election this year down in the “mint julep” and “thoroughbred horse state” of Kentucky? New York University researcher LeDoux claims that “We have gone from “Vote for me or you will end up poor” to “Vote for me or you will end up dead” in the water!

You may remember an ad run on a limited basis by Barry Goldwater who was running for president against Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) that featured a little girl plucking petals off some wildflowers while a nuclear bomb goes off in the background. By using the ad, Goldwater was trying to suggest that LBJ was planning on using low level nuclear weapons in Viet Nam. Further, the ad stated, “You know in your heart that he’s right - dead right!”

Perhaps, you remember the Willie Horton ad run against Michael Dukakis by “Bush the Elder” highlighting when Dukakis was the governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, a man by the name of Horton was given a weekend pass during which time he stabbed a man and raped a woman. That ad kind of sunk the Democrat’s chances from then on as it created the fear- producing suggestion that if elected as president, Dukakis would be inclined to let criminals like Horton off easy and that they could harm their fellow citizens—and the fear that was created worked!

On and on, fear has been exploited by politicians for generations. Unfortunately, the natural law of “supply and demand” gets out of balance at times like during the Great Depression or during times when many immigrants begin to arrive at our shores and they don’t look, act or worship as U.S. citizens are “supposed” to look, act or worship. FDR was a genius at recognizing that reality and tried to do something about that fear by talking about fear in his first inaugural speech, the fireside chats and the New Deal which included the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC). The CCC not only provided jobs for many but food and sustenance and money to send home to their families (a requirement) and also gave them their self-respect and self-confidence. It also gave them pride in the work that they did in many public places some of which are still present for all of us to see and enjoy in places like Jay Cooke State Park and Gooseberry State Park just to mention a few. Trump on the other hand, being an insecure man of the highest order, has demonstrated an ability to use the existence of the fears of many by facilitating the growth of their suspicion of others who don’t look, act, talk or worship the “right way” pushing folks into the safety and comfort of segments of our population who fear others, into strongly held tribal units exploited and controlled for Trump’s personal benefit.

Note: Support the DFL Senior Caucus by paying the annual $10 dues and get this newsletter by email or by snail mail. Go to the DFL Senior Caucus Website and find out how to pay the dues with PayPal or send a $10 check to John Larva. Address on page 11 of this newsletter.
The Coronas Virus is here – Don’t Panic!!

Julianne Johnston, Public Health Nurse, retired

As noted in the article on Fear in this newsletter, the fear of the COVID-19 can lead to panic and panic leads to rash and sometimes illogical behavior like hoarding toilet paper and bottled water. Because we are all in this together, follow the guidelines published by the public health officials. Wash your hands frequently. If the virus is on your hands, it will not cause the disease unless you touch your hands to your mouth, nose or eyes. Soap and water plus friction loosen the virus but if you touch surfaces that are contaminated, the virus can be reintroduced. So, wash surfaces that could have likely been contaminated like doorknobs and faucet handles, keys, etc. with a bleach solution. Keep six feet of distance from people who may already have the disease since they can be contagious for up to two weeks before they display symptoms. No more handshakes and hugs. Getting adequate sleep, fluids and nutrition will give you an extra edge in fighting off the virus infection.

Protect your family and your neighbors by slowing the progression of the disease. Because of the delay in virus testing and overwhelmed medical facilities, it will take time to figure out how widespread this virus is moving around our neighborhoods. Most people will have mild to moderate response to the virus, but those folks who are over 50 years of age are more likely to have difficulty dealing with the virus as our immune bodily protection systems change as we get older. Also, anyone with a preexisting condition that affects breathing or cardiac systems or who have diabetes (type one or two) will have increased problems.

Plan now to have food, medications and supplies available in your home for you and your family in case we must isolate for a long period of time to ride out the disease. Include activities to keep you occupied. Being at home for weeks can be really boring.

As families, including elderly folks, isolate themselves, remember that they are our neighbors and may need help getting their groceries and needed supplies. Call your friends and neighbors on the phone or send them a letter to let them know you care and are thinking about them. We all need that friendly contact even if we can’t visit in person. You can help to support our medical and health workers who are putting in long and difficult hours by bringing them prepared meals and/or helping them with grocery shopping so they can rest and as they care for their own families at home when they can.

If you are experiencing symptoms like coughing, or difficulty breathing, or elevated temperature, call your clinic rather than going there. You should receive instructions on how to proceed from them. It has been determined that those who get the disease will probably develop short term immunity, but like the common cold, this virus does not provide life-long immunity. The virus may mutate making an immunization, like the influenza vaccine, very difficult.

We are in for a long fight with this virus!

Highlights of the Senior Caucus Board of Directors the first quarter of 2020

Jim Reed and Norm Hanson

Actions:

Approved a refinement to the recently adopted Senior Caucus endorsement procedure to be used when considering an endorsement request from political candidates. This change will provide for a more efficient process. The recently adopted procedure will also creates a fair, equitable and consistent process for considering candidate endorsement.

Approved the Annual Meeting in June (date to be determined) and the Annual Picnic at the Brookview Park in New Hope on August 9.

Approved initial work on developing a Senior Caucus policy and procedure manual.

Reports and updates:

Russ Warren, Documents Committee chair, provided new business cards and Senior Caucus brochures. Documents Committee is working on the development of a process for the review and the management of Senior Caucus documents for public distribution.

Jim Reed announced that the March book club would be reviewing “The War on Science” by Shawn Otto (Cancelled)

Kay Hendrikson, Technology Committee Chair, reported that her committee was continuing work on Facebook and website updates. Also that the management of Facebook content remains an issue.

Roger Gehrke, Events Committee chair, reported that the 2020 Day-on-the-Hill went well at the state capitol after an absence of a few years in that location because of the large capitol renovation project. He requested ideas to improve the event in 2021.

Chapters: Representatives of chapters who were present reported on the programs, speakers and activities in their chapters.

NOTE: Because there is a problem with multiple robo calls on a daily basis on both landline and cell phones, please be sure to leave a message when you call a Senior Caucus member. Some phones have Caller ID that displays the source of the call but many do not. Seniors have been advised to not pick up a phone call if they do not recognize the caller. Please leave a message so that you can get a response.

April 2020
**Capitol Corner**

Victoria Reinhardt is a Ramsey County Commissioner. She represents District 7, which includes Maplewood, North St. Paul, the City of White Bear Lake and the Hillcrest neighborhood on St. Paul's eastside. Contact her at 651-266-8363 Victoria.Reinhardt@co.ramsey.mn.us.

The 2020 Census is happening now – and everyone counts! I have the honor of being Co-chair, along with St. Paul Councilmember Mitra Jalali-Nelson, of the St. Paul and Ramsey County Joint Complete Count Committee. We have been working with community members across a broad and diverse spectrum for nearly two years to get the message out about the importance of being counted in the 2020 Census.

At a recent forum hosted by the League of Women Voters, elected officials were given a number of questions to discuss with our constituents. The questions ranged from transit initiatives to health care to climate change and beyond. As I pondered writing this article, I realized that there is a direct connect between being counted in the 2020 Census and the pressing issues facing our county, our state and our nation. Therefore, I will use this opportunity to explain why everyone needs to be counted.

Most people know that the Census determines elected representation. Once the count is complete, the process of re-districting begins. The boundaries for elected positions within a municipality, county, and state are determined based on population. At the federal level, Minnesota is at risk of losing a seat in the U.S. Congress, which would result in having less of a say in policies that matter to each of us. Fair and equal representation is the goal. For the districts to be fair and equitable, everyone in the district must be counted, and, historically, that has not been the case.

In Minnesota, the census has missed large numbers of people of low wealth, indigenous people, renters, and racial and ethnic minorities. The 2010 Census undercounted the black population by more than 800,000, while more than a third of all children under five who were undercounted were Latinx — more than double the undercount of white children.

In addition to representation, the nationwide count of every person in the United States provides vital data that helps determine how to distribute more than $880 billion in federal funding! This leads me back to connecting the census to our fair share of that $880 billion to help address critical issues, including:

- Improved transit options to get to and from work, school, health care, a park, or another destination.
- Access to trusted health care and vital information about health concerns like COVID-19.
- Making investments in our environment that will impact Climate Change and protect Mother Earth.
- Provide needed resources for schools and our neighborhoods.
- Support economic development to provide good paying jobs so that all can prosper.

**Examples of funding programs:**

- **Food:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance; Women, Infants, and Children; School Lunch and Breakfast; Emergency Food Assistance; Child and Adult Care Food Program
- **Education:** Head Start; Title I funding; Pell Grants; Special Education grants
- **Healthcare:** Medicaid; Medicare Part B; Maternal and Child Health
- **Financial Assistance, Housing, other:** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Section 8; Community Development Block grants; Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities

The goals and base for serving the public in Ramsey County are: Prosperity, Opportunity, Well-being, and Accountability for all through the lens of equity. An accurate count means fair and equitable representation and our fair share of funding to help achieve our goals.

**Resources to help understand the 2020 Census process, or answer questions about confidentiality of the data or census takers, include:**

- In addition, the State Demographic Center has stated that “Minnesota is home to over 44,000 snowbirds”. A link to more information can be accessed at: [https://mn.gov/admin/2020-census/learn-about/who-gets-missed/snowbirds/](https://mn.gov/admin/2020-census/learn-about/who-gets-missed/snowbirds/)

Finally, the **2020 Census online form is now LIVE**! Here’s the link: [https://my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov)
Electoral College or Popular Vote? What is the Electoral College and how does it work?

Karen Schaffer, attorney

The Electoral College (EC) is a constitutional process in which electors from each state and the District of Columbia elect the United States president. Each state is allocated two electors (1 for each senator) plus one elector for each congressperson, with a minimum of three per state for a total of 538 electors. This allocation gives the individual votes in small states more weight that those in larger states, inconsistent with the one-person-one-vote principles required by the constitution in most other elections.

Electors are chosen in each state by any manner of their choosing. All states now provide for popular election of electors. In addition, all states (except Maine and Nebraska) now use the winner-take-all (WTA) rule, where the candidate who wins the state’s popular vote gets all of the state’s electors. WTA means that presidential campaigns have a laser focus on swing states where the electorate is evenly divided and ignore safe states and their large electorate. WTA decreases voter turnout in safe states and discourages third party candidates from running.

The electors cast their ballots on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December in their respective state capitols. The candidate with the greatest number wins with a minimum of 270. If no candidate receives 270, the decision goes to the House of Representatives, where a vote is taken—one vote per state.

How has the EC worked out in our 58 presidential elections?

- Twice it went to the House of Representatives (1800 Jefferson; 1824 J.Q. Adams).

- 19 times the winner of the EC did not win a majority of the popular vote.

- 5 times the winner of the EC won over an opponent who won the popular vote by an absolute majority (1824 Adams over Jackson; 1876 Hayes over Tilden; 1880 Harrison over Cleveland; 2000 Bush over Gore; 2016 Trump over Clinton).

- Democrats lost two of the last five elections because of the EC (2000 where Gore won popular vote by 500,000; 2016 where Clinton won popular vote by 3,000,000). As large states become larger, this trend could continue. As the size of the popular vote margin increases (perhaps to many millions), a crisis of legitimacy could arise.

- The standard small state argument is that the EC prevents the big coastal cities from controlling the election. But under WTA huge swaths of the electorate in big cities in small and large states are completely ignored by the campaigns. If all candidates sought votes everywhere, more voters in small and large states would receive campaign attention.

- Under EC and WTA, campaigns develop purely EC strategies rather than policies/goals that appeal to a majority of the public.

Alternatives to the EC

1. Amend the constitution to replace the EC with a national popular election.

2. Change state laws to end WTA, but keep the EC. However, if many or all states change to proportional allocation of electors, it could result in more occasions where no one gets 270 electoral votes and thus a final decision by the House.

3. States enact the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC), an agreement among states to throw their electoral votes to whichever candidate wins the national popular vote. It would go into effect as soon as states representing a 270-vote majority sign it. Currently 15 states and D.C. representing 196 EC votes have agreed. It has been introduced in all 50 states, including Minnesota (though it has not been enacted here).

Conclusion

The EC is essentially an undemocratic process by which a candidate can win the presidency without a popular vote majority. The EC prizes state boundaries over the national electorate and geography over people. It may have made sense to the Framers in 1787. Does it now?
Membership Matters
Josey Warren, DFL Senior Caucus Membership Director

Greetings! I want to tell you about new and reforming chapters. Together with Earl Bower, Karla Sand, and Dwayne King, we have been meeting with interested members in St Paul coming together to form a new chapter in that area. If not for the virus, we would have elected officers and completed the process. The group currently to meet to explore new chapter options. I promise more details next newsletter.

We have spent time in Brainerd and in Northfield with groups who are interested in starting a chapter. We had a good group of people attend a gathering in Brainerd. I am excited about the possibility of starting and reforming chapters in these areas.

Chapters are a great way to get together with people who have similar views to discuss senior issues, and to hear directly from our legislators and others who are familiar with specific senior topics. You can form a chapter around a specific idea, or a special topic such as health proposals, or a book discussions. There are many creative ways to have a get-together to form a chapter. I am open to hear and assist. Be safe and stay healthy everyone.

2020 Day-on-the-Hill

Jim Reed and Norm Hanson

The annual Senior Caucus Day-on-the-Hill returned to the recently beautifully renovated state capitol after several years of meeting at the nearby facility owned by our friends in the AFL-CIO. The 2020 event was held on February 19 with 55 interested seniors in attendance listening to speakers on a variety of topics and issues of importance to seniors. A light continental breakfast was available for folks when they arrived and a light lunch later in the day.

Attendees heard from six speakers on a variety of topics as well a brief surprise visit from Attorney General Keith Ellison, who was meeting with another group nearby. Erin Parish, AARP Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach, talked about the future of Medicare and Social Security. Senator Greg Clausen promoted life-long learning choices and opportunities for seniors. Karen Britton, Senior Linkage Line (SLL) Manager, spoke about in-home services available through the SLL. Rebecca Thoman, M.D. from Compassion & Choices, promoted end-of-life options and the proposed legislation. Representative Don Wolgamott spoke about the importance of supporting the volunteers who help provide special transportation to seniors and others in need of such assistance. Senator John Mary informed the group about prescription drug pricing and proposed what can be done to reduce their cost.

The 2020 Day-on-the-Hill was again a joint venture between the Senior Caucus and DFL Congressional District (CD) 2. Roger Gehrke, Events Chair of the Senior Caucus and chair of the South Metro Chapter along with many members of the Senior Caucus and members of the CD2 DFL helped to plan the event. Sue Moravec, from CD2 and the South Metro chapter, was the event moderator and introduced the event speakers.

Attendees commented on how much they enjoyed the large room where the event was held and just walking through the renovated and beautiful state capitol building that belongs to all of us. Some attendees also visited with their respective legislators following the morning program.

Join us there with us next year.!!!
DFL Senior Caucus Chapters April 2020

Anoka Chapter
Chair Mel Aanerud, 763-434-3809, aanerud4@comcast.net
Second Wednesday of every month at 1:00 p.m.
Perkins Restaurant in Blaine

East Central Chapter
Chair Bonnie Lokenvitz, 320-679-8202, blokenvitz@gmail.com
Second Thursday, odd-numbered months at 1:00 p.m.
Crystal Bar & Grill, 39 S Union St, Mora

East Metro Chapter
Chair Kay Hendrikson, 651-739-1080, dfleastmetrocaucus@gmail.com
Second Thursday of every month at 11:30 a.m.
Sgt. Pepper’s Bar and Grill, 930 Helena Avenue, North Oakland

Mankato Area Chapter
Chair Richard Chambers, 507-420-4030, gdthdr@aol.com
or Vice Chair Mary Bliesmer, 507-380-4308, mary.bliesmer@mnsu.edu
First Monday of every month at 11:30 a.m.
Happy Chef, 2100 Hwy 169, North Mankato

Minneapolis Area Chapter
Chair Kenneth Vreeland, 612-722-8017, borderlord_one@yahoo.com
Tony Scallon, 612 20204814, tscallon@msn.com
Second Saturday of every month at various sites, except in Summer

North East MN Chapter (Duluth)
Chair Gary Westorff, 612-709-5342, nemndflsrs@yahoo.com
Second Tuesday of every month at 11:30 a.m.
Clyde Iron Works, 2920 W Michigan St, Duluth.

North Metro Chapter
Chair Norm Hanson, 651-484-8926, norsan45@hotmail.com
Second Tuesday of every month at 11:30 a.m.
Little Venetian Inn, 2900 Rice St # 240, Little Canada

South East MN Chapter
Chair Patricia Mann 507-398-6670, mannp1@charter.net
Second Tuesday of every month at 1:00 p.m. DFL Office,
1500 1st Street NE, Rochester. “Coffee Talk” Fourth Tuesday 10 a.m. same location

South Metro Chapter
Chair Roger Gehrke, 952-412-7171, rogergehrke@yahoo.com
Second Wednesday, every month at 12 noon
Apple Valley Pizza Ranch, 15662 Pilot Knob Road, Apple Valley

Tri-County Chapter
Chair Sandra Trudeau, wmsandy@comcast.net 651-492-1149
First Tuesday of every month at 12:30 p.m.
Vannelli’s By The Lake, 55 South Lake Street, Forest Lake

Editors:
Norm Hanson, newsletter editor, norsan45@hotmail.com, 651-484-8926
Julianne Johnston, design and layout editor, juliannej@msn.com, 651-486-7120

Columnists: Norm Hanson, Kay Hendrickson, Julianne Johnston, Jim Reed, Josey Warren

Photographs: Julianne Johnston, Charlie Rike

Reviewer: Sandy Hanson
DFL Senior News
255 East Plato Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55107

DFL Senior Caucus
Annual Meeting
To be held in June—date to be determined

First Class

DFL Senior Caucus Calendar 2020 Events
All Events are Handicapped Accessible

Social Luncheon - The Egg and I, 2550 University Avenue West, St. Paul, Monthly at 12:30 p.m. fourth Wednesday. Contact Karla Sand, Vice Chair, 651-739-7397, karlaviolets@hotmail.com ON HOLD DUE TO VIRUS

Senior Caucus Board Meeting - Fourth Thursday of every month at 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. All welcome to attend. DFL Office, 255 East Plato Blvd., St. Paul, MN. Contact Vice Chair Karla Sand 651-739-7397 or karlaviolets@hotmail.com ON HOLD DUE TO VIRUS

Senior Caucus Book Club - Every third Monday from 11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. at the Davanni's Restaurant, 41 Cleveland Avenue South, St Paul. Contact information: Karla Sand 651-739-7397. Become an educated senior—read a book and discuss with other DFLers. ON HOLD DUE TO VIRUS

Annual Meeting: June (date to be determined)
Annual Picnic: August 9 at the Brookville Park in New Hope beginning at noon.

DFL State Convention on May 31, 2020
State Primary Election: August 11, 2020
National Democratic Convention on July 13, 2020
National Election Day on November 3, 2020

Contact Us:
Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/groups/DFLSeniorCaucus/
Email: dflseniors@gmail.com
Website: /www.dfl.org/seniors/

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 us. However, we always welcome more articles from our readers to be sure we cover all the interests and concerns of DFL seniors.