



Vote as if your future depends on it! We live in grim times, but have an opportunity for a bright future

by Sen. John Marty

There is nothing more important to our future than this coming election. Day after day, we read more disturbing news headlines:



- The Republican Senate confirms to a lifetime Supreme Court appointment, a man who demonstrates how far he is from a calm judicial temperament by angrily calling out people asking for a thorough investigation of credible allegations of sexual assault against him as “a calculated and orchestrated political hit fueled with apparent pent-up anger about President Trump and ... revenge on behalf of the Clintons.” Despite his angry partisan rant, Brett Kavanaugh is now *Justice* Kavanaugh where he might remain for decades.
- A thorough *New York Times* investigative report alleges that the Trump family engaged in “outright fraud” to evade taxes to the tune of \$500 million on their family inheritance. It isn’t just his reckless, offensive political actions, and it isn’t just his divisive, hate-filled tweets and speeches. Even in his personal financial activities, he is harming the people of the United States.
- Ever more destructive hurricanes and forest fires, intensified by climate change, and a new UN report stresses the urgency of addressing greenhouse gases as “a life and death situation,” yet the President and top Republican policy makers call climate change a “hoax” and withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord Agreement.

There are so many scandals and crises that we become numb to the news. Our minds forget many of the issues that motivate us to vote and seek political change. Even the horrific school shootings that inspired so many young people to engage, seem like long-ago history because of the daily barrage of bad news.

We cannot allow ourselves to minimize the stakes involved in the election. Unless we retain the governor’s office and regain control of the Minnesota Legislature and the US Congress we will continue the downward spiral in our democracy.

It is appropriate that we remind voters of all the harm that is being done by President Trump and Republicans in the US Congress and the
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Upcoming events

Until Monday, November 5 - Early/absentee voting is open for the November general election

November 5, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
SD66 Central Committee

Tuesday, November 6 - General Election

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March 4, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
SD66 Central Committee

See page 7 for full calendar.

Minnesota Legislature. However, to inspire people and win over uncommitted voters, ***Democrats must not focus solely on what is wrong with Republicans; we must talk about our values and spell out our vision.*** We need to talk confidently about our plans to move forward.

Focusing on the negative demoralizes us and others; it makes the situation seem overwhelming and hopeless. In contrast, by articulating our vision and what we want to accomplish, we inspire each other and our fellow voters. We give them a compelling reason to vote:

- We can, and will, create a welcoming community where refugees fleeing from war and violence know they will be safe, and that their young children will not be taken away.
- We can, and will, pass the Minnesota Health Plan and give all people access to comprehensive health care, so that nobody goes bankrupt from trying to get the healthy dental care they need.
- We can, and will, promote labor laws and tax policies that ensure that all workers receive a living wage—enough to pay for housing, food, and other necessities for their families, and no children are raised living in poverty.

Perhaps the biggest determinant of the election outcome will be turnout. As much as one third of all voters who vote in presidential years do not vote in the mid-term elections. Many other eligible voters do not vote because they don't think their vote matters, or they aren't paying attention. In total, close to half of all eligible voters in Minnesota do not vote in mid-term elections.

Such nonvoters consistently report that no candidate or campaign has reached out to them, either with campaign literature or even just talking with them. That's why your efforts as an individual, to talk to everyone you know, especially those who you think are least likely to vote, make such a difference.

Talk with your friends and family and neighbors about our DFL values and goals and what we want to accomplish. Then, after the election, let's hold ourselves accountable, and work tirelessly, to build that better future.

Again, nothing is more important to our future than this election. Volunteer for a campaign if you can. But at a minimum, please round up every family member, friend, co-worker, and neighbor and urge, encourage, or even beg them to join you in voting for a better future.

With corporations wielding more and more power, Minnesotans have an opportunity to change direction this November

by Rep. John Lesch



The level of acrimony in the halls of government in Washington, D.C. and Saint Paul is matched only by the uncertainty many regular people are feeling. While numbers from Wall Street paint a picture of American financial triumph, this success doesn't exactly reflect the situation for most working families. As cheers erupt from corporate boardrooms when they hear rosy quarterly financial reports, workers employed by those same corporations wonder when they will see their incomes tick upward in any meaningful way. As corporate bigwigs reap massive profits, many families teeter on the brink of financial disaster, with some just one health emergency or auto repair away.

Since the 2016 election, we've seen what happens when the Republican playbook is utilized to its full potential. Special interests like the insurance industry have opened the barn door in Minnesota to for-profit health insurance and have worked to roll back vital protections for people with preexisting conditions. Meanwhile, health insurance premiums continue to be out of reach for too many. Another well-funded special interest, Big Pharma, has been able to avoid accountability for their role in the opioid crisis by stopping a "penny-a-pill" fee to fund addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery strategies.

With teachers being asked to do more with less, school districts facing budget crunches, and a persistent opportunity gap, we've seen Republicans reject adequate school funding and tools like universal pre-K. Instead, they've pushed voucher-like programs which almost exclusively help the very wealthiest families.

After violent events at schools and workplaces, commonsense steps to prevent gun violence should be a no-brainer. Instead, Republicans at all levels have rejected measures such as expanded background checks—which carry broad support even among gun owners—and red flag laws to keep communities safe.

The #metoo movement has given a voice to women who have had enough of harassment, assault, and intimidation in workplaces everywhere from Hollywood to the State Capitol. Instead of enacting overdue protections against harassment, Minnesota Republicans gave corporate special interests their way and told harassment survivors they'd need to wait for change. As if this wasn't bad enough, Republicans in Washington pushed through a Supreme Court justice facing troubling allegations of despicable behavior without a full investigation.

After generations of progress for workers to earn a living wage and fair benefits through the right to organize, corporate allies in Congress and the state legislature have worked to erode these rights. Now, more than ever, we need to protect the rights of organized labor while expanding benefits like earned sick and safe time and paid family leave.

Despite broad scientific consensus regarding the urgent need to take action on climate change, we've seen Republicans capitulate to the fossil fuel industry and slow progress toward renewable energies. Some Republican lawmakers even deny climate change itself exists.

Collectively, all of this could justify reasons for despair, but the stakes are too high to sit dejected on the sidelines. I'm hopeful that this November, folks in Minnesota and across the country will say "no" to a politics that seeks to only intensify divisions, with an ultimate goal of further concentrating power—financial and otherwise—with the very richest. In the wake of this onslaught, I'm optimistic because I've seen just how energetic people have been in resisting attacks on a thriving middleclass.

Minnesotans deserve communities that are safe and healthy, with great schools and good-paying job opportunities. People from underrepresented communities need to be treated with respect and be given the same opportunities as anyone else. Our seniors deserve the opportunity to retire with financial security and live with dignity. These are all values worth fighting for, and I'm confident that if DFLers all come together this November, we can ensure each of these becomes a reality.

Residents in our neighborhoods are amazing

by Commissioner Janice Rettman



After the Minnesota State Fair is over, school starts back up and we all move towards the beautiful fall season. We are all proud the Great Minnesota State Fair is located in Falcon Heights adjacent to the Como and the Midway neighborhoods whose residents all literally live the fair. Thanks to all who labored and volunteered there!

Fall also means that HEAT's ON Day arrives! This year Pipefitters Locals 455, 6, and 539 celebrated their Thirty-One Years of Heroes who volunteered one Saturday in September. They freely gave of their time and talents making memories in people's hearts as they safely fixed furnaces to ensure there's no carbon monoxide, checked and/or installed smoke detectors, and made sure residents are warm both inside their home and in their hearts. These volunteers joined forces with the mechanical contractors and suppliers as well as with the Community Action Agency staff who locate folks most in need of their services. I have been at every one of their events

and know the specialness of the gifts they give!!!

Coupled with the apprenticeship programs and training embedded in the values of professionalism and in the pride of work is what every plumber and pipefitter does! Do you realize even just doing 100 visits a year (they have done way more than that) touched a minimum of 3,000 individuals who whether they tweet, text, or talk over the backyard fence have made 10,000 people know of the deliberate acts of talent and kindness!

In the spring there is equally a marvelous effort by the Plumbers Locals 34, 15, and 6 called Water's Off! ***The literally millions of gallons of water they have saved from going down the drain is a WOW factor!*** Plus, their talents are amplified in their uplifting spirit of giving, their leadership's vision, and making sure pipes are repaired, unclogged, and flow properly. That toilet running or a pipe dripping is a waste, is expensive, and is fixable! That is indeed what environmental stewardship is all about! The plumbers also have an incredible apprenticeship program that literally gives the participant a pathway to a good, living-wage job and a career that is phenomenally rewarding! The plumbers are awesome!

I am privileged to serve and work for you!! My dream is to be the best I can be, working hard and giving one's best at any job, serving and working with integrity, honesty, and dedication to serve all and to foster the faith that can sustain one's self through the good and the bad times, enjoying the tapestry found in people and when taking a stand to do what is right and to have the courage to live it! I do.

Be kind to bees

by Gwen Willems



One of our gems in Senate District 66 is the Bee Lab on St. Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota. The Bee Lab's mission is to promote the conservation, health, and diversity of bee pollinators. There, Dr. Marla Spivak, a MacArthur Fellow and Distinguished McKnight Professor in Entomology, and her staff members conduct research on honey bees and help educate the public about these industrious little insects.

What's so special about bees?

Bees play a keystone role in the productivity of agriculture and the beauty of our world through the pollination of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and flowers. A drastic decline in honey-bee numbers is termed

Colony Collapse Disorder. The organization Friends of the Earth reports that beekeepers lost nearly 50 percent of their hives last year. This crisis is due to a reduced number of appropriate flowers for pollination, disruption of natural habitats, extensive use of pesticides, and bee diseases and parasites.



Photo courtesy of the Bee Lab

The good news is you can help in several ways:

1. Limit or eliminate use of pesticides (insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, etc.) on bee flowers.
2. Cultivate bee flowers and plants.
3. Provide nesting habitat for bees.
4. Support the Bee Lab by making a financial contribution. See www.beelab.umn.edu/giving for further information about options for your donations.

Pesticides

It's important to be extremely careful with use of pesticides, if you decide to use them at all. According to the Bee Lab, insecticides are designed to kill insects and, depending on formula and concentration, can be harmful or fatal to bees. Fungicides may have detrimental effects on bee nutrition if they destroy beneficial yeasts and microorganisms in bees' guts. Herbicides kill the weedy flowers that provide nectar and pollen for bees.

Friends of the Earth is working to eliminate Monsanto's pesticide Roundup from our food system and shift to organic agriculture. Recent research indicates that glyphosate, the pesticide in Roundup, is linked to honey-bee declines, making them more susceptible to disease by altering the balance of healthy bacteria in their guts. Roundup use has increased dramatically, jumping from 11 million pounds in 1987 to almost 300 million pounds in 2016.

Bee-friendly flowers and plants

Bees need flowers to supply food to them. Some flowers provide only pollen (bees' main protein), others provide both pollen and nectar (carbohydrates). Bees convert the nectar into honey, and use the protein in pollen to feed their young. Minnesota is home to hundreds of different bee species, and different types of bees prefer different flowers, due to the size and shape of the bees and the flowers and nutritional needs.

It's best to provide diverse plants to support an array of bee species. Some of my favorites are wild geraniums, pussy willows, lanceleaf coreopsis, wild lupine, purple and yellow coneflowers, blue lobelia, purple prairie clover, sunflowers, autumn joy sedum, beebalm, catmint, oregano, stiff goldenrod, and calico aster.

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Maximilian Sunflower. Photo courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture



Wild Geranium. Photo courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture



Purple Coneflower. Photo courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture

Nesting habitats

Most bees dig burrows in the ground. The other 30 to 40 percent are cavity-nesting bees that use hollow plant stems or holes in wood left by wood-boring beetles. A nesting bee uses mud, leaves, or other material to build walls and divide the tunnel into a linear series of small, sealed cells to hold pollen and eggs.

Build your own bee house. You can attract cavity-nesting bees by providing tunnels in a man-made bee house. You can buy these houses at a hardware or home and garden store, or build one. The easiest is the *bundle-of-sticks model*. Just take some hollow sticks or reeds, such as bamboo, bundle them up, and place them where bees can find them.

The *wooden-block model* bee house mimics the holes in trees that cavity-nesting bees use in the wild. It is simply a block of wood of any size with some deep holes drilled partway through. Disposable paper straws are inserted into each tunnel. They can be pulled out to access the bees, and easily be replaced with new straws to clean the house. Foam blocks are a cheaper and easier option to work with compared to wooden blocks.

The third model is the *observation block*, which has a clear top over a block of wood with U-shaped grooves. This is the most difficult and expensive to construct, but it offers easy viewing and house cleaning.

Thanks to the Bee Lab for information used in this article. Read more about bees and bee-house construction at www.beelab.umn.edu/.

Gwen is co-chair of the Capitol Region Watershed District Citizen Advisory Committee.

CALENDAR

Until Monday, November 5 Early/absentee voting is open for the November General Election.

It is too late to pre-register for this election, but in Minnesota you can register when you vote, either early/absentee or at the polls on Election Day. See <http://dfi-sd66.org/sd66home.php#earlyvot> for more details.

November 5, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. - SD66 Central Committee

New Life Presbyterian Church
965 Larpenteur Avenue West, Roseville 55113

Tuesday, November 6 - General Election

Polling places open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. Voters in line by 8 p.m. have the right to vote. Unregistered voters can register and vote at their polling place, with required documentation

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Visit our website at <http://www.dfi-sd66.org/> for calendar updates.

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The *Senate District 66 DFL Newsletter* is published four times a year to inform and educate all interested parties in the activities and issues of SD66 DFLers including elected officials and endorsed candidates.

Please contact the editor if you are interested in joining the newsletter committee or submitting an article for publication.

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