



SPECIAL REPORTS

Important dates

*Elections matter!
This year they will have
significant impacts on our lives.*

In addition to caucuses being held February 25, the presidential primary is March 3. Early voting for the presidential primary has started and you have the option to either vote early in person or by mail. Visit [DFL.org/voteinperson](https://www.dfl.org/voteinperson), [DFL.org/votebymail](https://www.dfl.org/votebymail), or the [Secretary of State's website](https://www.sos.state.mn.us) for more information on how to vote early.

Thanks to our strong early voting laws, Minnesota has the privilege of being the first state in the entire country to vote in the presidential primary. Vote and take advantage of this historic opportunity.

In this issue

- Why precinct caucuses still need you this year 1
- In 2020 session, lawmakers can strengthen fairness, justice, and the opportunity to succeed 2
- Looking ahead to the session 3
- A new year at Ramsey County 4
- The latest on my campaign and the United States Census 5
- Congratulations to our neighbors who are exemplary conservationists 6
- Joint leadership report on SD66 DFL activities 8

Upcoming events

- Saturday, February 8**
Caucus Convener Training
- Tuesday, February 11**
Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting
- Tuesday, February 18**
Caucus Convener Training
- Tuesday, February 25**
House District 66A DFL Caucuses

See page 10 for full calendar.

Why precinct caucuses still need you this year

by Sarah Lukowski, SD66 DFL Outreach & Inclusion Officer

For many Minnesota DFLers, the presidential nominating process will look quite different this year. Instead of participating in a presidential preference ballot during the precinct caucuses, a primary election will be held on March 3. In-person voting in the presidential primary at the Ramsey County Board of Elections began January 17. That may leave some folks thinking there is no need to caucus this year, but there are many reasons why you should attend your DFL precinct caucus the evening of February 25.

First, a thriving democracy requires our participation at all levels, and that includes precinct caucuses. Second, many folks talk about seats at the table and who is in leadership, but that can only matter if we are willing to show up and take our seats! Meeting with our neighbors in a small room to select party leaders may not seem like much, but those leaders are critical to having the organizing power we need for each election! Third, the precinct caucuses are the first level for establishing the party platform. If you have an issue that means a lot to you—such as health care, the environment, or affordable housing—you can advocate for its adoption in the overarching party platform. Finally, if you dream of coming together at the national convention in Milwaukee with members of the Democratic Party from all over the country, the precinct caucuses are the first step toward having a vote as a delegate in the congressional district convention where national delegates are selected.

Whether you want to help select the next set of precinct and district leaders, strengthen the party platform, become a delegate, or just participate in grassroots democracy, your voice is needed and welcomed at the DFL precinct caucuses. Join us Tuesday, February 25, starting at 6:30 p.m. and then cast your presidential preference ballot on Tuesday, March 3.

In 2020 session, lawmakers can strengthen fairness, justice, and the opportunity to succeed

by Rep. John Lesch



The 2020 legislative session is upon us and I look forward to continuing our work to ensure everyone—both here in our neighborhoods and across the state—has the opportunity to succeed and thrive. From a fiscal perspective, by many metrics our state continues to do well. Minnesota has a positive budget balance, low unemployment, a healthy rainy-day fund, and good credit rating. More important than numbers on a spreadsheet, though, is the quality of life folks can experience in our state. Minnesotans deserve world-class schools, good-paying jobs with fair wages, and affordable and accessible health care. To ensure each of these values can be a reality, it's critically important for the Minnesota Legislature to continue budgeting in a responsible fashion.

There are several key areas in which Minnesotans are demanding action, and I remain committed to further advancing these priorities. In 2019, House DFLers stood up to the gun lobby by approving measures to expand criminal background checks and create a red flag law. Unfortunately, Senate Republicans stood in the way. All Minnesotans deserve to be safe in their communities, and we will renew these efforts in 2020. I'm also committed to advancing solutions to combat climate change, lower the price of prescription drugs, and strengthen economic security for families, including Earned Sick & Safe Time for all workers.

In 2020, I'll continue in my role as chair of the House Judiciary and Civil Law Committee, where I've worked to remove barriers to justice and ensure our justice system treats all Minnesotans fairly and equitably. Due to a pair of recent rulings from the Minnesota Court of Appeals, we have some work ahead of us to ensure certain bad actors can be held accountable.

In December, the court struck down as unconstitutional the state's law which prohibits stalking over the telephone. While I respectfully disagree with the court—which ruled that the law violated free speech rights under the first amendment—Minnesotans also have the right to live their lives free of threatening and intimidating contact, especially when it's coming from a domestic abuser. When this type of behavior occurs, people also deserve to know that those taking part in it will be held accountable. I've already started discussions with community members and public safety leaders to build consensus around new solutions that protect victims of domestic violence and give prosecutors the tools they need to hold wrongdoers accountable.

In 2016, I was the chief author of legislation banning the nonconsensual dissemination of private sexual images, more commonly referred to as "revenge porn." The legislature passed the bill almost unanimously and then-Governor Dayton signed the bill into law. This abhorrent behavior is often done with the aim of humiliating, harassing, or intimidating a former partner, and just like physical abuse, stalking, blackmail, and other forms of harassment. In our digital age, legislators have a responsibility to take new action to stop it.

Taking action similar to the ruling on stalking-by-telephone, the Court of Appeals in late December also struck down our revenge porn law as unconstitutional on free speech grounds. While people have the right to free speech, they also have the right to privacy, and no one deserves to have their photos or video of an intimate nature—meant to be private—shared across the internet without their consent. Other states have upheld laws banning this behavior, and I hope Attorney General Keith Ellison and the Dakota County Attorney's Office (which originally prosecuted the case) appeal to the Supreme Court.

It may be tough to believe, especially over a century and a half since we banned it, but our Minnesota Constitution still has language providing an exception allowing slavery. The constitution states: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the state *otherwise than as punishment for a crime of which the party has been convicted*". I support Saint Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell in his efforts to raise awareness of this language, and plan to introduce legislation for a constitutional amendment removing these harmful words. I'm hopeful to have this on the 2020 general election ballot.

What are some of your priorities for the 2020 session? I encourage you to be in touch with me and share your ideas and input. Working together, we can solve problems facing our state and ensure everyone can experience a more prosperous, equitable, and successful future.

Looking ahead to the session

by Rep. Alice Hausman



All over the state, all over the country, housing challenges continue. I will begin with a story that you may have read in the newspaper. A young man and woman and their baby were struggling to find housing. The man had a job that he liked but the salary was insufficient to afford housing. The woman had a job but, near the end of her pregnancy, had to give it up to deal with health issues. They were staying with family and friends. On one of those nights they were in an apartment and parked their car in the lot, likely private property. That night their car was towed and it would require \$1,200 to get it back, money they didn't have. How do you get to work if transit doesn't serve that area? Then they had good news. They found a place at the Drake Hotel. That is where they were living on the day of the fire. The loss of all of those housing units in the winter compounds what was already a growing crisis. Add to that the earlier high-rise fire in public housing when we learned that much public housing doesn't have sprinklers.

This leads us to an understanding that we need to make the case for increased funding this next legislative session. The Homes for All Coalition is taking up the cause. This year they are requesting \$500 million in bonding, \$100 million in general obligation bonds for public housing, and \$400 million for housing infrastructure bonds where we partner with nonprofits who leverage private dollars. Their first effort was to focus on the governor's office with the hope that he would include it in the bill he presents to the legislature. He just announced his proposal and he included roughly half of their request so we have more work to do.

A second issue facing us is the changing climate. The newly formed Climate Caucus in the Minnesota House has used the interim to hold a series of hearings on the intersection of climate and transportation, climate and housing, climate and health, and climate and the environment. There will be a number of bills that will emerge from that work. My hope is that, despite our divided legislature (the only divided state legislature in the country), we can come together for a productive session. There is so much at stake with both of these issues. In some cases these are literally issues of life and death.

Opportunity gaps in education, lack of affordable and quality day care, growing health care costs—there is no shortage of work to be done. And some systems cry out for reform—our criminal justice system, the mental health system. As never before, we need to come together, work together. But I see reasons to be hopeful. The faith community has stepped up. Young people have stepped up. I see citizens of every age rallying, finding their voices, working hard. We need each other.

A new year at Ramsey County

by Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo



It's hard for me to believe that I'm already a year into my term! We accomplished a lot together at Ramsey County in 2019, but I know we still have a long way to go before we've made a county that works for everyone.

Our 2020-21 biennial budget passed last December. I've already talked a fair bit about the exciting things we're doing with our budget in these coming years, but there are a few initiatives that I think are particularly important. These include our community-led work to understand how our procedures and programs contribute to disparities, which is branded as Transforming Systems Together, and our ongoing work to make our juvenile justice system not just more humane for the children who enter it, but also more effective in keeping them out of trouble in the future.

We've also made significant strides in making our human services more humane and responsive to the needs of the people we serve. These services are at the heart of what we do at Ramsey County, and as someone who has navigated them for decades on behalf of my family, I know our challenges all too well. Our Financial Assistance Services department has been doing diligent work to improve customer service, and I am proud to say that those efforts have begun to pay off. Last November, nearly 71 percent of people who came to our services hub to see a case worker were waiting for 30 minutes or longer. As of last month, that number has dropped to 42 percent, and we hope to see that percentage continue to drop as more changes are implemented.

We've also made significant strides forward in making our county roads safer and more accessible for people of all ages and abilities. Last month, Public Works announced that they would make the four-three lane conversion on Maryland Avenue permanent in 2020, citing a significant reduction in crashes and better-than-expected performance at rush hour. For the similar changes on Larpenteur Avenue, Public Works has not yet made a final decision, but they are looking to hold another public open house on the project in late February or early March. Stay tuned to my pages for more information there.

As always, I want to encourage everyone to contact my office with thoughts or concerns. The problems we face are complex, and the more perspectives we hear the more we will be able to do to solve them. Please send me your concerns directly at Trista.MatasCastillo@co.ramsey.mn.us or (651) 266-8360.

The latest on my campaign and the United States Census

by Commissioner MaryJo McGuire



Happy New Year! I'm looking forward to a very busy 2020. This is going to be an exciting year on many fronts! In addition to my work at Ramsey County, I will also be on the ballot this November. For those of you that live in District 2, I ask for your support in the upcoming precinct caucuses on February 25. We have a lot at stake, and I can't wait to work alongside all of you and our other DFL-endorsed candidates to make sure that we win in November 2020 and keep building on the progress we have made.

To get connected to my campaign, visit <https://www.mcguireforcountyboard.org/>. To connect with my official office, visit ramseycounty.us/district2.

2020 census

Did you know that the U.S. Constitution requires that every ten years we count how many people are living in the United States?

The results of this count provide the basis for distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds annually to communities across the country to support vital programs—impacting housing, education, transportation, employment, health care, and public policy.

The data is also used to determine the number of congressional seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and redraw the boundaries of congressional and the Senate and House Districts of the Minnesota Legislature. Minnesota currently has eight seats in the House, but we're at risk of losing one. A complete count gives our communities the strongest possible voice in Washington, DC, and in Saint Paul.

Ramsey County has been working with cities and other local partners to create a Complete Count Committee—to ensure that everyone living in Ramsey County is counted. The communities across the county have a wealth of diversity, including diverse racial and ethnic communities, thriving immigrant and refugee communities, a large student population, and many English-language learners.

However, the United States Census has disproportionately undercounted such communities in the past. Both past and projected response rates show that broad areas of Ramsey County, especially Saint Paul, are at risk of being undercounted. Low-wealth areas are particularly vulnerable. The 2020 census represents an opportunity to have all our residents counted.

What information will not be asked?

There will be no citizenship question on the 2020 census. In addition, the Census Bureau will never ask for:

- Social Security numbers,
- Bank or credit card account numbers,
- Money or donations, or
- Anything on behalf of a political party.

2020 dates	What to expect
January	Early census counting operations begin.
March	Census Bureau sends invitations to all households to respond to the online form.
April 1	Census Day
April	Census Bureau sends paper forms and reminders to households that haven't responded online.
May - July	Census takers visit households that haven't yet filled out their online or paper forms.

The census is also hiring! For information about how to apply, visit <https://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html>.

Congratulations to our neighbors who are exemplary conservationists

by Gwen Willems

The Capital Region Watershed District (www.capitolregionwd.org) was established in 1998, covers forty square miles, and is one of forty-two watershed districts in Minnesota. All of the district's lakes, including Como Lake, Crosby and Little Crosby Lakes, Loeb Lake, and Lake McCarrons, eventually flow into the Mississippi River. CRWD is dedicated to protecting, managing, and improving the water resources of the district. CRWD has twenty staff members, a five-member Board of Managers, and a twelve-member Citizen Advisory Committee. In Fall 2018, CRWD moved to new offices at 595 Aldine Street in the Midway neighborhood of Saint Paul. The building uses green building principles, including stormwater management and energy-saving practices, to conserve natural resources and create a healthy workplace. If you'd like to tour CRWD's new building, sign up online or call (651) 644-8888.

Within the boundaries of the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD)—parts of Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Maplewood, Roseville, and Saint Paul—many folks are conducting excellent conservation practices. Six of them were recognized in January at the CRWD's 2019 Watershed Steward Awards event.

Winners were honored for exemplifying watershed stewardship through activities or projects that demonstrate a commitment to help protect, manage, and improve our lakes and the Mississippi River.

This year's winners include three individuals and three organizations:

Erin Spry received the **Watershed Citizen Award** for her volunteer leadership of the Como Community Council's (District 10) lakeside cleanup. Erin, who is a hydrologist with the State of Minnesota, scheduled and conducted three cleanup dates, created flyers and posters, and obtained cleanup supplies. She worked with the boat rental vendor at Como Lake to arrange boats that participants could use while collecting trash on the lake. The sixty participants removed approximately 200 pounds of trash in the three cleanups and learned about the difficulty of lake improvement.

Henry Welliver won the **Young Watershed Steward Award** for coordinating planting of the northwest rain garden at CRWD's new building as part of his Eagle Scout activities. He was in charge of fifteen volunteers, developing maps and teams, and providing direction

during the event. Henry and his team also helped CRWD divert and infiltrate 2,094 gallons of rainwater annually, and remove .14 pounds of phosphorous and 25.7 pounds of suspended solids. Through his leadership and stewardship, Henry was able to provide a unique educational opportunity and familiarity with the district to members of Boy Scouts of America Troop 9013 and other volunteers.

Shirley Reider was presented with the **Lifetime Stewardship Award**.

In 2002, she started her service to CRWD with membership on the Citizen Advisory Committee, four years after establishment of the district in 1998 and even before staff members were hired. Shirley went on to serve on the Board of Managers for seven years. In addition, she contributed to community and environmental issues through leadership on the Hamline-Midway District Council, and participated in the first St. Paul Plan that addressed water issues.



Boy Scout Henry Welliver with his Young Watershed Steward Award. Photo courtesy of CRWD.

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Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division (RCSWCD) received the **Watershed Partner Award** for exceptional technical assistance and design services for CRWD's Stewardship Grant program since 2013. The nominator wrote, "As a partner they have been committed to continued innovation through design, are quick to respond, and they readily adapt to changes in our field. RCSWCD staff eagerly put 110 percent into potential projects and provide exemplary service at every level of our grant program including site visits, conceptual planning, design, and construction oversight. They imbue each opportunity with passion and commitment to CRWD's mission by proposing solutions that maximize water-quality benefit in a cost-effective manner." Among the amazing projects they have designed are the Bang Brewing permeable surfaces, raingardens, and native plantings; boulevard curb-cut raingardens throughout St. Paul and Roseville; Frogtown Farm raingarden and bio-swales; and Harambee Elementary School raingardens. They also contributed greatly to the success of CRWD's monitoring program.

Parkview Center School was honored with the **Watershed Outreach Program Award** for the Parkview Water Project which reaches nearly 500 students each year, coordinating classroom curriculum across grade levels and finding ways to integrate water lessons and case studies into classes. Jenny Eckman, former environmental science specialist at Harambee Elementary School, came to Parkview in 2016. She expanded the curriculum from focusing primarily on water lessons for fourth graders to creating connections to water for grades kindergarten to five. They include a pond study for kindergartners and first graders, special in-school water lesson experiences led by educators from the Science Museum for grades two and three, a field day to Lake McCarrons for grade four, and finally a day on the Mississippi River in voyager canoes with Wilderness Inquiry for grade five. The learning opportunities and access to real-world connections to water for Parkview students have been priceless.

The recipient of the **Watershed Project Award** was **Allianz Field**, a joint public-private project of the City of Saint Paul, the Minnesota United soccer team, and CRWD. This development is a bold example of sustainability and green infrastructure that will recycle millions of gallons of rainwater annually and support the long-term health of the surrounding community and environment. Rain and snow melt from Allianz Field's roof, and future buildings on the 35-acre Snelling-Midway Development, is directed to a 675,000-gallon storage tank below the Great Lawn. The water is filtered and disinfected through a smart hub that connects to rainfall forecasts and adjusts water levels accordingly, achieving pollutant reduction goals. The clean water is then distributed throughout the site to irrigate trees and grass. In addition, boulevard trees in engineered soil trenches capture and clean polluted runoff from roads and sidewalks. The landmark water system will provide new businesses on the site with filtered water for uses such as laundry, irrigation, or restroom flushing.

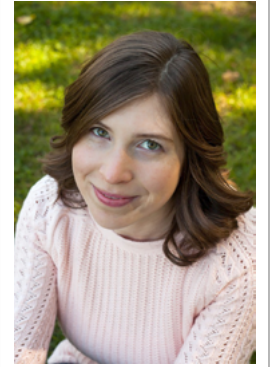
*Gwen is co-chair of the Capitol Region Watershed District Citizen Advisory Committee.
Thanks to Jessica Bromelkamp, CRWD Communications & Engagement Division Manager,
for sharing information used in this article.*

Joint leadership report on SD66 DFL activities

by SD66 Chair Ryan Lee and SD66 Vice Chair Katrina Lee



Greetings, SD66 DFLers! It feels like we only just organized our annual potluck picnic in Como Park, but the outside temperatures and rising snow banks remind us that we're in the throes of winter, and caucus and convention season is nearly upon us. As a quick reminder, we have shared the [answers to some frequently asked questions about the precinct caucuses](#) on our website—please take a look if you haven't already, and share this link with your neighbors and friends!



In addition to being a major election year in the presidential and state arenas, it is also time for the SD66 to look to its own elections to fill positions on our executive committee. These roles are filled for a two-year term, and they represent a unique opportunity for you to be involved with the senate district and help forge its future. If any of these positions sound like a good fit for your skill set—or if you'd like to develop these skills—please keep a look out for information that will be sent by the nominations committee in early March (or check on our website for updates). The nominations committee will be looking to field applicants and perform interviews before the elections are held at our organizing unit endorsing convention on April 11 at the Washington Technology Magnet School.

SD66 DFL positions

- **The Senate District Chair** convenes the endorsing convention, helps organize the precinct caucuses, and presides at meetings of the central committee and executive committee. Other responsibilities include acting as spokesperson and point of contact for the Senate District 66 DFL, representing the Senate District 66 DFL at other committee meetings, and working with endorsed candidates to secure victory in the general election.
 - **Time commitment:** During election year, the chair can expect to devote around five hours/week to the SD66 DFL; during the off years, the chair might devote around ten hours/month. Both figures include at least one two-hour meeting per month.
- The role of the **Senate District Vice Chair** is very much dependent on the chair and their role. You must complement and support the chair in their work, have a strong grasp of the work of all the executive officers, and work to fill in holes wherever they appear.
 - **Time commitment:** During election year, the vice chair can expect to devote around three hours/week to the SD66 DFL; during the off years, the chair might devote around five hours/month. Both figures include at least one two-hour meeting per month.
- The **Treasurer** is responsible for being a good steward of the party's finances and ensuring compliance with party rules as well as state campaign finance laws. Primary responsibilities include preparing and submitting reports, issuing and collecting receipts, and preparing the budget in conjunction with the rest of the executive committee. *As our current treasurer has announced her intention to step down in April, please consider submitting your candidacy for treasurer for the 2020–2022 term.*
 - **Time commitment:** two to five hours per week during election year, five to ten hours per month during off year. The treasurer must be able to file the necessary reports by the deadline.
- The **Secretary** must preserve the minutes and attendance records of all proceedings of the executive and central committees. The secretary also notifies members of all meetings and other logistical support for meetings and party unit activities. This involves learning how to use the VAN (the DFL's voter database platform) to send out

(Continued on next page)

email blasts and generate reports such as sign-in sheets for the caucuses and conventions.

- o **Time commitment:** During the election year, the secretary can expect to devote about six hours/month to the SD66 DFL
- The **Outreach Officer** ensures all constituents are treated equally, based on the Minnesota DFL principles of inclusion. The Outreach Officer leads the local unit's efforts toward inclusive political participation, and strives to achieve DFL diversity in perspective and representation.
 - o **Time commitment:** two to five hours per week during election year, five to ten hours per month during off year.
- The board of twelve **Directors** perform duties assigned to them by the chair and vice chair. In the past, directors have formed subcommittees of interest to them that help the work of the organizing unit. For example: forming the newsletter committee to create and publish the organizing unit's newsletter, or forming the events committee to plan social gatherings and raise awareness of other groups' activities.
 - o **Time commitment:** two hours per week during senate district election year, ten hours per year during off year.

The full list of positions and responsibilities is available to view as a PDF linked on this [web page](#).

Ryan and I are happy to continue serving our senate district for the 2020–2022 term, but we are flexible as to what roles that takes. Primarily, we want to help grow the next generation of leaders and make sure everyone has a place at the table. Both of us are happy to meet with anyone interested in any of the above positions and answer any questions you might have over coffee or at a happy hour—just use our [contact form](#) if you're interested.

By the time this newsletter is published, we'll likely have already seen the results of the Iowa caucuses, and the election year is only just beginning. There will be increasing opportunities for you to get involved and help keep Minnesota blue, either as a delegate, central or executive committee member, or as a campaign volunteer. Please come to our next public meeting on March 2 at 6:30 p.m. at the New Life Presbyterian Church in Roseville.

Keep warm and carry on!

CALENDAR

Saturday, February 8, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Caucus Convener Training

Ramsey County Library – Roseville
2180 Hamline Avenue North, Roseville 55113

Tuesday, February 11, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

Ramsey County Library – Roseville, Board room,
2180 Hamline Avenue North, Roseville 55113

Tuesday, February 18, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Caucus Convener Training

Rice Street Library, 1011 Rice Street, St. Paul 55117

Tuesday, February 25, 6:30 p.m. registration,

7:00 p.m. call to order—House District 66A DFL Caucuses

Roseville Area High School
1240 County Road B2 W, Roseville 55113

House District 66B DFL Caucuses

Washington Technology Magnet School
1495 Rice Street, St. Paul 55117

Wednesday, February 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

SD66 DFL Happy Hour

Half Time Rec, 1013 Front Avenue, St. Paul 55103

Monday, March 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

New Life Presbyterian Church
965 Larpenteur Avenue West, Roseville 55113

Tuesday, March 3

Minnesota Statewide Presidential Primary

Saturday, March 7, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

SD66 DFL Convention Planning Meeting

New Life Presbyterian Church
965 Larpenteur Avenue West, Roseville 55113

Tuesday, March 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

SD66 DFL Happy Hour

Monday, April 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

New Life Presbyterian Church
965 Larpenteur Avenue West, Roseville 55113

Monday, April 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Roseville DFL Central Committee Meeting

New Life Presbyterian Church
965 Larpenteur Avenue West, Roseville 55113

Tuesday, April 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

SD66 DFL Happy Hour

Monday, May 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

SD66 DFL Central Committee Meeting

New Life Presbyterian Church
965 Larpenteur Avenue West, Roseville 55113

Tuesday, May 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Roseville DFL Convention

Visit our website at <http://sd66-dfl.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.

Newsletter committee

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