



President's Report – 2021-2022

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As we worked through our second solid year with COVID safety restrictions, virtual meetings continued to be the new normal. In May of 2021 we wrapped up our first book club session. We read and discussed *The Reunited States of America*. We hoped this book, a manifesto for a movement to reunite America, would help us put a stop to the seemingly endless Left-Right fistfight while honoring the vital role of healthy political debate. Mark Gerzon describes how citizens all over the country—Republicans, Democrats, and independents—are finding common ground on some of the most divisive and difficult issues we face today. After reading the book we were inspired to share it with our Central Peninsula Community and as luck would have it a documentary based on the book was available. We were hoping to host our first in person event to share this documentary in the fall.

In July 2021 we walked in our Annual Soldotna Days Parade. Some of us were dressed up as Suffragettes and we handed out bookmarks that had the dates of the fall's upcoming elections and some toy Styrofoam planes.

In September 2021 as COVID numbers climbed in our community once again we decided that our *Reunited States Documentary and Discussion* would have to be virtual. We offered the documentary for free to all those who signed up for the discussion that would follow. We invited all current and candidates running for office and all the local politically affiliated groups in the area. We learned about the importance of talking to and connecting with everyone with every political persuasion, but we also learned how hard it is to bring everyone together just to get the discussion started.

As our election season was small with just one local Borough election with no propositions and with very few competitive seats, we could not get participation in our annual candidate forum. The voter turn-out in that election was a measly 17.33% with only 9,214 ballots cast out of 52,638 registered voters.

In the fall of 2021, our members all signed up to participate on priority committees. Our priority committees consisted of protecting voting rights, protect Alaska's current judicial selection process, redistricting, education, and health care. We then tied each of these committees to the national priorities of Democracy Defense Fund, Democracy Truth Project, People Powered Fair Maps, and Expand the Franchise. The education and redistricting committees were most active right away as the redistricting process was well under way. The Education committee was busy planning a series of Forums.

In December of 2021 the education committee held its first forum on Voter Turnout geared towards KPB Districts 8 & 9 in the Homer Area. The League works very closely with the Kenai Peninsula Votes group on many of these efforts.

We also held a virtual League Christmas Party in December. We played some Christmas bingo and a trivia game and had a show and tell session of the toys we annually gift to our local Women's Resource Centers in Kenai and Homer. Its not the same as meeting in person but a fun time was still had by all.

In February 2022 we started our second book club session reading Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout. This book is a wealth of scientifically based information on what is truly effective in increasing voter turnout and has inspired us to plan a comprehensive Get out the Vote campaign this coming fall.

We also realized that our checking account balance had grown quite a bit, so we brainstormed on how best to spend that money and then created a spending survey to see what floated to the top. The Get out the Vote campaign which may include Wednesday Market booths, canvassing collaboration campaign, postcard campaign and an Election Festival the weekend before Election Day got the top billing, followed by Ranked Choice voting education and a marquee sign to promote voter education in a prominent place. Our hope is to synergistically combine these ideas with our current priorities to educate and increase voter participation.

Thank you all for attending the convention.