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"Skip a Primary" Day in Minneapolis

There was no primary election in Minneapolis September 15, thanks to ranked choice voting (RCV). Voters didn't need to worry about making a trip to the polls, but many did turn out to learn about the new voting system.

The Minneapolis Democratic-Farmer-Labor (DFL) took advantage of the day to educate voters about RCV, hosting practice voting forums throughout the city.

During the events, dubbed "Majority Rules: Practice in September for Voting in November," attendees ranked their choices for declared and presumptive DFL gubernatorial candidates.

The events captured the attention of the media, who did their part to help spread the news about Minneapolis' transition to a new way of voting.

KSTP-TV: [Minneapolis skips a primary due to new voting method](#)

MPR: [DFL hosts instant runoff practice sessions in Minneapolis](#)

KARE 11: [Ranked Choice means no primary day in Minneapolis](#)

WCCO-TV: [Primary Day in Minnesota – Except Minneapolis](#)

[Unintentional] Skip a Primary Day in St. Paul

St. Paul voters weren't supposed to skip their primary election last week, but that's what 95 percent of them did. That's right – 95 percent did NOT show up at the polls.

Last year, former St. Paul mayor George Latimer and former Ramsey County Commissioner Ruby Hunt [asked some pointed questions in a piece in the Pioneer Press](#): What if an election were held tomorrow and only five percent of voters showed up? Is this the type of democracy we want? What if an election were held tomorrow and the majority of voters didn't vote for the winner — is *this* the type of democracy we want?

These are the realities of our current voting system.

The St. Paul Better Ballot Campaign is out to change this reality and make St. Paul elections work better for ALL voters. The campaign is energetic, innovative and

fun!

The Campaign has put IRV on the menu in restaurants throughout the city in an innovative way to educate voters about IRV in advance of St. Paul's Nov. 3 elections. You can eat – and vote – at “Tasting Trial” restaurants for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Participating establishments include Coffee News Café, Happy Gnome, Cecil's Deli and Cooqi bakery. See the full list of current and soon-to-start sites [here](#). You can also read the Pioneer Press article about Tasting Trials [here](#).

Just Five Weeks to Go in St. Paul

Of course, eating and drinking will not win a campaign. To help IRV win in November, we need your help in at least one other way!

With just five weeks go to until this year's municipal elections, we must have your help making IRV a success in St. Paul voting booths.

Here's how you can help:

If you live in Saint Paul:

[Get a lawn sign today.](#)

Tell your friends to eat and drink at [Tasting Trial restaurants](#) and learn how easy it is to vote 1-2-3.

[Host a house party.](#)

[Volunteer](#) for events, door knocks and lit drops.

[Donate!](#) It's important that we have the funds to keep our campaign going strong all the way up to Election Day.

If you live outside of Saint Paul: Contact ALL your friends in St. Paul and ask them to do two things:

- 1) [Get a lawn sign](#)
- 2) Vote Nov. 3 and vote YES for IRV

If they can do more, ask them to contact Dakotah at dakotah@fairvotemn.org to volunteer! [They can:](#)

[Come for an afternoon lit drop.](#)

[Host a house party](#) and [raise money](#) for the campaign.

[Join a phone bank team](#) (there's all-you-can-eat pizza!).

[Make a donation.](#) The campaign needs real dollars to buy lawn signs, print lit and do mailings. We need YOUR support to win in November!

To sign up or ask questions, contact Dakotah@fairvotemn.org.

[Catch up on the latest news](#) about and from the campaign - and stay tuned for action alerts about how YOU can continue to help in the weeks before the election.

Finally, we want to thank the Minnesota Daily for its [endorsement](#) of IRV in St. Paul and Lori Sturdevant at the Star Tribune for [telling us](#) why St. Paul primaries are obsolete. Thanks for helping us keep the momentum going!

Just Five Weeks to Go in Minneapolis

FairVote Minnesota helped bring RCV to Minneapolis; now we are partnering with the City of Minneapolis and helping voters learn how to vote 1-2-3. Our goal? To ensure all voters are ready to go to the polls for their first RCV election Nov. 3.

To educate voters in a city as large as Minneapolis, we need LOTS of volunteers. [Here's how YOU can help:](#)

Tell all your neighbors and friends to get information about the RCV elections at www.voteminneapolis.org and [attend an event](#) to learn more.

Plant a lawn sign to help advertise the new RCV elections. Signs will be available October 1. Contact info@fairvotemn.org.

Host a house party and give neighbors and friends the opportunity to practice voting before November. You provide the venue, desserts, wine, cheese or whatever you want to put on the ballot, and we'll provide ballots, a vote tallier and a speaker for your event. See examples of demo elections: [straw polls](#), [dessert elections](#) for [house parties](#), [wine-tastings](#), and bake-offs.

Help table at events – nearly daily across the city.

Door knock – every Saturday before between now and November 3.

[Contact us!](#) info@fairvotemn.org or 763-807-2550.

Learn More about RCV and the Races on the Ballot

[Vote Minneapolis](#)

[FairVote Minnesota](#)

[League of Women Voters Candidate Forums](#)

[Minnesota Independent Candidate Profiles](#)

RCV makes campaigns less contentious, more issue-focused. Minneapolis voters are experiencing what voters in San Francisco, Burlington, Vt., and other cities have been experiencing since switching to RCV: fewer personal attacks and more focus on the issues that matter to voters.

Minneapolis Ward 5 council campaigns, under the former primary-general voting system, often topped the mudslinging charts. The campaigns have changed their tunes this year under RCV, with notably less rancor and more mutual respect among the candidates. In a competitive race, like the five-way Ward 5 race, the candidates need to appeal to voters not just for first-choice votes but also for second-choice votes. This means they are less likely to offend voters by attacking the other candidates.

[Read more about this race in the Minnesota Independent.](#)

In Ward 6, RCV has led to coalition-building among candidates. See the [KSTP-TV report](#) highlighting this new way of campaigning.

There's No Time Like Today...

... to get involved in the drive to make RCV a success throughout Minnesota.

Educating voters in Minneapolis and running a successful ballot initiative campaign in St. Paul are both critical to our future success in Minnesota.

We have just five weeks and plenty of work to do before this year's elections. [Please donate today to ensure we succeed!](#)

With [\\$50](#) we can buy 10 lawn signs.

With [\\$100](#) we can sponsor three house parties.

With [\\$250](#) we can support Tasting Trials to five restaurants in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

With [\\$500](#) we can host a speaker at 10 Minneapolis events.

With [\\$1000](#) we can reach 1200 voters at their doors.

We're grateful for any amount you can give – but please, give generously. Better democracy depends on it. [Contribute today!](#)

IRV Goes Hollywood!

Instant runoff voting (a.k.a. ranked choice voting) will soon become a household name. Earlier this month, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science announced that it will use instant runoff voting for the election of Best Picture, ensuring that the most celebrated movie of the year is one with strong support among Academy members. [Read the press release](#) – and this [commentary from USA Today](#).

DFL Gubernatorial Candidates Weigh in

On Sept. 1, The Uptake and AM 950 co-hosted a debate among DFL candidates for governor at the State Fair. The debate included a question about RCV.

All of the candidates, less Senator Bakk, responded strongly in support of RCV, highlighting the importance of demonstrating that it can work well at the municipal level in Minneapolis and St. Paul to advance reform statewide.

You can watch the debate [here](#). The RCV segment is 30 minutes into the first hour.

RCV Action Around the Country

"Choice Voting" on the Ballot in Lowell, Mass.

In Lowell, the all at-large, winner-take-all system for city council elections has excluded immigrant and minority communities. So FairVote Lowell began a

petition drive and got “choice voting” on the municipal election ballot. Interestingly, Lowell used to be one of several cities in Massachusetts to use the voting system; Cambridge is the only one that still does. [Learn more](#).

Petition Drive for Statewide RCV in Massachusetts

Citizens for Voter Choice is working to make RCV a reality in all of Massachusetts. Visit them [online](#). We’ll be keeping a close eye on how things go.

Campaigns Underway in Los Angeles and Long Beach

To bring IRV to Los Angeles, voters need to approve an amendment to the city charter. But to get it on the ballot, a majority of the LA City Council first needs to approve an IRV bill. If that happens and the mayor signs the bill, then the question will go to the voters.

Recently, IRV sparked a lively discussion at a top LA Council candidate forum. Read more [here](#).

In Long Beach last week, a city council committee voted to put IRV in front of the full council on Sept. 15. If the council votes in favor, IRV will be placed on the April 2010 ballot.

Keep up on all the latest RCV/IRV news around the country at [Fairvote.org](#).

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