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Kearsarge Regional School District

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Kearsarge Regional High School Teacher Discusses MLK's Impact With Sunapee League of Women Voters



Kearsarge Regional High School Teacher Curtis Roddy gave a luncheon presentation to more than 40 members of the Kearsarge-Lake Sunapee League of Women Voters last month. (Photo Courtesy Kearsarge Regional School District)

NEW LONDON, N.H.-- Superintendent Winfried Feneberg is pleased to share that Kearsarge Regional High School Social Studies Teacher Curtis Roddy gave a luncheon presentation on Martin Luther King Jr. to more than 40 members of the Kearsarge-Lake Sunapee League of Women Voters (LWV) last month.

On Wednesday, Sept. 15, Roddy presented the case study 'Martin Luther King and the Struggle for Black Voting Rights'. The case examines the civil rights movement, specifically the events in Selma, Alabama in 1965 which brought national attention to the disenfranchisement of black voters in the South.

On Sunday, March 7, 1965, protesters, not including King, attempted to march across Pettus Bridge but were stopped with force. This sparked public outrage and King

announced a renewed march over the bridge on Tuesday, March 9. President Lyndon Johnson did not condone the march and a federal judge issued a restraining order against it. President Johnson's representatives told King that protesters could avoid violating the judge's order by marching to the bridge and turning around before crossing. The case considers King's decision-making process between turning around or leading protesters across the bridge.

Members of LWV were asked to work in small groups and take an in-depth look at a portion of this case. Participants conducted a close reading analysis, then discussed their three biggest takeaways, and King's words that they felt were most impactful or important. Small groups shared their ideas with the entire group.

Roddy's presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session.

"Voting is a fundamental freedom that everyone should have access to, which is why it is important to remember and reflect upon those who fought so hard to make it a universal right," said Roddy. "I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to share the insight that I learned from this case with others, and look forward to sharing it with my students, too. I would like to thank the League of Women Voters for being an engaged audience, and for their continued work to empower voters, as well as protect and expand voting rights."

Roddy first learned of the MLK case study through Harvard Business School's (HBS) Case Method Institute Program virtual conference, which he attended in January 2021 thanks to funding from the LWV. Keynote speaker HBS Professor David Moss presented the case and asked participants to examine and discuss the text and its key players. The conference was attended by over 200 professionals from across the country.

Additionally, Roddy plans to analyze this case study with his students at Kearsarge Regional High School.

"The LWV is always excited to hear about new approaches to civics in the classroom. Civics education is one of the most important things that our schools are expected to provide," said N.H. LWV President Liz Tentarelli. "Close readings of case studies like this will help today's students become informed voters in the future. Much of the league's work involves helping the public understand how elections work, how voters can participate and how voters can evaluate candidates' positions."

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Members of Kearsarge-Lake Sunapee League of Women Voters worked in small groups to analyze a portion of the 'Martin Luther King and the Struggle for Black Voting Rights' case. (Photo Courtesy Kearsarge Regional School District)

A message from the Kearsarge Regional School District

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