



Cindy Long

Biography: Cindy Long is an author, freelance writer, and retired teacher. Writing everything from snowmobile reviews to feature articles, her work has found its way into trade publications, newspapers, and several magazines including VOICE. Her Ontario teaching career took her to Nibinamik, Ottawa, and Thunder Bay where she worked mainly with grade seven and eight students.

Cindy was born in Toronto, and currently lives in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Her interest in electoral reform began in 2007 when Ontario explored the idea of moving to a Mixed-Member Proportional voting system. She has been a supporter of Fair Vote Canada for over a decade now.

Cindy is an avid nature nerd, and has spent a lot of time photographing insects and mushrooms. She also enjoys travel, political debates, and long hikes.



John Baumann

Biography: John Baumann is a semi-retired elementary teacher, married with four grown children. He has served as a volunteer director on the boards of Fair Vote Canada and its

Toronto chapter and is currently active with the Environmental Educators of Ontario (EEON). John believes the Covid pandemic and ongoing climate emergency show Canadians how vital it is that our political processes be responsive to protecting not just people, but the natural environment on which we depend for our lives and our futures. He also believes that our political processes are not up to these tasks, and that much of the current dysfunction at all three levels of government - municipal, provincial and federal—can be traced to an out-dated electoral system that marginalises more voters than it includes and rewards behaviours that are fundamentally anti-democratic and counterproductive to effective governing.



Marc Gasparotto

Biography: Marc Gasparotto is a communications professional experienced in stakeholder relations, strategic planning and content development. He is a former exploration geologist who has held roles in the Yukon Territory, Northwestern Ontario, Western Australia, and Myanmar.

Marc is currently the Chair of Fair Vote Canada’s Toronto chapter, and is also the Vice President of the Next Generation Explorers Award Association where he promotes geoscience innovation and helps students explore opportunities for career development.

Workshop title: *Growing Democracy: Planting the Seeds of Change*

Workshop description: Canada has changed in many ways since Confederation. However, what hasn’t changed is our voting system, the outcome of which does not fairly represent the choices of voters and the diversity of voices in our country.

Most people’s experience with democracy officially begins in the voting booth at age 18, but the foundations of democracy are laid at a much earlier age through lived experiences both inside and outside the classroom. The ways in which we engage students in decision-making and group participation are crucial to helping them develop an understanding of responsible citizenship and be more aware of inequalities in our present systems.

Led by Fair Vote Canada volunteers (two of whom are retired teachers), this workshop will examine our current voting system and explore effective alternatives already used in other countries. Participants will gain insights on how to integrate democratic values into classroom activities, and learn how to empower themselves and their students on the journey to growing a stronger, more inclusive democracy.