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Join us for our May Program Meeting–

Monday, May 10



Nucleus Clinic - Protecting reproductive health in a pandemic

Speaker - Becky Fink, Executive Director, Nucleus Clinic

Nucleus Clinic in Coon Rapids is the only independent, reproductive health, sexual health and education specialty community clinic between St. Paul and St. Cloud. Keeping the doors open during this pandemic year has been challenging. Becky will share her experiences, challenges and successes in a presentation May 10, Monday evening at 6:30 pm.

We'll open the Zoom at 6, come early and socialize a bit before we start!

Click this link to join us!

<https://lwvmn-org.zoom.us/j/91622789201?pwd=SDRsSTZlQ1hYcElIU3BKakIMbFBGdz09>

For phone-only connection: dial in on 312-626-6799 (long distance)

Meeting ID: 916 2278 9201

Passcode: 829326

After Becky's talk we will launch our new initiatives – **it's not too late to fill in the member interest survey if you haven't done so yet.** Here's the link for the survey:

<https://forms.gle/9i7VFTnqxwKkregGA>

LWV Minnesota Convention 2021

The 2021 LWV MN Convention is being planned as a virtual convention and will be held the weekend of June 11-13. LWV ABC is sending a full delegation of six (Gretchen Sabel, Julie Trude, Linda Rodgers, Sandy Connor, Kathy Aanerud and Pat Kennedy, plus observers Wes Volkenant, Shalonda Gordon, Kathie Whelchel and Geri Nelson. **If you are interested in attending, sign up as an observer – free!** We will hold a pre-convention virtual meet up in early June for all who will be attending. If you do sign up, let us know at lwvabc@gmail.com so we can invite you to the pre-meet! **Here's the registration link:** <https://www.lwvmn.org/convention-2021>

It Was a Successful Annual Meeting -- Via Zoom

With the assistance of Zoom technology, we conducted a productive Annual Meeting on April 12. Some highlighted summaries follow:

Leading off the evening was our guest speaker Scott Schulte, chair of the Anoka County Board of Commissioners. He delivered a message about his goal of keeping politics out of the board room and then participated in an active Q and A. Redistricting was a major focus of this discussion as all the Commissioner districts have had enough change in population to require redrawing the lines.



President Gretchen Sabel highlighted this year's many accomplishments despite our activities being grounded by the pandemic. Gretchen's remarks, along with all the official documents of our business meeting, can be found on the [LWV ABC Board Agendas page](#). This is in the Members-only section of our website.

Elections were held, with unopposed incumbents being reelected for two year terms on our board:

President: Gretchen Sabel

Secretary: Arlene Gillett

Membership Chair: Patricia Kennedy

Additionally elected to non-board positions on the **Nominating Committee** were Mary Jo Truchon (chair) and Glenda Meixell (committee member). **And for our vacant Vice President position:** It was announced that the Board has appointed **Julie Trude** to fill out the remaining year of this term. **Thank you, Julie! Congratulations and thanks to all these leaders!**

Other business items included adopting a budget, confirming the continuance of our current dues structure, approval of updates to our bylaws, affirming our local non-partisan policy and more. Read the details of each of these items in the meeting invitation that went to members:

<https://www.lwvumrr.org/lwv-abc-blog/lwv-abc-annual-meeting-april-12-2021>

Linda Rodgers was presented with Zilla Way Award

The Zilla Way Award was created by the LWV ABC board in 1996 to honor a local League member who has provided outstanding leadership in guiding our organization. It was named after current member, Ms. Zilla Way, for her more than 60-year participation in League and her role as LWV ABC mentor and advisor.



It's a tradition to present this award at our Annual Meeting. See photos of past recipients at this link on our website:

<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/about-us/zilla-way-award>

This year's recipient, **Linda Rodgers**, is a worthy recipient indeed! The accolades on the watercolor painting created by LWV ABC member and artist, Mary Jo Truchon, read:

She led us with good cheer and gentle demeanor
To inform the voters in 53 races with 40+ candidate forums

And to teach us vital lessons by sharing
her beautiful Native Plant Gardens

She is a mighty force for civic engagement and pollinator protection

With our thanks, LWV ABC presents to Linda Rodgers,
this Zilla Way Award, 2021

Sadly, we have not had a great opportunity to recognize our members for milestone memberships... check out the list on our website –<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/member-milestones> **We have twenty members with more than twenty years of service to LWV ABC! Thank you for your continued support of our League!**

Building Pollinator Habitat All Around LWV ABC March Meetings now on video

In a special two-part presentation, LWV ABC focused in on the birds and bees:

Pollinator Habitat – Part 1

LWV ABC's Linda Rodgers and Gretchen Sabel share their successes at developing native plant gardens, and Laurie Schneider from the Pollinator Friendly Alliance will join us for discussion of ideas for using even small bits of land for native plants. If you live in free-standing home, a condo or apartment, you can build pollinator habitat in a space near you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkbZ84zV0c8>



Pollinator Habitat – Part II

Emily Johnson from the Anoka Conservation District discusses grants and programs to help build pollinator habitat. Pollinator habitat is part of the work that ACD does, and will be discussed in context of the new Comprehensive Plan that ACD has just completed. ACD's work is much broader than pollinators, and has promise to green our county.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_3s4DLrbdM

Widening the Circle – Our Members Share Resources For Racial Equity, Cultural Awareness, and Inclusion for All

LWV ABC is serious about improving our diversity and inclusion, including through learning about anti-racism. Besides our book and film clubs, we will include in this newsletter articles about how to improve. We are looking for contributors for this

column: submit your recommendations for articles, blogs, video, podcasts, etc. to: lwvabc@gmail.com Write: RECOMMENDATION in caps in the subject line.



Book and Film Discussions via Zoom – with LWV ABC

Expand your knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion topics -- and participate in interesting discussions!. Thank you, Pat Kennedy for organizing these activities to advance topics of diversity and inclusion.

Film club meets the first Wednesday evening of the month; and the book club meets on the third Wednesday evening of the month. Click on our website calendar for

- Information about where to obtain the book or film and
- The Zoom link

<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/calendar>

Film: *Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World*

Wednesday, May 5, 6:15 social / 6:30 discussion

Available on Kanopy and Amazon Prime

Link to the *Calendar* on our website which will provide a film summary and the Zoom link for this discussion:

<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/event/rumblethe-indians-who-rocked-world-may-2021-lwv-abc-film-discussion>

Readings: The Life of George Floyd – articles and podcasts

Wednesday, May 19, 6:15 social / 6:30 discussion

Link to the *Calendar* on our website which will links to articles and podcasts and the Zoom link for this discussion:

<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/event/podcast-and-articles-life-george-floyd-may-2021-lwv-abc-book-club>

Film: *Get Out* (2017)

Wednesday, June 2, 6:15 social / 6:30 discussion

Available on DVD at libraries.

Link to the *Calendar* on our website which will provide a film summary and the Zoom link for this discussion:

<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/event/get-out-2017-june-2021-lwv-abc-film-discussion>

Book: *Funny in Farsi A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America*, by Firoozeh Dumas

Wednesday, July 21, 6:15 social / 6:30 discussion

Link to the *Calendar* on our website which will provide a book summary and the Zoom link for this discussion:

<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/event/funny-farsi-memoir-growing-iranian-america-july-2021-lwv-abc-book-club>

Anti-Racism Resources for watching, reading and listening:



March was Women's History Month and the Minnesota History Center opened both its Extraordinary Women exhibit and continues to highlight extraordinary Minnesota women in its [online Votes For Women exhibit](#). Some history articles highlighting extraordinary Minnesota women:

- [Lena Olive Smith: A Minnesota Civil Rights Pioneer](#)
- [Nellie Griswold Francis: the Vicissitudes of Activism for Women and Race](#)
- [Minneapolis' Phyllis Wheatley House served as a community center for the city's African American community](#)



LWV ABC's April Book Club selection "Sisters in Hate" focuses on three women involved in the white nationalist movement. Some other resources related to white supremacy in the US:

- [Capitol mob wasn't just angry men – there were angry women as well](#) - article
- [The long history of US racism against Asian Americans, from 'yellow peril' to 'model minority' to the 'Chinese virus'](#) - article

- One flag, one school, one language: Minnesota's Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's – MNHS history article
- Sounds Like Hate, produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center, is an audio documentary series about the dangers and peril of everyday people who engage in white supremacy extremism, and ways to disengage them from a life of hatred. Links are for online listening. Also available as a podcast.
 - Getting Out, Part I and II
 - Not Okay, Part I and II
 - Baseless, Part I and II

It Was a Special Earth Day Event – With Our Very Own Darby and Geri Nelson

If you missed this event, you can watch it here:
www.lwvmn.org/for-love-of-a-river

In commemoration of Earth Day 2021, LWV members and author, Darby Nelson, and his 'paddling companion for life,' Geri, along with 4 extraordinary women, shared their challenges and successes in translating science into wise policy and action on the ground to improve and protect Minnesota water quality.



Darby & Geri Nelson go "behind-the-scenes" to share their experiences of writing *For Love of a River: The Minnesota* (a biography of the Minnesota River Basin and a personal story of exploration of it) and *For Love of Lakes*.

Other participants included: **Dr. Carrie Jennings**, Freshwater Research and Policy Director; **Dr. Karen Gran**, Professor and Earth and Environmental Sciences Department Head, Swenson College of Science and Engineering; **Kim Musser**, Associate Director of the Water Resources Center at Minnesota State University, Mankato; and **Judy Erickson**, founder of Conservation Strategies!



How 26 People In The Census Count Helped Minnesota Beat New York For A House Seat

Thanks to LWV ABC member Kathie Whelchel for sharing her email conversation with Matt Brown, Economic Development Director for the City of Coon Rapids. Their email pointed out the importance of the work of LWV and many others in promoting the 2020 Census and providing accurate, objective information to help people make informed decisions about responding to the Census. (Do you remember back in October of 2019, when we actually met in person and Matt Brown talked about what the Census would mean to Coon Rapids? [Here's the video.](#)) Kathie's conversation with Matt Brown:

From: Kathie Whelchel kathiew7contacts@gmail.com

We did our part, didn't we!!! So happy that our League worked with City of Coon Rapids to make this happen!!

From: Matt Brown <mbrown@coonrapidsmn.gov>

I agree that the League and the City can take credit for at least some of the success. Coon Rapids' self-response rate relative to the State's increased notably between 2010 and 2020. We all knew it could be close, but I never expected it'd be this close!

Here's a link to the story from NPR – it's a good read so click the link and take a look.

How 26 People In The Census Count Helped Minnesota Beat New York For A House Seat

Small census numbers can make a big difference. If Minnesota's 2020 count included 26 fewer residents, it might have lost a seat in Congress — a seat that New York fell short of winning by 89 people.

Read in NPR: <https://apple.news/Ab9jZdafJTRy37gixHpaFVw>

We've heard that Minnesota saved our Eighth Congressional seat over New York by 89 votes. But actually, given the formulas that are used to apportion Congressional seats, the difference was 26 ... here's a quote from Susan Brower, Minnesota State Demographer:

"We found that had Minnesota counted 26 fewer residents that we would have lost that eighth congressional district," Brower says. "I knew it was going to be very tight, but I just didn't think it could possibly come out to be that close."

We all deserve a hand for the work that was done. Good work!

Highlights of LWV ABC Board Meeting, April 27

We discussed how to handle voter registration in high schools this year. Right now, no outsiders are allowed in school buildings, and most students register online in their classrooms. We may try to work with Honor Society members to become a resource of information for the students, and to help answer any questions they may have on voting and registering.

Planning programs for membership meetings was next on the agenda. We developed a list of potential topics and speakers for the rest of the summer.

Updating our handbook and bylaws is a project that some of our members have been working on for quite awhile. We decided to defer this to Board Retreat to be able to devote more time for this discussion.

--Arlene Gillett, Secretary

Highlights of LWV ABC Board Meeting, March 22, 2021

The Board worked on preparations for the Annual Meeting, coming up next month. We discussed possible changes in our Member Interest Form and how to use it at the Annual Meeting. This form gives our members an opportunity to select which areas of our League they might like to participate in. We also discussed that League needs to do a study in order to take a position on an issue, at the national, state, or local level. Once a consensus has been reached on a LWVMN or LWVUS position, local leagues can use their study.

--Arlene Gillett, Secretary

How We Know 2020 Elections Were Fair and Accurate

Did you miss this live one-hour webinar with Secretary of State Steve Simon and county election officials from metro and greater Minnesota? Watch the video recording at the link below – and learn about the many checks and balances that are in place to ensure election safety and integrity -- and how our counties managed the special challenges of 2020.

Moderated by Michelle Witte, Executive Director of LWV Minnesota.

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Et6It6UodWI>

Do you have Information to share with LWV ABC?
Get in touch with LWV ABC

Visit our public website: www.lwvabcmn.org. If you need a refresher on accessing the Members Only section of the website, send an email to lwvabc@gmail.com. We will reply with the link for you to bookmark.

We're on Facebook: Just search for "LWV ABC Facebook". **Instagram, too!**

Our monthly newsletter, *The Voter*: Members and other interested persons receive our newsletter by email in the early part of each month. Issues are also available on our LWV ABC website, www.lwvabcmn.org.