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## What's Happening this Summer? Focus shifts to Candidate Forums and Registration Events in July and September

### --Month of July --No monthly meeting - Candidate Forums will be held for Primary Elections

See the details of our preparations in the article on page 3.

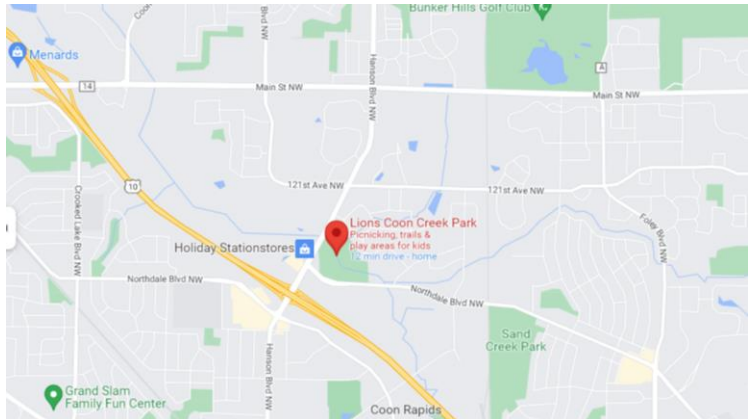
### -- August 8 --An Outdoor Gathering for Dessert and Conversation

In our tradition of holding an event in August to enjoy a local outdoor space, here's what's planned this year.

**When:** August 8, 6:30 pm

**What:** Bring a dessert or snack to share – and enjoy an evening of conversation with fellow League members and any guests you'd like to invite. We will provide beverages.

**Where:** Lion's Coon Creek Park, 1664 119<sup>th</sup> Ave NW, Coon Rapids This is an accessible facility.



### --In September, No monthly meeting - Candidate Forums will be held for General Elections

See details of our preparations in the article on page 3.

### --On Monday, October 10, we resume our monthly evening programs

We are working on some timely election topics **with our special guest speaker, Paul Linell from his new position at the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office.** The program details will be posted to the Calendar on our website when finalized:

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

## The Local Impact of Climate Change: Connecting Climate and Community

*Our Last Month's Program on June 13*

This engaging program was presented by Alisa Reckinger, Hennepin County Environmental Communications and Outreach and Emily Johnson, Environmental Educator at Hennepin County. Their presentation focused us on how to reach out and talk about climate change with friends and neighbors. We had a great discussion after the presentation, too.

**Missed the program or want to share it?** QCTV was on hand to record the program. Watch the video at: <https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/lwv-abcs-spotlight-issues>

Co-Sponsored by LWV of Women Voters Brooklyn Park/Osseo/Maple Grove (LWV BPOMG)

### Tips for encouraging political and civic action

- Amplify the social norm of taking political action
- Frame climate campaigning as part of a new reality – you don't need to be an environmentalist or activist
- Get a variety of champions and leaders to encourage people they know to get involved



Source: Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light

Are you looking for more ways to get involved in working on this issue? Did you know that LWV MN has a Climate Change Task Force, and you can join? Check it out [at this link](#).

And... LWV US also has a Climate Interest Group that you could be part of... read about it [at this link](#) and get involved.

## LWV ABC is a finalist for LWV US Powering Democracy Award

Thanks to Membership Chair Pat Kennedy for sending our application in! Our League is one of three finalists for the LWV US Powering Democracy Award. The winner was to be presented at the 2022 LWV US Convention in recognition of Leagues for their work exemplary over the past biennium. But... things ran long at the Convention so the awards will be awarded at a later date. We will continue to wait...

## Voter Service --

### Preparations for Meet the Candidates Forums Underway!

*Primary Elections are on August 9.*

Dates have been set for LWV ABC's **forums in July** to help our communities meet their candidates and learn about candidates' stands on issues -- in advance of Primary Elections on August 9.

The forums will be recorded without a live audience – but we are **soliciting questions from the community online prior to each forum**. See the forum schedule and deadline for submitting questions on the Candidate Forums page on our website: <https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/meet-candidates-forums-2022>

Forums have been scheduled for:

- Anoka—Mayor
- Blaine – City Council Wards 1, 3; Special Election for Ward 1
- Columbia Heights – Mayor; two at-large City Council members
- Coon Rapids – Mayor, City Council Ward 3
- Ramsey – City Council Ward 1
- Anoka County – Commissioner District 3; County Sheriff

We thank Linda Rodgers for organizing forums, and we thank those volunteers who answered the call to host and moderate. **Questions about volunteering?** Contact Linda at 763-291-2718 or [itslinda jean@gmail.com](mailto:itslinda jean@gmail.com).

**Questions about *your* local election?** See our Vote 411 article below.

## Anoka Human Rights Commission Update

We recognize the work of Sue Dergantz and Jody Anderson for tracking and taking action on the Anoka City Council's move to dissolve the Human Rights Commission and remove it from the city charter. Sue and Jody's work with collecting more than 400 signatures on a petition forced the council to revisit the issue. Sue and Jody are members of LWV ABC but this work was done by them as citizens of Anoka, not ABC members.

In a revisit on June 7, the council voted to bring back the commission. Therefore the petitioners were successful in re-instating the Human Rights Commission.

The council's actions and quotes from Sue and Jody are contained in a *Star Tribune* article of June 22: <https://www.startribune.com/anoka-votes-to-reinstate-its-human-rights-commission/600184315/>

## Our Voter Registration Events

*A good time is being had by all!*

Our members have been having enjoyable and successful experiences staffing our voter registration table at community events. Thank you to **Cindy Wetzell** for organizing our participation at Spring Lake Park, Fridley, and Columbia Heights events thus far -- and thank you to **our volunteers!**

Looking ahead, there are openings at Ramsey's Happy Days on Saturday, September 10.

Follow the sign-ups here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/805084AAEA82CA7FA7-june>.

You can also find all of our Voter Registration Events on the Calendar on our website, along with sign-up links:

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

Questions? Send an email to [lwvabc@gmail.com](mailto:lwvabc@gmail.com).

*(At right, Gretchen Sabel and Laura Moore at Spring Lake Park Tower Days celebration.)*



## VOTE411 – a Resource for Voters across the Nation

Vote411.org is the one-stop shop for voter resources! LWV MN and LWV US will heavily promote this tool during the 2020 election season. **Please recommend this resource to all your friends and family and check it out!** This LWV tool had over 92,000 hits in 2020.

Type “Vote411” into any search browser and the top find will be the League of Women Voters site with the first screen allowing you to enter your address and find out:

- Where to register to vote, or verify your registration
- See who will be on your ballot for the primary and later, the general election
- View candidate responses to a questionnaire sent out by LWV MN
- Learn where you vote
- View candidate forums (*We like this a lot!*)

**Julie Trude, our LWV Vice President, is working to encourage candidate participation in our area.** If you are good at online sleuthing, contact Julie at: [jtrude@comcast.net](mailto:jtrude@comcast.net) for a few names to help sleuth! Many local candidates did not provide contact information at the time of filing.





### Remembering Carol Bradley

In our April newsletter we shared the sad news of the passing of member Carol Bradley on March 29, 2022. Carol was an active member of LWV ABC for over 50 years and made many contributions to the work of our organization.

Carol's family and friends shared their heartwarming memories of Carol at a Celebration of Life at First Congregational Church in Anoka on June 18. Read about Carol's life, her family, community involvement, and favorite things in the obituary at the following link:

[https://www.startribune.com/obituaries/detail/0000427704/?fullname=carol-marie-\(conley\)-bradley](https://www.startribune.com/obituaries/detail/0000427704/?fullname=carol-marie-(conley)-bradley)



Carol's friend Patricia Hagerty recently made a generous contribution to LWV ABC in honor of Carol. We thank Patricia for this memorial and join her and Carol's family in recognizing her passage.

### Highlights of the LWV ABC Board Meeting, June 27, 2022

A booklet on the 100 year history of LWV ABC developed by the Anoka County Historical Society with the help of our member Sandy Connor, is ready to go to press. Now the Board has to make some decisions about how we want to distribute this booklet. We decided we should provide a copy to our local libraries, give a copy to new members when they join us, offer a copy to present members who want one, and perhaps have copies available at voter registration tables at community events. We also discussed copyright issues, and if we would want to have it available as an e-book.

The Board then discussed our goal of developing a more open, transparent working relationship with the Board of Anoka County Commissioners. We feel it would benefit both of our organizations to have that kind of positive relationship. Having one-on-one conversations with Board members, and working to have a more open format at their meetings are two ways we could approach the issue.

LWV ABC will be holding many candidate forums this year, for both Primary elections and the General election. Our website lists all the candidates and forum dates. One of our members, Pat Kennedy, has set up a method to track all this information in the form of an Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet will list all the candidates in a calendar form, forum dates, questionnaire responses, and can be accessed and updated.

- Arlene Gillett, Secretary

## LWV ABC Book Discussion for July – on Zoom

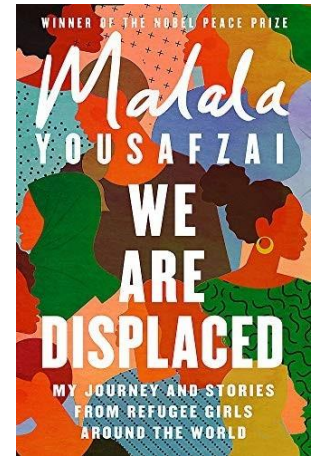
*Expanding our knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion topics.*

In this powerful book, Nobel Peace Prize winner and New York Times bestselling author Malala Yousafzai introduces the people behind the statistics and news stories about the millions of people displaced worldwide.

Find the Zoom link for this book discussion on our website:

<https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/event/we-are-displaced-malala-yousafzai-july-lwv-abc-book-club>

Upcoming books through March are listed on our website – join the book club!

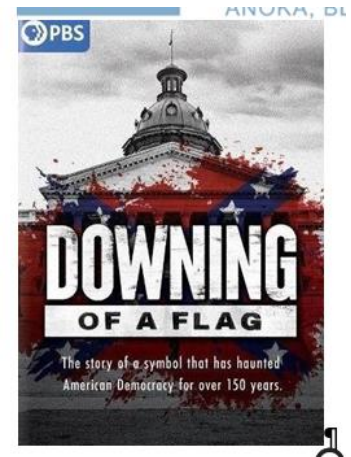


## LWV ABC Film Discussion for July – on Zoom

*Expanding our knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion topics.*

Join us on **Wednesday, July 6 at 7:00** for the discussion of the film, *Downing of a Flag: How South Carolina Took It Down (2021)*

A co-production between South Carolina Educational Television, Strategic Films and Susie Films, *Downing of a Flag* focuses on the Confederate Battle flag and its impact on the people, politics, and perceptions of the South. Through firsthand interviews of people with various perspectives and a wealth of historical footage, *Downing of a Flag* traces the symbol's controversial relationship with South Carolina, exploring its true meaning and how a tragedy served as the catalyst for its long-debated removal.



Find the Zoom link for the discussion on our website: <https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/event/downing-flag-july-2022-lwv-abc-film-discussion>

Watch the film before our discussion with free streaming from [Kanopy](#), with library card

## Expanding our use of Social Media

*Seeking volunteers for this project*

Do these grab your attention? Do you have skills in promotion via social media? Our League could use support with our social media platforms. Let us know if you can assist our Communications Committee. Contact Kathy Aanerud, Communications Chair at [aanerud4@comcast.net](mailto:aanerud4@comcast.net)



## LWV ABC Film Discussion for August – on Zoom

*Expanding our knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion topics.*

Join us on **Wednesday, August 3 at 7:00 pm** for a discussion of the film, ***Blinded by the Light***. In 1987 Luton, England, a British teenager of Pakistani descent writes as a means to escape the intolerance of his hometown and the inflexibility of his traditional father. While completing his A-Levels in college, he is introduced to the music of Bruce Springsteen and learns to understand his family and find his own voice. It is based on and co-written by journalist and real-life Bruce Springsteen superfan Sarfraz Manzoor, and directed by Gurinda Chadha, director of *Bend it Like Beckham*, *Bride and Prejudice* and *Beecham House*.

Find the Zoom link for this film discussion on our website: <https://my.lwv.org/minnesota/anoka-blaine-coon-rapids-area/event/we-are-displaced-malala-yousafzai-july-lwv-abc-book-club>

## LWV US Convention – A Big Event... First Impressions

Our League was well represented at this national convention held in Denver, Colorado on June 23-26. President Gretchen Sabel attended in person and Membership Chair Pat Kennedy attended virtually. Vice President Julie Trude attended virtually as the delegate from CMAL – the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues. Gretchen will do a presentation for our League on the process and events that are part of an LWV National Convention later this year, until then, we are happy to share Julie Trude's notes and recollections here in this newsletter.

### My First National LWV Convention! Session Recaps by Julie Trude

I was one of three LWV ABC members to attend the LWV US Convention in June. As a representative to CMAL (Council of Metro Area Leagues), I served as their voting delegate. Our ABC President, Gretchen Sabel and Membership Chair, Pat Kennedy served as our two voting delegates.

The first session I attended, **"Building Civic Capacity in a Time of Disinformation & Disruption,"** suggested two ways to engage the public: thick engagement and thin engagement. Thick engagement involves more in-depth opportunities to get to know others, their stories, their concerns and then their opinions. It requires a neutral facilitator, small groups and ends up with an action plan. Thin engagement involves quick ways for people to check in such as on-line polls and petitions to share concerns.

Neuroscientist Dr. Terry Wu (session on **"US vs. Them"**), explained we begin at birth with identifying our sense of belonging with others like ourselves. Our sense of belonging brings us together, gives us a sense of safety. It was timely to hear him state "it takes tremendous courage to stand up to a group and walk away." Categorizing information or misinformation is also based on our beliefs. Arguments on social media reinforces "us vs. them." We judge harshly based on stereotypes and are less harsh when we look at

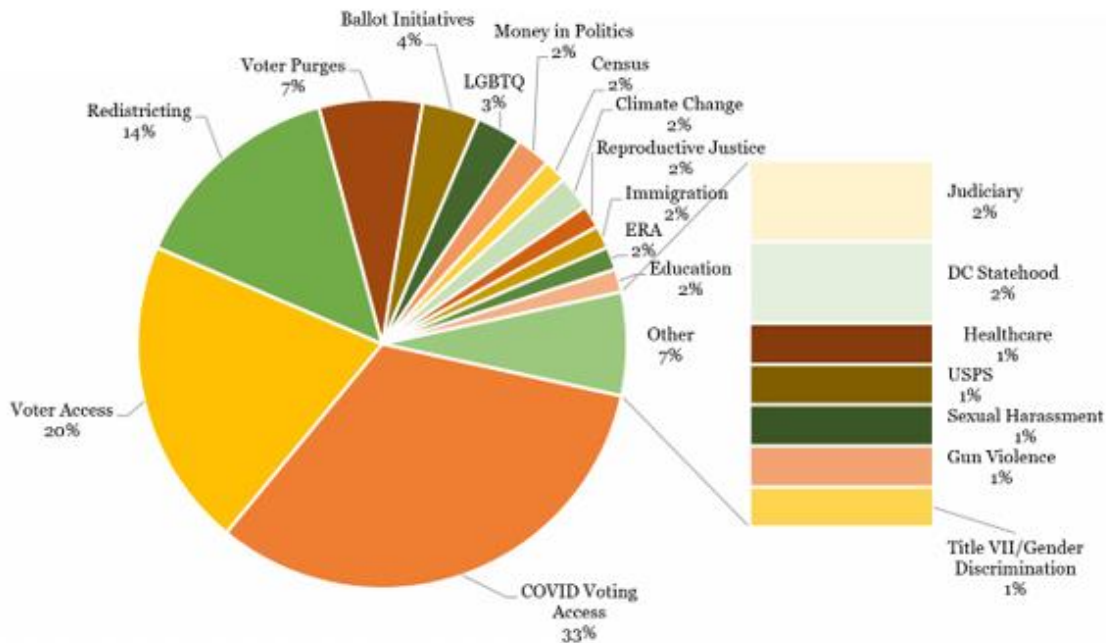
an individual. Dr. Wu encourages us to switching to “Me & You” to improve and calm interactions as they are personal, not group-based. Times of stress, such as the pandemic, reinforce us vs. them thinking. The idea of belonging to a team like us or not, also involves our prejudices, notions about who is good and bad or right and wrong. The emotional part of our brain is active as we make these decisions of belonging, not our intellectual areas of the brain.

## The Power of Litigation

The majority of cases prosecuted by the LWV since 2020 involve protecting voters, voter’s rights, voter access and also redistricting. Over 22 million voters were protected through successful litigation. Much of the effort was related to COVID voting access.

LWV US staff is available to support local leagues in identifying issues for litigation, locating legal help, coordinating and communicating during litigation.

## Case Trends from 2020-2022





## LWV US Supports Abolishing the Electoral College

Did you know we have a position supporting the national popular vote and abolishing the electoral college? I did not! Members actively promoted and were successful in elevating the League's focus in 2022-2024 to promote and support the elimination of the electoral college through adoption of a constitutional amendment.

A mathematician evaluating the electoral college versus national popular vote opined: "The Electoral College system is four times more vulnerable to manipulation than a national popular vote."

In 2020, only 38 electoral votes would need to be changed to alter the outcome. The intense focus on 7 states provided enough votes to change the outcome. Many recounts and lawsuits attempted to change the outcomes. Sixty-three lawsuits filed by the losing candidates were all dismissed or dropped due to lack of evidence. Fives states submitted fake electoral appointments with documents resembling authentic documents. On January 6, at the Joint Session of Congress, 147 members voted to reject electoral votes from Arizona and Pennsylvania (8 senators, 139 representatives). Vice President Pence was pressured to refuse to count electoral ballots from targeted states. If no candidate had received the majority of electoral college votes, then the House of Representatives would have voted on the new president with each state having one vote.

Electoral College provides partisan operatives with a roadmap for overturning election results with the fewest number of votes.

- In 2020, that meant "finding" an additional 38 electoral votes
- Not 7+ million popular votes

2020 Election	Popular Vote	Electoral Votes
Biden	81,268,924	306
Trump	74,216,154	232
Difference	7,052,770	74

Right – LWV ABC President joins the group who pushed for LWV US to adopt the "Abolish the Electoral College" position. Gretchen is directly right of LWV US President Dr. Deborah Turner, in the center of the group.



## Get in touch with LWV ABC

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

Check out the LWV ABC blog:

<https://www.lwvumrr.org/lwv-abc-blog>

**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](http://www.lwvabcmn.org).

