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Important Activities Are Continuing....

We're just proceeding differently in how we connect with each other and with the public in this era of COVID19

Pitch in where you can!

Last month, our newsletter started out with an article about putting our lives on Pause for the pandemic. Now that we all understand that life will be different, we are looking for new ways to go forward.

In this issue, we offer ways to keep working with LWV on the important issues that are shaped by Covid in ways we never expected.

We can all stay involved and do the vital work of the League of Women Voters. Thank you for your time, your work and your support!



A Century of Civic Engagement

**NOT
PRIVILEGE
BUT
JUSTICE**

You are Needed for the Battle Ahead

"Life is a hard battle anyway. If we laugh and sing a little as we fight the good fight of freedom, it makes it all go easier. I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me." – Sojourner Truth

(graphic from LWV MN All Member email 5/5/20)

Upcoming Meeting – How the Library is serving Anoka County during the Pandemic

Wednesday, May 13 -- It's Online via Zoom

6:00 pm – the Zoom room opens at 5:30 so you can join early for a bit of socializing before the program.

To join from your computer, click this link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85176651363?pwd=S0JjcE9RNVVWWTWovTIQxOFp6Z0RaZz09>

You can participate by phone if you prefer.

Meeting ID: 851 7665 1363

Password: 365380

Dial in 312-626-6799 (This is a long-distance call, there is no local number.)

Join us for a timely presentation by Patti Hetrick, recently appointed to interim director of Anoka County's library system. She will be talking with us about what services the library system provides during the pandemic, services available to county residents who are shut-ins and provide us with some insights into what direction the Anoka County Board has expressed for the library system.

Patti Hetrick previously served as budget director in the finance and central services division since 2008. According to the resolution approved by the board for her appointment to the interim director position, "Hetrick has distinguished herself for her professionalism, knowledge and leadership." Here is a link to a [news article in Anoka County Union Herald](#) when Patti Hetrick's appointment was announced:



Our thanks to QCTV for partnering with us to make this presentation available for viewing from our homes.

Corona Virus and the Upcoming Election

Our April newsletter included a story on Secretary of State Steve Simon’s statement about the upcoming elections. This led us to think, what do our local legislators think about this? We thought it would make a good program... and it did!

How to Run an Election in the Time of a Pandemic

On April 29, Gretchen Sabel interviewed Senators Michelle Benson (R, District 31) and Carolyn Lane (D, District 41) on the topic. You can watch the video of this discussion [at this link](#) (or Google “QCTV LWV” – this is the current program.) As the Senators talk, you gain a greater understanding of the positions of the parties and see where possible agreement can happen. Both thought that an election bill would pass in the last two weeks of the session.

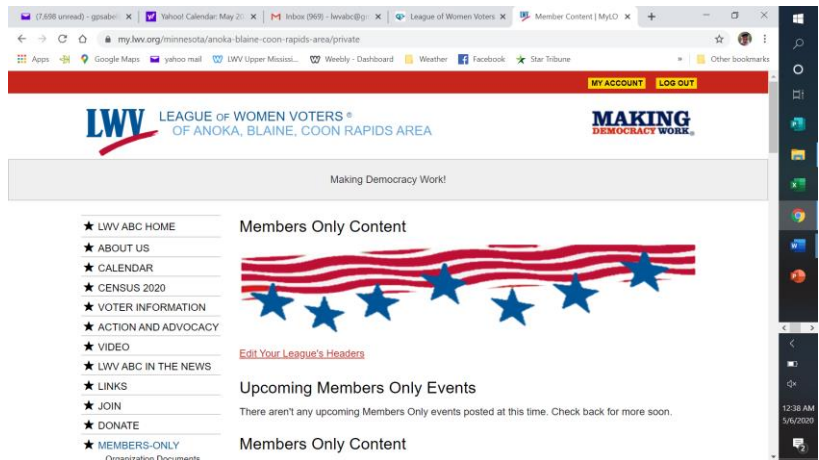


Our thanks to Senator Benson and Senator Lane for taking time from a very busy schedule and to the committed QCTV staff, Winter Kucharski, Producer and Katherine Lenaburg, Operations Manager. And thank you, Gretchen, for embracing technology to move us forward!

Our Website –

LWVABCMN.org [[hyperlink](#)]
Including the Members-Only Section**

- Stay in touch with LWV ABC’s activities. Click and explore the information available -- www.lwvabcmn.org .
- Looking for a copy of our Membership Roster or other *Members-Only* documents? If you don’t see *Members-Only* in the menu on the left-hand side of the website -- and if you can’t locate the email sent to each member with instructions for password set-up, send an email to lwvabc@gmail.org so we can connect you to our webmaster.



Results of Our Annual Meeting – Part 1

Moving Forward With Good Intentions

We couldn't meet in person in April for our annual meeting due to social distancing needs (and similar conditions will prevail in May), so our Board approved online procedures to get two key items approved. Here are voting results for ballots posted in the April Annual Meeting Issue of our newsletter, The Voter:

- **Our Budget for 20-21:** The proposed budget was also unanimously approved by online voting. You can find the approved budget posted in the Members-Only section of our website (see website information below).
- **Elections:** Thanks for participating in our first-ever online election. Our nominees for 2020-21 were unanimously elected:

Position	Elected	Term
Vice President	-open-*	2 years
Treasurer	Wes Volkenant	2 years
Voter Service Co-Chairs	Geri Nelson / Arlene Gillett	2 years
Program	Susan Butler	2 years
Action	-open-*	2 years
Nominating Committee Chair	Mary Jo Truchon	1 year
Nominating Committee Member	Susan Butler	1 year

**For those positions without nominees, the Board of Directors will make appointments when nominees/volunteers are identified.*

Many thanks to all the volunteers who raised their hands to work on Election Forums and the Program Committee. You will be hearing from LWV ABC soon!

Annual Meeting – Part II

Stay tuned for the other components of our Annual Meeting, the timing to be further discussed by our Board. These components include:

- Celebrate our accomplishments from the past year!
- Adopt a program of topics for study and further action
- Re-adopt or drop present local positions; Review and/or amend local League bylaws; Review and/or amend Non-Partisan Policy
- Present the Zilla Way Award to an outstanding member of LWV ABC
- Nominate Friend of League recipient to be presented at fall kick-off meeting

An Annual Report document will be provided.



THE VOTER
May 2020

Calling for the Census

Do you remember getting an email from LWV ABC in mid-April, offering you a chance to help inform and remind people about filling out the Census. Alyssa Kreuzel, LWV ABC member and Community Engagement Specialist for the City of Fridley, is working with the State Demographer’s office to organize Census reminder calling for Anoka County. Cindy Wetzell, LWV ABC member from Columbia Heights is organizing LWV ABC volunteers. This hasn’t been a smooth process , but since the Census Bureau is working to get a [three month extension](#) we will have time in the months to come.

The calling is done from your home, using a dialer that shows the person you’re calling a different number, keeping your phone number private. Cindy will mentor you in using this simple process. Calls are placed one afternoon and one evening a week; callers can work as many hours they want. Thanks to the LWV ABC members who have already volunteered, more volunteers are needed once they get things sorted.

Following is Cindy’s letter with the basic information on this project. Please contact her if you are interested in working on this project – her contact info is at the end of the email.

Dear Members,

While in-person voter registration events, legislative meet-and-greets and every other face-to-face event has been put on hold or outright canceled, an opportunity has come our way to help with the 2020 Census in Anoka County—from the comfort of our own homes!

Alyssa Kruzell, the Community Engagement Specialist for the city of Fridley, is working with the State of Minnesota Demographer’s Office to organize at-home phone banking for the census. They will provide the callers with the voter registration list for Anoka County. Volunteers would contact the households on the list to encourage them to complete the census. Calling can be done either via telephone or computer/tablet. All phone numbers will be masked—both the number you are calling and the number you are calling from. The Demographer’s Office will provide each caller with a script. We would only be talking about completing the census and NOT helping them fill out the form. We will be able to provide information about who to contact for assistance in completing the census.

This phone banking could be accomplished if we have 10-15 people calling one day and one evening/week for 2-3 weeks. Each session would be approximately 2-3 hours. The League of Women Voters-ABC is just one organization that is being approached for volunteers.

This project is in the early stages of its organization. But because the completion date for the census has been pushed back to July 31 due to the pandemic, we have some extra time. As they become available, I will let you know more details.

Please consider volunteering for this project. All levels of participation are happily accepted! We all know how vital an accurate and complete census count is for Minnesota. Here is a chance to stay safe, stay at home and stay connected.

If you are interested, please contact me at chwertzell@gmail.com.

Thank you!
Cindy Wetzell, LWV ABC Census Calling coordinator, Columbia Heights

Scaling Vote at Home Processes for Safe and Secure Elections

by Wes Volkenant

The Webinar, "[Scaling Vote at Home Processes for Safe and Secure Elections](#)" was presented May 5, 2020, by the Humphrey School of Public Affairs as a class for their Certificate in Election Administration Program. Doug Chapin, Director of Election Research at Fors Marsh Group hosted Amber McReynolds, CEO of the National Vote at Home Institute (and former City Elections Director in Denver, Colorado).

Ms. McReynolds shared a slide show titled, "Delivering and Strengthening Democracy". She had four main slides:

1. In-person Voting has had issues over time
 - a. long lines, machine breakdowns, running out of ballots, etc.
 - b. significant challenges for election officials
 - c. fixing bad policies
2. Time to Act is Now
 - a. ensure every voter can vote in a safe, secure, accessible way
 - b. decisive, immediate action is needed
 - i. only @160 days remain before ballots are sent overseas, such as for the military
 - c. political leadership and will are needed
3. Support (implementation); Train (election officials on best practices); Provide (guidance); Advise (election officials on strategies)
4. Vote at Home (she put up a US map on the status)
 - a. States that are fully Vote at Home (in-person option is provided): Washington, Oregon, Utah, Colorado, Hawaii
 - b. Transitioning to full Vote at Home: California
 - c. No Excuse, Permanent, Mail Option: Montana, Nevada, Arizona, Virginia, New Jersey
 - d. Several states use a No Excuse Absentee Ballot system that need to be re-requested each election: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Idaho, Wyoming, Alaska, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Maine, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina

States that require an excuse for an absentee ballot do not identify the pandemic virus as a valid excuse to request a ballot.

During the Q & A period, we learned only Colorado, of the five Vote at Home states does not provide a pre-paid postage return envelope. The Postal Service is indicating it will deliver

absentee ballots without postage, but it then bills the office receiving election materials. In a question about fraud, she noted the rarity of voter fraud, and there's no evidence vote from home increases its incidence. Homeless, transient voters can still vote in-person under the open, pre-election period in many states. They also often have "home" P.O. Box addresses at which they can receive their government mail.

This was an enjoyable webinar. Amber McReynolds is very involved in the 100-year anniversary of women's suffrage. She co-authored a new book with Stephanie Donner, "When Women Vote," which takes interviews with women and ties in not only 100 years of women voting, but takes a look at election infrastructure, and suggests we have a long way to go for better voting, advocating changes in the infrastructure.

I looked - the book is available in paperback through Amazon for \$14.95. I would advocate the League purchase two copies to circulate among interested LWV-ABC members.

Wes Volkenant

VOTER SERVICE NEWS:

Meet the Candidates Forums

Onward with candidate forums in this era of social distancing! Voter Service Co-Chair, Geri Nelson has been working with her mentee, Linda Rogers, and with volunteer Bruce Pomerantz to provide opportunities for **online** candidate forums. This will be done in partnership with QCTV.

The *Forum Ground Rules* are being updated with modifications specific to the online aspects of the forums. These forums will each be specific to an office, i.e. mayoral, council, legislative, rather than a group of offices within a forum

Final details of gathering questions for candidates from voters and whether these online forums can be conducted live are still being processed. If you haven't yet indicated a willingness to work on forums for your community, send an email to Geri Nelson care of LWV ABC at lwvabc@gmail.com.

Voter Registration

Arlene Gillett, Voter Service Co-Chair for Voter Registration will be working with LWV ABC's volunteers for modifications to our activities and scheduling that will be necessitated in this current environment.

If you have questions or information about voter registration, contact Arlene care of LWV ABC at lwvabc@gmail.com.

Our Youth Civic Engagement Fellow for Election Activities

Our application to participate in the LWV MN *Youth Civic Engagement Fellows program* was approved. President Gretchen Sabel notified our four local high schools of this program; and we are very happy to report that we have a Coon Rapids High School student who stepped forward to be a Fellow.

We are very happy to welcome Hailey Shager as our first Fellow. Hailey provided us with a short bio:

My name is Hailey Shager, and I am currently a junior at Coon Rapids High School. I'm in a lot of activities, but I especially enjoy choir, theatre, National Honor Society, and LEO club. I'm interested in studying political science in college. I think it's really important for young people to get involved in our democracy and understand their importance, which is why I'm really looking forward to this fellowship.

Likely activities at Coon Rapids High School will include voter registration, educational events around key issues in the election, and promoting voting in the August primary and November general elections. Wes Volkenant and Diann Halverson are leading the LWV ABC, and we are still looking for a mentor to work with Hailey on activities in Coon Rapids.

Our Fellow will participate in webinars with other Fellows and mentors across Minnesota. 2020 is an exciting year to help students understand and participate in our election processes. To read more about this program: www.lwvmn.org/youth-civic-engagement

We still have room for one more Fellow. If you have a candidate suggestion, contact Gretchen Sabel at lwvabc@gmail.com.



Highlight of the LWV ABC Special Board Meeting, April 13, 2020

We received the slate of candidates for open board positions from the Nominating Committee, and decided to send this ballot out to all members for their vote by e-mail. We also accepted the Budget for next year in a roll call vote.

Arlene Gillett, Secretary

Highlights of LWV ABC Board Meeting, April 27, 2020

Gretchen Sabel reported the results of our all-member email voting on candidates for Board positions, and on our Budget for next year. All voters approved the Nominating Committee slate of candidates for the Board, and also approved the Budget.

Geri Nelson told us about Voter Service's plans for doing online forums, using a separate Zoom meeting for each race. QCTV is looking forward to working with us on them. Geri presented a revision of our Forum Ground Rules, Modified for Online Forums.

We discussed how we wanted to handle our regular monthly membership meetings. We decided to have shorter, online meetings, and keep our regular schedule, meeting on the second Monday of each month in the evening, with QCTV recording it. They will put in on their website, and we could link that to our FaceBook page. We would like interested members to sign up for the Program Committee, and work on topics to explore during this difficult year.

Arlene Gillett, Secretary

Upcoming Events

Our Board Meeting for May – This monthly meeting will be rescheduled due our regular fourth-Monday date falling on Memorial Day and will be conducted via Zoom.

Our Monthly Program Meeting, June 8, 6:00 pm -- Further information will be forthcoming, and will likely include a continued Zoom format.



THE VOTER
May 2020

LWV Minnesota Events

Wine and Webinar

Wednesdays from 5 - 6 PM, May 6
Chat with LWV MN Executive Director Michelle Witte

Voters Service Training

Scheduled for in-person on June 11 – check League calendar for updates
<https://www.lwvmn.org/league-calendar>

More LWV ABC Events to be Added

Our program committee will be coming up with more things – stay tuned!

Do you have Information to share with LWV ABC?
Four ways to stay 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".

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.