

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter
February 2023



Northern Lights Express: Is This the Year?

Monday, February 13
Zoom Meeting

6:30 - online socializing
6:45 - online quiz for African American History Month
7:00 - program begins

Northern Lights Express (NLX) is a proposed higher speed train project to connect Minneapolis and Duluth with stops in Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley, and Superior. The Federal Railroad Administration completed an environmental review and approved the service development plan in early 2018. The project has come close to a funding package in recent legislative sessions. Is this the year? Bills have been introduced to provide \$99 million in state funds, unlocking up to \$496 million in a federal match.

Our guest speaker, **Jill Brown**, a resident of Blaine (moving soon to Anoka), is a **public information consultant for the [NLX Alliance](#)**, a joint powers board of government entities along the 155 miles of the existing track.

Learn more about the [Northern Lights Express at MnDOT](#).

Zoom Link for NLX Program Meeting

Due to a scheduling conflict, our planned meeting on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives will be rescheduled in the future.





Minnesota's Constitutional Officers Series

In January, LWV ABC, with cosponsor LWVMN, began our civic education series on the Minnesota Constitutional Offices. How does the Minnesota Constitution lay out the roles of the Secretary of State, the State Auditor and the Secretary of State? What are the actual responsibilities of each office?

In **Part I** of our series, **LWV ABC's Gretchen Sabel** interviewed constitutional law scholar and **law professor Jason Marisam**. Watch the video to learn more about how the Minnesota Constitution defines the roles of the Secretary of State, the State Auditor and the Secretary of State.

[Watch Part I - James Marisam](#)

In **Part II**, **LWV ABC's Jody Anderson** and **LWVMN President Laura Helmer** discussed the role of the Attorney General Office with current **Attorney General Keith Ellison**. Watch the video to learn more about the responsibilities and activities of the Attorney General Office, as well as the current priorities of Keith Ellison.

[Watch Part II - Keith Ellison](#)

Part III of the series, focusing on the State Auditor Office, coming in March.

January Consensus Meeting

Firearms Study

At our January meeting, we reviewed and voted on the consensus questions for the new Firearms Study. When combined with the responses to the consensus questions from all local LWVs, your responses will shape the LWVMN Firearms proposed position to be voted on at the 2023 LWVMN Convention in June.

The consensus process is a critical part of developing statewide positions on important public policy issues. **Many thanks to the members who took part in the consensus process!**

Email us if you are interested in the final vote tally for LWV ABC and a summary of the interesting discussion we had!

lwvabc@gmail.com



Inspiration!

Sadly, we lost two valued members of our League in December: **Susan Anderson and Dee Ann Christensen**. The eulogies raised for these women can serve to inspire us.

Watch the video of Susan's service. The eulogy delivered by her son, starts at 45.20 minutes.

[Video of Susan Anderson's Eulogy](#)

Read the [text of Dee Ann's eulogy](#) or watch the video of her eulogy at the link below.

Video of Dee Ann Christensen's Eulogy



LWV ABC Action and Advocacy Co-Chair Jody Anderson (far right) unfurling the banner in the Capitol rotunda.



Michelle Witte, executive director of LWV Minnesota at the podium; League friend Ellen Hadley (left) with Jody Anderson (right).

Photos provided by attendee Linda Rodgers, our Voter Service Chair

LWV ABC Members Join the ERA Rally

Despite it being a stormy January day, LWV ABC members enthusiastically joined in the January 3rd rally at the State Capitol in support of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). It was the opening day of the 2023 Legislative Session and on hand were ERA advocates, legislators, and Attorney General Keith Ellison to show commitment to an inclusive democracy and protecting equal rights for all in the Minnesota Constitution.

Join us on **March 13** for our monthly program "**What Is The ERA and Why Do We Need It?**". Our guest speaker will be **Suzann Willhite, President of ERA Minnesota (ERAMN)** nonprofit, volunteer organization.

Learn about the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), history of inequality in the US, the US and MN Constitutions, why the ERA matters and what action is needed now.



Use Your Voice!

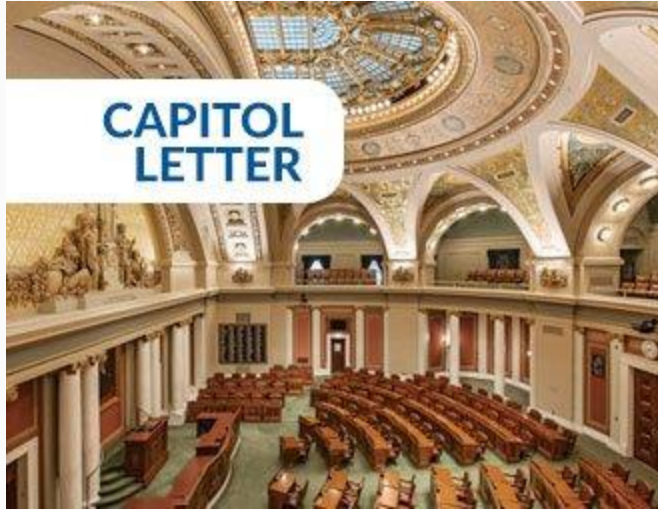
The Legislature is back in session and now is the time to urge your legislators to support League positions.

LWVMN's Action Alerts emails makes it quick and easy to contact your legislators on pending legislation on League priorities. A simple click on the button in the email brings you to an email letter. When you enter your contact information, the website program addresses the email to your legislators. You can just click "send" or you can edit the email text before sending.

A minute or two of your time can have a big impact!

[Current Action Alerts](#)

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Stay Informed

The LWVMN Observer Corps and Legislative Corps are actively monitoring legislation. Corps members are attending key hearings on bills ranging from abortion rights to civic education to voting rights.

Keep up to date with the legislative process through *The Capitol Letter*.

[Read The Capitol Letter](#)

[Subscribe to The Capitol Letter](#)

Interested in joining the Lobby Corp or Legislative Corp?

Complete the online training available on the LWVMN website. Many legislative meetings are livestreamed so you observe and report from the comfort of your own home.

[Join the Corps](#)



Save the Date

Annual Meeting: April 10

Celebrate, reconnect, help plan for another outstanding year of LWV ABC!

Preliminary planning is underway for our annual meeting to be held at Andover Community Center with a light supper before the meeting. There will be a Zoom option for those unable to attend in person.

Participate in the election of Board Members, learn who has been named the recipient of the Zilla Way award for outstanding leadership to our local League, and hear summaries of some of our favorite events in the past year. See you there!

Questions? Send an email to lwvabc@gmail.com



Become a Board Member!

Join a Committee!

Our Nominations Committee - Mary Jo Truchon, Glenda Meixell and Geri Nelson - is seeking members interested in serving on the board, in other appointed positions and as committee members.

Under our Bylaws, the positions of **President, Secretary, Communications Committee Chair and Membership Committee Chair** are up for election in April 2023, as well as our vacant **Program Committee Chair position**. Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Chair is also **vacant**. All of our committees need more members.

After many years of service, **our current Communications Chair, Kathy Aanerud, will be stepping down in April at the end of her current term.**

Find out more about all our committees in the [LWV ABC leadership and Governance section](#) of our online [Member Handbook](#).

Board meetings, the third Monday of the month, are open for participation by all members and are a great opportunity to learn more about LWV ABC and the board.

Email us if you are interested in finding out more about these or other opportunities

lwwabc@gmail.com



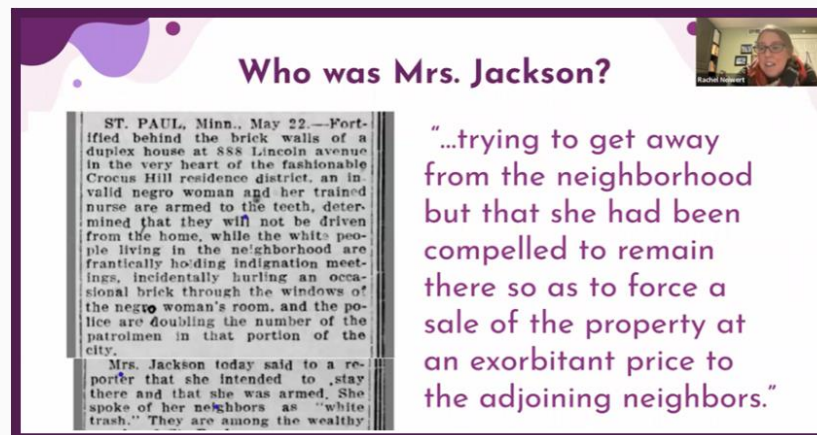
January Board Highlights

By Arlene Gillette, LWV ABC Secretary

President Gretchen Sabel brought up the request from LWVMN that we do a **survey of all our members** to help determine our program ideas and encourage member participation based on their interests. Board members can look at Vice President Julie Trude's questionnaire suggestions in Google Drive, and add their ideas. The survey would be sent out in early February, with a follow-up in early March.

Pat Kennedy proposed **updating job descriptions and duties of Board members and committee chairs** in the Handbook. Many of the changes are just clarifications. Also, we would like to change the bullets preceding each line in the descriptions to numbers, so that we can more easily refer to them. The Program Committee duty to "Plan and coordinate local studies" should be moved to the Action Committee. Duty to coordinate with the Hospitality Committee should be added to the Program Committee. Hospitality Committee duties should be updated. All the suggested changes were moved and seconded, and approved.

Voter Service and Registration chairs Linda Rodgers and Cindy Wetzell submitted a **proposal for how to conduct future candidate forums and how we set up Voter Service and Voter Registration**, in the form of three draft motions. These motions would separate the two, and have separate chairs/co-chairs. The Board then discussed how to set up our Annual Meeting, where to hold it and what sort of food to serve.



Welcoming the Dear Neighbor? Project

At their **January program meeting**, LWV St Paul, LWV Roseville and LWV WBL expanded the conversation about **racial covenants and redlining in the Twin Cities**. The [Welcoming the Dear Neighbor? Project](#), based at St. Catherine

University, partnered with the [Mapping Prejudice](#) project to expand data collection on racial covenants into Ramsey County. They are now researching how the maps came to be, adding faces and stories to the data collected by Mapping Prejudice.

Click the button below to watch the video of Dr. Rachel Neiwert and her student collaborators sharing some stories from their *Welcoming the Dear Neighbor?* research.

Watch "Welcoming the Dear Neighbor?"

Coming in March...

- *What is The ERA and Why Do We Need It?*
- *Daughters of Arraweelo* book club
- Part III of the Minnesota Constitutional Offices Series
- Registration begins for LWVMN Convention 2023

Click button below to get details and find more events on our online calendar.

LWV ABC Calendar

The League of Women voters is a non-partisan civic organization which promotes good government and active, informed participation in local, state and federal government.

The League is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in principle and practice.

Become a Member

Support Our Work

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