

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter

March 2023



What is the ERA and Why Do We Need It?

Monday, March 13
Andover City Hall
Council Chambers

6:30 - online and in person socializing

6:45 - online Quiz for Women's History Month

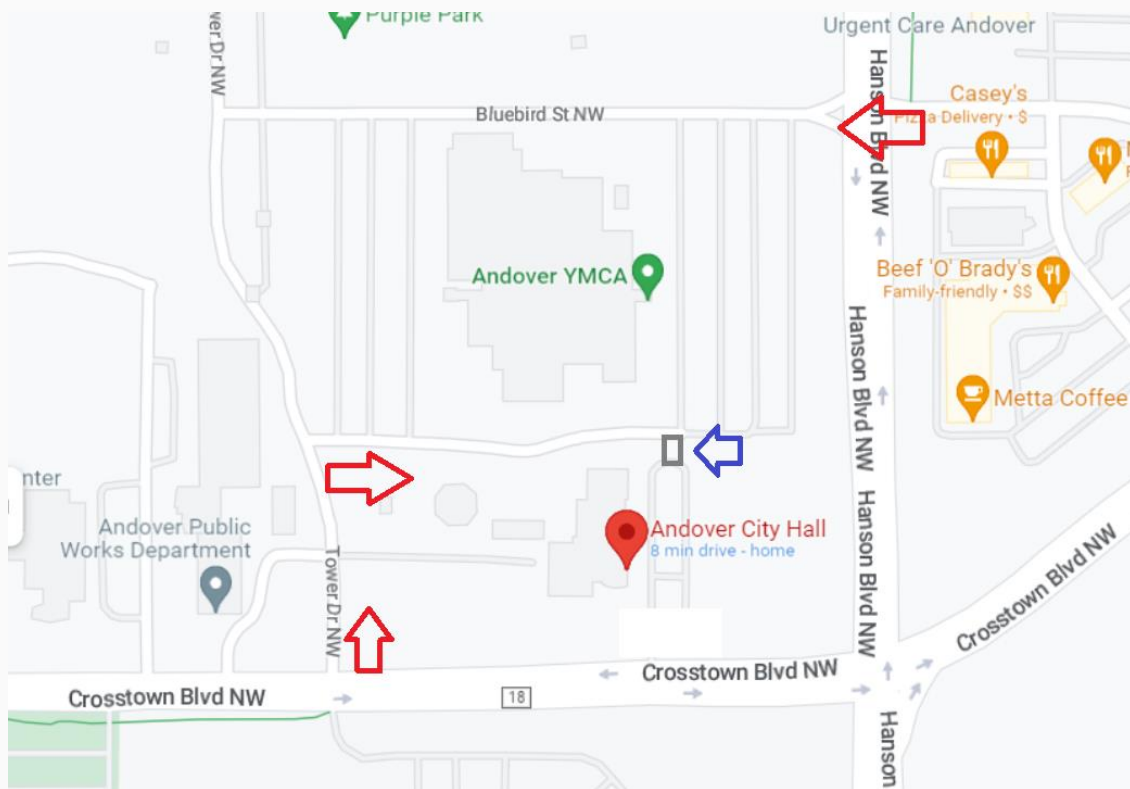
7:00 - program begins

Our guest speaker will be **Suzann Willhite, President of ERA Minnesota (ERAMN).**

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.

The non-profit ERAMN has two goal: add an Equal Rights Amendment to the Minnesota Constitution through a ballot measure and to enact the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment as the 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

[Zoom Link for ERA Meeting](#)



New Entrance to Andover City Hall

Andover City Hall has a new entrance - and Google Maps has not yet updated their map!

You can no longer enter the City Hall parking lot directly from Crosstown Blvd. The old road has been removed.

Instead, **turn onto Tower Drive from Crosstown or onto Bluebird Drive from Hanson Blvd.** From the YMCA parking lot, you can access the northside of the City Hall parking lot.



ERAMN Rally

State Capitol

March 8, 2023

1:00 - 4:00 PM

Celebrate International Women's Day by attending the ERAMN rally at the Capitol!

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota began the 2023 Legislative Session with a clear goal: to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. Bills [HF173/SF37](#) for an inclusive state Constitutional amendment and [HF197/SF47](#) for Congress to ratify the federal ERA. We are expecting a floor vote on the ERA bills as early as March 8.

LWV members will **meet at the LWVMN office at 546 Rice St, St Paul and we will all walk together to the Capitol by 12:45 pm.**

The LWVMN office has free parking or sign-up to carpool.

[Carpool SignUp](#)



Northern Lights Express

On February 15, Jill Brown of the NLX Alliance spoke about Northern Lights Express (NLX), the proposed higher speed train project to connect Minneapolis and Duluth with stops in Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley, and Superior.

[Watch Program Video](#)

ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Membership Meeting

Monday, April 10, 2023
Andover Senior Center (Plus Zoom)
6:15 Dinner

**6:45 Social Activity
7:00 pm Meeting**

Every April our members gather for the Annual Membership Meeting to vote for our leadership team, approve an annual budget and update our bylaws and positions if needed. As we plan for the upcoming year, we also celebrate our accomplishments and honor the work of our members.

For members able to attend in person, a boxed dinner from Nelson Cheese and Deli will be available at 6:15. Check your email later this month to reserve your meal.

The proposed budget and the proposed changes to the bylaws, along with annual reports of committees, will also be emailed later this month, along with the Zoom Link. Bring your ideas for monthly meetings!



Nominations

The Nominations Committee has completed their work in preparation for our April elections. Nominations are:

- President: **Gretchen Sabel**
- Secretary: **Kathy Aanerud**
- Communications Committee Chair: **Pat Kennedy**
- Membership Committee Chair: **Betsy O'Berry**
- Program Committee Chair: **TBA**
- Nominating Committee Chair: **Arlene Gillett**
- Nominating Committee Member: **Kathie Whelchel**

Nominations may also be made from the floor at the Annual Membership Meeting.

Lonni McCauley will be a member of the Program Committee and **Rachel Mero** will be joining our Communications Committee. Other committees need members, too, so think about where you want to be involved!

Thanks to everyone who agreed to run for office and volunteered to serve on a Committees!

Are you interested in getting more involved in LWV ABC? **Email us if you are interested in helping on any on our committees.**

lwvabc@gmail.com



Exciting Changes

– **And this is your chance to get in on the ground floor.** There are going to be some amazing opportunities for LWV ABC members to advance voter registration throughout our area and to spread the word about the league.

Starting in 2024, we plan to have the Voter Registration leader serve on the board, providing more opportunity to integrate voter registration into the work of our league. We will focus more attention on partnerships (with libraries, festivals, religious and ethnic communities, the media, high schools) and on recruiting more members to help with voter registration. To do all this, we need **your** help.

We are asking you to think about how you might want to become involved with voter registration. Write an article for one of the local papers? Coordinate volunteers for activities using Signup Genius? Expand our community partnerships? Pass out voter registration info at a community festival?

Become part of a century-old tradition of strengthening our democracy through voting.

Let's get **every eligible person** registered to vote!

Leadership Expands!

This year “interns” **Arlene Gillette, Jane Dunn and Naomi Peterson join Cindy Wetzell**, current Voter Registration Chair, in providing leadership for Voter Registration activities.

“Interns” **Paula Mohr and Julia French join Linda Rodgers**, current Voter Services chair, in providing leadership for Voter Services activities.

Tape Only Format

The ABC board has voted to streamline our longtime “Meet the Candidates” format in order to reduce the amount of volunteer time needed. We will tape Q&A sessions with candidates for various elections, one after another, in a few locations instead of many. We will not be hosting a live audience.

There may be times when we provide moderation for other nonpartisan organizations who sponsor an event that adheres to League rules.

A Fresh Name

“Meet the Candidates” and “candidate forum” imply that people are invited to be part of a public event. To help our video audience and participants understand that we are creating this important voter service in a new way, we need a new name. A fresh name will better reflect our fresh start in how we give voters a view of their local candidates.

Members who attend our Annual Membership Meeting in April will have an opportunity to brainstorm ideas for a new moniker as part of the evening’s activities. Members may also submit ideas by email. The board will select a new name from members’ ideas.



Special Election

On April 11 voters in Blaine, Ward 2 will select a new city council person in a special election. Julie Jeppson, who previously held that seat, won the November election for county commissioner, so the seat is vacant. LWV ABC, with the help of North Metro TV, is taping a candidate Q&A. Leslie Waterhouse will moderate.

The deadline for submitting your questions for the candidates is March 6th.

[Submit Questions for Blaine](#)

The video of our candidate Q&A for the Blaine City Council Special Election will be posted on our webpage as soon as it is available. Check our webpage after March 11.

[Watch Candidate Forum](#)

A purple banner with the text "Welcome New Members" in white. The banner is decorated with colorful confetti (yellow, blue, red, green) scattered across the background.

Welcome New Members

Carmela Shea of Blaine. Carmela recently celebrated her 16th birthday by becoming a League Member.



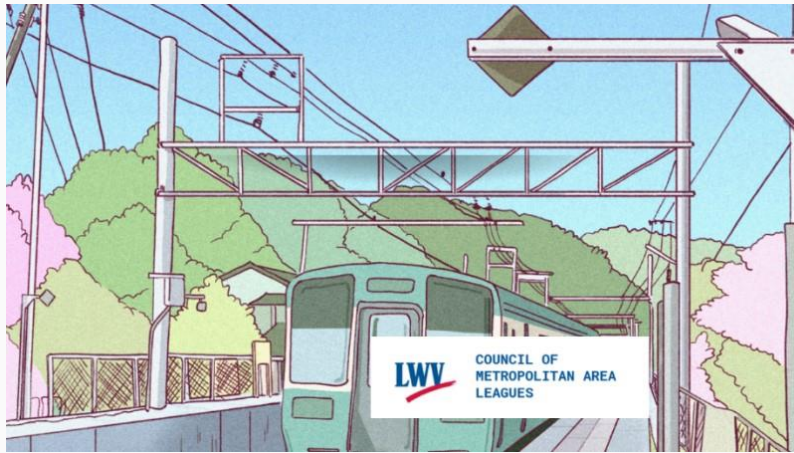
February Board Highlights

By Arlene Gillette, LWV ABC Secretary

The Board discussed amendments to our Bylaws so that they conform to the State League Bylaws, regarding definitions of types of membership, and rights and duties of each type. We then clarified the distinction of what differentiates a Membership Meeting from a Program Meeting. Membership meetings are ones where actual voting on League business takes place, and notice requirements must be sent out ahead of the meeting.

The Vice-President reported that our Annual Meeting will be on April 10th this year, and will be held at the Andover Community Center. We decided to offer box lunches with a variety of choices at the meeting.

The Membership Committee reported receiving the LWVMN mini-database has a lot of improvements over the old system but will take a while to adjust to. Voter Service said that we are doing well, and are considering re-branding our candidate forums. We are considering using the term "candidate Q and A", as being more descriptive.



CMAL Quarterly Meeting

**Is Metro Transit at a Crossroads?
Saturday, March 18
10:0 AM – 12:00 PM on Zoom**

At the County of Metropolitan Leagues March quarterly meeting, Deb Barber, Metropolitan Council Member from District 4 and Lesley Kandas, Interim General Manager, Metro Transit, will discuss crime, safety and ridership trends on the transit system.

[CMAL Zoom Link](#)

The February CMAL newsletter includes a summary of the January quarterly meeting on the role of the County Government in 2023, as well as **a tribute to long time LWV ABC member Susan Anderson who served on the CMAL Board from 2013 to 2022.**

If you missed the January CMAL quarterly meeting, video is available online.

[CMAL Newsletter](#)

[Watch County Government 2023](#)



DEI Roundtable

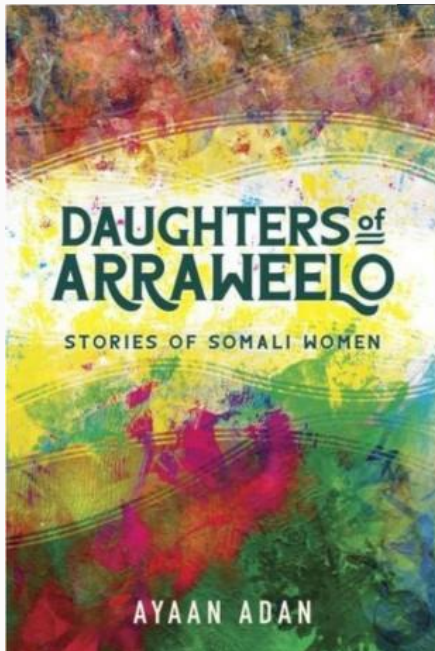
Kiarra Zackery, Director of Equity and Inclusion for Intermediate School District 287 and former Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Manager for Golden Valley, was the guest speaker at LWV's February DEI Roundtable. Zackery shared information her work in Golden Valley and spoke about the isolating nature of equity work.

Too often, people believe that *their* organization or *their* community is the one "magical unicorn" free from racism. Organizations often only hire a single equity person, with an expectation that one individual in an organization can identify all the issues, propose all the solutions and can single-handedly enact necessary changes.

When asked "**What can we do to make a difference?**" Zackery responded:

- **Show up and support DEI change agents**
- **Be authentic**
- **Listen to and *believe* the stories and feelings of others**
- **Understand how history is connected to contemporary outcomes**
- **Look for opportunities to remove barriers to equity** in our organizations and communities

The next REI Roundtable will be September 18, 2023.



Book Club

Daughters of Arraweelo

Wednesday, March 15

7:00 pm on Zoom

After a civil war broke out in Somalia in 1991, thousands of people fled the country, seeking asylum all over the world. Many Somali women were charged with the responsibility of finding safe passage and a new home. The largest numbers in this diaspora settled in Minnesota. In *Daughters of Arraweelo*, Somali women share experiences of love, war, family, displacement, identity, and everyday life.

[Book Club Zoom Link](#)

[Upcoming Books](#)



LWVMN Convention

June 2, 2023, 6:00 pm
June 3, 2023, 9:00 - 4:00 pm
**Best Western Conference Center
New Ulm**

Calling all members of LWV! Plans are underway for the in-person State Convention in New Ulm on Friday, June 2 and Saturday June 3.

Optional social activities are available Friday afternoon, including a program on the [LWV Upper Mississippi River Region](#) at [Riverside Park Environmental Learning Center](#), planned by **LWV ABC's Gretchen Sabel and Geri Nelson**. Participants of this event will receive a free copy of the late LWV ABC member Darby Nelson's wonderful book, [For Love of a River: The Minnesota](#).

Our local LWV ABC can send five delegates (with options for us to add more delegates if needed). **Email Gretchen Sabel if you would like to be a delegate.**

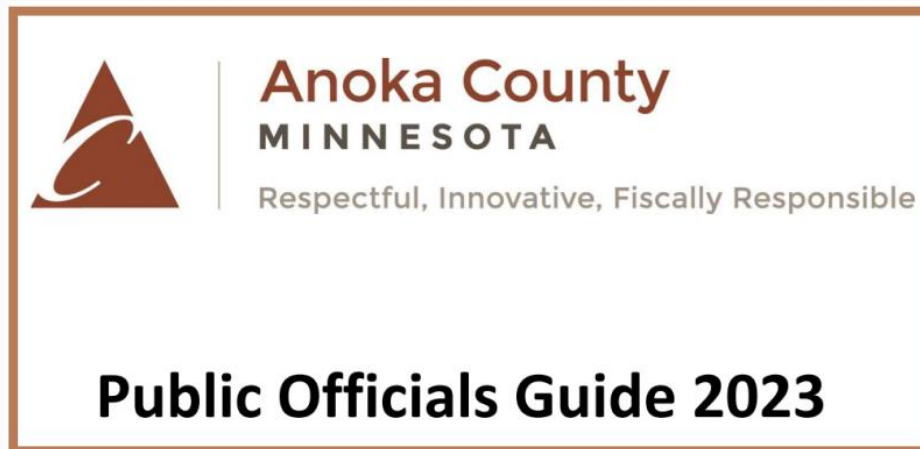
lwwabc@gmail.com

A block of rooms is now available for reservations at Best Western New Ulm at a special rate until May 3.

Plan for an enriching and informative experience!

Find more details and link for hotel reservations on the LWVMN convention website.

LWVMN Convention 2023



Public Officials Guide

Every year Anoka County publishes a "Public Officials Guide". Not just a guide to Anoka County government, the guide includes contact information for all public officials in Anoka County including cities, school boards and legislators.

Whether you need help with a problem or want to advocate for an issue, it is an invaluable resources for all residents of Anoka County.

Check out the 2023 Public Officials Guide by clicking the button below.

Public Officials Guide



A Glimpse of ERA History

When LWV ABC celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 2013, Kathleen Sehkon, LWV ABC member and former State Representative, came dressed in her "uniform" from ERA rallies.

Kathleen recalls the first ERA rally she attended in the Anoka area was probably in the early 1980's. She had started a NOW chapter after moving to the area from Wisconsin. LWV co-sponsored the rally with NOW, and soon after Kathleen joined LWV!

Coming in April ...

- Annual Membership Meeting
- Special Election in Blaine

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

LWV ABC Calendar

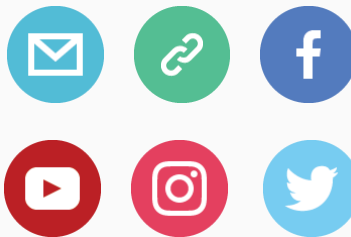
The League of Women voters is a non-partisan civic organization which promotes good government and active, informed participation in local, state and federal government.

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

Become a Member

Support Our Work

More About LWV ABC



**League of Women Voters ABC
1482 158th LN NW
Andover, MN 55304**

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