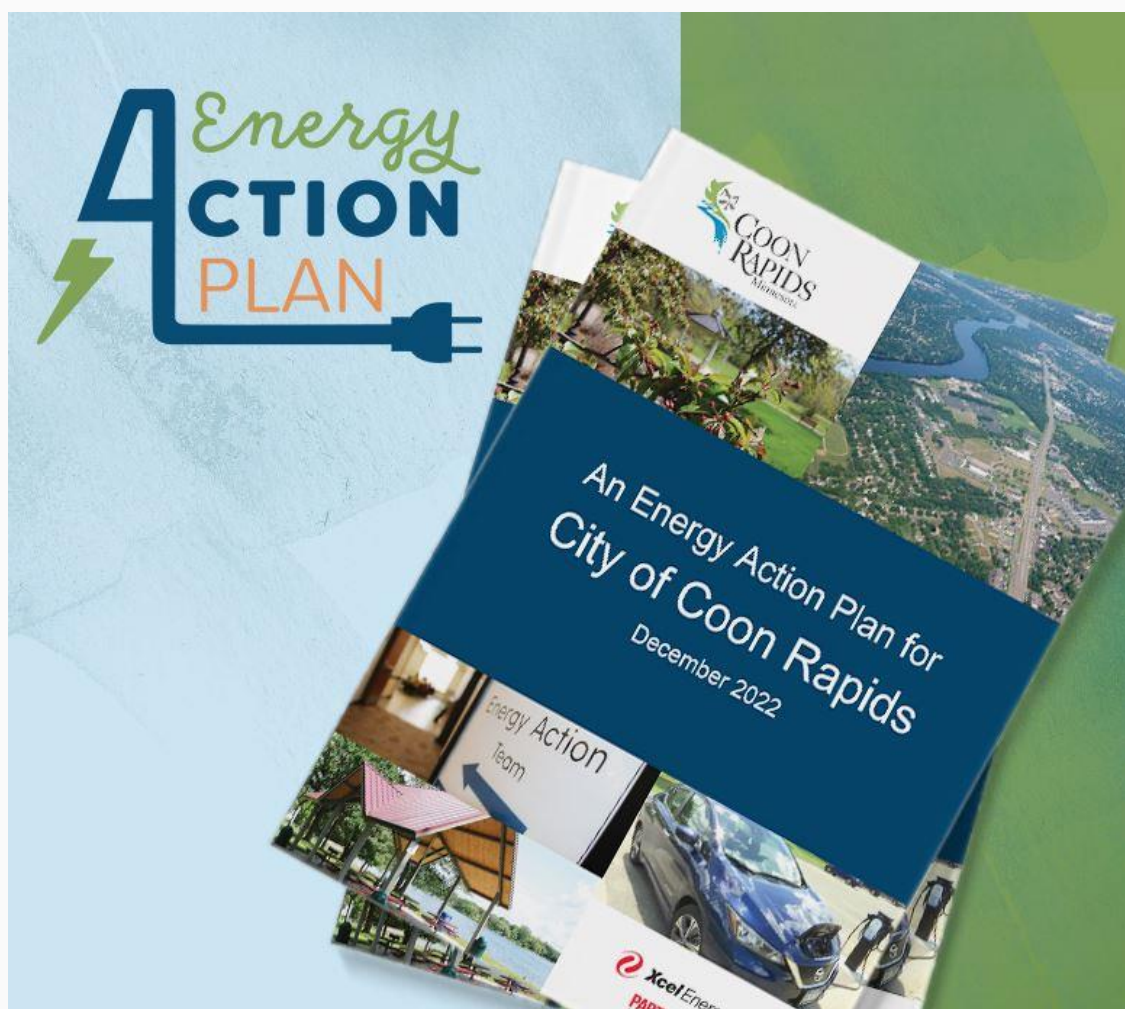


# The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter  
May 2023



## Coon Rapids Energy Action Plan

*How one Anoka County city is approaching energy efficiency and renewable energy to reach sustainability goals*

**Monday, May 8, 2023**

**Andover City Hall Council Chambers and Zoom**

**6:30** - online and in person socializing

**6:45** - quiz about April's Arab American Heritage Month

**7:00** - program begins

Coon Rapids is launching an Energy Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 35% by 2030. To meet this goal, the City is looking at two main components: energy efficiency and renewable energy.

LWV ABC member and Coon Rapids resident, Lonni McCauley, will open our program with a short presentation on the Coon Rapids Regenerative Energy Taskforce. Guest speakers **Coon Rapids Ward 2 Councilmember Kari Rehrauer and Coon Rapids Sustainability Planner Olivia Dorow Hovland** will present a program on the Coon Rapids Energy Action Plan recently approved by the city council. Co-Chairs of the Coon Rapids Sustainability Commission, Chris Backes and Kelsey Brodt, will also provide remarks.

*All LWV ABC members will be emailed the Zoom link.*

*Non-members wishing to attend by Zoom should send an email to LWV ABC.*

[Email LWV ABC](#)





## Annual Membership Meeting

33 members attended our first in-person Annual Membership Meeting since 2019. An additional 6 attending via Zoom. We connected and reconnected with other League members while completing our business of approving a budget, updating bylaws and electing officers. Winners of our "Participation Bingo" brought home beautiful plants and herbs, buttons and a women's history puzzle (prizes courtesy of **Gretchen Sabel** and **Jody Anderson**).

The approved Bylaw changes included some technical changes required by LWVMN. The membership approved holding a fundraiser this year.

Thanks to **Julie Trude** for preparing the agenda and meeting packets, **Leslie Waterhouse** for placing the meal orders and **Cindy and Jim Deruyter** for picking up and delivering the meals.



## Summary President's Annual Report

by Gretchen Sabel

Our League has been quite busy this year.

Our forum schedule was truly colossal. There were a few bumps in the road, to be sure, and we learned from our experiences. All 54 forums were recorded by local cable companies, and shared both by cablecast and through YouTube. Julie Trude managed our participation in Vote 411, the national online voter guide set up by LWV US. Voter registration is also an area where we were very active, expanding our outreach significantly into community festivals and senior living facilities. We staffed a table with voting information at five community events, and distributed registration information to libraries, high schools and senior residences. Thanks to Rachel Mero we were able to have digital billboards with voter registration information on three occasions (total of seven days), with an estimated 400,000 views.



Our Action Committee co-chairs, Jody Anderson and Leslie Waterhouse, have been leading our increasing connection to what's happening at the Minnesota Legislature and the work of LWVMN in lobbying for our democracy platform. Thanks, too, to Sandy Connor for monitoring the LWVMN Action Committee meetings and providing excellent notes. Wes Volkenant, a charter member of the LWV ABC Observer Corps, has been a strong advocate for transparency in decision-making in their work with the Anoka County Board; working with our much-missed DeeAnn Christensen and others to bring about change in how the county operates.

I am proud of our group and enjoy the work we do. Others are proud of us, too! LWV ABC was recognized for our work by LWV US, where we were nominated for the LWV US 2022 Powering Democracy for our efforts in embracing technology to enhance and expand our voter outreach during the last biennium.

Finally, I'd like to spend a few minutes remembering our fallen members this year: Marj Perry, DeeAnn Christensen and Susan Anderson.

## President's Full Report



Program Co-Chair Lonni McCauley with Kathie Whelchel (Nominations Committee). Arlene Gillette (Nominations Committee) with VP Julie Trude.

## LWV ABC Elections

Our newly elected and re-elected officers and committee chairs are:

- President: **Gretchen Sabel**
- Secretary: **Kathy Aanerud**
- Communications Committee Chair: **Pat Kennedy**
- Membership Committee Chair: **Betsy O'Berry**
- Program Committee Co-Chairs: **Lonni McCauley, Kathleen Sekhon, Kathy Tingelstad**

**Arlene Gillette** and **Kathie Whelchel** were elected to serve on our Nominating Committee.

*Click button below to find out more about LWV ABC Governance*

**LWV ABC Handbook**



## 2023 Zilla Way Award

This year we honor **Cindy Wetzell** for leading and re-invigorating LWV ABC voter registration and voter education activities. Cindy truly is a Defender of Democracy!

The Zilla Way Award, created in 1996, honors a LWV ABC member who has shown outstanding leadership in guiding our League. The beautiful artwork of the award is courtesy of LWV ABC member **Mary Jo Truchon**.

All Zilla Way Award Winners



## Member Milestones

**Zilla Way**, pictured above with our newest member **Carmela Shea**, celebrated her 94th birthday and 70 years as a member of League at the Annual Membership Meeting.

In addition to Zilla, 16 members received certificates of appreciation for their years of service:

35 Years - **Mary Jo Truchon**



25 Years - **Lois Ballinger, Kathie Whelchel**

15 Years - **Kathy Aanerud** (pictured above with her certificate), **Rochelle Hartjes, Gretchen Sabel**

10 Years - **Rita Newton**

5 Years - **Jody Anderson, Sandy Connor, Susan Dergantz, Jane Dunn, Pat Kennedy, Glenda Meixell, Naomi Peterson, Kathleen Sekhon, Paul Sitz**

Thank you for donating your time and talent!

### All Member Milestones



## Membership Renewals

**Thanks to the nearly two-thirds of the membership who have completed their membership renewals** which were due in April. The many donations included with renewals are also greatly appreciated.

**If you have not yet renewed your membership, please send in your dues renewal by check or PayPal** as soon as possible. Remember that if our dues are a financial hardship, simply choose "Flexible Dues" and pay whatever amount fits in your budget. If you have decided not to continue your membership, please send us an email and let us know.



*Click button below for information on how to renew your membership.*

**Renew Membership**



## **Program Ideas**

As **Naomi Peterson** cut and served Zilla's birthday cake at the Annual Membership Meeting, members distributed their nine dots to express the weight of their preferences on member proposed program topics. Zoom attendees submitted their preferences by email.

Top five topics (in order of preference):

1. Local Native American history
2. Status of the jail project in Anoka
3. Homelessness in our area
4. Health hazards of plastics
5. Legislative wrap up

Two topics were submitted by virtual attendees that members did not have the opportunity to vote on:

- Lawn culture without pesticides, fertilizer and water
- Attacks on our public schools and school boards, teacher curriculum

***If you have ideas on potential speakers/topics or want to help plan a meeting contact the Program Committee by email at:***

[lwvabc@gmail.com](mailto:lwvabc@gmail.com)

## 2023 Minnesota Absentee Ballot Application

**Complete lines 1 through 7 below. Please print clearly.**

Return this application as soon as possible. Ballots must be returned by election day to be counted.

**Important:** Active duty military and overseas voters should not use this application. See the other side for more information.

1.	absentee ballots requested for the following election(s) <i>(if no election is marked, a ballot will be mailed for the next election only)</i>			
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2/14 Special Election	<input type="checkbox"/> 4/11 Special Election	<input type="checkbox"/> 8/8 Primary Election	<input type="checkbox"/> Both 8/8 & 11/7 Elections
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3/14 Township Election	<input type="checkbox"/> 5/9 Special Election	<input type="checkbox"/> 11/7 General Election	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify date): <input type="text"/>
2.	last name or surname	first name	middle name	suffix
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3.	date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	county where you live	phone number	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/>	
	email address <input type="text"/>			
4.	mark all boxes that apply:			
	<input type="checkbox"/> I have a MN-issued driver's license or MN ID card. The number is: <input type="text"/>			

## 2023 Absentee Ballots

**You must complete a paper Absentee Ballot Application** to vote from home in the 2023 elections in Anoka county.

Upcoming Anoka County school board elections:

- Anoka-Hennepin
- Columbia Heights
- Fridley
- Spring Lake Park



Newly elected board members Kathy Sekhon (Program Co-chair) and Betsy O'Berry (Membership Chair)

### **April Board Highlights**

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

This was the first meeting of the year with newly-elected board members.

- Set fourth Mondays at 3:30 for this year's board meetings and most will be held via Zoom.
  - Membership renewals are at about 2/3 complete; follow-up will now commence.
  - Action and Advocacy provided updates on legislative results to date at the capitol; urged member engagement.
  - There will be four school board districts in our service area with elections this fall; no municipal elections.
  - Program chairs outlined plans for upcoming monthly programs.
  - Reviewed suggestions submitted at annual meeting to replace "Meet the Candidates" since most forums will now be taped without a live audience. Decision to be made at next board meeting.
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## Action and Advocacy

The **Democracy for the People Act** was passed by the legislature on **April 26**. Many of the provisions of the Act are a giant step forward towards long-standing voting rights positions of the League:

- Automatic registration of eligible voters when drivers' licenses or state ID's are issued
- Pre-registration for 16 and 17 year-olds
- Criminalization of voter intimidation and interference
- Option for all voters to apply for permanent Absentee Ballots
- Requirement for voting information in multiple languages
- Finance reforms to prevent foreign entities from influencing elections

**Keep up to date on legislative news with LWVMN's *Capitol Letter*.** Other important legislation is still pending and more rallies are being planned. Check it out on the [LWV MN Legislative Session page](#).

### **Your Voice Matters**

As we near the end of the legislative session it is critical that all League members and allies communicate to your elected officials what is important to you. Along with other bills, **both ERA bills are still stuck in committee**. You can help get these bills 'unstuck'. [Click this link for more info](#).

**We encourage everyone to respond to LWVMN Action Alerts and encourage friends and family to subscribe.** It is fast and easy to use the Action Alerts system. Simply click on the link in the Action Alert email and then add your name and address. The system produces a pre-written email addressed to your legislators. You can even edit the email to add your own thoughts before you click send.

**Legislators are reading and responding to emails sent by our members through Action Alerts.** One legislator even added her name to a bill after receiving an email from a LWV ABC member.

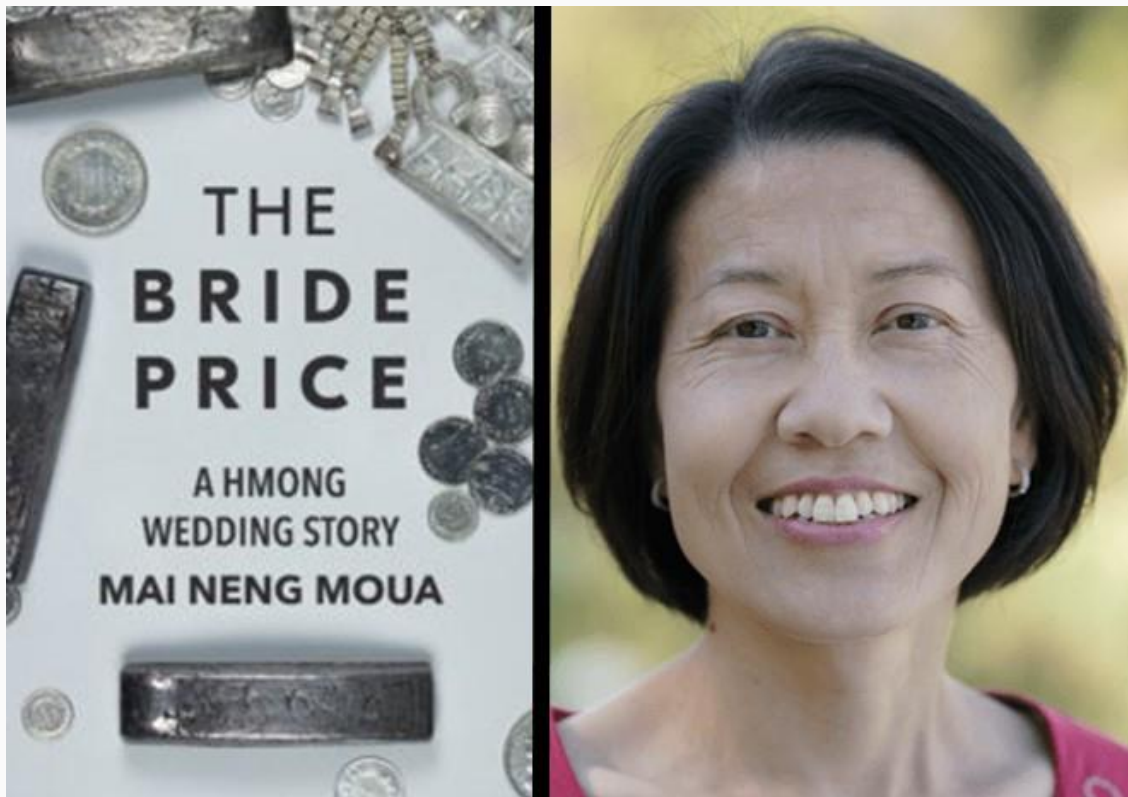
***Email us, or Action Committee Co-Chair Jody Anderson directly, if you are interested in carpooling to any rallies announced by LWVMN***

[lwwabc@gmail.com](mailto:lwwabc@gmail.com)

**Capitol Letter**

**Subscribe to Action Alerts and Capitol Letter**

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## **Book Club**

### ***The Bride Price***

**Wednesday, May 17  
7:00 pm on Zoom**

When Mai Neng Moua decided to get married, her mother, a widow, wanted the groom to follow Hmong custom and pay a bride price. Mai Neng refused and her husband-to-be supported her choice. What happened next raised questions about the very meaning of being Hmong in America.

**[Book Club Zoom Link](#)**

**[Upcoming Books](#)**

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## Register New Citizens

Join League members from throughout the Twin Cities area to help new citizens get registered to vote.

[Sign-Up for Citizenship Ceremonies](#)

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## Coming in June ...

- LWVMN Convention
- Legislative Wrap Up Program Meeting
- LGBTQ+ Pride Month

## Coming in July ...

- Gretchen Sabel's Birthday Celebration / LWV ABC Fundraiser

***Click button below to get details and find more events***



Plant sales in our area feature many native plants and much more!

**Plant sales! [Click here for more information!](#)**

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.

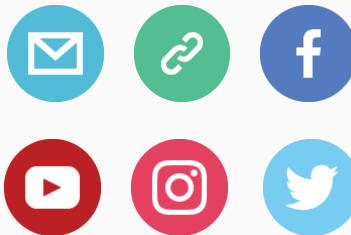
The League is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in principle and practice.

[Become a Member](#)

[Support Our Work](#)

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## More About LWV ABC



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

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The Monthly Newsletter of LWV ABC*



