

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter

October 2024



Fair and Accurate Elections

Monday, October 14

Andover City Council Chamber & Online via Zoom

1685 Crosstown Blvd NW

Andover Minnesota

6:30 - online and in person socializing

7:00 - program begins

Elections have been proven to be fair and accurate across Minnesota and the US. How does this happen? What processes are followed to make sure that only qualified voters vote? How are the voting machines verified and kept secure? How are election results checked and certified? What protections are in place to protect domestic violence survivors when voting?

On October 14, LWV ABC will host **Tom Hunt, Anoka County Elections Director**. Tom will talk with us about all this and more! The meeting will be held at Andover City Hall and will also be available via Zoom.

Tom Hunt holds a bachelor's degree in political science and international relations. Before coming to Anoka County Elections, he previously worked in the financial services industry where he processed foreign and domestic trades. Prior to that, he worked as an Operations Manager at the Minneapolis airport and also served 8 years in the Minnesota Army National Guard and two years as a stay-at-home dad. Tom very much enjoys traveling, going "up north", coaching his kids in sports and spending time with his family.

[Submit a Question to Tom Hunt](#)

[Zoom Link](#)



Local Newspapers

In September, Matt DeBow, ABC Newspaper Managing Editor and Ian Reisner, Community Editor, joined us for a discussion on the decline of local/community

newspapers and importance of local news sources to communities. If you missed our discussion, video is available on our website.

[Watch Program Video](#)

[LWV Washington Study on Local News and Democracy](#)



Picture from Andover Nature Preserve Commission at <https://www.andovermn.gov/253/Nature-Preserve-Commission>

LWV ABC Walk and Talk

Come and join other LWV'ers and our friends as we walk the trails in local woods this fall. We will meet up and walk for about an hour, taking in the fall colors and natural beauty along the way. We can talk about League stuff or other, non-partisan things as we walk. No sign-ups, just show up in comfortable shoes, dressed for the weather. We will move to the rain date if it's pouring rain. Friends and Dogs (except at Springbrook) are welcome!

Wednesday, October 9

(Rain date Oct 11)

Maple View Preserve in Andover

10 am

Meet in the parking lot at the corner of 167th Ave and Avocet Street, just a few blocks east of Hanson Blvd. Trails here are wood-chip and the terrain is slightly hilly. [See Map.](#)

Monday, October 14

(Rain date Oct 15)

Springbrook Nature Center in Fridley

10 am

Meet in the parking lot at 100 85th Ave NW in Fridley, just a few blocks west of Red Lobster on University Avenue, on the south side of the road. Trails here are paved and accessible. [See Map.](#)

Wednesday, October 16

(Rain date Oct 17)

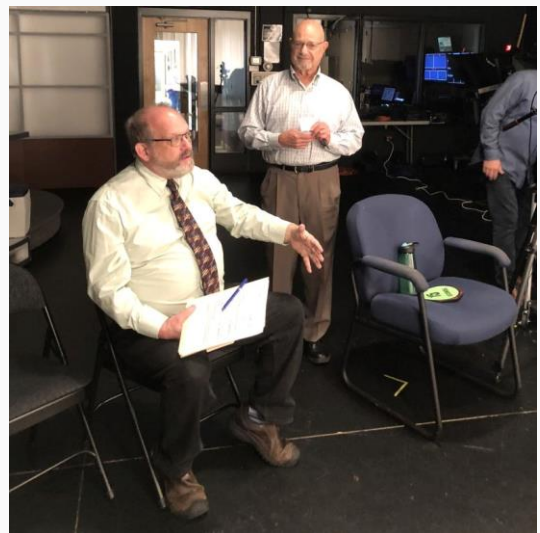
Coon Rapids Dam - North End Trails

10 am

Meet at the Mississippi River Regional Trail access on the north end of the park, 10100 Mississippi River Blvd in Coon Rapids, at the intersection with Uplander Street. Park on the street, no fee or permit required. Trails here are paved and accessible, with some dirt trails that can also be taken. [See Map.](#)

LWV ABC President **Gretchen Sabel** will lead these non-strenuous walks. We hope you can join us!

Save the Date for a November 18 Lunch and Talk. Details available next month.



Candidate Forums

LWV ABC is wrapping up all our candidate forums the first week in October. All will

be available for viewing next week. Since September 4, LWV ABC completed 38 forums with the help of our partners - CTN, the cities of Columbia Heights and Nowthen, Ham Lake Chamber of Commerce, NorthMetro TV and QCTV.

Thanks to all our members who donated their time - as Forum Captains, Moderators, Timers, and Greeters - so the voters of Anoka County can be informed voters!

[Candidate Forum Webpage](#)

[YouTube Forum Playlist](#)



Board Members Kathy Aanerud, Julie Trude and Wes Volkenant at September 2024 Program Meeting.

Board Highlights

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

- Finalized arrangements for Friend of League award including award preparation, contacting recipient, and pairing with monthly program in November.

- Confirmed arrangements for October monthly program with Tom Hunt, Anoka County Elections Director, including website form to submit questions.
- Reviewed candidate forums conducted to date, identified a couple open volunteer spots for upcoming forums, and viewed results for completed and posted forum videos.
- Voter registration events continue to be scheduled with senior residences. Also tabled at Anoka Ramsey Community College's two campuses on National Voter Registration Day.
- Dates have been set for Walk and Talk in area parks in October and a lunch date in November at Davanni's.

Members can find Board Agendas and approved Board Minutes in the Members Only section of our website



National Voter Registration Day

September 17, 2024

Under the new legislation allowing 16 and 17 year-olds to pre-register to vote, high schools are required to help students pre-register.

In order to help schools meet this obligation, LWV Minnesota joined with the Secretary of State Office and the three major political parties - the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, the Republican Party of Minnesota and the

Minnesota Legal Marijuana Now Party to host a live virtual event on National Voter Registration Day (NVRD).

LWVMN Executive Director Michelle Witte and Secretary of State Steve Simon live streamed from both Bemidji High School and Blackduck High School. The live events included video from Senator Amy Klobuchar and Republican Senate candidate Royce White. Students and teachers from other schools, including student ambassadors from the Youth Voter Project, joined them online to encourage voter registration and engagement in the election process. Students were walked through the online voter registration process and also encouraged to become student election judges.

About 150 Minnesota schools chose to participate in one of the two events, including Champlin Park High School, Columbia Heights High School, Fridley ALC, Fridley High School and Totino-Grace High School.

NVRD at Bemidji

Program starts at about minute 9.30.

NVRD at Blackduck

Program starts at about minute 6.30.

Youth Voter Project



Kathie Whelchel at Anoka-Ramsey Community College on NVRD.

Voter Registration

On National Voter Registration Day, **Kathie Whelchel, Paul Sitz, Geri Nelson and Gretchen Sabel** offered voter registration and information to college students at Anoka-Ramsey Community College, at both the Coon Rapids and Cambridge campuses.

Through September, **Naomi Peterson** continued to organize voter registration events at senior housing residences. In August and September, we registered and made absentee ballots available for 124 seniors!

With the success of the new automatic voter registration system, we have been registering less voters at events. **Under the automatic voter registration system, 65,339 Minnesotans registered to vote** and 25,572 16- and 17-year-old preregistered between April 29 and September 12, 2024 when getting driver licenses or state ID. The new process is very easy for voters but has multiple steps behind the scenes to ensure only citizens are registered to vote.

Secretary of State News Release

Automatic Voter Registration Flow Chart



Voter Guides

At VOTE411.org, every voter in the country can obtain a personal voter guide for all candidates on their ballot, as well as voter registration information for their state. 500,000 Minnesotans consulted VOTE411 in 2022.

Every candidate in the United States - from President to City Council - was given the opportunity to participate. Candidates have the opportunity to share their picture, contact information and answers to 3-4 questions posed by League.

New this year, are direct links for our candidate forums from the webpage for each race. In the past, it was a challenge to find links to candidate forum video.

Thanks to the staff at LWVMN for all their work making sure that the Voter Guides

are up to date.

If your candidates have not responded please contact them and ask them to participate. LWV ABC has sent a reminder to all candidates.

Vote411



The Nature Conservancy's Mississippi River Basin Project

October 8

7:00 pm

Today, the Mississippi River faces unprecedented challenges. Increasingly intense flooding, nutrient runoff that creates a Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico, invasive species, and changing flows strain the river's infrastructure and threaten homes, communities, and livelihoods.

The Nature Conservancy has set ambitious goals to transform how they conduct and influence conservation across the whole basin to ensure its long-term resilience. They are developing projects, partnerships, and policies that protect essential lands, habitats, and waters, while deepening our understanding of the connections between people and place.

Join LWV UMRR on October 8th when they will host The Nature Conservancy's Steve Herrington, Associate Director of Water for Minnesota-North Dakota-South Dakota, and Amy Cazier, Water Quality Technician. They will provide an overview of The Nature Conservancy's Mississippi River Basin project.

[Register for LWV UMRR Webinar](#)

[Learn about The Nature Conservancy](#)



Survey on Plastics

LWV ABC Member **Diane Kroll** and the Coalition to Reduce Plastic (CRP) have created a survey to learn what Minnesota residents know about plastic and their interest in making changes to address the plastic problem.

The Coalition to Reduce Plastic (CRP) plans to share survey information with legislators as they work on legislation. The survey is anonymous with optional demographic questions.

Diane appreciates you taking the time to help with her environmental advocacy efforts.

Take the Survey on Plastics



Purple Thursday

October 17

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month. Purple Thursday, celebrated on the third Thursday of October, is a day where people wear purple to show their support for survivors of domestic violence. Purple is as a symbol of peace, courage, survival, honor, and personal dedication to domestic violence awareness. Using purple outside lights - house and or garage - during October is another way to show support.

It's also a great day to contact your state legislators and members of Congress to request additional funding for domestic violence programs.

Learn how survivors of violence can vote safely without their location becoming public information. Minnesotans have three options:

1. File a Request to Withhold Voter Information from Public Information
2. File a Request to Inactivate Voter Record (after you vote)
3. Enroll in Minnesota's Safe at Home Program

Options to Vote Safely



Post-Election Reviews

November 18

The League of Women Voters Minnesota (LWVMN) is seeking volunteers to observe and report on the Post-election Reviews (also called post-election audit). The Anoka County review is scheduled for 9:00 am on November 18.

Each county must randomly select at least two precincts to hand count and then compare to the machine tabulation. This is done by party balanced election judges in a meeting that's open to the public.

Volunteers must attend a 1.5 hour long training option either in-person or online for a half to full day commitment observing the PER (about 4-8 total hours).

Volunteer for Post-Election Review

Public Accuracy Tests

Members are also encouraged to observe and report on Public Accuracy Testing. This testing of voting machines must be done within 14 days of the

general election and must be observed by at least two election judges from different political parties. The public is invited and encouraged to observe these tests.

Watch the 2023 North Metro TV coverage of the Anoka County Public Accuracy Test to learn more.

[Video of 2023 Public Accuracy Test](#)

Coming in November...

All Month - National Native American Heritage Month

Nov 5 - General Election

Nov 11 - Program - Domestic Violence

Nov 18 - Lunch and Talk

Nov 18 - Anoka County Post-Election Review

Nov 20 - Book Club

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

[LWV ABC Calendar](#)

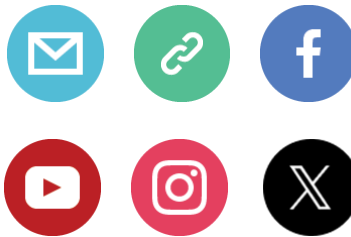
The League of Women voters is a non-partisan civic organization which promotes good government and active, informed participation in local, state and federal government.

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

[Become a Member](#)

[Support Our Work](#)

More About LWV ABC



League of Women Voters ABC
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