

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter
March 2025



The History and Promise of the Nongame Wildlife Program

Monday, March 10, 2025

Online via Zoom

6:30 - online socializing

7:00 - program begins

Join the League of Women voters and special guests on March 10th for a conversation about Minnesota's Nongame Wildlife program. The Minnesota Nongame Wildlife Program is a conservation initiative run by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It focuses on protecting and managing the state's nongame wildlife, such as songbirds, eagles, turtles, frogs, and rare mammals.

The program is entirely funded by donations—it receives no money from hunting or fishing license fees. The main source of funding is the "Chickadee Checkoff" on Minnesota state tax forms, where residents can donate to nongame wildlife conservation

Come and ask questions and learn more about the program, funding and activities to support Minnesota's wildlife.

[Program Zoom Link](#)



Understanding Public, Education, and Government (PEG) Television

In February, we were joined by Danika Peterson of North Metro TV, Eric Strouse of CTN, and Karen George of QCTV. Watch the video to learn more about the changing landscape of local cable television and the need for legislation to modernize funding.

[Watch Program Video](#)



Save the Date
Monday April 14, 2025

Annual Membership Meeting
Members Only
5:00 pm Dinner and Socializing
5:45 Meeting

This year's Annual Membership Meeting will be held at the Pizza Ranch Community. Pizza Ranch offers a buffet featuring pizza, salad and chicken. Suggested donation of \$10-\$20 to defray the cost of food.

In addition to our usual business of updating bylaws, approving a budget and electing officers, we will be holding a consensus meeting on the Federal Judiciary Study.

If you are interested in serving on the board or helping with any committee, please email the Nominations Committee at lwwabc@gmail.com



Consensus Meeting Federal Judiciary Study

**Monday, April 14
Part of Annual Meeting**

What is a Consensus Meeting?

All League action — our advocacy — is based on League positions. League can only advocate for a policy based on a position. Positions are reached through the consensus of members after conducting a study of the issue. League positions are written in broad terms, outlining principles we can apply to specific actions for decades in the future.

Consensus meetings involve discussing the issues explored in the study. The study committee provides consensus questions to facilitate this discussion. For a national study, every local League in the country submits their response to the consensus questions. A position is formulated based on the consensus responses.

The Federal Judicial Study

The Federal Judiciary Study (FJS) Committee was authorized by the delegates to the 2024 LWWUS Convention.

The FJS study consensus questions are focused on:

- transparency
- accountability
- independence
- ethics
- standards of conduct
- recusals
- recusal enforcement procedures
- financial disclosures
- stability of law
- public perception

The FJS committee plans to present a Federal Judiciary Position for approval at the LWVUS National Council in June 2025.

Prepare for the Consensus Meeting

The Study Committee offers some background materials and prepared short policy briefings related to the consensus questions.

LWVUS also sponsored a town hall meeting featuring experts on the federal judiciary. The panelists explained why many experts recommend Supreme Court term limits of 18 years and answered questions such as "What is a shadow docket?"

In addition, LWV Roseville Area has focused their recent program meetings on the judiciary.

- "Behind the Gavel" features judges currently serving on the Minnesota District, the Minnesota Court of Appeals and the Minnesota Supreme Court. The judges offer insight into judges and court operations. (Note: LWVRA had technical problems with the video recording, but the audio is excellent and very informative.)

- "Federal Judiciary 101" features LWV RA member Karen Schafer, a retired government attorney, discussing the constitution and the history of the Supreme Court and other Article III federal courts.

We have a lot to accomplish at our Annual Membership Meeting, so please review the FJS Study Research and Discussion Resources.

Resources for Federal Judiciary Study

Welcome New Members

Welcome New Members

Becky Kieffer of Lino Lakes
Natalie Novacek of Columbia Heights
Jennifer Tudor of Fridley



ChapterSpot

New Membership System ChapterSpot

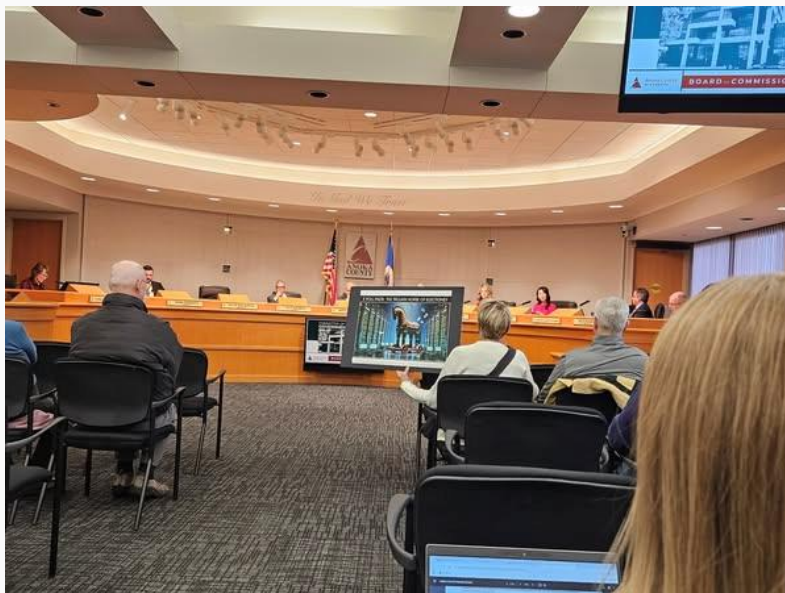
Everyone should have received an email invitation to register with Chapter Spot. Please register if you have not done so already. Only about 15 members have signed into the system.

Be sure to carefully check your contact information, especially your address. **Paul Sitz**, our Roster Manager, corrected the information of the many members which were added to the system with incorrect cities, but there may still be errors.

Everyone who first joined LWV ABC prior to 2024 has an expiration date of April 30, 2025. If you renew your membership when you sign in to register, your membership will be extended one year from your current expiration date to April 30, 2026.

[Register with ChapterSpot](#)

[Step by Step ChapterSpot Instructions Video](#)



Poll Pads in Anoka County

Anoka County Board of Commissioners Meeting

On February 25, 2025, LWV ABC members **Paul Sitz, Kathy Aanerud and Wes Volkenant** attended the Anoka County Board of Commissioners Meeting to observe the discussion of the Elections Office request to replace poll pads. Purchase of the poll pads was approved 4 to 2 on roll call vote. Commissioner Braastad was absent.

On the board agenda Action Item form, the Election Office notes several reasons why poll pads are an improvement over paper rosters:

- No need for staff to hand stamp absentee voters on rosters
- Roster updated as absentee ballots received
- Decreased voter check-in times
- Voter Privacy - voters cannot see other names when check in
- Easy confirmation of correct polling place
- Significant reduction of time and staff needed to upload results

During the board meeting, Commissioners commented that paper rosters are also expensive due to increased costs for full-time and temporary employees. Documents in the agenda show that about 60% of the poll pad cost will be covered by state voter funding.

The commissioners, with the exception of Commissioner Heinrich who voted against the proposal, were satisfied with the security of poll pods. Commissioner Reinert voted against the proposal because he believes cities should have the autonomy to choose whether they want to use poll pads or paper rosters.

Multiple commissioners thanked the public for their engagement on this issue. Commissioner Schultz commented that he had received more calls in the last two weeks than he had ever received before on any issue.

Public Comment Period

During the public comment period, which is not taped, five county residents spoke, three in support of poll pads and two against.

The comment period was opened by a member of the active citizen group ACEIT (Anoka County Election Integrity Team) which supports paper poll books, as well

paper ballots, hand counting of paper ballots, local storage of election data, precincts size capped at 2,000 and expanded Post-Election reviews. The ACEIT speaker thanked Commissioners Reinert and Heinrich for their "no" votes and warned the majority that the word would spread of their action. The last speaker also opposed poll pads, expressing concern about the hidden figures controlling our electronics.

LWV ABC member **Wes Volkenant**, acting as a private citizen, was the second speaker. Wes acknowledged the campaign of election disinformation the commissioners and elections staff have experienced over the past four years or so. Wes thanked Elections Manager Tom Hunt and his staff for their professionalism and communication with the public. Wes expressed his opinion that technology makes our elections more efficient and expeditious, noting that results are known by midnight rather than waiting 2 or 3 days as we did with paper. Two Oak Grove election judges thanked the majority for their vote, and expressed their preference for the poll pads.

About 10 members of ACEIT attended the meeting. Throughout the meeting and public comment period, several held large printed signs which characterized electronic poll pads as the Trojan Horse of elections.

Watch video of the commissioner meeting (starting about minute -45) and review agenda documents (starting at page 11) to learn more about poll pads.

[Watch Board of Commissioners Meeting](#)

[Read Board Agenda Documents](#)

Learn more about ACEIT

[News Article - ACEIT Seeks Action](#)

News Article - Anoka Cities Take ACEIT Advice

ACEIT Presentation to City of Columbus



Action and Advocacy Chair Jody Anderson (far left) at LWV ABC Walk & Talk, October 2024.

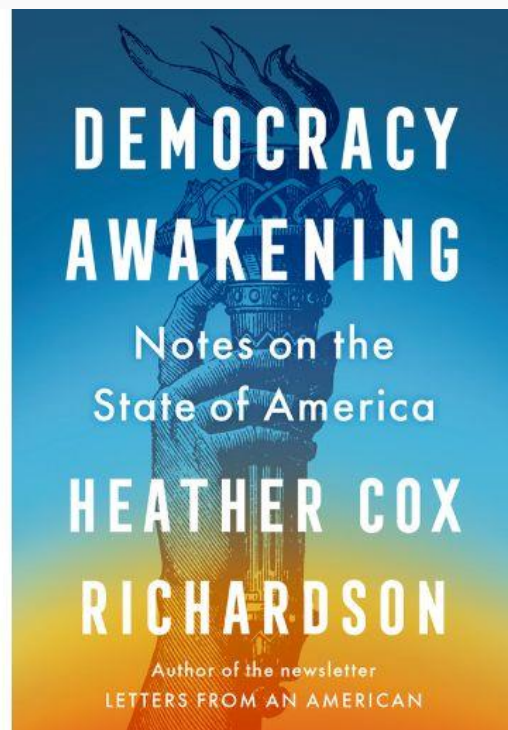
March Board Highlights

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

- Arrangements have been finalized for the March program with former DNR Commissioner Gene Merriam on the subject of the Nongame Wildlife Fund, a program that's entirely funded by donations.
- Discussed an upcoming discussion at Anoka County Board meeting regarding renewal of the electronic poll pads and who would be able to attend and support the work of Anoka County Elections.
- Significant ongoing updates to our website have been completed, including changes related to the new LWVUS membership platform.

- Continued the planning for a venue and costs for April's annual meeting and setting a preliminary agenda and socializing activities.
- Also in preparation for April's annual meeting, the first draft of a budget for the upcoming 2024-25 year was presented. Information was identified for further updating to be discussed at March board meeting.

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



LWV ABC Book Club

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

7:00 pm on Zoom

Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America (2023)
by Heather Cox Richardson

How, author and historian Heather Cox Richardson asks, did we get where we are now, with millions of Americans fearing democracy and socialism as fundamental threats to the world's biggest republic, and an equal if not larger number convinced

the danger lies in the appeal of authoritarianism?

Heather Cox Richardson believes the answer is to be found in what Americans have been taught about this nation's history. According to Democracy Awakening, there are two principal understandings of our nation's origins and subsequent development: the "authoritarian" and the "democratic." Which of these we accept as true largely determines our reactions to current events today.

Library Availability: Multiple books, eBooks and audiobooks available at Hennepin County and Anoka County libraries.

[Book Club Zoom Link](#)

[Upcoming Books](#)



Journey to Citizenship: Insights into the Immigrant Experience

Tuesday March 18 at 6:30 PM.

Online via zoom

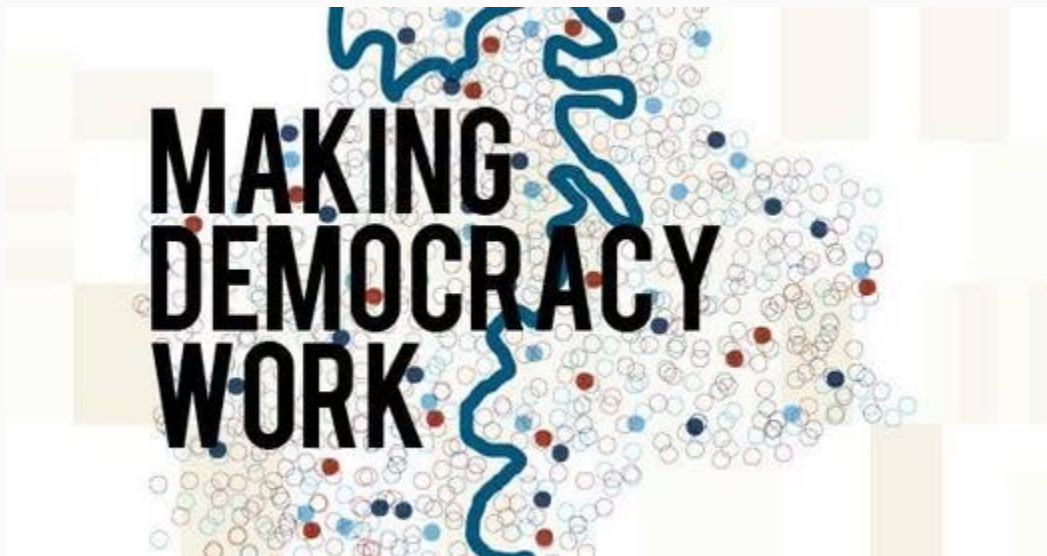
**and
In Person at
Ramsey County Library - Roseville
2180 Hamline Ave 55113**

Learn how you can better support and advocate for immigrants seeking a path to citizenship. St. Paul immigration attorney Gloria Contreras Edin will share her knowledge and perspective on immigration from the front lines.

This program is co-sponsored by LWV Roseville, Ramsey County Public Library and Do Good Roseville.

[Zoom Link for Journey to Citizenship](#)

[Flyer](#)



March First Friday: Immigration Panel

Friday March 7, 2025

12:00 PM

Live streaming on Facebook

Join LWV Red River Valley on Facebook Live for a panel discussion about immigration. Panelists include Anna Marie Stenson, immigration attorney, and Eric Jefferson O'Denius, recently retired deportation officer.

LWV Red River Valley Facebook



Proposed Redistricting Bill

HF550/SF824 Bipartisan Redistricting Commission

For decades, LWVMN has advocated for a *non-partisan* redistricting commission.

A new bill, HF550/SF824, proposes a *bi-partisan political* commission rather than proposing a *non-partisan* commission. Since 1992, the Minnesota Supreme Court has set new maps because the legislature was unable to reach bipartisan agreement on redistricting maps.

LWVMN objects to the proposed bill because:

- Proposed composition ensures a process of, by, and for the partisan political parties
- Proposed redistricting principles are narrower than those used by the Minnesota Supreme Court and do not reflect preservation of communities of interest as a high priority
- Proposed provisions for public hearings lacks specific requirements regarding the number, location, and manner of the hearings and there is no provision for online public input and participation.
- The proposal does not specify a deadline nor or address what happens if the commission fails to reach an agreement on maps

Paul Huffman, LWVMN Election and Redistricting Policy Coordinator, has submitted testimony to the House State Government Finance and Policy Committee.

Learn more about the proposed legislation

LWVMN Testimony on Proposed Redistricting Bill

Observer Report of Committee Hearing

League encourages everyone to contact your Minnesota Senator and Representative. Use this Action Alert form to contact both at the same time.

Redistricting Action Alert

LIGHT FOR OUR DEMOCRACY

MARCH 4, 2025 • 8:30PM ET

#Light4Democracy

We The People Reclaim Our Democracy: “Know Your Rights” with MN ACLU!

learn more and register at lwvmn.org/events

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
OF MINNESOTA

NCJW | MN
National Council of Jewish Women MINNESOTA



**JEWISH
COMMUNITY
ACTION**

Common Cause
Minnesota

Know Your Rights Webinar

Tuesday March 4, 2025

7:30 PM (Central Time)

Webinar via Zoom

Join LWVMN and allies for an informational webinar to learn about our rights and those of our neighbors. This presentation by ACLU will take place during the "Light for Our Democracy" events happening around the President's first address to Congress. We hope to build solidarity and support the health of our democracy with people across the country.

Come learn more about your rights, and how to take action in your community!

Register For Know Your Rights



LWVMN Convention

June 6-7, 2025

Confluence Hotel

Hastings, MN

Registration for the 2025 LWVMN Convention is now open. Based on our current membership, LWV ABC is allocated six voting delegates for the LWVMN Convention. Convention will be in person only.

Business meetings will take place 6:00-9:00 PM on Friday June 6, 2025 and 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM on Saturday June 7, 2025. Business includes voting on bylaw changes, considering resolutions and electing a new statewide board.

Before the meeting convenes on Friday, members will have the option to participate in a Hastings Area Historical Society & Suffrage Tour and a Waterfront Tour and Water Tasting

Friday's keynote speaker is Shelley Buck, President of Owámniyomni Okhódayapi (Oh-WAH-mini-yo-mini Oh-KOH-dah-yah-pee), a Dakota-led organization working to transform five acres of land at Owámniyomni (St. Anthony Falls) into a place of restoration, education, healing and connection.

New members are encouraged to be delegates - it is a great opportunity to learn more about League! Delegates will be reimbursed the \$120 registration fee and hotel costs by LWV ABC.

Email LWV ABC at lwwabc@gmail.com if you interested in being a delegate.

LWVMN Convention Webpage



Can the President DO That?

Many of us are wondering: Can the President DO that? What actions can the President take without Congress? Can executive orders override the U.S. Constitution? How do Minnesota's state and local laws protect our civil rights, voting rights, and environment from federal overreach?

On February 25, 2025 Michelle Witte, Executive Director, League of Women Voters of Minnesota asked University of Minnesota Law School Professor Alan Rozenshtein these very questions and more.

Registration for the webinar exceeded LWVMN's capacity of 500 people on zoom, so if you missed the webinar, it now available on YouTube.

The League of Women Voters of the US Urges Congress to Act in New Letter

Press Release / Last Updated: February 14, 2025



LWV Letter to Congress

On February 14, 2025 the League of Women Voters sent a letter to Congress urging Congress to assert its constitutional authority under Article I to protect our system of checks and balances, the rights of Americans, and democracy itself. The letter was signed by leadership from every state League and DC affiliate in the country.

The letter expresses League concerns about a recent series of executive orders (EOs) and directed actions by the President which violate the law and encroach upon the constitutional authority of Congress. The letter urges congress to take action regarding the President's actions to:

- End birthright citizenship for all persons born in the United States;
- Pause the distribution of federal funds already allocated to programs by Congress;
- Dismantle federal agencies such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which require notice to and the input of Congress before such actions can be taken;
- Allow private citizens, who have neither been elected or complied with the advice and consent requirement of the Senate, to access sensitive government systems; and

- Attempt to reduce the federal workforce through unorthodox means that deny them due process.

Read the full letter to Congress.

LWV Letter to Congress

League encourages everyone to contact your U.S. Senators and Representative about exercising congressional authority. Use this form to contact both at the same time.

Contact Senators and Representative about Congressional Authority



Take Action to Protect Voting Rights
Stop The Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act

The U.S. House and Senate have introduced the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act. The SAVE Act would require *in person paper documentation of citizenship* to register to vote and every time you update your voting registration (all name and address changes). No state, tribal

or military ID, including REAL IDs, include citizenship information, so verification of citizenship will require a birth certificate, a passport or naturalization certificate.

The SAVE Act shifts the burden of proving citizenship from elections officials to individual citizens - and this burden does not fall equally. Birth certificates, even if in the possession of a citizen, will not be sufficient documentation for the 84% of married women who changed their name or the 86% of transgender people whose birth certificates do not match their current legal gender. Only half of American citizens have a passport. Rural citizens, working class citizens, citizens of color, and older citizens are less likely to hold a passport or a readily accessible birth certificate. Citizens unable to produce paper documentation of citizenship, including victims of natural disasters, will be disenfranchised.

The SAVE Act would invalidate all of Minnesota's hard won voter laws designed to remove barriers to voter registration - online registration, registration by mail and automatic voter registration. Voting drives by organization such as LWV will be obsolete.

If enacted, the SAVE Act will become effective on the day of enactment. A vote on the SAVE Act is expected within the next few weeks.

League encourages everyone to contact your U.S. Senators and Representative about the SAVE Act. Use this form to contact both at the same time.

Contact Your Senators and Representative about SAVE



MMIR Update

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous (MMIR) license plate, first issued in February 2024 (the same month of our MMIR program), has generated over \$90,000 to fund the investigation of unsolved cases, rewards for information, community searches and prevention programs. MMIR plates cost \$15.50 plus an annual contribution of at least \$25 when renewing registration.

Recently, the MMIR office, in its first instance of international cooperation, was able to help reunite a First Nation women from Manitoba with her family and friends. After finding her unconscious, Ottertail County Sherriff Office was unable to identify her using the usual law enforcement resources. When a sheriff contacted the MMIR office, staff was able to utilize their contacts in Canada to identify her and facilitate transportation home.

[MPR Article - MMIR International Cooperation](#)

[LWV ABC 2024 MMIR Program](#)

Coming in April ...

All Month - Arab American Heritage Month

April 14 - LWV ABC Annual Meeting

April 16 - LWVMN Lobby Day

April 28 - LWV ABC Board Meeting

April 30 - CMAL Annual Meeting

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

[LWV ABC Calendar](#)

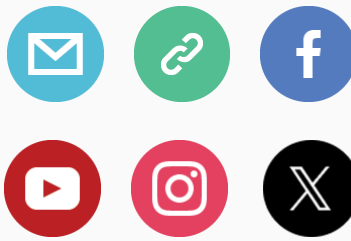
The League of Women voters is a non-partisan civic organization which promotes good government and active, informed participation in local, state and federal government.

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
1482 158th LN NW
Andover, MN 55304

*Copyright © 2025 LWV ABC,
All rights reserved.*

The Voter
The Monthly Newsletter of LWV ABC

