

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter

April 2025



Annual Membership Meeting

Monday, April 14, 2025

In Person Only

Community Room "Bunk House"

Pizza Ranch

13797 Jay St NW

Andover, MN 55304

5:00 - Dinner and Socializing

5:30 - Program Begins

8:00 - Pizza Ranch Closes

When you enter Pizza Ranch, go to your left, passing the buffet, to the "Bunkhouse." Do NOT pay at the registers; we check in at the Bunkhouse and LWV ABC will pay for the group. Suggested donation of \$10-\$20 to help defray the cost

of the buffet.

We have a lot of business to accomplish - approving a budget, electing officers, updating our bylaws, and completing the consensus question for the Federal Judiciary Study voting. We will also acknowledge member milestones and present the Zilla Way Award to a member for their outstanding service.

Vice President Julie Trude will be emailing the final agenda shortly.



Federal Judiciary Study

Monday, March 31

7:00 PM

Online via Zoom

Join us to talk through the Federal Judicial Study material and the issues involved. We will be doing our actual consensus vote at our April 14 Annual Meeting.

FJS Zoom Link



The History and Promise of the Nongame Wildlife Program

In March, we were joined by Carrol Henderson, the Director of the Nongame Wildlife Fund from 1973 to 2018. If you missed the meeting, watch the video to learn more about the Nongame Wildlife Program.

[Watch Program Video](#)

Welcome New Members

Welcome New Members

Susan Cole of Circle Pines
Cheryl Day of Ham Lake
Danielle Holder of Ramsey
Tina Karelson of Fridley
Erin Kennelly of Coon Rapids
Ann Larson of Lino Lakes
Lisa Zamberletti of Ramsey

**Help us continue
Making Democracy Work!**



Renew Your Membership Today

Renew Your Membership

Over the last year, LWV ABC has accomplished a lot - taping 12 public service announcements, registering voters, hosting candidate forums, advocating at the capitol, partnering with libraries to provide voter information and providing opportunities to learn more about important public issues.

If you first joined LWV ABC before 2024, your membership will expire on April 30. Renew now and help us continue to work towards our vision of "a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate."

You can renew your membership online or by check. **Checks must be made out to LWVUS but mailed to LWV ABC, or give check to Treasurer Wes Volkenant at the Annual Membership Meeting.**

[Renew by Check](#)

[Renew Online](#)



Voter Registration Opportunity at Expungement Clinic

Columbia Heights Library

April 24, 2025

Clinic 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Voter Registration until 3:00 PM

The State Attorney General Office, as part of their 2025 Clean Slate Tour, will be offering an expungement clinic at Columbia Heights Library on April 24, 2025. Walk-ins are welcome but those seeking expungement may also pre-register.

Expungement seals records of old, non-violent convictions. The records are no longer accessible to the public, making it easier to obtain housing, jobs and education. The expunged criminal record remains available to the Court, prosecutors, and law enforcement agencies for criminal investigations, prosecution, or for sentencing and probation purposes. The record also remains available to state agencies for certain types of job applications and some occupational licenses.

Expungement through the State Attorney General Office is free. The State Attorney General Office files all the paperwork with the court. While an individual may independently seek an expungement by filing a "Petition for Expungement with the Court", filing fees are \$300 or more for each offense.

During the expungement clinic, LWV ABC will have a voter registration table at the library to answer questions about voting and register voters.

[Sign Up to Register Voters](#)

[Learn More About Expungement](#)

[Pre-Register for the Columbia Heights Expungement Clinic](#)



Blast from the Past - current Secretary Kathy Aanerud, Zilla Way and current Voter Service Chair Geri Nelson at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

Board Highlights

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

- Continued preparations for Annual Meeting on April 14 included finalizing drafts of a budget, dues policy update, and bylaws revisions related to LWVUUS membership platform. Venue arrangements, agenda, and volunteers for the event were also reviewed.
- Nominating committee reported on progress to date and ongoing recruitment efforts for board members for 2024-25 year to be elected at Annual Meeting
- Discussed various issues and problem-solving with the new LWVUS membership platform. Some ongoing resolutions still being sought.
- Action and Advocacy items were discussed including Letters to Editor, Lobby Day on April 28 which may affect our next board meeting date, and increasing member participation by dividing efforts into three categories -- local, state, and lobbying Senator Emmer's office on LWV issues as requested by St. Paul LWV

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



UMRR Action Committee Members Needed

UMRR Action Committee Meetings

Third Tuesdays

4:30 PM via Zoom

The LWV Upper Mississippi River Region Action Committee is seeking more participants from any dues-paying local League members within our five-state region. LWV ABC members **Gretchen Sabel** and **Colleen Werdien** are already active participants.

The Action Committee advocates for state and federal legislation and regulation that supports the UMRR mission to protect the Upper Mississippi River region from pollution degrading our drinking water supply, destroying wildlife habitat and contributing to the “dead zone” in the Gulf of Mexico. Action Committee members may also serve as liaison to like-minded organizations, such as the Sierra Club and the Izaak Walton League.

Some of the major topics UMRR is currently following:

- Confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs)
- Conservation Programs - Farm Bill reauthorization

- Corporate capture of state/federal agencies
- PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances)
- CO2 pipelines
- Coal ash storage
- River Compact Mississippi
- Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI)
- Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative (MRRRI)

If any or all of these topics are of interest to you, sign up for the UMMR Action Committee meeting notices by emailing contact Mary Ellen at memiller.lwvumrr@gmail.com

Read the UMRR Blog



CMAL Annual Meeting

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

**Capitol Region Watershed District
595 Aldine Street
St. Paul**

5:30 – 6:30 PM: Tour of the building and social time

6:30 – 7:15 PM: Keynote Speaker

7:15 - 7:45 PM: Program & Annual Meeting

Join CMAL for a tour of Capitol Region Watershed District, followed by the CMAL Annual Meeting. Keynote speaker James Wisker, District Administrator for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, will present on “Watershed Management in the 21st Century: Weaving Together The Land and The Water”. Mr. Wisker is a 2009 recipient of the Minnesota Division Isaak Walton League Stewardship Award and was also awarded the Watershed Administrator of the Year.

Located near Hamline University, the Capitol Region Watershed District building has been converted from a prior industrial use to a renovated watershed district headquarters using green building principles, including storm water management and energy-saving practices.

All members are encouraged to attend the tour and the meeting, although only two LWV ABC delegates will be able to vote during the business meeting.

Please RSVP to CMAL if you plan to attend.

[RSVP for CMAL Annual Meeting](#)

[Read March CMAL Newsletter](#)



Upcoming Legislative Deadlines

Before a bill can reach the floor of the Senate or House for a vote, it must be passed by committees with jurisdiction over the topic.

Friday, April 4, is the deadline by which all policy committees must act favorably on a policy bill in order for the bill to still be considered viable for the 2025 session.

Friday, April 11 is the last date that most committees have to act favorably on major appropriation or finance bills.

After April 11, major budget bills begin moving to the Senate and House floors for voting by each body. Following the floor votes, a bill may move to a conference committee to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of a bill.

Some committees are exempt from the deadlines. The Senate committees on Capital Investment, Finance, Taxes, and Rules and Administration, as well as the House committees on Capital Investment, Ways and Means, Taxes, and Rules and Legislative Administration, may continue processing bills.

Read LWVMN's Capitol News to keep up to date on what is happening at the capitol

Capitol News

Check the status of bills important to you

House Bill Status

Senate Bill Status



Take Action

LWVMN and partners make it easy to contact legislators about an issue by creating forms that will help you contact both your legislators at the same time. The email language is written for your convenience but it can be personalized.

Take a minute to contact your legislators on these issues by clicking on the hyperlink:

LWVMN: [Redistricting Reform](#)

Minnesotans for Equal Rights: [Minnesota Equal Rights Amendment](#)

Move Minnesota: [Protect Transit Funding](#)

MCEA: [Safe drinking water for well owners](#)

MEP: [Protect environmental funding for communities](#)

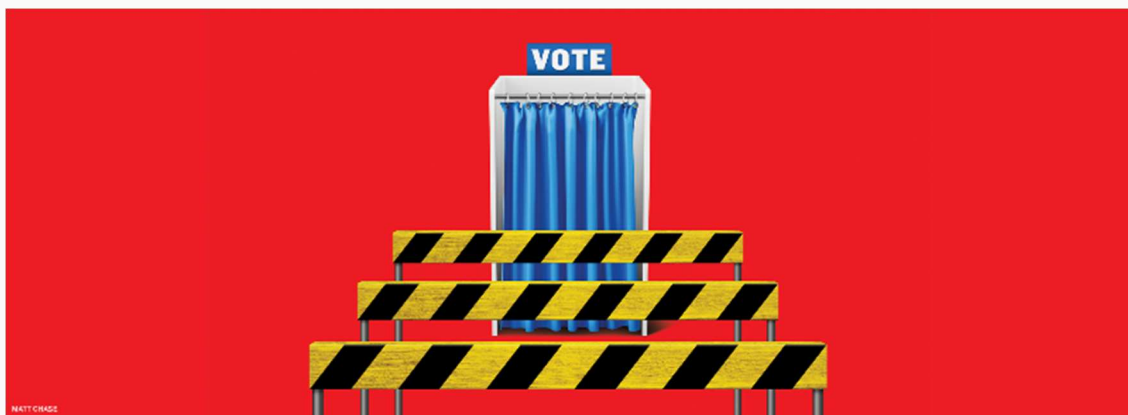
Rise and Repair: [Protect Wild Rice!](#)

Friends of the Boundary Waters: [Prove It First](#)

Clean Water Action: [E-Waste Legislation](#)

Clean Water Action: [Protect MN From PFAS](#)

Clean Water Action: [Ban on Plastic Bag Bans!](#)



Presidents Don't Control Our Elections

Zoom Webinar

Tuesday April 1

2:00 pm (CST)

President Trump recently signed an executive order designed to disenfranchise millions of American citizens, undermine data security, and decertify voting systems across the country.

The executive order includes many provisions included in a pending voter suppression bill, the SAVE Act, which would require every American to provide a document like a passport or birth certificate to register to vote. **The executive order goes far beyond the SAVE Act.** It would give Department of

Government Efficiency access to voter records in every state. It would also decertify every voting machine in the United States, costing states hundreds of millions of dollars.

Join the Brennan Center and a panel of voting experts to learn more about what's at stake and what could come next.

Register for the Brennan Center Webinar



Hands Off! Mass Mobilization Day

Saturday April 5, 2025T

Hands Off! MN State Capitol

12:00 – 2:00 pm

Hands Off! Anoka and Wright Counties Fight Back

Main Street in front of Anoka Courthouse

1:00 - 3:00 pm

The Hands Off! Mass Mobilization Day is intended to be a message to the world from those who do not consent to the destruction of our government, our economy and

our basic rights. Peaceful protests will be held across the country.

Bring your signs and join others in solidarity for a massive, visible, national rejection of actions taken by the current administration.

[Hands Off! Website](#)

The poster features a purple background on the left with the text "SHOULD FREE SPEECH BE CURTAILED TO COMBAT DISINFORMATION?" in yellow and white, followed by "YOU DECIDE in this thought-provoking debate" in white. On the right, under "FEATURED SPEAKERS", are portraits of Jane Kirtley, J.D. and David Lapakko, Ph.D. with their titles and affiliations. The bottom purple banner contains the LWV logo, the event date and time, and the location.

SHOULD FREE SPEECH BE CURTAILED TO COMBAT DISINFORMATION?

YOU DECIDE
in this thought-provoking debate

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Jane Kirtley, J.D.
Silha Professor of Media Ethics and Law
University of Minnesota

David Lapakko, Ph.D.
Emeritus Associate Professor
Communication Studies
Augsburg University

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' OF WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA

Thursday, April 10, 2025 | 6:30 pm
White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church, 328 Maple St, Mahtomedi, MN 55115

Should Free Speech Be Curtailed To Combat Disinformation?

Thursday, April 10, 2025

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

**White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church
328 Maple St
Mahtomedi MN 55115**

Freedom of speech is protected in the Constitution and a right that Americans hold dear. With 24/7 news cycles, AI, and social media, it's difficult to sort out truth from fiction. Should free speech be curtailed to combat disinformation?

Join LWV White Bear Lake Area for a thought-provoking debate and then cast your vote to determine the winner.

The debaters are David Lapakko, Ph.D., Emeritus Associate Professor, Communication Studies, Film, and New Media at Augsburg University and Jane Kirtley, J.D., Silha Professor of Media Ethics and Law, Hubbard School of Journalism at the University of Minnesota.

Reserve Your Spot



What the Heck is a Watershed District? And Why Should I Care?

Tuesday, April 15, 2025

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Zoom and In person

Ramsey County Public Library - Roseville

2180 North Hamline Ave

Roseville MN 55113

Join LWV Roseville Area and a panel of administrators from Capitol Region, Rice

Creek, and Ramsey-Washington water districts as they share their roles in preserving our water quality. Learn about current watershed projects and how you can contribute to the important work of keeping our water clean.

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters Roseville Area in collaboration with Ramsey County Library and Do Good Roseville.

[Watershed Zoom Link](#)

[Flyer](#)



**Staying Inside the 501(c)(3) Lines:
Keeping Non-Partisan in Messy Partisan Times**

Zoom Webinar
April 23, 2025
1:00 PM Central

Remaining nonpartisan is crucial to the protection of 501(c)(3) non-profit status. Navigating where "the line" is can be difficult in these highly partisan times.

With that in mind, Nonprofit Vote is partnering with the dedicated attorneys from the Harmon, Curran, Spielberg & Eisenberg law firm to provide nonprofits with a holistic overview of how they can simultaneously engage voters AND continue their advocacy efforts in a 100% nonpartisan way.

RSVP for Staying Non-Partisan



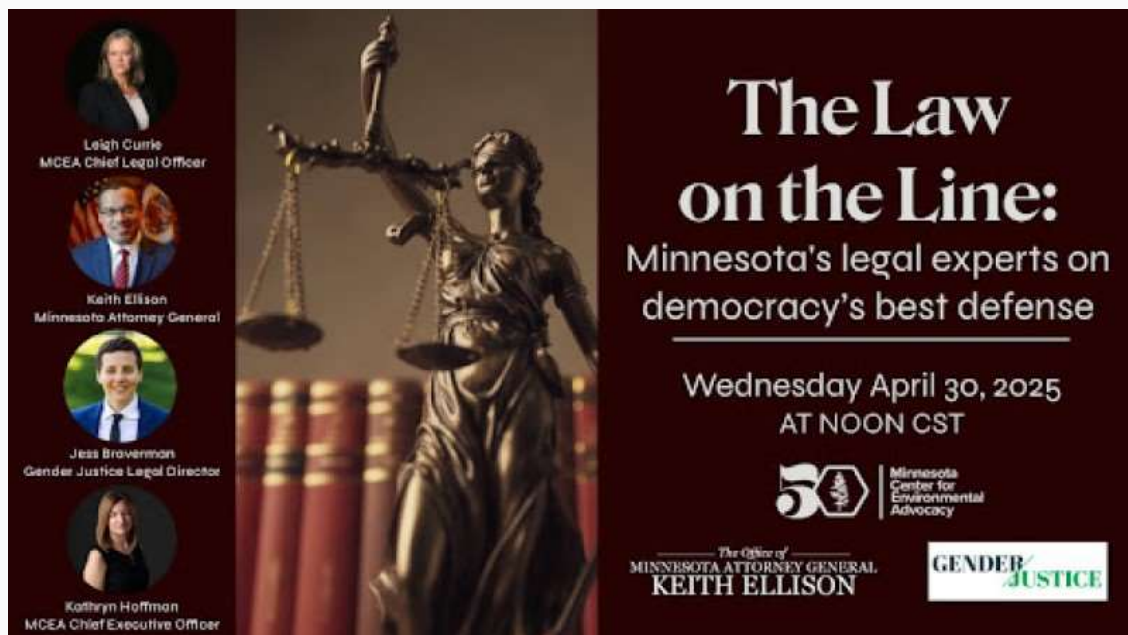
Stand Up! for Healthy Communities Rally
LWVMN Lobby Day
Friday, April 28, 2025
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

**Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
St Paul, MN 55155**

As the Minnesota Legislature considers where to direct state funding, join LWVMN to stand up for a healthy democracy - a healthy democracy that is fueled by healthy communities, and active participation from its citizens.

More details will soon be available from LWVMN but save the date and RSVP now.

RSVP for Standup for Democracy



**The Law on the Line:
Minnesota's legal experts on democracy's best defense**

April 30, 2025

12:00 PM

Zoom Webinar

Join the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) and Minnesota legal experts to discuss how we can utilize the law in Minnesota to protect our

environment and our rights.

MCEA Chief Legal Officer Leigh Currie, Minnesota's Attorney General Keith Ellison, and Gender Justice Legal Director Jess Braverman will consider the importance of the law in protecting our democracy.

[Register for Law on the Line](#)



LWV St. Paul Instagram pictures from the March 8, 2025 50501 International Women's Day protest at the State Capitol

International Women's Day Protest

March 8, 2025

LWVMN Associate Director, Amy Perna, spoke on the Minnesota State Capitol steps on Saturday, March 8, as part of the 50501 International Women's Day protest. Amy's speech was both compelling and a good reminder of what non-partisan means:

"Nonpartisan does not mean neutral. We advocate, we hold power accountable and we take a stand when democracy is under attack."

"It is not partisan to defend the Constitution, it is not partisan to stand against discrimination, it is not partisan to challenge the irresponsible behavior of DOGE, it

is not partisan to demand representation from those elected to serve us"

"We refuse to accept less than a democracy where every voice matters, where every vote counts and where power belongs to the people."

Watch Amy's full speech on YouTube

Amy Perna's Speech

You have constitutional rights:

DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR if an immigration agent is knocking.

DO NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS from an immigration agent if they try to talk to you. You have the right to remain silent.

DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING without first speaking to a lawyer. You have the right to speak with a lawyer.

If you are outside of your home, ask the agent if you are free to leave and, if they say yes, leave calmly.

GIVE THIS CARD TO THE AGENT. If you are inside of your home, show the card through the window, slide it under the door, or read the back of this card out loud to them.

I do not wish to speak with you, answer your questions, or sign or hand you any documents based on my 5th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

I do not give you permission to enter my home based on my 4th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution, unless you have a warrant to enter, signed by a judge or magistrate, that you slide under the door.

I do not give you permission to search any of my belongings based on my 4th Amendment rights.

I choose to exercise my constitutional rights.

These cards are available to citizens and noncitizens alike.



CENTRO LA FAMILIA
ADVOCACY SERVICES
BY THE IMMIGRANT ADVOCATES OF MINNESOTA

Know Your Constitutional Rights

On March 4, LWVMN hosted ACLU MN to discuss constitutional rights enjoyed by everyone while physically in the United States, regardless of citizenship status.

Unlike police officers, ICE agents are not under any legal obligation to inform people of their constitutional rights. The "red card", pictured above, is one of the ways the ACLU and immigration organizations have been informing millions of their Constitutional rights. Carrying the card and presenting it to ICE agents, helps people exercise their Constitutional rights.

The ACLU does not represent people in civil or criminal immigration cases, but does represent anyone whose constitutional rights have been violated. The ACLU is concerned about deceptive tactics used by ICE, especially the so called "warrants" issued by ICE. An "ICE Warrant" is just a piece of paper intended to confuse people. It does not give ICE agents any right to enter or search places. Without a warrant from a judge, which is rare, ICE agents have no legal authority to enter a home, a car, a school or non-public spaces of any businesses, such as a restaurant, without an invitation. Education is critical, as simply opening a door, even if opened by a child, is considered an invitation to enter.

For more detail and to learn more, watch the video of the Know Your Rights webinar.

[Watch Know Your Rights](#)

[ACLU MN's Immigrants' Rights Web Page](#)



Michelle Witte, speaking at the LWV Dututh Citizens In Action event in January 2025.

We Will Not be Erased

On March 23, the Star-Tribune published an opinion piece written by **LWVMN Executive Director Michelle Witte** and Kelsey Waits, the Minnesota President of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). In the opinion piece, entitled "Try as the Trump administration might, it can't erase women", their comments include:

"Now the federal government is going even further — banning or limiting nearly 200 terms from government materials and websites. Words that describe key aspects of the human experience — accessible, advocate, belong, Black, cultural heritage, disabilities, equal opportunity, expression, gender, Indigenous community, justice, mental health, pollution, trauma, victim, vulnerable populations — are being erased. And among them? The ultimate F-word: female."

"But we will not be erased".

"Our Constitution tells the story of an evolving and more inclusive democracy. Beginning with the ratification of the Bill of Rights in 1791, the amendments to our Constitution have expanded the definition of "We the People," striving to "establish justice" and "secure the blessings of liberty" for all. From the right to bear arms to the abolition of slavery, from the right of women to vote to the elimination of poll taxes, our history reflects a slow but steady march toward providing the blessings of liberty to a diverse country, promoting greater equity and inclusion for all within the American dream. It's a story of both deep injustice and

extraordinary progress — one that should be illuminated, not erased."

[Read Full Star Tribune Opinion Piece](#)

[Learn more about AAUW](#)



State of Democracy 2025

Celina Stewart, LWVUS CEO

On March 5, 2025, **Celina Stewart, LWVUS CEO** released this year's "State of Democracy", as well as a press release in response to the president's address to congress.

In her State of Democracy address, Celina reminds us that "Democracy is a living, breathing, evolving system we must nurture. Democracy does not only happen in Washington DC, it happens each and every time an individual registers to vote and casts a ballot. Democracy happens when we speak up." "One day we will look back and ask ourselves if we adequately met this moment" and "nurtured our democracy when it mattered the most."

In her March 5th press release, Celina commented that "As an organization committed to empowering voters and defending democracy, the League is outraged by the current administration's assault on the American people...The American people are tired of the divisiveness, reckless decision-making, and unpresidential conduct coming from the executive office because it threatens the very fabric of our democracy."

On March 23, 2025, in response to the "Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections" executive order, Celina commented "This executive order is an assault on our republic and a dangerous attempt to silence American voters. The President continues to overstep his authority and brazenly disregard settled law in this country. To be very clear — the League of Women Voters is prepared to fight back and defend our democracy."

Listen to Celina's address and/or read the entire press releases by clicking the buttons below.

Watch State of Democracy

March 5 LWVUS Press Release

March 23 LWVUS Press Release

Coming in May ...

All month - Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

May 12 - Program Meeting

May 19 - Last day of the legislative session

May 21 - LWV ABC Book Club

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

LWV ABC Calendar

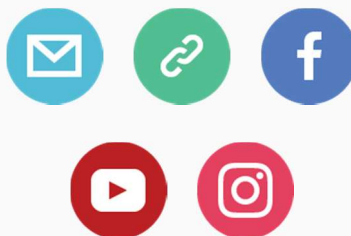
The League of Women voters is a non-partisan civic organization which promotes good government and active, informed participation in local, state and federal government.

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
1482 158th LN NW
Andover, MN 55304**