

# The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter

August 2025



Annual picnic 2022.

## Annual Potluck Picnic

**Monday, August 18, 2025**

**5:30 pm Gather**

**6:00 Dinner and Announcements**

**Note the Date - Third Monday of August**

**Lion's Park in Coon Rapids - Shelter 2**

**11861 Hanson Blvd NW**

**Coon Rapids, MN 55433**

Join us for the annual potluck picnic. Bring a dish to share, and the utensils needed to serve it. No agenda except for some announcements.

Water, ice tea, lemonade, as well as compostable plates, cups and utensils will be provided by Gretchen.

***If the weather isn't cooperating, check your email. No rain date will be set***

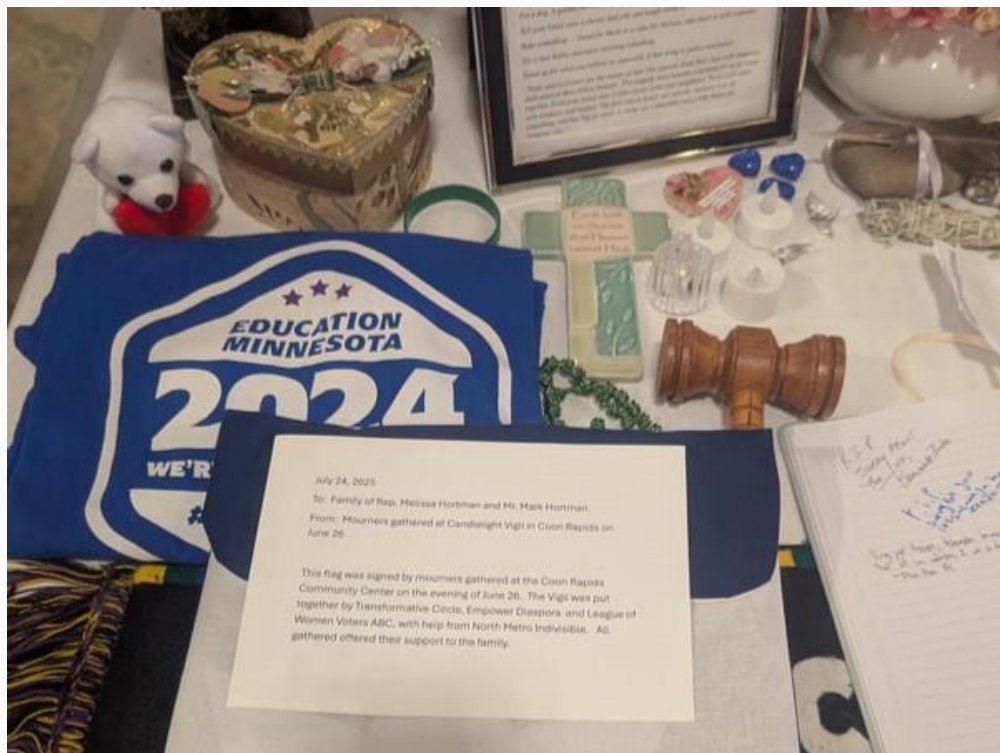
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# Welcome New Members

## Welcome New Member

**Samantha Streater** of Coon Rapids

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## Candlelight Vigil

by Gretchen Sabel

LWV ABC joined with Transformative Circle and Empower Diaspora to plan and host a candlelight vigil for House Speaker Emeritus Melissa Hortman, her husband Mark and dog Gilbert, and to show support for Senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette following their shooting on June 14. North Metro Indivisible participated as well.

The vigil on June 25, 2025 was held at the Coon Rapids Community Center; about 75 people attended. Quiet cello music was provided by Yuna Yong Chen of Coon Rapids. Ian Oundo from Empower Diaspora provided remarks and **Betsy Kiekhafer** from Transformative Circle and LWV ABC led the group in meditations.

Attendees signed Minnesota State flags for the Hortman and Hoffman families. These flags were taken to the State Capitol where they will be forwarded to the families. Thanks to **Julie Trude** for sewing cloth envelopes for each flag for a nicer presentation.

The flag for the Hortmans is shown above with other memorial materials outside the House Chamber, but the flag was taken to the House Information office where they will forward it to the family. The memorial display at the Capitol for Representative Hortman is quite moving, with so many people having come by to pay their respects.

Best wishes to Senator **John Hoffman** and Yvette for a continued recovery. We were very glad to see that they are both out of the hospital now.

***Watch video of the KARE11 coverage of the event on the LWV ABC Blog.***

**LWV ABC Blog Post**



Blast from the Past - 2014 Candidate Forum Studio set.

## **Candidate Forums**

### **Special Election**

2025 Elections Season begins with the Special Election for House District 34B. The Brooklyn Park, Osseo, Maple Grove League of Women taped a **Candidate Forum on July 31 which will be added to the LWV ABC 2025 Candidate Forum webpage as soon as available.** The Primary Special Election will be August 12, 2025 and the Special Election on September 16.

### **General Election**

LWV ABC will hold candidate forums for contested General Election contested races. Once the candidate filing and withdrawal period ends, Voter Services Co-Chair **Jeorgette Knoll** will determine which forums LWV ABC will be hosting. LWV

ABC will start **accepting questions for candidates by August 20 on our 2025 Candidate Forum Webpage**. Check our webpage or look for an announcement on our (new) Facebook. Our forums will be taped in September without a live audience.

### Candidate Forum Training

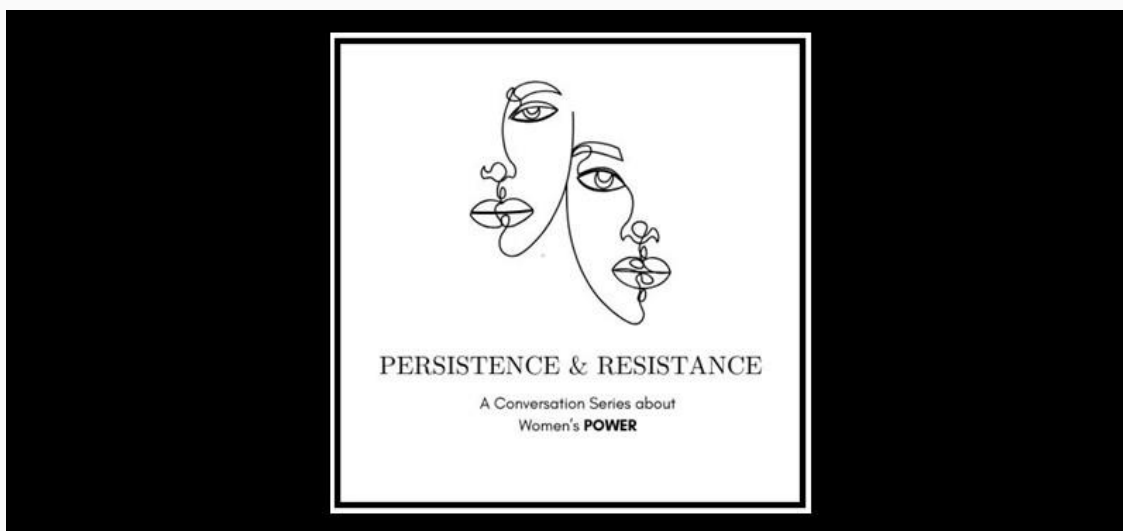
All LWV ABC members who wish to help with 2025 Candidate Forums are invited to attend **training on Tuesday, August 5**. If you have not sent a RSVP for the Candidate Forum Training please do so as soon as possible.

[2025 Candidate Forum Webpage](#)

[RSVP for Candidate Forum Training](#)

***Announcements will be made on our new Facebook Page. Be sure to follow us on our new Facebook page.***

[New LWV ABC Facebook Page](#)



## **Persistence and Resistance: A Conversation Series about Women's POWER**

**September 25, 2025 - March 14, 2026**

**Reservations Required, Tickets \$8.00**

**Sponsored by Anoka County Historical Society and LWV ABC**

"Persistence and Resistance: A Conversation Series about Women's POWER" is an opportunity to engage in a discussion regarding society's perception of women throughout history, the challenges they have faced, and the valuable lessons we can draw from that legacy. These programs will encourage safe conversations, the sharing of experiences, and foster a better understanding of the history that surrounds us every day.

The conversations are not a book discussion but each session will be grounded by books and other published material, establishing a solid foundation for the topic and discussion.

We hope that attendees will leave with action steps for their future and a deeper understanding of women's power then and now – whether quietly persisting or loudly resisting.

**The first Persistence and Resistance Conversation, on September 25, will focus on Reproductive Rights.** Recommended reading:

- *Booth Girls: Pregnancy, Adoption, and the Secrets We Kept* (2021) by Kim Heikkila
- *Evidence of V: A Novel in Fragments, Facts, and Fictions* (2019) by Sheila O'Connor

Both books are available at local libraries.

### **Future Persistence and Resistance Conversations:**

- November 18, 2025 - Women in Politics
- January 24, 2026 - The Nurses of Vietnam



- March 14, 2026 - Women's Mental Health

[Get Tickets for September](#)



2017 Friend of League recipient Leslie Sauer Smith, QCTV Community Television producer, pictured with **Mary Jo Truchon** and **Gretchen Sabel**.

## Friend of League Nominations

The Friend of League Award is awarded to a community member or group who assists LWV ABC in achieving our goal of good government. Recent past recipients include Connie Moore of Alexandra House, TJ Tronson of NorthMetroTV, Anoka County Historical Society staff, Anoka County Historical Society staff and Anoka County Elections staff.

Please submit nominees by August 15. The LWV ABC Board will make a final decision at the August Board Meeting.

***Click the button below to submit your nominations.***

**Submit Your Nomination**

**Previous Recipients of Friend of League**



Photo from LWV Roseville Webpage.

## **Take Action to Defend Democracy**

While voting and protesting is critical for democracy, defending democracy also requires holding elected officials accountable and educating voters. LWVUS, LWVMN and other pro-democracy organizations all have "Take Action" webpages which can provide you with the tools and information to take action, whether you



only have a few minutes or an hour or two.

## Contact Congress

Action Alerts are a fast and easy way to contact your elected officials. LWVUS has several current Action Alerts:

- Support passage of the reintroduced John Lewis Voting Rights Act
- Hold Congress Accountable for the One Big Beautiful Bill
- Tell your Senators to oppose the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act

Current ACLU Actions Alerts include:

- No Troops on Our Streets
- Shut Down "Alligator Alcatraz"
- Stop Masked Agents - support the "No Secret Police Act"
- Keep DOGE Out of Our Data

## Write Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor in local and statewide newspapers are an effective means of sharing information and countering misinformation. While only the board may approve "official" LWV Letters to the Editor, all members are encouraged to write letters as individuals, not as League members. Note sure how to get started? LWVMN and LWVUS offer some sample letters to revise and send, as well as facts on important issues.

## Attend Fired Up Fridays

The next LWVMN Fired-Up Fridays is scheduled for August 22 or join LWVMN on August 11 at 11:30 am for the August Academy 2025 class *How to Advocate for Healthy Communities*.

## Social Media

Whether you are a frequent or occasional user of social media, take the time to post information from reliable sources. Follow and repost from LWV ABC and other Leagues (our links at the bottom of this newsletter). **Do NOT engage with misinformation posted by others** - it simply makes the misinformation more popular. Instead post the correct information without referencing the original

inaccurate post.

***Find links to everything mentioned above on the Take Action webpages.***

**LWVMN Take Action Webpage**

**LWVUS Take Action Webpage**

**ACLU Take Action Webpage**



## **New Federal Judiciary Position**

In June 2025, at the LWVUS Council, the League of Women Voters adopted a position on the Federal Judiciary. The position is now part of the League's official public policy positions and will be included in the next edition of *Impact on Issues*.

The position is the result of the Federal Judiciary study authorized by the delegates,

including LWV ABC delegates, at the 2024 LWVUS Convention. In April, members of LWV ABC and 320 other local Leagues, representing 45 states and the District of Columbia, participated in the development of this position by discussing consensus questions and submitting our group response.

**A League position, developed through the consensus process, allows League members, when acting as League members, to advocate on an issue.** A position is purposely stated in broad terms so the position can be applied, for many years to come, to specific legislation and other actions.

If you look closely at the final language of the new position, the language does reflect our discussion and the comments we submitted. Specifically, the addition of "recognizing the need for limited exceptions" in the Transparency section is reflective of our concerns.

**For the federal judiciary, the League supports the essential principles of:**

- **Transparency:** Federal court documents, proceedings, and rulings, including those in "shadow docket" cases, should be open and available to the public within the bounds of the law, recognizing the need for limited exceptions, such as legally protected sensitive information.
- **Accountability:** Federal judges and Justices should be held legally and ethically responsible for the integrity of their actions, with enforceable consequences for violations.
- **Independence:** Federal judges and Justices should act in accordance with the Constitution and statutory and case law, free from the influence of the other branches of government and free from shifting popular and political opinion.
- **Ethics:** Federal judges and Justices should adhere to ethical standards of conduct that apply universally at all levels of the federal courts. There should be a meaningful enforcement process with judges and Justices subject to penalties for failure to comply with the standards.

***Click the buttons below to read the full Federal Judiciary Position or find all other League positions in Impact on Issues.***

**Full Judiciary Position**

**2024-2026 Impact on Issues**

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# August Academy



## **New Member Orientation**

**Tuesday, August 12, 2025**

**12:00 - 1:00 PM**

Whether you're new to our League or just want a refresher, this session is your chance to dive into our vibrant history and discover the exciting work we do, with an emphasis on the State and National levels. Get ready for a fun and engaging overview of who we are, what drives us, and how you can jump in and make a difference.

## **Other LWVMN August Academy Classes**

Several other August Academy classes will be held during the week of August 11. While some may only be of interest to members holding specific leadership roles, others may be of interest to all members, including:

- ***Advocating for Healthy Communities***
- ***Canva Workshop*** (Canva is free online graphic design program)
- ***Nonpartisanship, Belonging, and Hope - Oh My!***

**Register for New Member Orientation**



## **Women's Rights are Human Rights: Reflections on UN Commission on the Status of Women from LWV Delegates**

**August 12, 2025  
11:30 AM Central via Zoom**

In March 2025, twenty delegates from the League of Women Voters attended the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 69) in New York. Join LWVUS to hear about the delegates' global advocacy experience and what they envision as next steps for the future.

League has a long history of supporting international cooperation to promote peace. League was an early supporter of the League of Nations. The League has held "Observer" status with the United Nations since the United Nation's 1945 inception, when League was invited by President Harry Truman to serve as a consultant to the US delegation. Since July 1997, League of Women Voters members have served as delegates to the United Nations NGO (Non-Government Organization) Commission on the Status of Women.



[Register for Webinar](#)

***Learn more about the League's work with the United Nations.***

[History of League and the United Nations](#)

[Blog: My Experience as a UN Observer](#)

[Blog: Women, Girls, and Climate Change at COP27](#)

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## **Understanding the Three Branches of Government**

**LWVUS Democracy in Your Hands Series**

**Wednesday, August 20, 2025**

**11:30am Central**

**Online via Zoom - Registration Required**

Join LWVUS for a conversation that takes a deep dive into why it's important that voters understand the purview of the executive branch, judicial branch, and legislative branch of government.

*Understanding the Three Branches of Government* is part of the

LWVUS monthly *Democracy in Your Hands Series*. Recordings of previous Democracy in Your Hands Series are available to watch online:

- *Understanding Media Literacy* - recorded June 18, 2025
- *Championing the Issues that Matter* - recorded July 23, 2025.

[Register for Democracy in Your Hands Series](#)

[Watch Previous Democracy In Your Hands Video](#)

## DIASPORA SPEAKS

WHERE STORIES SHAPE POLICY 



**MODERATOR**  
**DR. YAKASAH WEHYEE**

### AUGUST TOPIC

EDUCATION & THE AFRICAN  
IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

THURSDAY  
AUGUST 21ST  
6PM - 7:30PM

RSVP AT [WWW.EMPOWERDIASPORA.ORG](http://WWW.EMPOWERDIASPORA.ORG)



PRESENTED BY EMPOWER DIASPORA



## **Diaspora Speaks: Education & the African Immigrant Experience**

**Thursday, August 21, 2025  
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM Via Zoom**

In August, **Empower Diaspora debuts "Diaspora Speaks"**, a monthly community conversation rooted in the lived experiences of African immigrants and the policies that impact their daily lives. Empower Diaspora plans to cover **a different topic on the third Thursday of each month**, led by community, with policymakers, community partners, allies, and industry experts.

On August 21, the topic will be "Education & the African Immigrant Experience". The moderator will be Dr. Yakasah Wehyee. Dr. Wehyee is a respected political scientist, educator, former city councilmember, and thought leader whose work explores the intersections of civic engagement, race, and immigrant identity.

Empower Diaspora is a grassroots organization dedicated to empowering and amplifying the voices of African immigrants across the United States. Their mission is to foster political participation, civic engagement, and community advocacy through education, mobilization, and support.

***Register for the August Diaspora Speaks and follow Empower Diaspora on Facebook and Instagram.***

**Register for August Diaspora Speaks**

**Empower Diaspora Facebook**

**Empower Diaspora Instagram**



Photos (above) of Anoka Good Trouble Lives On are from Instagram @Indivisblenorthmetro and @ian.oundo



Photos (above) of the Minneapolis Good Trouble Lives On are from Instagram @handmaids\_of\_mn (photo by@guru\_merc) and @indivisible\_twincities

## Good Trouble Lives On

Were you able to attend a local Good Troubles Lives On event?

Watch a series of short videos posted by the Minnesota Women's March, one of the Minneapolis organizers, to hear some of the inspiring speeches on July 17 in Minneapolis.

Indivisible North Metro has posted to Instagram a very short video of the Anoka Good Troubles Lives On march. Can you spot some of our members in attendance?

**Minnesota Women's March Playlist**

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## Coming in September...

**Sept 15 - Oct 15 National Hispanic Heritage Month**  
**Mid to Late Sept - Candidate Forums**

**Sept 8** Program Meeting  
**Sept 16** National Voter Registration Day  
**Sept 17** LWV ABC Book Club  
**Sept 17** Democracy in Your Hands Webinar  
**Sept 19** Early Voting Begins  
**Sept 22** Board Meeting

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

**LWV ABC Calendar**

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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**

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## **More About LWV ABC**



[Website](#)



[Facebook](#)



[Email](#)



[Bluesky](#)



[Instagram](#)



[YouTube](#)

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*The Voter  
The Monthly Newsletter of LWV ABC*