

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter
July 2026

No July Program Meeting

Join us in August for our annual potluck picnic.



Welcome New Members

Ellen Hadley of Anoka

Lara Newberge of Andover

Heidi Ripplinger of Anoka

Barbara Schilling of Andover

Kathleen Simmelink of Fridley

Christine Sowden of Coon Rapids

Kandise Zethren of Oak Grove



Cindy Wetzell at Mississippi Library, 2020.

Voter Engagement

Thanks to everyone who volunteered for our Voter Registration events in June!

Andover Family Fun Fest Parade

Our next voter engagement event is the Andover Family Fun Fest Parade on **July 11**. We will be handing out voter information instead of candy. Gretchen is providing her pickup truck for those who would like to be in the parade but find the mile-long walk challenging. Meet at the Andover HS parking lot by 9:30.

Help Decorate Gretchen's Pick-Up

We will also be meeting at Gretchen's house on **July 10 at 6:30pm** to decorate the pickup! Email lwvabc@gmail.com for Gretchen's address. All are welcome with ideas and/or decorations! This should be a lot of fun!

[Register for Andover Parade](#)

Voter Registration Training

If you are new to voter registration, or need an update, you can find resources on our ["Voter Registration Volunteers" webpage](#) or attend the Voter Registration/Get Out the Vote training offered by LWV Mpls

- Wednesday, July 15 - 7:00pm-8:15pm via Zoom
- Wednesday, August 5 - 7:00pm-8:15pm via Zoom

Register for Voter Registration Training



Candidate Forums

In July, LWV ABC will tape eight candidate forums for the Primary Election:

- Anoka City Council Members At Large (elect 2)
- Blaine City Council Member Ward #1
- Coon Rapids Mayor
- Fridley City Council Ward 1
- Fridley City Council Ward 2

- Ramsey City Council At Large
- Anoka County Commissioner District #3
- Anoka County Commissioner District #4

Voters, including League members, are encouraged to submit questions about specific issues in your city or county commissioner district.

Submit Questions for Candidates

Volunteer for Candidate Forums

Thanks to everyone who signed up for the Candidate Forums!

We still need one more Forum Coordinator. Forum Coordinators, working with the voter services chairs, make sure we have all the supplies needed on the night of the forum. Email Jeorgette Knoll at lwvabcmn@gmail.com if you have questions.

Volunteer for Candidate Forums



Geri Nelson and Linda Rodgers, former Voter Service Chairs and current Emeritus Board Members.

Moderator Training

5:30 - 8:00 PM

July 27, 2026

Champlin United Methodist Church

or

August 11, 2026

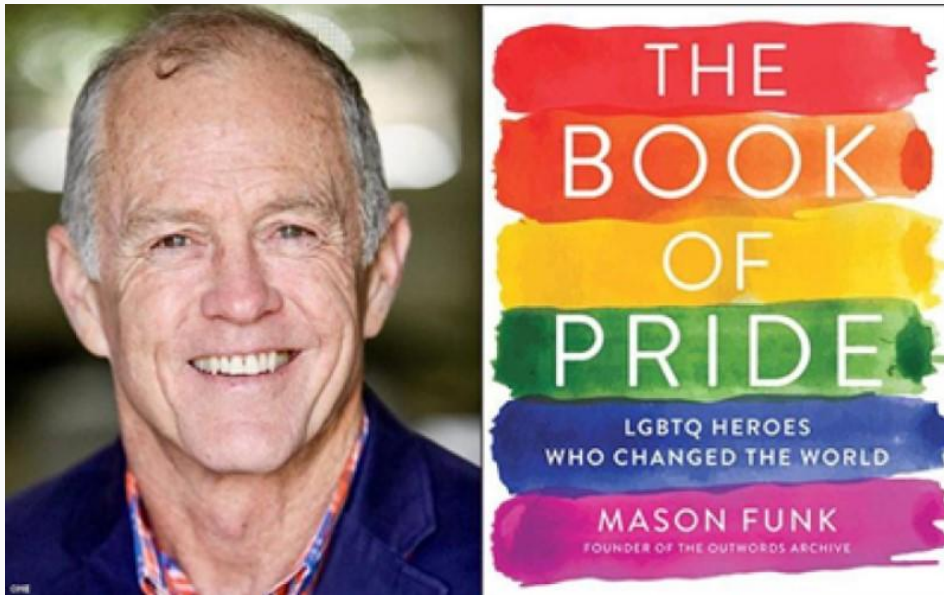
Davanni's - Coon Rapids

Geri Nelson and **Linda Rodgers**, previous LWV ABC Voter Services Chairs, will be providing in person moderator training on July 27 and August 11. Dinner will be available at both trainings.

All members who might be interested in moderating at forums are encouraged to attend. Completing training does not require you to moderate a forum but no member can moderate without completing training.

Experienced moderators are only required to repeat training every 4 years but are welcome to update their training. This is a unique opportunity for LWVMN approved in person training, as most LWVMN moderator training is conducted via Zoom.

[SignUp for Moderator Training](#)



Book Club

Wednesday, July 15

7:00 pm on Zoom

***The Book of Pride: LGBTQ Heroes Who Changed the World (2019)* by Mason Funk**

The Book of Pride captures the story of the gay rights movement from the 1960s to the present, through richly detailed, interviews with the leaders, activists, and ordinary people who witnessed the movement and made it happen. The 75 individuals featured include Minnesotans Karen Clark, Don Quaintance, Jean Tetter and Sharon Day.

The Book of Pride was compiled by Mason Funk of Outwards, a nonprofit organization dedicated to capturing, preserving and sharing the stories of LGBTQIA2S+ elders. Stories in the book are available on [The Outwards Website](#) in written and video format.

Book Club Zoom Link

Upcoming Books



Vice President Julie Trude and Treasurer Wes Volkenant pictured in September 2025.

June 22, 2026 Board Highlights

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

- Discussed monthly programs that will include a picnic in August and a possible screening of The Officials with election partners in September. Details will be finalized in a separate meeting.
- Members have been actively responding to Voter Registration activities in our communities, arranged by Cindy Wetzell. One addition to the schedule is having a unit in the Andover Fun Fest Parade on July 11. Members will have a choice of walking or riding during the parade route.
- Gretchen Sabel and Julie Trude will now both be virtually attending the LWVUS National Convention in Columbus, Ohio on June 25-28.
- Jeorgette Knoll and Gretchen Sabel, Voter Service Co-Chairs, reported on the activities and arrangements that have been finalized for taping Primary Election forums in the studios of our local cable stations and at Fridley Council Chambers as arranged by Julie Trude with City of Fridley. Their work is supported by the spreadsheet created by Pat Kennedy that captures all components of the arrangements.
- Geri Nelson reported on Forum Moderator training dates. All members who have expressed an interest in this training have been notified of the dates.

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

Voting Before Election Day in Minnesota

IN PERSON ABSENTEE

- Begins 46 Days Before Election Day
- Identical to absentee voting by mail
- Complete an absentee ballot application
- Submit ballot in absentee ballot envelopes

EARLY VOTING

New in 2026

- Begins 18 Days Before Election Day
- Similar to voting on Election Day
- Complete a short certificate
- Insert your completed ballot in ballot counter

DIRECT VOTING

- Begins 18 Days Before Election Day
- Hybrid of Absentee and Early Voting Process
- Complete an absentee ballot application
- Insert your completed ballot in ballot counter

Vote Before Election Day 2026 Changes

In Person and Mail Absentee Voting for the Primary Election began June 26. In Person Absentee Voting is available at the Anoka County Government Center and at some city election offices.

Anoka cities now offering In Person Absentee Voting for residents of their cities:

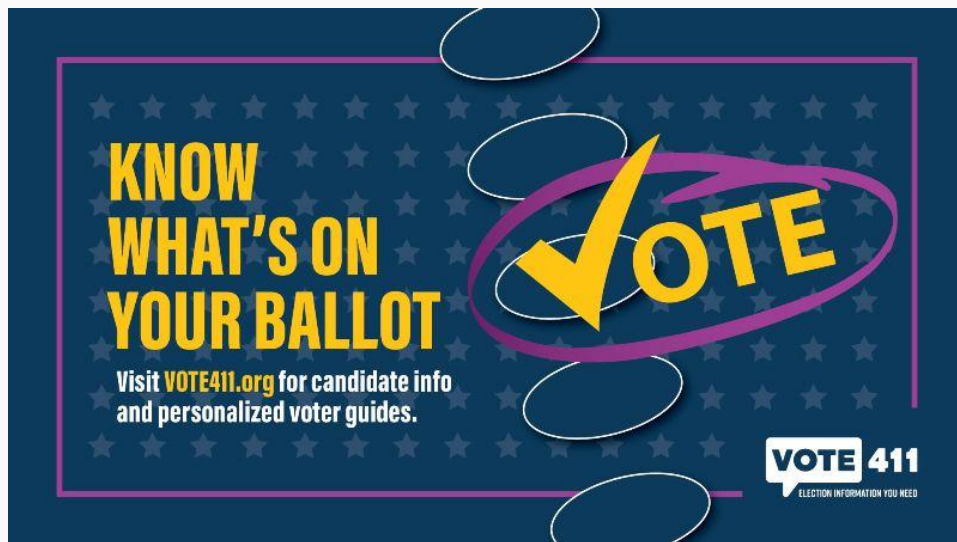
- Andover
- Anoka
- Centerville
- Circle Pines
- Coon Rapids
- Fridley
- Hilltop
- Ramsey

New legislation allows cities to opt out of offering In Person Absentee Voting for the entire 45 day early voting period. Instead, cities can choose to offer Early Voting or Direct Voting for 18 days prior to an election. With Early Voting and Direct Voting, voters insert their ballot directly into a ballot counter. "Direct Voting" requires completion of the Absentee Ballot Application to receive your ballot. "Early Voting" (new in 2026) requires completion of a short certification to receive your ballot.

Cities which will start Early Voting for the Primary Election on July 24:

- Bethel
- Blaine
- Champlin
- Columbia Heights
- Columbus
- East Bethel
- Ham Lake
- Lexington
- Lino Lakes
- Linwood Township
- Nowthen
- Oak Grove
- St. Francis
- Spring Lake Park

Anoka County Absentee and Early Voting Locations



Vote411 Voter Guides

VOTE411 went live on June 26 with candidate information for the August 11 Primary Election. All candidates in the Primary Election had the opportunity to upload contact information and answers to a few questions.

Help spread the word! Encourage your candidates to participate. Share VOTE411 and information about local candidate forums with friends, family, neighbors, and community groups so every voter has access to trusted election information.

Vote411



Observer Corps Training

July 22, 2026

2:00 PM via Zoom

An observer is an individual who attends a public meeting of a governmental body/agency/committee, notes what happens at the meeting and reports back to the League.

Observers collect information on process and protocol as well as content. League promotes open, transparent, and accountable government by documenting:

- Who is there? Media? Staff? Public?
- Has a quorum been met?
- Was the meeting announced in advance?
- Was the agenda available in advance?
- Is the venue accessible?
- Can the space accommodate members of the public?

- Can the proceedings be heard?
- Is the agenda being followed?
- Are the proceedings being conducted in a professional manner?
- Are rules and procedure available to the public?
- Opportunity for public input?
- Overall tone or atmosphere?

LWV ABC has been observing Anoka County Board meetings since October 2015. We hope to expand our efforts to other governmental bodies in the future.

This LWVUS training will share best practices for League's to build their Observer Corps network.

[Register for Observer Corp Training](#)



Barbara McQuade, Author of *The Fix*

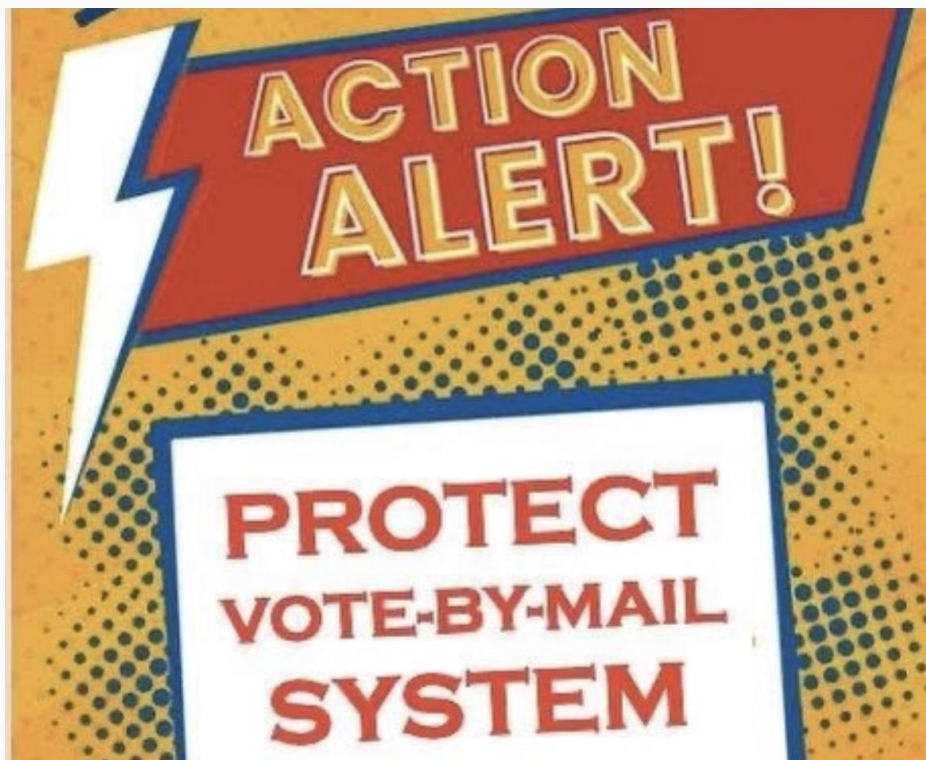
July 8, 2026

5:00 PM via Zoom

In July, LWV Minneapolis will hold a special session to honor one year of their Women Defending Democracy series. LWV Minneapolis is thrilled to welcome attorney, professor and author Barbara McQuade. McQuade served as the US Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan from 2010 to 2017. Currently, she is a professor of law at the University of Michigan Law School, a legal analyst for NBC News and MSNBC and cohost of the podcast #SistersInLaw. She is the author

of *The Fix: Saving America from the Corruption of a Mob-Style Government* (2026) and *Attack from Within: How Disinformation Is Sabotaging America* (2024).

[Register for July 8 WDD Session](#)



Tell USPS that Mail Voting is Already Secure

Deadline: July 2, 2026, 5:00 PM ET

On June 2, 2026, the United States Postal Service (USPS) issued a proposed rule that would create unnecessary barriers to voting that could prevent eligible voters from receiving and returning their mail-in and absentee ballots and serve to disenfranchise eligible voters who are unable to vote in person.

The League is encouraging people to submit comments opposing [USPS's proposal](#).

[Submit Comments to USPS](#)



Some of the Minnesota Delegation to the LWVUS National Convention

LWVUS National Convention

By Gretchen Sabel

The LWV US National Convention took place June 25 to June 28 in Columbus, Ohio. Minnesota sent a 17 member delegation in person; 8 more delegates attended virtually. Among the virtual delegates were LWV ABC members Julie Trude and Gretchen Sabel. The delegates elected a new LWV US President - **Sania Irwin** of Chicago. Sania has a couple PhD's in Engineering, started and runs a social-justice non-profit, is a mother and distance runner in her spare time. She will serve as President of LWV until June of 2028.

The new membership system has been a success - 18,000 new members have joined LWV in the past year! Financially, LWV is in a very strong position for the next two years. The LWV Washington State position on the treatment of immigrants was approved for inclusion as an official position of LWV US and will be published in the next Impact on Issues.

The main accomplishment of the Convention was **adoption of the 2026-2028 Program for Action: Defending a Democracy Under Siege**, which includes six prongs for programmatic focus. The prongs are broadly worded to be able to capture actions that could take place in the next biennium.

Voting Rights: Ensuring that every eligible voter has equitable access to register,

vote, and have their ballot counted fairly and accurately.

Protecting Elections: Protecting and empowering voters to ensure that our elections are fair, accessible, and representative of all Americans.

Redistricting: Ensuring fair and equitable representation for all residents through transparent and accountable redistricting processes and protection of the US Census.

Immigration: Advocating for a fair immigration process and a path to citizenship. Standing up for immigrant communities to ensure they receive fair treatment under the law and encouraging new citizens' participation in our democracy.

Individual Rights: Protecting and defending the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and preventing attacks that undermine those fundamental freedoms.

The Presidency: Working to guarantee that presidential power is exercised within the constitutional framework of a dynamic balance between the three branches of government (checks and balances).

Supporting the Abolition of the Electoral College, including the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

It was a very successful convention, well attended and accomplished all that was needed. Onward!

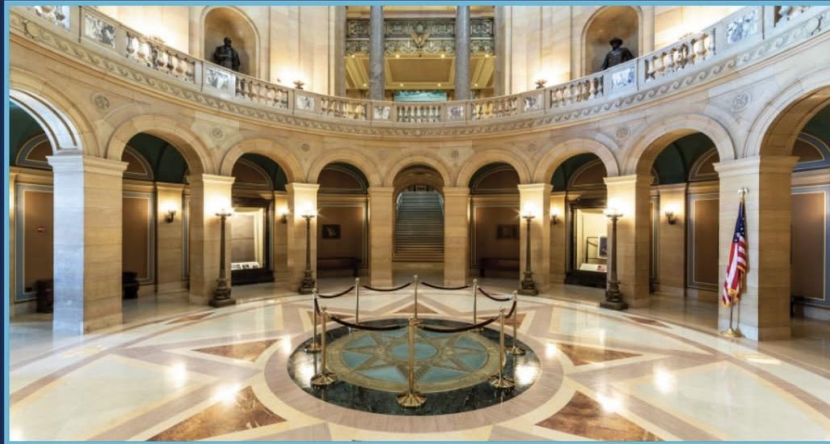
MINNESOTA

AMERICA 250

**Sharing the Spirit of America: Nationwide Reading
of the Declaration of Independence**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2026 | 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Minnesota State Capitol, Rotunda



For more information, visit: <https://www.mnhs.org/events/55974979197>

Register for this Free Event

Coming in August ...

- Aug 5 - Voter Registration Training
- Aug 10 - Annual Picnic
- Aug 11 - Primary Election
- Aug 11 - Candidate Forum Moderator Training
- Aug 24 - Board 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



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