

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter
September 2026



Zilla Way Award

In August, LWV ABC awarded the Zilla Way Award for Outstanding Leadership to **Leslie Waterhouse**.

Leslie's leadership, public speaking and organizational skills help educate the public on candidates and important topics. Leslie is a valued Board Member who makes a difference!

All Zilla Way Award Winners



Candidate Forums

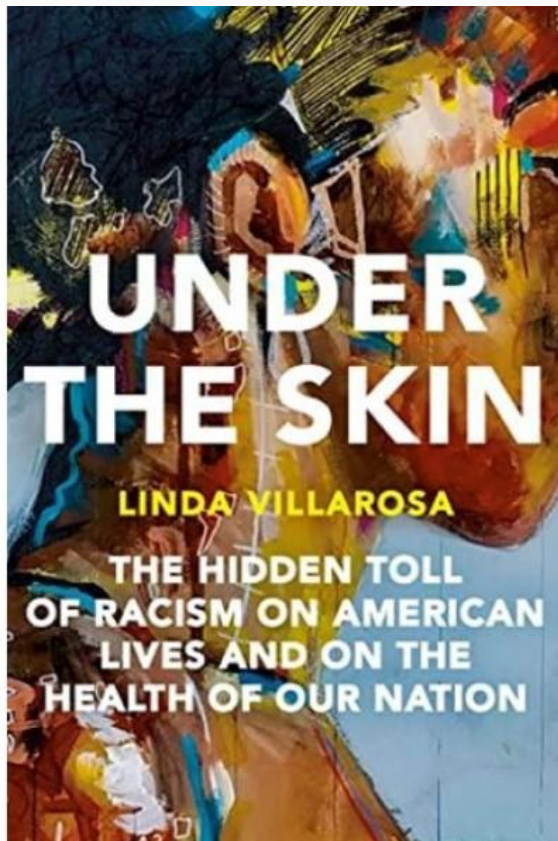
August 22 - October 6, 2026

LWV ABC has scheduled 43 Candidate Forums for contested city, county and legislative races. We started recording on August 27 and will continue through October 6, when we end our forum season with the Ham Lake area forums. The Ham Lake area forums, our only live forums, are co-sponsored by the Ham Lake Area Chamber of Commerce.

LWV ABC forums are posted on our website and YouTube, as well aired on local cable television. Our website also includes forums hosted by other local LWVs for races that include some Anoka County voters.

Everyone, including members, are encouraged to submit questions for your candidates for upcoming forums.

[Watch Forum Videos and Submit Questions for Candidates](#)



Book Club

Wednesday, September 16, 2026

7:00 pm on Zoom

Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation (2022)
by Linda Villarosa

Like other professionals, health journalist Linda Villarosa once believed that the poor health outcomes of Black Americans was simply a matter of education and class. But poverty does not account for the racial disparities in health outcomes when income, education and access to healthcare are matched. In *Under the Skin*, Linda Villarosa lays bare the forces in the American health-care system and in American society that cause Black people to “live sicker and die quicker”.

Book Club Zoom Link



Voter Services Chair Jeorgette Knoll and Secretary Kathy Aanerud.

Board Highlights

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

- Upcoming monthly programs were discussed. No program will be scheduled for September due to the high volume of candidate forums that are scheduled.
- The schedule for taping candidate forums from August 27 through September 28 was reviewed with an eye to filling all volunteer and moderator slots for these 39 studio recordings. It was confirmed that an in-person forum will be recorded by North Metro TV for four legislative forums at Majestic Oaks on October 6. Ham Lake Area Chamber of Commerce has arranged the venue and refreshments. Moderator and other volunteer roles were discussed.
- Two upcoming community Voter Registration events were reviewed, along with the Voter Registration events that have been conducted and are upcoming at senior living facilities.
- Action and Advocacy activities were noted that include an appeal from LWV Minnesota for volunteers for nonpartisan observers for the Public Accuracy

Test (PAT) and Post-Election Review (PER). Other activities noted were updates on ERA, information on the Permanent School Fund Constitutional Amendment, National Voter Registration Day on September 15, and Indivisible's Election Defense Team's plan to speak during Public Comment at Anoka County Board meeting on August 24

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



Permanent School Fund Constitutional Amendment Forum

**September 3, 2026
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM via Zoom**

Join LWVMN and Denise Dittrick and Kimberly Dunn Lewis from the MN School Boards Association to learn about the Permanent School Fund Constitutional Amendment Ballot Measure that will be on the ballot in the November 3 General Election.

Amendment Background

In 1858, the Minnesota Constitution put acres of public land into a trust in to generate revenue for public schools. Article 11, Section 8 of the Minnesota State Constitution outlines this Permanent School Fund and how the state distributes the net interest and dividends from the fund to school districts in the state.

Over the last 10 years, strong investment returns and revenues from land management have doubled the Fund's value. The Legislature created a task force, charged with balancing two goals: protect the fund for future generations and maximize the benefits for today's students.

In 2024, the Permanent School Fund Task Force reported that the current constitutional language is highly prescriptive and limits the Fund's ability to adapt. The Task Force recommended that the Constitution should be changed to state the enduring principles and objectives of the Fund, reserving the specific operating details of distribution policy, governance, and investment management to be established in statute.

The Ballot Question

"Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to increase the funding going to all school districts from the permanent school fund, which is a fund that supports school districts without raising individual income or property taxes, effective July 1, 2027?"

Leaving the question blank on your ballot is the same as a "No" vote.

If the Amendment Passes

The Amendment will not automatically increase local funding. It will allow the Legislature to pass legislation governing investment and distribution.

Currently, the interest and dividend formula does not allow capital gains on assets to be disbursed to schools. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature adopt a 4.5% distribution rate, calculated using a 3-year rolling average of Fund value, resulting in more local funding for schools.

Learn more by attending the webinar or reading the Task Force Report.

[RSVP for Forum](#)

[Task Force Report](#)

Voting Before Election Day in Minnesota

IN PERSON ABSENTEE	EARLY VOTING New in 2026	DIRECT VOTING
• Begins 46 Days Before Election Day • Identical to absentee voting by mail • Complete an absentee ballot application • Submit ballot in absentee ballot envelopes	• Begins 18 Days Before Election Day • Similar to voting on Election Day • Complete a short certificate • Insert your completed ballot in ballot counter	• 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

On **September 18, 2026**, in-person absentee voting begins at Anoka Government Center and some city election offices. Cities which offer in-person absentee voting for their residents are:

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

Beginning **October 16, 2026** all Anoka cities will offer Early Voting/Direct Voting in which voters put their ballot into the ballot county machine.

New this year, is Sunday Early Voting. All early voting locations will offer early voting from **9:00am to 3:00pm on Saturday October 31 and Sunday November 1.**

The last day to pre-register to Vote is **October 13, 2026**. Same Day registration will remain available whether you vote early in person or vote on Election Day.

Find more information:

Anoka County Elections

Secretary of State



Volunteer as an Observer

Help support Minnesota's free and fair elections, by signing up to observe the 2026 Public Accuracy Test (PAT) and the Post-Election Review (PER)! Every volunteer with LWVMN will be trained as a nonpartisan observer and join a team of observers.

You do not need to be a member of League to join the League PER Observer team, so encourage your family and friends to participate.

Register for PAT Training

Register PER Training



Women Defending Democracy

September 30, 2026

5:00 PM via Zoom

September topic to be announced.

RSVP for September WDD

The ERA Today: Where Minnesota & the Nation Stand

Recorded August 26, 2026

In August, LWV Minneapolis welcomed former MN State Representative Betty Folliard, a longtime advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Betty shared an update on the 28th Amendment (known as the Alice Paul Amendment based on her wording from 1923) and the proposed Minnesota ERA, and discussed why constitutional equality remains more important than ever.

Watch on YouTube

Presentation Slides

Star Tribune Commentary By Betty Folliard



ACLU Legislative Session Town Hall

Recorded July 28, 2026

During session, ACLU-MN focused on defending against bad bills, introducing new bills on immigration enforcement and scheduling hearings on key surveillance reforms.

ACLU-MN immigration enforcement priorities were a mask ban for law enforcement, identification required for all law enforcement, bounty hunter regulations, warrant requirement to enter protected spaces, the right to public education regardless of immigration status and establishment of an ability to sue law enforcement for violation of constitutional rights. Surveillance reform priorities were license plate readers, facial recognition and reverse warrants.

There was little movement on all bills due to gridlock and the evenly divided House.

Watch the video or read the ACLU report to learn more about threats to our First and Fourth Amendment rights.

Watch ACLU Town Hall

[Read ACLU Legislative Session Report](#)



The Wetlands Initiative: Then, Now, Next

Recorded June 9, 2026

The Wetlands Initiative designs, restores and creates wetlands. In this video, Paul Botts, Executive Director of TWI, describes their work in restoring farmland and industrial sites to vibrant wetlands teeming with diversity.

[Watch Wetlands Initiative Recording](#)

[UMRR Blog](#)

LEAGUE LITIGATION



City of Oak Grove vs Simon, Hunt and LeBlanc

LWVMN filed an *amicus* brief in a case filed by the City of Oak Grove against the Secretary of State, the Anoka County Elections Manager and the Chief Officer of Anoka County Property Records and Taxation. The case, pending before the Minnesota Supreme Court, concerns whether election precincts should use electronic or paper voter rosters to check in voters and which governmental entity has authority to make that decision.

The City of Oak Grove wishes to use paper voter rosters. LWVMN argues that if cities can opt out of county election systems, it could create inconsistent voting procedures, longer lines, administrative errors, and confusion for both voters and election officials. Those barriers can discourage participation and make it harder for eligible voters to cast their ballots.

[Press Release](#)

[Amicus Brief](#)

Coming in October...

National Hispanic Heritage Month

Sept 15 to Oct 15

Oct 12 - **Program Meeting**

Oct 13 - **Last Day to Pre-register to Vote**

Oct 16 - **In-Person Early Voting Begins**

Oct 26 - **Board Meeting**

Oct 29 - **CMAL Quarterly 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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