The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter
November 2026



President Gretchen Sabel at Candidate Forum in September 2026

Improving Our Voter Service Work

Monday, November 9, 2026
Online via Zoom

Members Only Meeting

6:30 - online socializing
7:00 - program begins

Voter Service Co-chairs Jeorgette Knoll and Gretchen Sabel will recap our 2026 candidate forums including number of forums, most watched forums and which candidates chose not to participate. We will also recap the community events we tabled at and our work registering votes at senior living facilities. Then we'll open it up for LWV ABC members to share their insights and thoughts for improvement.

Whether you were a volunteer or not, come to this meeting and help us get ready to be better in future years!

Nov 9 Zoom Link



A Conversation with Outgoing Anoka County Commissioners Braastad and Schulte

Monday, November 16, 2026
Online via Zoom

Members Only Meeting

6:45 - zoom meeting opens
7:00 - program begins

LWV ABC President Gretchen Sabel will lead a conversation with Commissioners Braastad and Schulte, as they take a retrospective look back on their tenure on the County Board and share with us some insights on county government and elected office.

District 2 Commissioner Julie Braastad has served on the board since 2013 representing Ham Lake, East Bethel, Bethel, and portions of Oak Grove, St. Francis, and Blaine. District 4 Commissioner Scott Schulte has served on the Anoka County Board of Commissioners since 2013, representing portions of Andover, Anoka, and Coon Rapids. Commissioners Schulte and Braastad did not run for re-election in 2026.

Come and meet these outgoing leaders as they leave the Board after a combined 26 years of service!

Nov 16 Zoom Link



Welcome New Member

Judy Reier of Andover

All members are welcome to attend the New Member Orientation Nov 19, 2026 12:00 PM to learn more about LWVMN and LWVUS.

LWVMN New Member Orientation Registration



Jody Anderson and Beth Bergmans at Anoka Ramsey Community College.

Voter Engagement at Anoka Ramsey

October 27, 2026

On October 27, 2026, Secretary of State Steve Simon visited Anoka Ramsey Community College for a community discussion on voting and elections.

LWV ABC members **Jody Anderson, Beth Bergmans and Cindy Wetzell** were on hand with voter information before and after Simon's presentation. All participants were given one of out “business” cards with mnvotes.gov on one side and LWV ABC info on the other side.













Observing Public Accuracy Tests

by Wes Volkenant

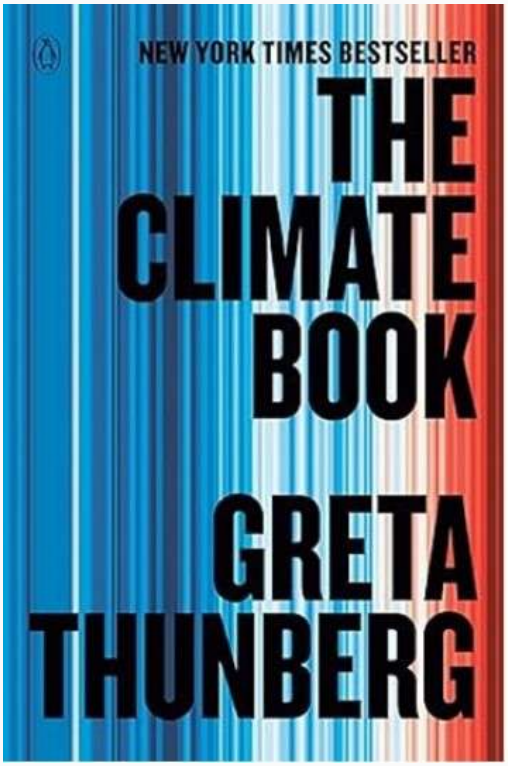
LWV ABC members **Lora Oberle, Maery Rose and Laura Rades**, along with myself, observed the Anoka County Public Accuracy Testing (PAT), as well as the PAT in several cities in Anoka County. There were no other public observers in attendance at the PATs observed by our members.

There were no errors at any of the test sites among the machines tested. The lead person at each location, including Tom Hunt, Anoka County's Elections Office Director, were gracious, pleased to have observers present and very informative.

Sam Streukens of LWVMN, who helped train the League observers, noted during training that "LWVMN helps protect public trust by observing and documenting the public processes that make our elections secure. By witnessing these processes firsthand, we can collect and share accurate information about how elections are actually administered, rather than relying on claims or speculation."

Find more details (and more pictures) in Wes' report

Read Wes Volkenant's Full Report





Book Club

Wednesday, November 18, 2026
7:00 pm on Zoom

The Climate Book: The Facts and the Solutions (2023) by Greta Thunberg

In *The Climate Book*, Greta Thunberg has gathered 100 bite-size essays by climate experts — geophysicists, oceanographers and meteorologists; engineers, economists and mathematicians; historians, philosophers and Indigenous leaders— to equip us all with the knowledge we need to combat climate disaster. Alongside them, Thunberg shares her own stories, introducing sections and linking things up.

- How climate works
- How our planet is changing
- How it affects us
- What we've done about it
- What we must do now

Among the 100+ contributors, Thunberg's own voice provides a through-line of

commentary. Her essays introduce sections and link things up, with all of her usual urgency, moral clarity, and take-no-prisoners dismissal of anyone who thinks the world is doing enough.

Book Club Zoom Link

Upcoming Books



No RSVP Lunch

November 12, 2026
11:30 AM

The Tavern on Main
8001 Lake Drive
Lino Lakes

Join other LWV ABC members for good food and conversation.

Tavern on Main Menu

For October's No RSVP lunch, LWV ABC members **Pat Kennedy, Georgette Knoll, Paula Mohr, Gretchen Sabel, and Julie Trude**, tried new foods at the Asia Market in Blaine.







Help LWV ABC Start a Local Youth Civic Engagement Program!

by Gretchen Sabel

LWVMN is working with the Shumer Family Fund to integrate a space for youth voices throughout the voter process, while engaging youth in meaningful civic engagement work. Specifically, the Fellows program seeks to encourage students of diverse backgrounds, in partnership with local LWVs, to participate in voter registration, get-out-the-vote initiatives and National Voter Registration Day in September within their local communities.

There are about 18 total high schools in the LWV ABC service area, with more than

14,000 students enrolled in these schools. LWV can help these students engage in the civic processes of our country and be ready to vote when they are 18.

The goals are ensuring that all eligible 18 year-olds are registered to vote, that all 16-17 year olds are pre-registered to vote and to improve youth turn-out by including "Get Out The Vote" activities within all youth voter registration efforts. In addition, Youth Fellows will learn how advocacy is an important part of participation in our democracy.

For LWV ABC to take this program on, we would need several volunteers willing to commit to a two-year effort to set goals for our area, work with schools to recruit students and share results with LWV ABC membership through newsletter articles and short reports to the LWV ABC Board. The team would begin getting organized in early 2027 and wrap up work after the 2028 elections.

Would you be willing to help our youth grow into their civic responsibilities? Email lwvabc@gmail.com to get started.

Youth Fellowship Webpage



Treasurer Wes Volkenant, with LWV New Brighton Area President Grace Gee, at Ham Lake PAT.

Board Highlights

October 26, 2026

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

- Identified several timely program topics for upcoming months, with follow-up arrangements noted.
- Discussed and selected an honoree for Friend of League Award. Award preparation will be arranged with our artists.
- Reviewed viewer statistics for candidate forums, including most popular. Also reviewed and allocated funds for forum expenses.
- Reminded members of volunteers needed for Post-Election Reviews (PER) and Public Accuracy Tests (PAT). Reviewed Wes Volkenant's description of participation in the Public Accuracy Tests and agreed to proceed with a Letter to the Editor to highlight this activity.

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

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Protecting Our Elections

See Something, Say Something

Under Minnesota state law, election observers and law enforcement, including Department of Justice Observers and other U.S. government officials, may not enter polling places unless invited by election officials. Observers:

- Must stay 100 feet away from a polling location
- Must not speak to voters before they vote
- May speak to voters after they vote but voters are not required to speak to them

If you experience intimidation, observe another voter experience intimidation, or believe your or someone else's voting rights are being violated:

1. Tell your Chief Election Judge

Every precinct has a Chief Election Judge to resolve any problem, big or small, on Election Day. Most concerns can be immediately addressed by the Chief Election Judge who has ongoing contact with local election officials.

2. Call your Election Officials

Contact your city election office, your county election office or the Secretary of State if your concern is not adequately addressed at the precinct level.

- Minnesota Secretary of State Election Hotline: 1-877-600-VOTE (8683) or Text 651-217-3862
- Anoka County Elections: 763-324-1300
- Contact information for City Election Offices in Anoka County

3. Contact the Voter Protection Hotline

If your local officials are unable to resolve your concerns to your satisfaction, report your concerns and get free legal advice from the Voter Protection Hotline, a national, non-partisan coalition.

- English: 866-OUR-VOTE hotline (866-687-8683)

- Spanish: 888-VE-Y-VOTA (888-839-8682)
- Asian languages: 888-API-VOTE (888-273-8683)
- Arabic: 888-YALLA-US (844-925-5287)

The Election Protection Hotline is staffed with trained volunteers to answer questions and elevate issues as needed. Common Cause MN runs the Election Protection program for Minnesota. Leaders from multiple democracy groups, including LWVMN, as well as lawyers, will be physically stationed together in a Command Center to work together on Election Day.

4. File a written complaint with your county attorney.

Use the Minnesota Election Law Complaint Form. All complaints will be investigated by your County Attorney after the election.

Ensuring the rights of voters is up to all of us.



Trusted Elections. Stronger Together.

Recorded October 2, 2026, New York Mills

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota, in partnership with *The Minnesota Reformer,* the Minnesota Secretary of State Office and the Leagues of Detroit Lakes,

Duluth, Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Mankato, hosted a series of nonpartisan community conversations about Minnesota's elections.

Panelists in Ottertail County discussed the absentee ballot process, election security, the recruitment and duties of Election Judges, Public Accuracy Tests, Post-Election Reviews, vouching and election observers, as well as answering other questions from the live audience.

Watch 10/2 Trusted Elections Video

Read the commentary in *The Minnesota Reformer* by Amy Perna, LWVMN Executive Director, to learn more about this partnership to improve public knowledge about and increase public trust in our elections.

Minnesota Reformer Article



Trusted Elections. Stronger Together.

Recorded October 8, 2026, St Paul

Panelists Dave Triplett, Ramsey County Elections; Melanie Hazelip, Director of Voter Outreach, Minnesota Secretary of State Office; John Martin, City of Minneapolis Elections; and Judy Zaunbrecher, LWVMN Voter Services Chair answered questions about Minnesota elections and provided some insights into our election process, including:

- Once polls close, members of public can come in to observe Election Judges perform tasks to close out the polling place.
- Ballot counting machines are not connected to the internet. Results are transmitted through an internal Ethernet connection.
- Minnesota law now requires that the person who receives the most votes must be seated.
- Since 2020, Ramsey County, has actually experienced a groundswell of people wanting to be Election Judges.
- Much misinformation is simply confusion with information from another state/jurisdiction or confusion caused by lawsuits.
- Biggest fear of election officials is low voter turnout.
- Minnesota had no significant problems with the Department of Justice observers during the August primary.
- The Attorney General's Office has organized observers to observe any DOJ observers for the General Election.
- Most recounts only find one or two changes to the vote count.
- This year, the number of people returning absentee ballots in person increased from 1-2 a day to 50 a day in Ramsey County.
- Only a small number of Election Day incidents are reported to the Hotlines. Most calls are questions.

Note: Since recorded, the DOJ has notified Ramsey and Hennepin counties that they will be sending observers on November 3.

Watch 10/8 Trusted Elections Video



Countdown to Election Day

Secretary of State Town Hall

Recorded October 20, 2026

Learn more about elections in Minnesota including a discussion of preparing for problems on Election Day. Officials do not expect Election Day problems, but are prepared to respond if problems do come up.

Watch 10/20 Town Hall



Picture from NorthMetro TV video of the 2022 Anoka County PER.

Post-Election Review Observers Needed

November 12-17, 2026

LWVMN has sufficient observers for the Post-Election Review (PER) in Anoka County on November 16, but observers are still needed in other counties.

By volunteering as an observer, you can make a difference by creating a public record of how votes are counted, ultimately leading to increased trust in election outcomes.

Observing the Post-Election Review is even more important this year. For the first time in 20 years, the administration declined to invite international election observers from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to monitor this year's U.S. midterm elections.

All League Observers must attend training. Two more training sessions are available.

Register for Nov 5 | 7:00 PM Training

Register for Nov 7 | 10:00 AM Training

Are you available to observe a PER in another county?

List of County PERs



Get the Flock Out

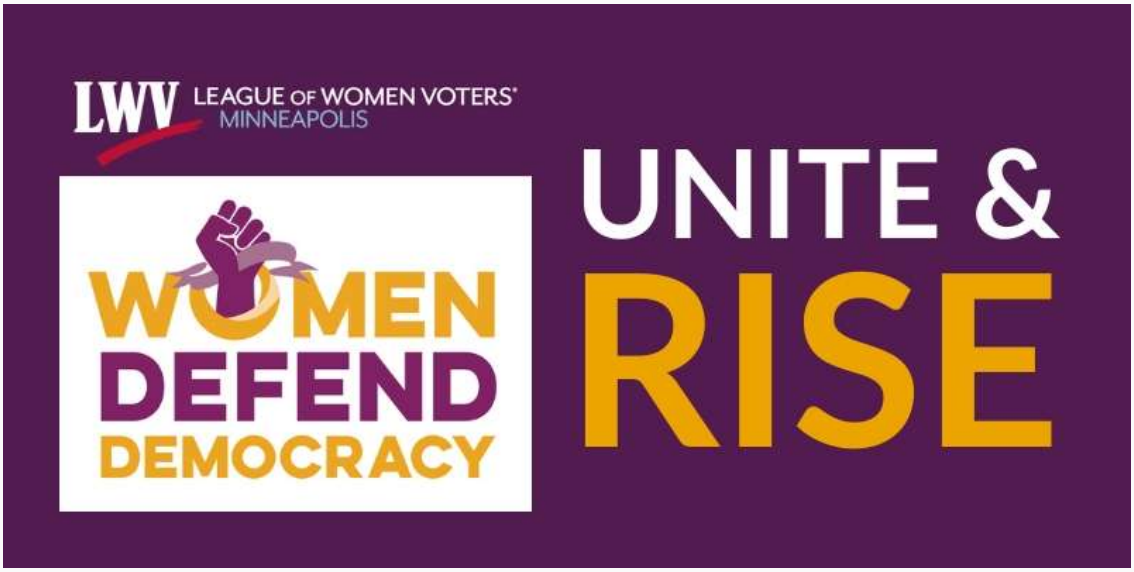
Mass Surveillance, Minnesota, and You

Tuesday, November 10, 2026
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM via Zoom

Join ACLU-MN to learn:

- The who, what, why and how of mass surveillance and automatic license plate readers (ALPRs)
- The role of new AI technology in the mass surveillance ecosystem
- How ACLU-MN is working to reign in surveillance technology
- How we can organize our communities to end mass surveillance at the local and state levels

ACLU Registration



What Comes Next?

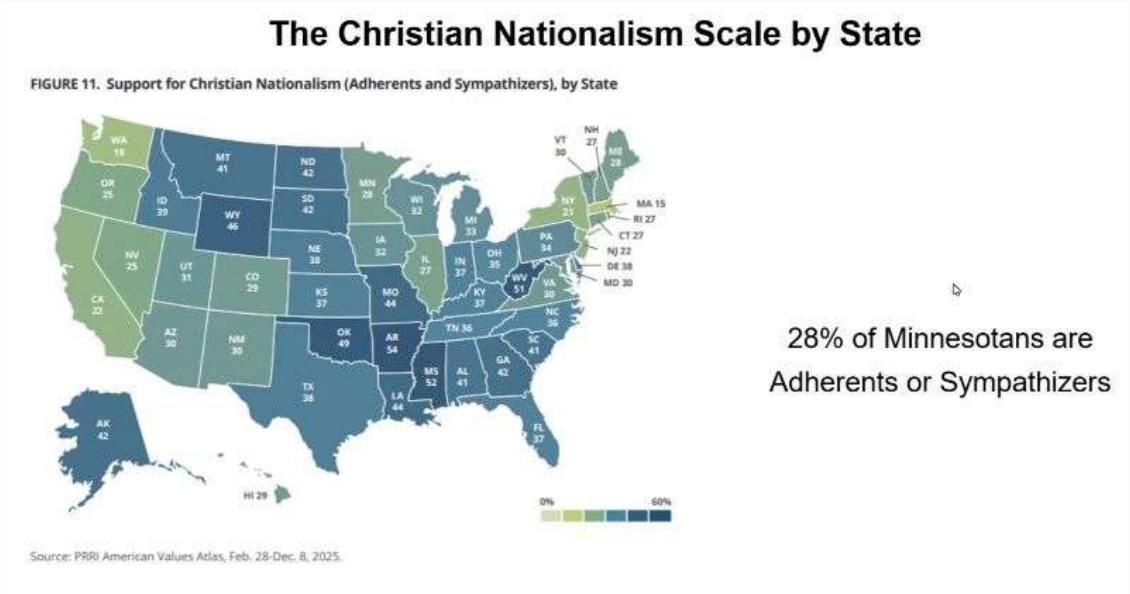
Making Sense of the Election and Shaping the Future of Democracy

Wednesday, November 18, 2026
5:00 pm via Zoom

Ben Wikler will share his perspective on the election results, what they mean for the future of American democracy, and where we go from here. Drawing on his experience leading Wisconsin Democrats through years of closely contested political battles, he will discuss the lessons outlined in his book of grassroots organizing, the challenges ahead, and how citizens can help shape and defend the future of our democracy.

Ben Wikler is the best-selling author of *This Is the Plan: How to End America's Meltdown and Save Democracy* (2026) and was the chair of the Wisconsin Democratic Party from July 2019 to July 2025.

Register for Nov WDD



One Nation, One Religion?
Christian Nationalism and the Constitution

LWV Mpls WDD Series

Recorded October 28, 2026

In October, guest Speaker Jerry Gale, Founder of Christians Against Christian Nationalism Minnesota, discussed the rise of Christian Nationalism, a political ideology and cultural framework that seeks to merge American and Christian identities. Gale noted it often overlaps with, and provides cover for, white supremacy, racial injustice and male dominance.

The Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) interviewed 22,111 people, including 555 Minnesotans, and determined that nationwide, 11% are Christian Nationalism adherents and 21% are Christian Nationalism sympathizers. In Minnesota, PRRI estimates 28% of the population are sympathizers or adherents.

Adherents are engaged in "Strategic Spiritual Warfare" to conquer the "Hierarchy of Demons" at the top of each of the "seven mountains" of the country - Religion, Family, Education, Media, Government, Business and Arts. Christians are mandated to install "Kingdom-Minded" individuals at top each mountain. Trump is considered an instrument of God to achieve this "Seven Mountain Mandate".

Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth is the most prominent Christian Nationalist in the Trump administration. Other members of the administration (and Supreme Court justices) are involved with the "Shadow Network", a powerful alliance

undermining the separation of church and state. The network includes the Alliance Defending Freedom, the Liberty Counsel, the Heritage Foundation, the Federalist Society and Turning Point USA.

Gale states that fighting back must be both theological and secular. Theological organizations fighting back include ISAIAH and Minnesota Faith in Action. Secular organizations include ACLU, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Freedom from Religion Foundation and the American Humanist Association.

Christian nationalists have spent decades building a movement so there are no easy, fast solutions. Actions you can take:

- Enter into dialogue with friends and relatives about Christian nationalism with a goal of raising doubts among sympathizers.
- Ask your religious leaders to preach against Christian nationalism.
- Ask your elected officials about Christian nationalism
- Read and discuss in a book club a book about Christian nationalism.

Watch One Nation, One Religion?

Read PRRI Survey of Christian Nationalism

Recordings of previous LWV Mpls WDD sessions are now available on the LWV Mpls WDD YouTube Playlist.

LWV Mpls WDD Playlist



Jerry Gale also recommended watching the documentary "Bad Faith", currently available to watch for free on Kanopy with your Anoka County library card.

"Bad Faith" on Kanopy



Constitutional Amendment Video

Thanks to QCTV for producing a video explaining the proposed Permanent School Fund Constitutional Amendment. The entertaining three minute video explains the proposed amendment succinctly.

Watch the QCTV Video



Celebrate Native American Heritage Month

Some exhibits to visit this month:

- Dakota Sacred Hoop Walk - Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
- Okciyapi - Minneapolis Sculpture Garden
- "Merciless: Indigenous Lands Since 1776" Exhibit - Weisman Art Museum
- "Our Home: Native Minnesota" Exhibit - Minnesota History Center
- "Reframing Our Stories" - Minnesota History Center

Find more information and some online resources on our calendar page

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Coming in December...

Dec 10 - No RSVP Lunch
Dec 14 - Program Meeting
Dec 17 - LWVMN New Member Orientation

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

Website Facebook Email

Bluesky Instagram YouTube

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