



**OUR MISSION:** *Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.*

April 15, 2026



**League of Women Voters  
of St. Croix Valley**



**2026 ANNUAL MEETING**

Sunday - April 26, 2026  
1:30 to 4:30 Amery Area Community Center  
608 Harriman Ave S

Keynote


***“The Power Pillar of Rural White America  
and Your 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment Rights”***

with

Jenelle Ludwig Krause

Executive Director, GROWW/LWV SCV member

Agenda

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1:30 - 2:00 | Check-in & Social Time  |
| 2:00 - 3:00 | Welcome & Business Meeting  |
| 3:00 - 3:15 | Stretch Break  |
| 3:15 - 4:00 | Keynote   |
| 4:00 - 4:30 | Announcements & Wrap Up   |

Potluck: Please bring grazing food to share.

***Invite Friends***





## **Member Services**

Membership Matters: Growing Stronger, Together!

As members of the LWVSCV we honor our volunteers who do the hands-on work to safeguard democracy. We are directly involved in shaping the important issues to keep the community strong. Every life we touch is remembered! Sometimes, the most difficult and most fulfilling choice is to show up! Thank you to all of our members for covering the big projects and the small details.

As of this newsletter's publication, LWVSCV proudly counts 116 paid members.

***If you need to renew your membership, please print the membership application from our website at [lwtstcroixvalley.org](http://lwtstcroixvalley.org), fill it out, and mail it to Katrina, our treasurer with a check or fill out the membership application on our website and use a credit card to join. We do offer a \$20.00 minimum fee to join if needed. Please let me know if you have questions.***

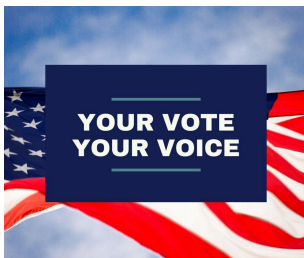
Reach out to our new members near and far, in your HUB and beyond. Attend a coffee, a rally, farmers market, or a high school visit.

Don't forget to bring a friend! Check on your neighbors! Farmers Market planning is coming soon.

Please join me in welcoming our newest member!

**Jacqueline Zarek, [jpzarek@me.com](mailto:jpzarek@me.com), Somerset**

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## **VOTER SERVICES**

HUBS have just completed work for the Spring General Election which included great, informative posts about voting and the election by Beth Wood on Facebook. Many members were poll workers or observers. Thanks to everyone who helped Those who manned the polls saw a huge turnout and a mix of ages.

We suspect that we were seeing some of the high school seniors that we spoke with at our area high schools. The turnout also reflected more interest in local elections, which we have learned have much greater importance than people previously realized. We also thank members who posted VOTE FROM HOME, VOTE TUESDAY, and THANK YOU ELECTION WORKERS signs in their yards! They are simple, but great statements to make to our respective communities. If you missed out this time, contact Katrina Larsen ([katrina\\_larsen@yahoo.com](mailto:katrina_larsen@yahoo.com)) for signs. The next election will be the Fall Primary Election on August 11.

**What's next?** HUBs will decide what they want to participate in during the next few months. As the weather warms up, we will consider returning to Farmers' Markets with our game wheels and information tables. Other possibilities are summer celebrations, of which there are many.

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## *Readers Theater*

Oh, dear, what shall we do with It??

What shall we do with our Readers Theater production *Oh Dear, What Can The Matter Be...*

We have obtained the copyright to the play so it officially belongs to LWVSCV!!

I would like to form an ad hoc committee to discuss options.

I will be gone until mid-May, but I would like to gather sometime after that for a conversation.

If you are interested in participating in that drop me an email and when I get back, we can set up a Zoom !!

[vickiharmon@hotmail.com](mailto:vickiharmon@hotmail.com)

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## *Potluck Summer Picnic: Save the Date!*

Join us in friendship and community

**Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>**

**New Richmond Heritage Center from 4-7 PM**

\* Watch for Information about a second picnic in the northern part of our League's geographical area to be scheduled later this summer.

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## **WHAT HUB AM I IN?**

Many members are unsure of what HUB they are in. We have split the League geographically, but members are welcome to do activities with ANY HUB! If you see something inviting in the newsletter that you would like to be a part of, there are no lines to cross. All are welcome anywhere!

☀️ PLEASE NOTE: As a chapter of LWVWI, we have been working on an exploration of our structure. Breaking into 4 HUBz is new, and we continue to explore structural frameworks. Please bring your experiences and ideas about organizational structure to the coffees and feel free to call or email your Hub organizer with your ideas. We welcome all of your voices and suggestions.

Each HUB will send two or three representatives to a preplanning retreat on May 19th in St. Croix Falls.

Here is a description of our HUBs by town:

HUB 1	HUB 2	HUB 3	HUB 4
Danbury Siren Webster Frederic	Amery Clayton Luck Milltown Osceola St. Croix Falls	Deer Park Star Prairie New Richmond Somerset	Hudson Baldwin Hammond River Falls Prescott Houlton

**HUB 1 News:** (contact Kris Surbaugh aksurbaugh@gmail.com)

*Hub 1 LWVSCV members collaborated with Polk Burnett Indivisible member Anne Taylor to bring Nicole Gabrail of the Fair Maps Coalition to Webster to inform local residents of the efforts to end gerrymandering permanently in Wisconsin.*

*Below is the news article submitted to local papers by LWVSCV member Nancy Kolb:*

### **Gerrymandering is a Bipartisan Disease. Why Wisconsin Needs a Constitutional Amendment**

Submitted by Nancy Kolb



On April 1, a group of twenty interested citizens attended Gerrymanndering is a Bipartisan Disease presented by Nicole Garbrail of the Fair Maps Coalition, at the Larsen FamilyPublic Library.

Ms. Gabrail defined gerrymandering as the way politicians create voting maps that create safe seats for themselves and their party.

Historically, both parties have used gerrymandering to hold onto power. This was a particularly timely topic because of the recent epidemic of partisan gerrymandering that has occurred prior to the 2026 mid-term elections to influence the number of Republican or Democratic seats in the U.S. Congress.

Every ten years, in the year after the national census when population data is available, states across the country redraw their voting maps. In Wisconsin we have three sets of voting maps – one for U.S. Congressional districts, one for Wisconsin state assembly, and one for Wisconsin senate. In 2024, after litigation and intervention by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, Wisconsin’s voting maps were redrawn to make them less partisan and to make districts contiguous, meaning that all voters in that district are in areas adjoining one another. These maps will remain until 2030. These new maps make districts more competitive and more

representative of local constituents. They do not either break up nor pack together certain groups that may vote alike because of race, culture, educational level, or other demographics.

The Fair Maps Coalition has partnered with the Wisconsin League of Women Voters to propose draft legislation to establish an Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC), structured like ones in Arizona, California, Colorado, and Michigan. This independent commission would be citizen-led, not controlled by representatives from any political party, and would create legislative and congressional district voting maps after every 10-year census.

The purpose of a commission is to operate outside of legislative restriction to prevent any disproportionate advantage to any political party, and to ensure that districts fairly represent all the constituents within that district. For example, the IRC would attempt to eliminate 'safe seats' which are those seats within a district drawn to ensure the outcome of elections, so the political party holding that seat is ensured it will remain under the control of that party in future elections.

While the Fair Maps Coalition has proposed draft legislation, their future goal is to pass a state constitutional amendment to enshrine the IRC in the Wisconsin constitution. This would eliminate the need for legislative approval and would close the door on retaliatory gerrymandering. Watch for further information on this topic or visit [fairmapsWI.com](http://fairmapsWI.com).



### LWVSCV Attend Nurturing Non-profits Expo!

On Thursday, April 9, Barb Katt and Carol McIntyre attended the Nurturing NonProfit Expo at the Zhashagiins Center in Siren, WI, to promote democracy and to 'Get Out The Vote!'.

The members interacted with many individuals and handed out membership materials and voter registration material.

Barb commented that the folks who stopped to talk had some challenging questions, and she suggested that we review the voter registration process with the training from Greater Chippewa Valley League.

Watch for information on upcoming training events in the next newsletters



### HUB 2 NEWS (contact Irene Bugge [irene.bugge@gmail.com](mailto:irene.bugge@gmail.com))

On April 1, eight members of HUB 2 gathered at artZ in Amery to debrief about their recent high school visits to Osceola, St. Croix Falls, Amery and Clear Lake high schools. League members present included: Miriam Flysjo, Nanette DelMonaco, Sharyl Manwiller, Pat Seidl, Colleen Foxwell, Judy Wyatt, Trudy Lorenz and Irene Bugge. (Photographer, Irene, took the photo late after several had left).

The purpose of this meeting was to share highlights -- what went well -- and also to discuss ways to make these visits even better. All events were successful.

Students were engaged, bookmarks and voter information were handed out and students enthusiastically wore Future Voter stickers. At one school, the students were particularly well grounded in civics and knew all of the answers to the questions. They had an enthusiastic Civics teacher! At another school League volunteers talked at length with a student who saw the potential for greater involvement with students and the League.

Key takeaways included the importance of developing relationships with civics teachers and students interested in civics. The importance of having a clear objective for the tabling or classroom event was also discussed. It was also noted that none of the signs displayed spelled out League of Women Voters – a banner with our full name spelled out could be useful. All schools were open to the League returning.

Teams hope to return to these four schools in the fall. They plan to contact Civics teachers before the school years end to line up plans for fall. All plan to ask to come to a Civics classroom if possible. Volunteers are also interested in obtaining an outline/curriculum for a short presentation to students about the importance of voting. There was also discussion at one school about involving students in offering a School Board Candidate Forum/Meet & Greet in the future.

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## HUB 3 NEWS (contact Kay Brooks [kaybrooks48@gmail.com](mailto:kaybrooks48@gmail.com))

With the Spring Election in the rearview mirror, HUB 3 is looking at what they can do to share information with the public about educated voting

New for us will be a version of Lunch and Learns, held in the evening. First up will be Karen Roberts with her powerpoint on Election Integrity-- probably on National Voter Registration Day on September 15. Other topics will follow.

We will continue to promote voter registration with unregistered voters at the Farmers' Market at the Heritage Center in New Richmond. Karen Roberts has agreed to handle the planning.

We also plan to participate in the Flag Day festivities at Lakefront Park in Hudson. For future consideration, we will be looking at taking turns, attending community meetings, such as County Board, School Board, and City Council meetings in order to be better apprised of upcoming issues that might be important to our work.

And finally, Mary Jo Krueger will accompany Kay Brooks to the May 19 LWV Retreat in St. Croix Falls. **We would love to have another member join us!**

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HUB 4 News (contact Kathy Streitz  
[kfstreitz@gmail.com](mailto:kfstreitz@gmail.com))

Kathy Streitz and Melissa Karl enjoyed a pleasant and productive visit to the Baldwin-Woodville High School to share information about voter registration with the students there!

Please join HUB 4 members and friends for a coffee at the home of Kathy Streitz:

429 Krattley Lane, Town of Hudson  
 Saturday April 19th  
 10:00 AM

We gather to support each other and to share ideas.  
 By sharing our stories of how we advocate for democracy,  
 We can find the support to continue the work in our communities!  
 Your RSVP is helpful.  
 Kathy Streitz, 612-916-8856, [kfstreitz@gmail.com](mailto:kfstreitz@gmail.com)



## Let's Vote Storytime Kit

Help Make Voting a Lifelong Habit

- Get Started! Access the Complete Kit through LWV
  - ❖ (Kay Brooks [kaybrooks48@gmail.com](mailto:kaybrooks48@gmail.com))
  - ❖ or through the **MORE Library System** (ask your local MORE librarian!)

→Talk to your local library about preschool story time

- Become familiar with the contents –
- Bring the kit with when you talk to your local librarian
- Check your local Children's Librarian and see if you can *volunteer to read*, or
- Ask you local Children's Librarian to see if they would include **Let's Vote** in one of their regular story times
- Volunteer to read at a local day care
- Volunteer to read at an after school program
- Practice with your own family (kids, grandkids...)

→The Let's Vote Storytime Kit is complete

- Four books to select from – you choose!
- Ballots
- Stickers
- Flip chart to explain election day
- Suggested Voting Games
- Reader chooses!
- Questions? Contact Kris Surbaugh 715-566-1186 (text or call)



*Do you want to 'ease into' an action—but want to make a change? How about simply enjoying some reading time with kiddos and spreading the message that voting is a lifelong skill?*

The Storytime Kit organized by LWVSCV has everything you need to have a fun, interactive, practice election day with kiddos ages 2-8!

Pick and choose what works best for your little audience. Check out the storytime kit from the MORE system or contact Kay Brooks to get the League's very own storytime kit.



**"How Do We Respond? Immigration and Due Process"**

Community members with questions about immigration enforcement and due process are invited a public educational forum.

**Date:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026

**Time:** 5:00pm to 7:00pm

**Location:** Immanuel Lutheran Church, 3214 Golf Road, Eau Claire

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Organizers have invited several speakers to share perspectives and to provide historical context.

**Dawanna Witt**, sheriff of Hennepin County, Minnesota who led their agency through the federal government's "Operation Metro Surge" in Minneapolis will discuss the relationship between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities.

**Jordan Hamzawi**, assistant professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, will discuss due process in immigration law providing historical context, including the Internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

**Dave Riewestahl**, Eau Claire County Sheriff, will provide the perspective of a Chippewa Valley law enforcement leader.

*Hosted by the League of Women Voters of the Greater Chippewa Valley in collaboration with the American Association of University Women - Eau Claire, Jonah Justice-Eau Claire, and Wisconsin Farmers Union.*

*The event is free and open to the public. Light snacks will be provided. No prior registration is needed.*



LWV-Greater Chippewa Valley | P.O. Box 75, Menomonie, WI 54751

[contact.lwv.gcv@gmail.com](mailto:contact.lwv.gcv@gmail.com) | <https://www.lwv-gcv.org/>



**SAVE THE DATE - May 1, 2026**

On May 1, 2026, workers, students, and families rally, march, and take action across the country to demand a nation that puts workers over billionaires, with many refusing business as usual through No School. No Work. No Shopping. <https://maydaystrong.org/>



## Give Big Valleys - Fundraiser

The United Way of St. Croix & Red Cedar Valleys sponsors a 24 hour online giving event to support nonprofits in western Wisconsin. In 2026, the giving day is Tuesday, April 28 but you can donate at any time.

Please consider a donation to the League of Women Voters St. Croix Valley and share this information with friends and others you know who support our educational mission "Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy." Donations can be made at:

<https://www.givebigvalleys.org/organization/League-Of-Women-Voters-Of-Wisconsin-Education-Fund-18>



or

*Tax Law Change Affecting Donations~ ~  
Beginning in tax year 2026, you can deduct up to \$1,000 of donations without having to itemize. This change will help many of us since we use the standard deduction. Save all your donation receipts for your 2006 tax preparation.*



Many of our LWVSCV members experienced SUFFS at the Orpheum Theater this past week. How wonderful this historically based history of the Suffrage movement will be available to everyone on PBS May 8!

April	15	<b>Take in THANK ELECTION WORKERS signs</b>
	21	<b><i>LWV-Board meeting 5:30 PM</i></b>
	26	<b><i>Annual Meeting All Members Amery Community Center</i></b>
	28	<b><i>Give Big Valleys</i></b>
May	1	Newsletter
	1	<p><b>SAVE THE DATE - May 1, 2026</b></p> <p>On May 1, 2026, workers, students, and families rally, march, and take action across the country to demand a nation that puts workers over billionaires, with many refusing business as usual through No School. No Work. No Shopping.</p> <p><a href="https://maydaystrong.org/">https://maydaystrong.org/</a></p>
	8	SUFFS aired on Great Performances! PBS 8:00 ET (check local listings)
	15	Newsletter
	19	Board Meeting and Pre Retreat St Croix Falls
	21	River Falls High School: Carol Skinner and Kathy Streitz will visit during their Future Week which they offer once a month.
	22	Farmers Market with Hub 1 Webster 11:00AM –3PM Kris S. and Mary K.
June	1	Newsletter
	5	Farmers Market with Hub 1 Webster 11:00AM-3PM Nancy Kolb and Pam Girtz
	14	Flag Day!

	17	Annual Picnic (south) Heritage Center 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM
	19	Juneteenth
	20	<b>Pride Event! Hudson Lakefront Park</b>
June/July		Annual LWVSCV Picnic Heritage Center
August	1	Newsletter
	?	Annual LWVSCV Picnic-Grantsburg Area
	11	<b><u>Primary</u></b>
November	1	Newsletter
November	3	<b><u>General Election</u></b>

## LWV SCV Leadership Team 2025- 2026

**Co-Presidents** Irene Bugge <irenebugge@gmail.com>

Beth Wood <bwood@frontiernet.net>

**Vice President** Kris Surbaugh <aksurbaugh@gmail.com>

**Secretary** Evanne Hunt <evanne.hunt@outlook.com>

**Treasurer** Katrina Larsen <katrina\_larsen@yahoo.com>

### Directors

Edna Early (DEI) <ed5early@gmail.com>

Barb Katt (DEI) <barbkatt@hotmail.com>

Kathy Streitz <kfstreitz@gmail.com>

Vicki Harmon <[vickiharmon@hotmail.com](mailto:vickiharmon@hotmail.com)>

**Member Services Chair** Kathy Streitz <kfstreitz@gmail.com>

**Voter Services Co-Chairs** Kay Brooks (interim) [kaybrooks48@gmail.com](mailto:kaybrooks48@gmail.com)

Kathy Streitz (interim) <kfstreitz@gmail.com>

**Communications & Media Chair** Kris Surbaugh <aksurbaugh@gmail.com>

**Budget Chair** Janet Lestock <janetblestock@gmail.com>

**Nominations Chair** Kathy Streitz <kfstreitz@gmail.com>

**Roster Managers** Katrina Larsen <katrina\_larsen@yahoo.com>

Tami Halcomb <thalcomb@gmail.com>

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Help us maintain our League. We need folks ready to take the reins in the next few years. Sign up to shadow a director/chair/or officer in 2026—contact one of the folks above to find out more!



Members continue to receive occasional emails that are scams. Beware of any emails that ask you to open a link or ask you to do something financially. It may include the name of a League member—but check the email address that it is coming from. If it isn't an address that you recognize, contact the person by using a text or league verified email of who is supposedly sending it— to verify that they sent it.

**LEAGUE LEADERS WILL NEVER ASK YOU TO BUY GIFT CARDS OR TO SEND THEM MONEY!**

