



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

May 1, 2026

## 2026 Annual Meeting



The 2026 LWV SCV Annual Meeting was held on April 26 at the Amery Area Community Center. Forty members and guests attended.



The gathering began at 1:30. Members mingled, connected with old friends, met some new League members and enjoyed our amazing potluck food table during the social time. Members were also given knitted “red hat” pins and learned that these red hats were symbols of resistance in Norway during WWII, (Thank you League Knitters: Colleen Foxwell, Linda Koep, Colleen Kwong, and Judy Wyatt).



Susan Bosley and Peg Wastell sold new purple League T- shirts plus white beanies and caps in white and purple.



## Budget Committee

- Janet Ballis Lestock, Chair – 2026-2027
- Carolyn Saunders – 2026 -- 2027

## Nominating Committee

- Kathy Streitz, Chair – 2026 -- 2027
- Kay Brooks – 2026-2027



LWVSCV Leaders: (l-r) Evanne Hunt, Edna Early, Barb Katt, Katrina Larsen, Janet Lestock, Carolyn Saunders, Beth Wood, Kay Brooks, Irene Bugge

Beth Wood celebrated League accomplishments of the past year and encouraged members to step up and to become more actively involved. She then introduced our keynote speaker, Jenelle Ludwig Krause who engaged the audience with her presentation “The Power Pillar of Rural White America and Your 4th Amendment Rights”.



Jenell is a LWVSCV member and the Co-Executive Director for GROWW (Grass Roots Organizing of Western Wisconsin.) Her presentation encouraged a shift from a feeling of powerlessness to understanding our abilities to make change in our own communities. Jenell challenged the audience to take action with words to encourage and inspire:

***“Billionaires and the corporate bosses are trampling on your values, your freedom, your rights. What are you going to do about it? What does it mean about my vote, our votes, in the upcoming elections? What does it mean to live in a country where the constitution is toothless? What does that mean to me as a woman? Do I still have constitutional rights?***

***I have a lot at stake right now. What is at stake for you?”***



The Women’s Suffrage movement was honored at our Annual Meeting with 5 coffee mugs filled with seeds to plant Sunflowers and were given by a drawing to five lucky attendees that completed their survey. Many of our members attended Suffr the Musical earlier in the month at the Orpheum and were inspired to continue the work. Donation of the prizes was made by co-President Beth Wood.



Post event reviews were stellar. When asked on the Event Evaluation Form, “How satisfied were you with the overall event experience?” almost all attendees (30/33 who answered this question) rated it as “excellent.” No one rated it lower than “good” on the excellent-good-fair-poor scale. When asked what they enjoyed the most about the event, the keynote speaker received the most accolades. Others listed the food and fellowship, the Treasure’s Report, a well-run business meeting and the overall pacing of the event, the group sing along and the knitted red hats.

### **Silence is complicity—but if we raise our voices together we have the power.**

If you would like more information on lessons in leadership or deep canvassing techniques you can access this on the GROWW website <[gro-ww.org/training](http://gro-ww.org/training)>. To access Jenelle’s notes you can request the link through your HUB leader.

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### **Reflections on Annual Meeting** (notes from Kay Brooks):

We were asked after the keynote what our take away was. Jenelle was very explicit in her message. Authoritarianism is definitely being developed in our country and the horrifying presence of ICE in Baldwin is something we cannot ignore. This small piece of a larger picture has impacted hundreds of people in a very small community. What is happening will only be amplified as we approach the midterm election in November. So what do we do? If we pretend it will go away and just live our lives as we have been doing, we LOSE. Life just isn’t going to be the same down the road. What we **MUST DO** is fight for democracy with our very being—whether it be calling our Congress people (remember the 5 CALLS app?), writing letters to the newspapers, joining protests, helping immigrant families (Los Amigos), getting involved in the upcoming Observation Corps, or going to GROWW’s Leadership Training on Saturday, May 9. We owe it to ourselves, our country, and the world that are increasingly being negatively impacted.

Kay Brooks

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## **CALL TO ACTION**

### **IMMEDIATE ACTION ITEMS**

- Sign up to help table at Flag Day on Sunday, June 14 **Contact Celeste Koeberl** ([koeberl@mac.com](mailto:koeberl@mac.com)) or **Kathy Streitz** ([kfstreitz@gmail.com](mailto:kfstreitz@gmail.com)) for more information
  
- Sign up to help with PrideFest on Saturday, June 20 **Contact Barb Katt** ([barbkatt@hotmail.com](mailto:barbkatt@hotmail.com)) or **Edna Early** ([Ed5early@gmail.com](mailto:Ed5early@gmail.com)) or **Kathy Streitz** ([kfstreitz@gmail.com](mailto:kfstreitz@gmail.com)) for more information.

- Sign up for your local Farmers Market for sometime during their season (contact your HUB leader)
- Sign up to attend the GROWW Leadership Training ([register at Training Calendar - GROWW](#) <https://gro-ww.org/trainings/>)

## ONGOING ACTION ITEMS

- Call your legislators
- Write a newspaper LTE (letters naming yourself as a League member must be run by Kris Surbaugh)
- Join a protest
- Offer help to Los Amigos (contact Edna Early or Barb Katt)
- Join the Observation Corps once it gets up and running



## 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 members. Most are active and current at this time.

If you need to renew your membership, please print the membership application from our website at [lwvstcroixvalley.org](http://lwvstcroixvalley.org), fill it out, and mail it to Katrina, our treasurer with a check for \$75.00 or fill out the membership application on our website and use a credit card to join. We do offer a \$20.00 minimum fee. 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, a high school visit or a farmers market. Don't forget to bring a friend! Check on your neighbors! ***Please join me in welcoming our newest members!***

Christine Byerly, [christinebyerly@gmail.com](mailto:christinebyerly@gmail.com), Frederic.

Pam Libirtini, [pamlibv@aol.com](mailto:pamlibv@aol.com), St Croix Falls

Suz Thompson, [btnsuz@gmail.com](mailto:btnsuz@gmail.com), Balsam Lake

Deborah Trauley, [traulecar@gmail.com](mailto:traulecar@gmail.com), Amery

Lisa Ortondergard [losondergard@gmail.com](mailto:losondergard@gmail.com) River Falls



## Voters Services

As high schools head towards the end of the school year, HUBs are encouraged to send thank you emails to the high schools we engaged with—which includes virtually all of them this year. We took our game wheel and specially made logo bookmarks to encourage 18 and soon-to-be 18 year olds to register to vote.

Some high schools welcomed our members to speak with their Civics classes. All in all, the districts looked to us and trusted us to deliver a non-partisan message to their students.

Spring is here and HUBs will be connecting with farmers markets to set up a table as many times as they can find volunteers to help. This is a great way to encourage people in the community to register to vote or check their registration.. It also is a fun way to spend a day outside with other members in a place with food, flowers, and a variety of people.

Please let your HUB leader know if you have a few hours to help.

Keep your eyes and ears out for the creation of an OBSERVER CORPS. The League of Women Voters has become cognizant of efforts to undermine our local government bodies with candidates that don't represent democratic principles. Some are supported by national hate groups that are attempting to infiltrate school boards and county boards. and are having success. We hope to find members to take turns attending meetings to better keep an eye on what is happening in our communities. We also plan to partner with other non-partisan groups that support democracy.

***All members, particularly those in HUB 3 and HUB 4 are invited to help with FLAG DAY on Sunday, June 14 and PRIDEFEST on Saturday, June 20. Both events will be held in Hudson at Lakefront Park.***

Thank you to members who are keeping track of current national and state legislation and are reaching out to leadership to inform our members so that we can take action.



## 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 !! contact: [vickiharmon@hotmail.com](mailto:vickiharmon@hotmail.com)

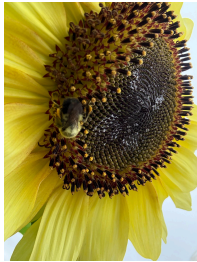
## Potluck Summer Picnic: Save the Date!

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.



## What's the buzz....Hubz NewZ!

**HUB 1 NEWS**— Northern Polk and Burnett County members are getting ready for the new Farmers Market season with dates lined up at the Northwest Passage Gallery in Webster. The market opens on Friday, May 22 at 10AM and runs until 1PM, and **we will be there!**

Stop by if you are in the area—this market has lots of great plants, crafts, and fun for the whole family! Check out the Gallery—wonderful local artists work on display—in an amazing variety of mediums. This is a great way to spend some time in Burnett County.

### **HUB 2 NEWS** –Amery, St. Croix Falls, Osceola, Milltown, Clear Lake

No news since the April 15 update.

**HUB 3 NEWS**—I will be honest and tell our hUB members that because we had a chance to see each other (and all League members) at the Annual Meeting, I deferred on holding a coffee until May. You will be hearing from Karen Roberts soon regarding helping out at the Heritage Center Farmers Market, so please be generous with a small chunk of your time.

Meanwhile I have taken a few weeks to have cataract surgery and organize my Voter Services accumulation of stuff in preparation for the coming months, leading up to the November election. Be looking for a coffee announcement that is in the works. i will be looking forward to SEEING YOU in more ways than one!

### **HUB 4 News**— Kathy Streitz, Janet Lestock, Judy Green

HUB 4 has members in the River Falls, Hammond, Baldwin, Roberts, and Hudson areas. We welcome suggestions, questions, and comments. Host a coffee, organize a gathering, reach out to members near you! It can be so comforting to meet in person.

## High School Visits

Thursday, May 21st, Carol Skinner and Kathy Streitz will visit River Falls High School during their Future Week which they offer once a month.

We will have in tow, our spinning wheel, civics questions, candy prizes and voter information. We have promised and will deliver bookmarks for the seniors with school logo, moto, and the QR code link to [myvote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov). Students will be offered voter registration materials and be invited to register to vote! We look forward to interacting with our future voters!

Please note HUB 4 members, other HUB members, and friends, are always welcome to come along on a high school visit! These visits are always joyful! Let me know if you have the urge for a joyful experience. 🌻



Thank you all for continuing the LWVSCV commitment to follow the Unite & Rise 8.5 playbook. As we head into our People Power Summer let us reflect on the closing inspiration from the CEO of League of Women Voters, Celina Stewart, Esq., that is attached to the body of this email.

You will also find a suggested calendar for the month of May which will help us prioritize our focus on activities and events as we move into a POWERFUL summer.

Forward, together  
Beth Wood, Unite&Rise 8.5 Captain



### **Acclaimed social justice artist Ricardo Levins Morales to speak at St. Croix Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**

**10:00 a.m., Sunday, May 10**

*Public is welcome to attend the Sunday service*

ST. CROIX FALLS, Wis. (May 2026) – Ricardo Levins Morales, a longtime Twin Cities social justice artist and organizer, will speak at St. Croix Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (SCUUF) at 10:00 a.m., Sunday, May 10. The service will be held on the Main Stage of The Historic Auditorium located at 210 N. Washington St. in St. Croix Falls. Levins Morales will present examples of his social justice art, which he uses as powerful instruments for healing and for change.

Levins Morales has been creating art in social justice movements since arriving in Chicago from Puerto Rico in the late 1960s. His activism has included working in solidarity with farmers, environmental, labor, racial justice, antiwar and other struggles for people’s empowerment. He draws on knowledge of history and ecology to understand the political ebbs, flows and currents within which we live. Levins Morales works out a collectively managed storefront studio in south Minneapolis.

“Ricardo’s art and writing support individual and collective healing by identifying our place in the cycles of nature and history so we can best make sense of the turbulent time we live in,” said singer-songwriter Barbara McAfee and friend of Morales. McAfee will share her music at the May 10 service.

**About St. Croix Falls Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**

Formed in 2012, St. Croix Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (SCUUF) is a liberal faith community that welcomes everyone. Unitarian Universalists – or “UUs” -- are **people of all ages, of many backgrounds and of many beliefs**. SCUUF gathers at 10:00 a.m. the first three Sundays of the month at The Historic Auditorium located at 210 N. Washington St. in St. Croix Falls. Rev. Terri Burnor preaches on the first Sunday of each month. ([www.scuuf.org](http://www.scuuf.org))

May	1	Newsletter
	1	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.  <a href="https://maydaystrong.org/">https://maydaystrong.org/</a>
	8	SUFFS airing on Great Performances! PBS 8:00 ET (check local listings)
	10	Social Justice Artist at St Croix Falls UUF
	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 10AM to 1PM Kris S. and Mary K.
June	1	Newsletter
	5	Farmers Market with Hub 1 Webster 10AM to 1PM Nancy Kolb and Pam Girtz
	14	<b>Flag Day! HUDSON Lakefront Park</b>
	17	Annual Picnic (south) Heritage Center 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM
	19	Juneteenth
	20	<b>Pride Event! Hudson Lakefront Park</b>
	17	Annual LWVSCV Picnic Heritage Center
	26	Farmers Market with Hub 1 Webster 10AM-1PM
July	1	Newsletter
	4	Independence day! 250 Years! Keep it up!!!
	15	LWVSCV Summer Picnic 5:00PM – 7:30PM In Frederic at the Community Pride Park on the corner of Traffic Ave. and Highway 48.
August	1	Newsletter
	11	<b><u>Primary</u></b>
November	1	Newsletter
November	3	<b><u>General Election</u></b>



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 below to find out more!

## 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>

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

**Voter Services Co-Chairs** Kay Brooks (interim) <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>



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!**



**Suffs Musical**

Feb 12 · 🌐

Grab your giggle juice: SUFFS is officially marching from the stage to the screen! We are delighted to announce that the PBS Great Performances broadcast of SUFFS will premiere on Friday, May 8.

This capture of the original Broadway production will air at 9 p.m. ET on PBS and affiliate stations, as well as on [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and streaming on the PBS app.

You know we're already planning our watch party. Stay tuned for more news!

**SUFFS**  
**PBS GREAT PERFORMANCES PREMIERE**  
**MAY 8, 2026 AT 9 PM ET**  
CHECK YOUR LOCAL LISTINGS