



Women's Suffrage

The beginning of a League of Women Voters

WHAT IS SUFFRAGE?

Suffrage refers to a person's right to vote. Who gained the right to vote and when depended on a person's sex/gender, race, age, and property ownership.

NATIONAL CHEAT SHEET—WHO CAN VOTE WHEN:

1789—White men: Individual states set their voting requirements. Mainly this meant voters also had to own property or pay taxes.

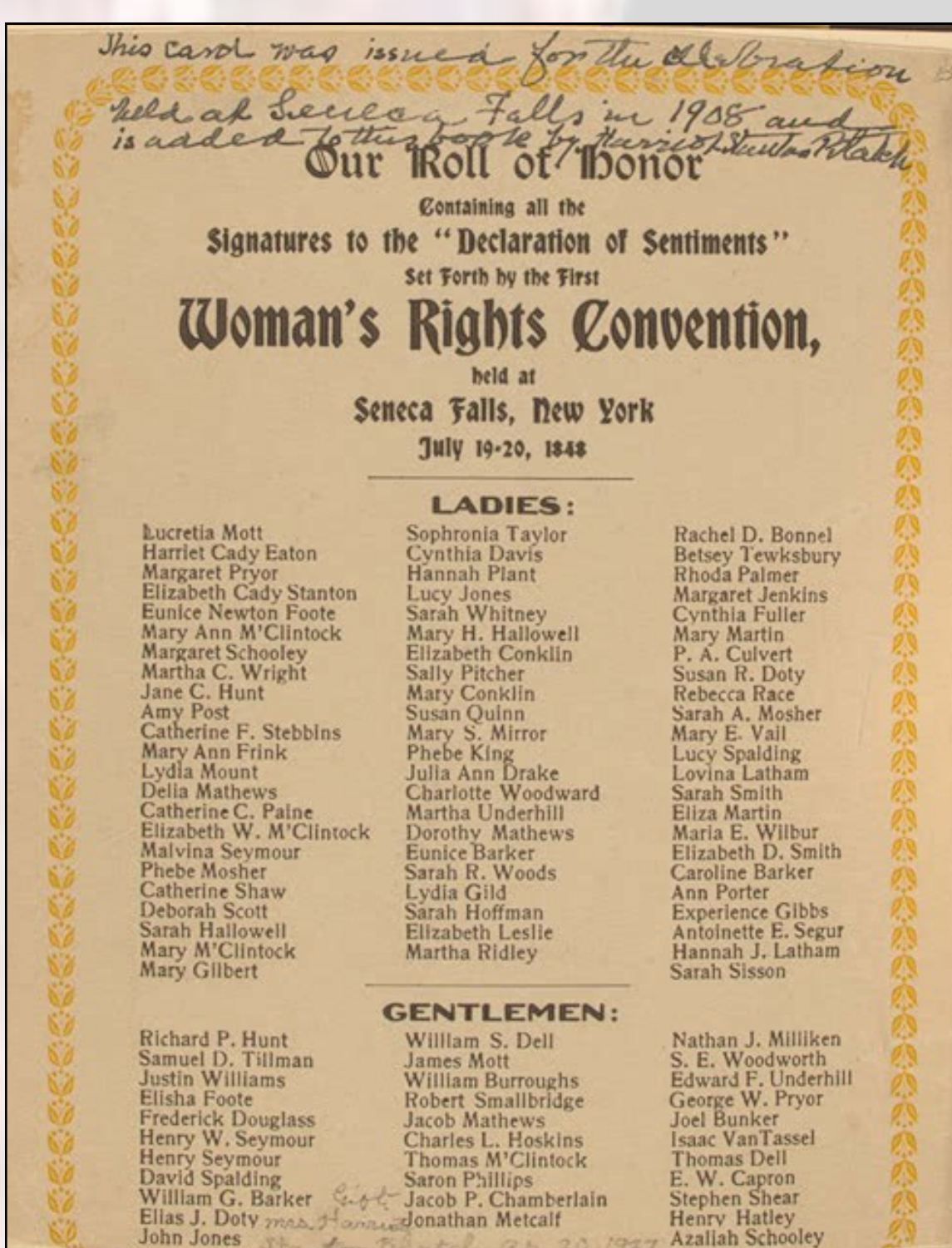
1870—Black men: The newly ratified 15th Amendment stated that citizens could not be denied the vote based on "Race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

1920—Women: The 19th Amendment expanded voting rights to women "right...to vote shall not be denied...on account of sex."

1971—Youth: The 26th Amendment lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 with the argument that if you could be drafted for war you should be able to vote.

Nearly 200 women and 40 men attend the First Woman Suffrage Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. **Lucretia Mott** and **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** organize the convention, which became a chance "to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of women..."

They adopted a "Declaration of Sentiments" that called out men's "history of repeated injuries and usurpations" in order to assert "an absolute tyranny" over women. Only one of the proposed resolutions didn't pass unanimously—the one regarding a women's right to vote.



Susan B. Anthony Circa 1890, Library of Congress

1848

Minnesota women begin to organize for suffrage.

1875

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton draft wording for a Constitutional Amendment giving women the right to vote.

MN State constitutional amendment allows women to vote in School board elections only.

Born into a Quaker family, **SUSAN B. ANTHONY** (1820-1906) initially joined the Temperance movement. Her experiences being denied a chance to speak at temperance events because of her sex and her acquaintance with Elizabeth Cady Stanton led her to join the women's suffrage movement in 1852. While she never saw the movement succeed during her lifetime, she left her mark in the wording of the eventual amendment granting women the vote.

1881

14 Women gather in Hastings and form the MINNESOTA WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION (MWSA).

By the next year they have 200 members.

1890

National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) form when the National Woman Suffrage Association and American Woman Suffrage Association merge.

They had one goal: obtaining the right to vote for women by pushing for as many states to adopt suffrage amendments that Congress would approve a federal one.

YES TO WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE!

- Women are domestic, moral, motherly creatures who could create a more "maternal Commonwealth."
- Voting is a part of "Women's Duties."
- To preserve the home.
- Would aid Temperance movement (Prohibition).
- Laws affect women, but they have no say: "taxation without representation."

NO TO VOTES FOR WOMEN!

- It would be redundant as women would just vote as their husbands do.
- Voting is part of *Men's* duties.
- Women's participation in politics is better without the ballot—as default non-partisans.
- Women make little use of the vote even when they do have it.

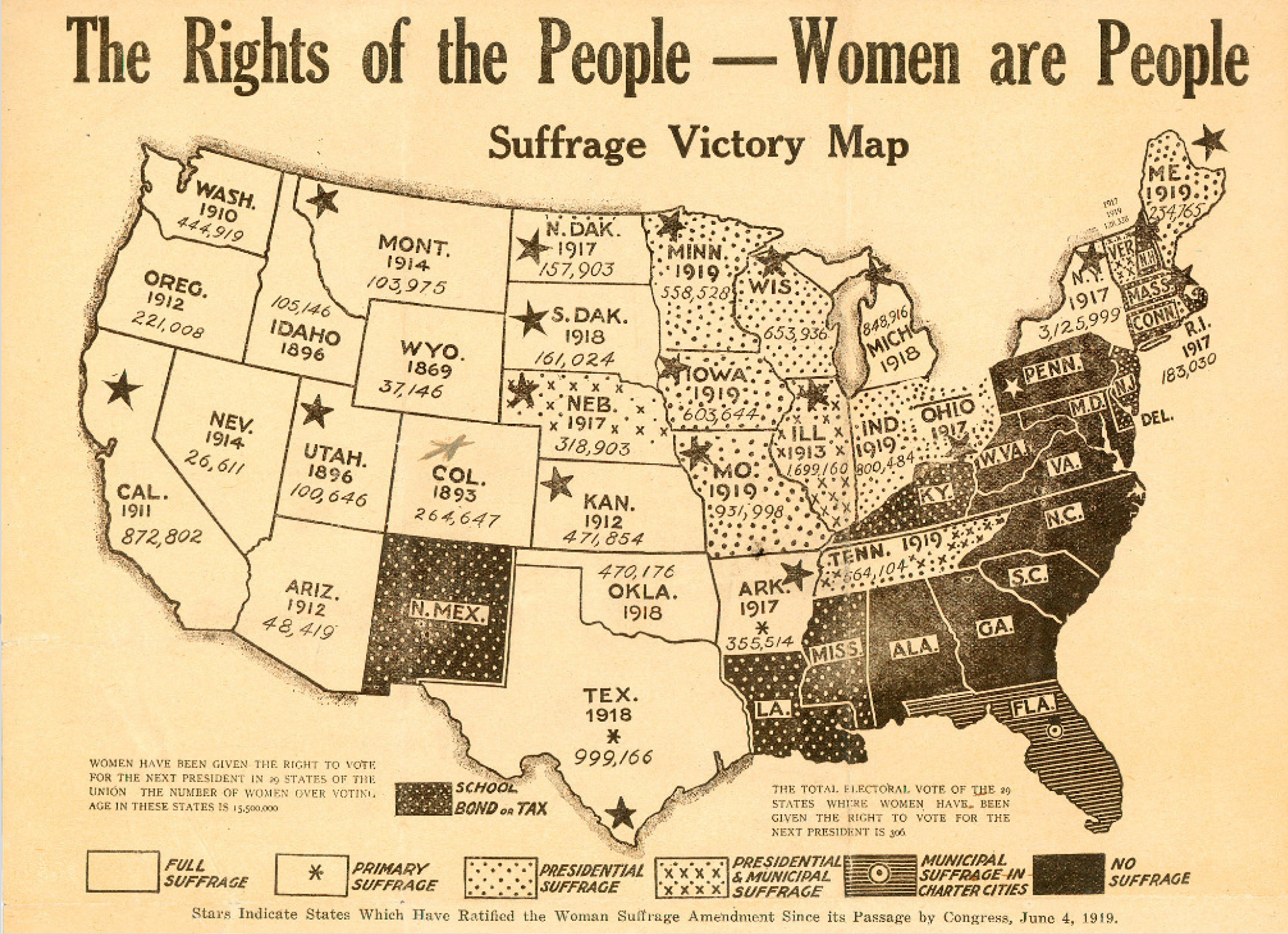


Election day! Library of Congress.

Territory of Wyoming was the first in the U.S. to adopt women's suffrage in 1869.

New Zealand became the first country to grant women the vote in 1893.

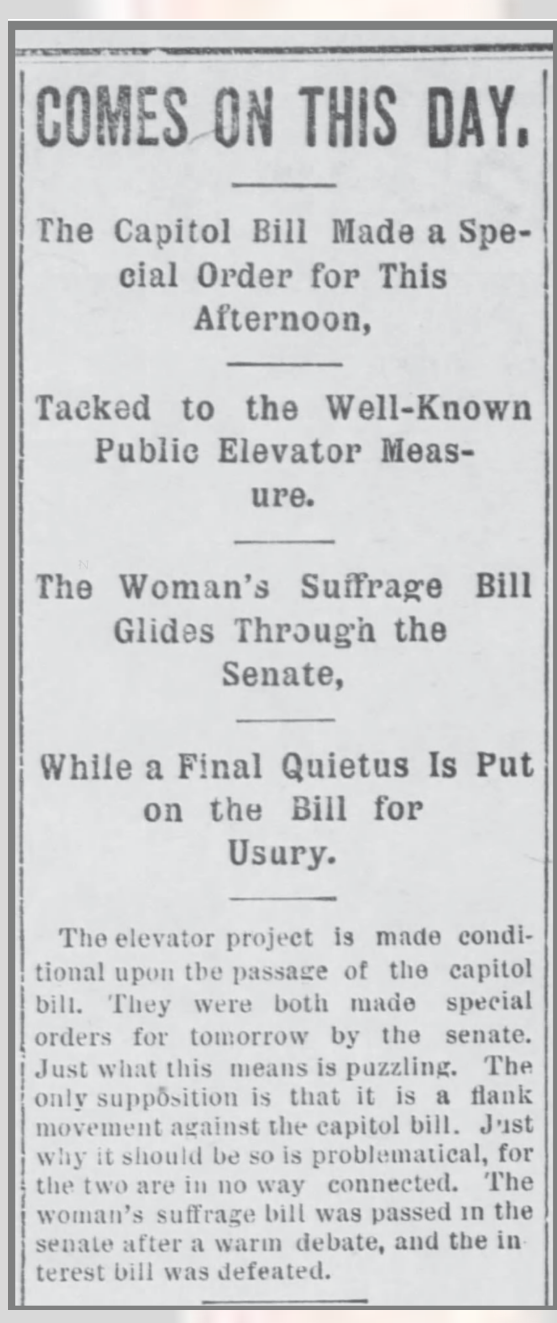
MN Women won the right to vote in Presidential elections in 1919.



Credit: www.virginiamemory.com/shaping "The Rights of the People- Women are People"

1893

First attempt to pass full women's suffrage in Minnesota nearly successful through the efforts of the Minnesota Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA)



The Saint Paul Globe March 22, 1893

The Minneapolis Tribune, April 18, 1893



Palczewski, Catherine H. Postcard Archive. University of Northern Iowa. Cedar Falls,

1911

Anoka resident Dr. Flora Aldrich speaks in favor of women's suffrage.

"If it is true—and it is true—that woman's moral leverage in the home is an all important one, then it is true that her moral leverage in the government would be an all important one. Home and government! Their problems are identical; and to give woman a voice in the government is but to enlarge her consecrated services in the home."

Flora Aldrich The Minneapolis Tribune, 1911.



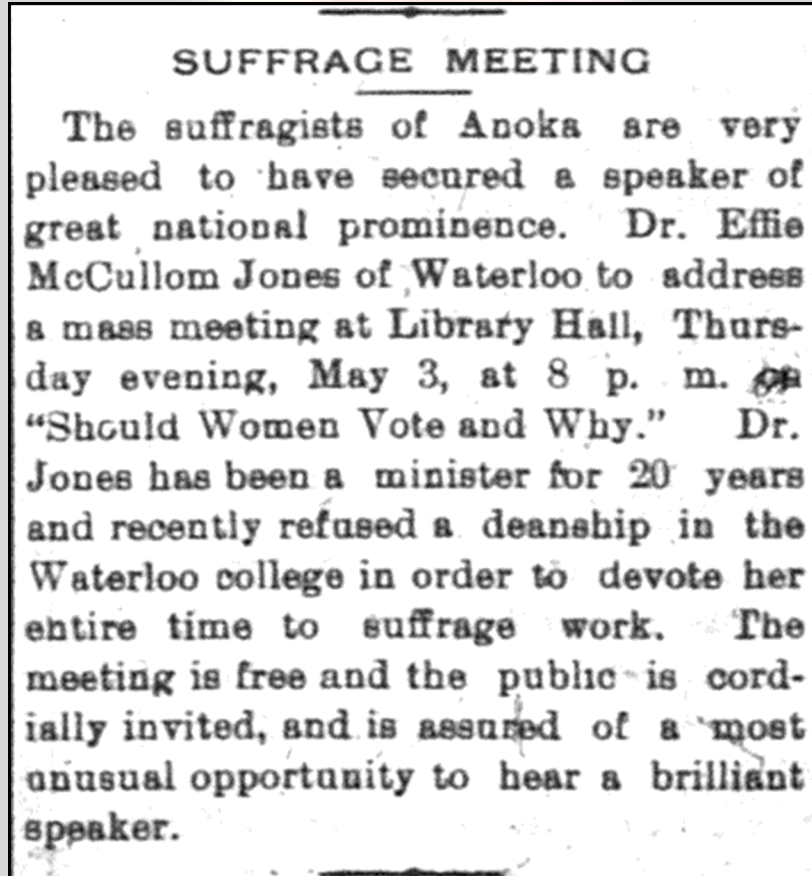
DR. FLORA [SOUTHARD] ALDRICH (1859-1921) earned her medical degree from the University of Minnesota in 1887 and practiced medicine in Anoka. An advocate for women's and children's health, she published two books on the subject, spoke out for women's suffrage and became the first President of the local women's Philolectian society.

1917

Nationally known suffragist Dr. Effie McCullum James speaks at Liberty Hall, Anoka

The Suffrage meeting at Liberty hall was not well attended Thursday evening, although Dr. Effie McCullum James gave a splendid address. It was not considered best to organize a Suffrage Society in Anoka.

Anoka Union May 9, 1917



Anoka Union May 2, 1917



League of Women Voters



From amendment to action with zeal

WORLD WAR I (1914-1918)

As people went off to fight in WWI, women's roles in society expanded. Those fighting for suffrage argued they were doing their part for the country, so getting the vote was only fair.



Miss Grace Randall, an organizer in the Minnesota Woman Suffrage Association, visits Anoka to appoint a Ratification Committee, to advocate for the 19th Amendment. The Committee included Mrs. A.E. Giddings as Chairman, Dr. Flora Aldrich and 14 other local women, and one man.



Object Id: 2014.0000.001



March — The National Woman Suffrage Association creates the League of Women Voters as an Auxiliary organization.

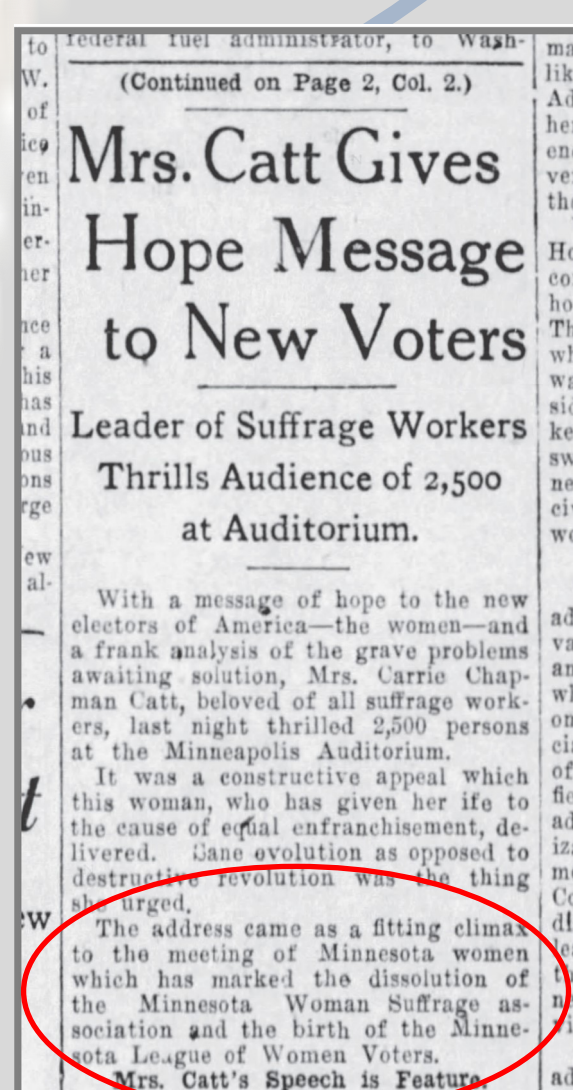
March 20 — Minnesota grants women the right to vote in Presidential elections only.



Minneapolis Morning Tribune
Sept. 9, 1919

September 8 — Minnesota ratifies the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

October 29 — The Minnesota Women Suffrage Association reincorporates as LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MINNESOTA



Minneapolis Morning Tribune
Oct. 30, 1919

Amendment XIX

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.



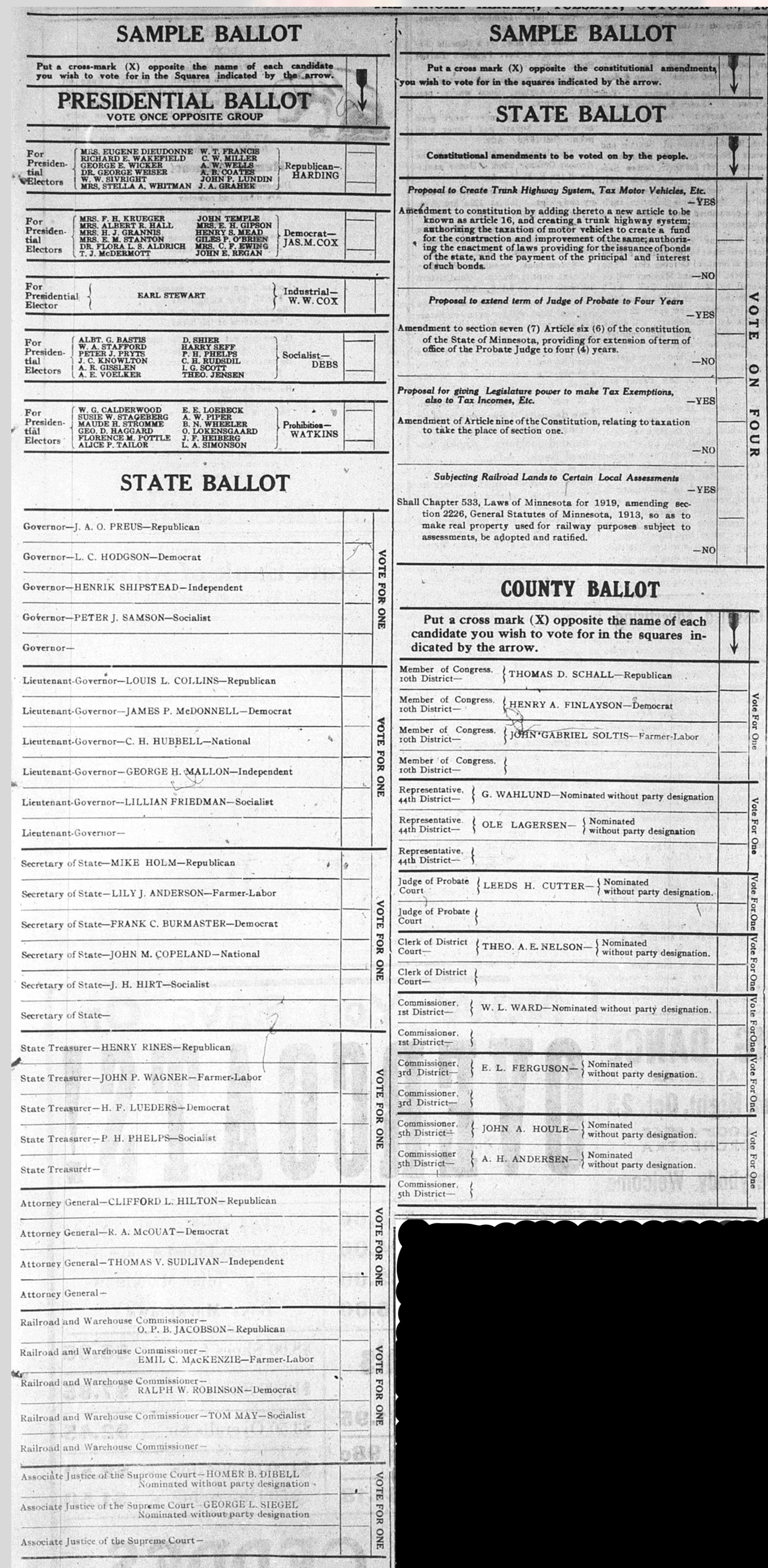
February 14 — The National League of Women Voters becomes an independent organization.

April 21 — National League of Women Voters chair, Mrs. Maud Wood Parker, and State and District League officers visit Anoka to organize an Anoka County League. Anoka was one of three cities besides Minneapolis and St. Paul selected for a possible chapter.

August 18 — The 19th Amendment becomes part of the U.S.

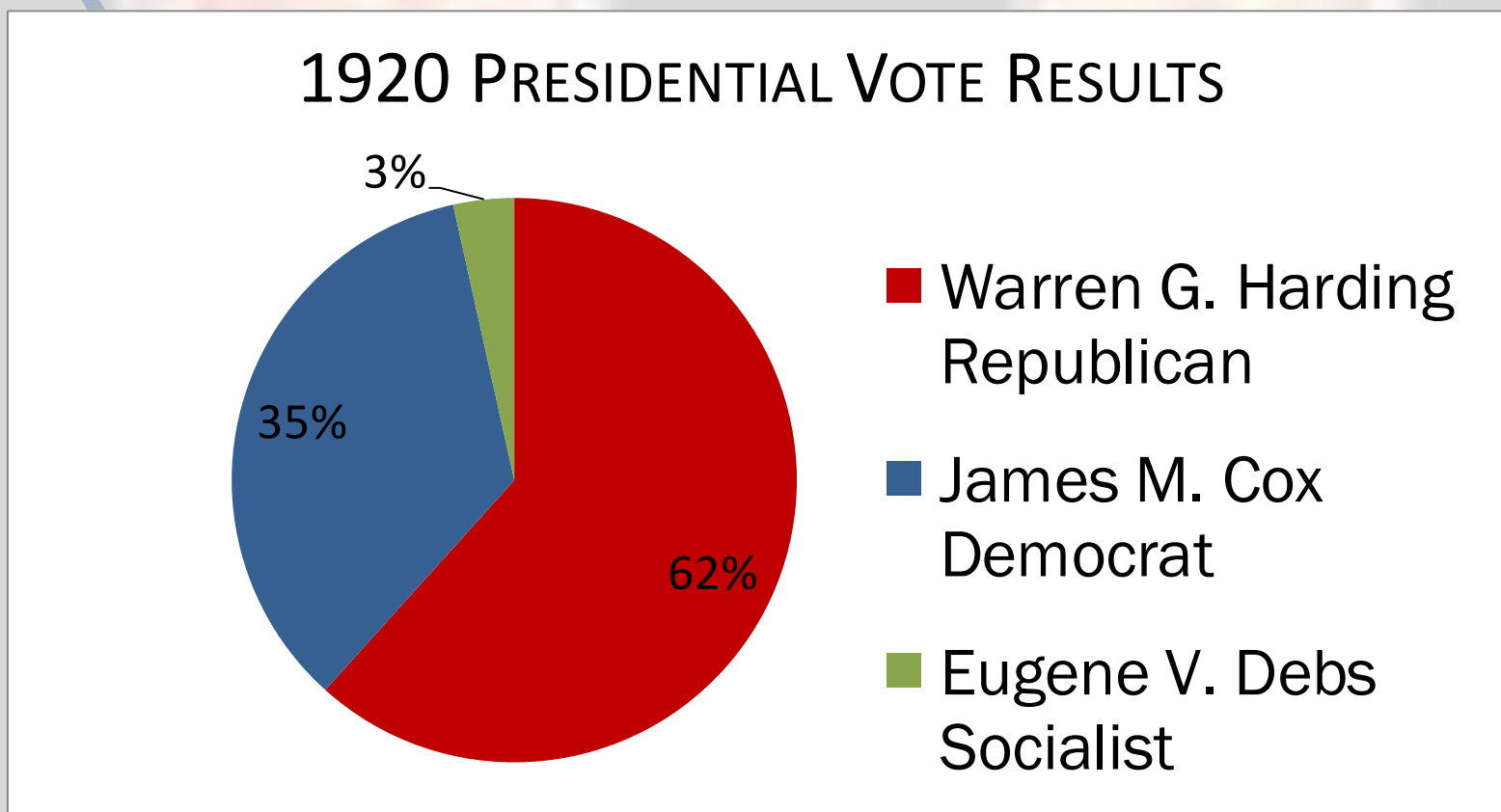
Constitution using the exact words proposed by Susan B. Anthony in 1875.

SAMPLE BALLOT 1920 ELECTION



November 2, 1920 — Women vote in the Presidential election.

In their first national election, women voted for the President of the United States, State Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Attorney General, Railroad and Warehouse commissioner, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, four State Constitutional Amendments, and county representatives.



Nellie [Erickson] Peterson, 1939
Photo Credit: Linda Johnson

NELLIE [ERICKSON] PETERSON [1866-1948] chaired the League of Women Voters in Anoka during the ratification of the 19th Amendment. She often hosted meetings at her home and submitted this article to the *Anoka Union* on September 1 on behalf of the League. She doesn't dwell on the win, but moves forward into what comes next: preparing to vote in the November Presidential Election.

Anoka Union

League of Women Voters

The ratification of the Federal Suffrage Amendment has now been completed. Every woman in Anoka County who is properly qualified by age and citizenship may now vote, not only for President, but for ALL State and National offices at the November election. It is the hope and belief of the League of Women Voters that the women of our county will respond in the finest spirit of patriotism to this new duty. ... It is the personal duty— the special responsibility of every Anoka county woman to take her place at the polls for the good of her home, her state, her country. We believe she will respond....

At the County Fair, the League of Women Voters will conduct a one day political school under the direction of Mrs. Emily Kneubuhl, State Director of Political Education. Mrs. A.E. Giddings is in charge of this department. A voting demonstration, under the direction of Mrs. Harlan Thurston will also be given at the County Fair... Come prepared to stay all day. Turn out on mass for the County Fair and come to school for ONE DAY. We extend a cordial invitation to the old voters to participate in this school.

VOTER TURNOUT

A day after the election, the *Anoka Union* reported "The heavy vote due to women's voting has delayed election returns many hours..."

Details about woman voter turnout in the 1920 election is varied. The *Editorial Research Reports 1927* indicated that women cast 40% of the vote in the Minnesota election and 35% of the total national vote for President.

ELECTION RETURNS FOR STATE OFFICERS, 1920 ANOKA COUNTY									
NAMES OF TOWNSHIPS, VILLAGES OR WARDS (In Alphabetical Order)	GOVERNOR		LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR		SECRETARY OF STATE		STATE TREASURER		ATTORNEY GENERAL
	WARREN G. HARDING REPUBLICAN	JAMES M. COX DEMOCRAT	WARREN G. HARDING REPUBLICAN	JAMES M. COX DEMOCRAT	WARREN G. HARDING REPUBLICAN	JAMES M. COX DEMOCRAT	WARREN G. HARDING REPUBLICAN	JAMES M. COX DEMOCRAT	
City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
1. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
2. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
3. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
4. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
5. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
6. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
7. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
8. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
9. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
10. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
11. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
12. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
13. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
14. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
15. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
16. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
17. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
18. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
19. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
20. City of Anoka.....	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100
TOTAL.....	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000



Minnie Hill Beatty, Charter Member of League of Women Voters Anoka, serves as the first female election judge chair in her ward.



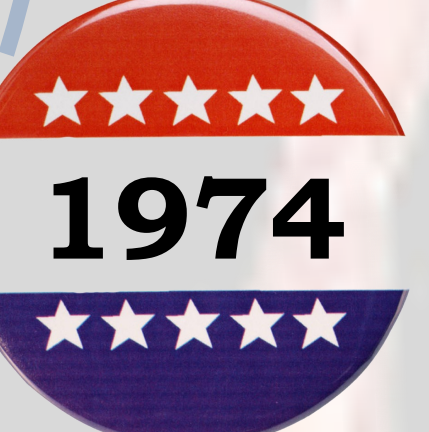
Mrs. Cecelia Keys, Charter Member of the Columbia Heights League of Women Voters, becomes a member of the State Board of the League of Women Voters. She works to organize new chapters in Southwestern Minnesota.

LOCAL LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MEMBERS ELECTED TO OFFICE

- 1967—ZILLA WAY, League member, first elected woman Anoka City Commissioner.
- 1967—SUSAN ANDERS begins service on the Blaine Charter Commission.
- 1982—MARGARET LANGFELD and NATALIE HAAS STEFFEN first women elected to the Anoka County Board of Commissioners.
- 2016—JIM ABLER and JERRY NEWTON elected to the Minnesota State Senate.



May 18—Mrs. Mary Spurzem holds a tea to permanently re-establish League of Women Voters in Anoka. The *Anoka Herald* reported "One of the major activities of the League has been the fight against the spoils system in politics. The League embodies many studies on different phases of government that materially affect women."



Fred Strobel becomes the first man to join the League of Women Voters—ABC.



Anoka Coon Rapids League and Blaine League merge to form League of Women Voters-ABC.



The formation of the League of Women Voters—ABC leads to decades more activities, efforts, initiatives and projects. The story does not end here, but continues on to the future.

POLITICAL EFFORTS THROUGH THE YEARS

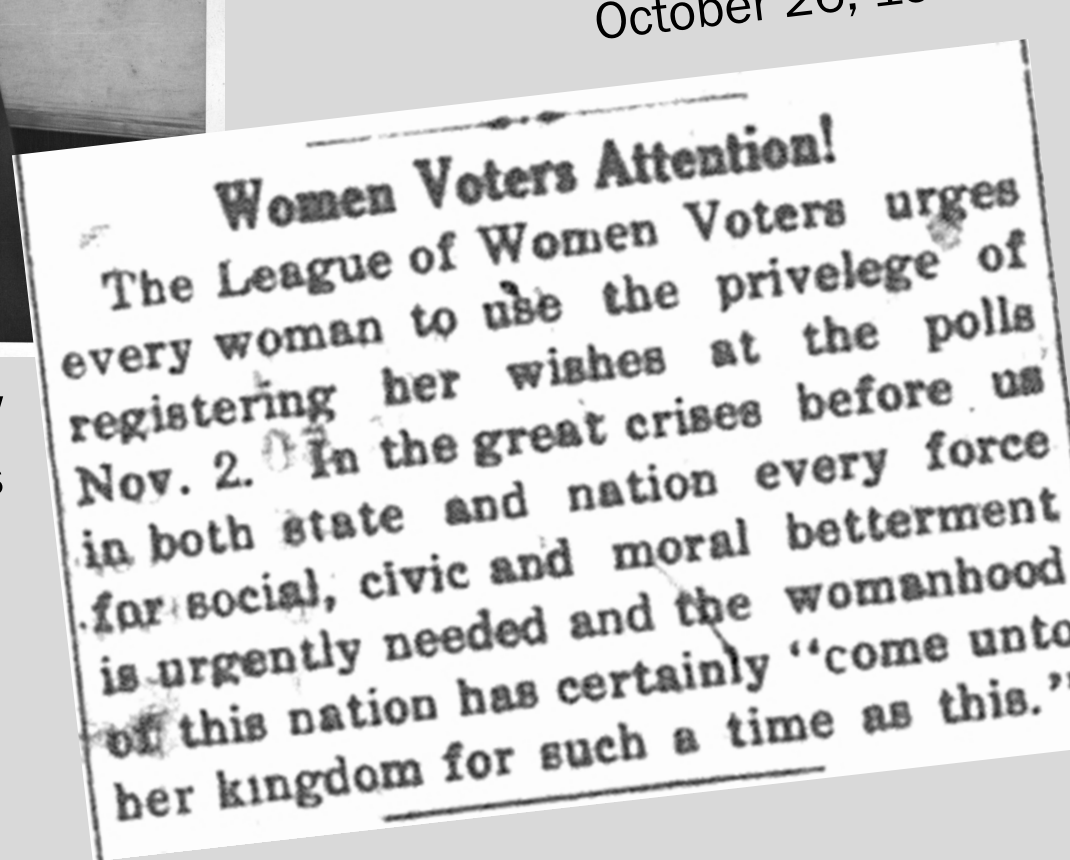
- 1940—League holds candidate meetings for all elections.
- 1954—Holds forums for amendments to support a revised State Constitution.
- 1956—Lobbies for permanent registration for voters in the Anoka area.
- 1963—Establishes a Charter Commission to review City of Anoka Charter.
- 1967—Blaine League of Women Voters publishes a City Candidate Questionnaire in the *Blaine Life*
- 1983—Recommends actions for a new correctional facility for women in Shakopee.
- 1990—Efforts by member Sandra Shanley result in passage of a permanent absentee ballot legislation in Minnesota.
- 1993—Members partner with Anoka-Hennepin District 11 to sponsor an education conversation with University of Minnesota President Nils Hasselmo.
- 2002—League hosts a forum on judicial independence and legislation.
- 2018—14 members train to moderate candidate forums for city and county offices.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®



Three suffragists casting votes in New York City, Library of Congress



Anoka Herald
October 26, 1920