

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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# NEBRASKA

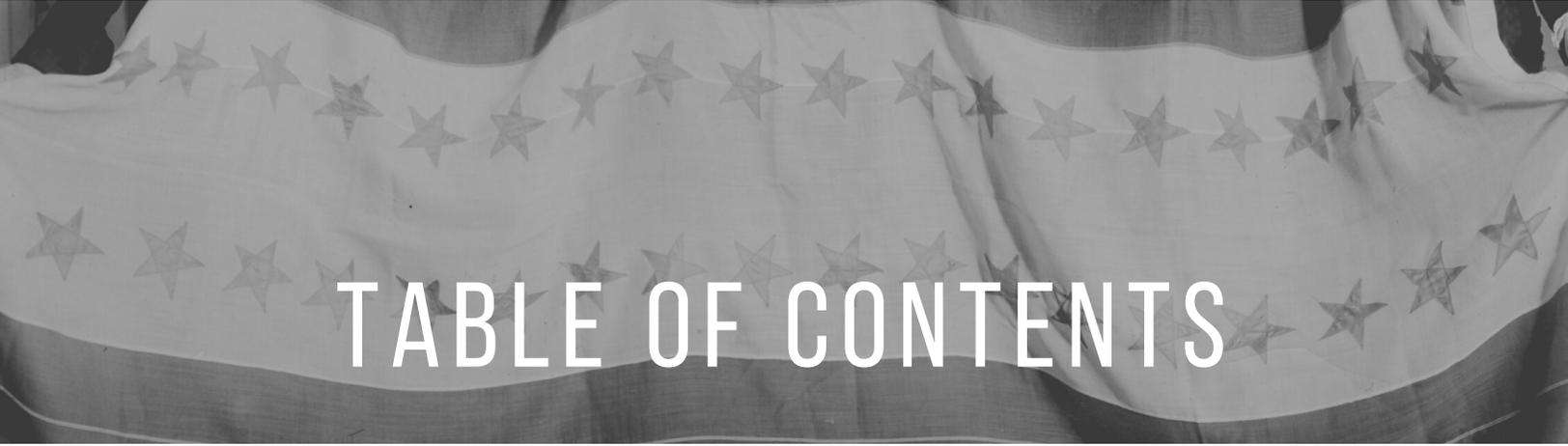
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RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON AUG. 2, 1919

1920  2020  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE  
CENTENNIAL  
COMMISSION



1920-2020



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"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."

The 19th Amendment

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# ABOUT

*The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (WSCC) was formed by Congress to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote and the 19th Amendment.*

Throughout 2020, the United States is celebrating the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which secured women's constitutional right to vote. Today, more than 68 million American women vote in elections because of the courageous suffragists who never gave up the fight for equality. This centennial is an unparalleled opportunity to elevate women's history and to commemorate a milestone of American democracy.

**Use this toolkit as your guide to commemorating the centennial in your state and community.**



ALICE PAUL IN FRONT OF THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D.C., 1920.

# LEARN THE HISTORY

## THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Suffragists began their organized fight for women's equality in 1848 when they demanded the right to vote during the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. For the next 72 years, women leaders lobbied, marched, picketed, and protested for the right to the ballot. The U.S. House of Representatives finally approved the "Susan B. Anthony Amendment," which guaranteed women the right to vote, on May 21, 1919. The U.S. Senate followed two weeks later and voted to approve the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919. The 19th Amendment then went to the states, where it had to be ratified by three-fourths of the then 48 states to be added to the Constitution. Tennessee became the 36th and final state needed to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. On August 26, 1920, the U.S. Secretary of State issued a proclamation declaring the 19th Amendment ratified and officially part of the U.S. Constitution. Today, August 26th is celebrated annually as Women's Equality Day.

## NEBRASKA QUICK FACTS

- Nebraska ratified the 19th Amendment on August 2, 1919.
- Nebraska women won municipal and presidential suffrage, but not full suffrage, in 1917.
- Suffragists campaigned for suffrage in Nebraska starting in the 1850s, when it was still a territory. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton toured the state several times.
- Both the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association held their annual conventions in Omaha in 1882.
- Suffragists like Amelia Bloomer, Rheta Childe Dorr, Erasmus Correll, and Governor John H. Mickey were active in Nebraska.
- The Nebraska State Woman Suffrage Association was a crucial force in the state



SUFFRAGIST AND  
LAWYER INEZ  
MILHOLLAND AT A  
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE  
PARADE IN NEW YORK  
CITY, MAY 3, 1913.

## LEARN THE HISTORY

ORIGINAL SOURCE: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NEBRASKA AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT

**RATIFICATION DATE: AUGUST 2, 1919**

Women first organized and collectively fought for suffrage at the national level in July of 1848. Suffragists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott convened a meeting of over 300 people in Seneca Falls, New York. In the following decades, women marched, protested, lobbied, and even went to jail. By the 1870s, women pressured Congress to vote on an amendment that would recognize their suffrage rights. This amendment was sometimes known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment and became the 19th Amendment.

The amendment reads:

*"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."*

Although progress on the federal amendment stalled, women also campaigned for changes to state suffrage requirements to win the vote. Nebraska had a long history of wrestling with the issue of woman suffrage.

Amelia Bloomer spoke in favor of votes for women at the Douglas House hotel in Omaha on July 4, 1855 while Nebraska was still a territory. Bloomer's appearance along with her visit to the territorial legislature the next year stoked interest in Nebraska women's rights. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton arrived in 1867 to urge support of woman suffrage; they would each tour the state again over the years during continued campaigns for women's rights.

Nebraska women won the right to vote for school board members in 1869 and the legislature continued to discuss full woman suffrage in every legislative session. Not much progress was made, however, until the 1880s when Nebraska became an example of the power of male allies in the fight for votes for women. Erasmus Correll, editor of the Hebron Journal and a member of the Nebraska House

of Representatives, introduced a bill to amend the state constitution to enfranchise women in 1881. At first, there were only ten other members of the legislature who supported the measure. Correll successfully negotiated with his fellow lawmakers to pass the measure, which would remove the word "male" from the constitutional suffrage requirements if Nebraska voters approved it.

Correll also founded the Western Woman's Journal with his wife Lucy, a monthly periodical with national readership which highlighted women's issues. The masthead of the paper included the Nebraska state motto, "Equality Before the Law."

Both the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) held conventions in Omaha in 1882 in order to support the initiative and bring attention to woman suffrage in the Midwest. If the amendment passed, Nebraska would become the first state with full woman suffrage. In her address to the AWSA convention, Lucy Stone declared, "When our feet touched Nebraska soil we felt as though we should take off our shoes, for the place on which we stand was holy ground. Not because of her grand prairies...but because her men are so noble and progressive that they have offered their wives and mothers and sisters equal rights with themselves."

Despite the efforts of men and women suffragists, the amendment was soundly defeated when it was put to the male votes of Nebraska in November 1882. The Western Woman's Journal ceased publication and suffrage organizations went dormant. Nebraska women who were politically active tended to work for other Progressive causes like temperance while also supporting suffrage.

## LEARN THE HISTORY

The Nebraska Woman Suffrage Association successfully petitioned to put the issue of municipal suffrage—the right to vote for city officials—to the voters. Suffragists held rallies, processions, and education campaigns, but that measure was also defeated by the men of Nebraska. Opposition from religious leaders and liquor interests was too powerful.

Then in 1917, with support from pro-suffrage Governor Keith Neville, municipal and presidential suffrage for women passed the Nebraska legislature and was signed into law. Anti-suffrage organizations tried to overturn the law. Their effort to put a referendum on the ballot for the 1918 election failed when signatures on the petition for the referendum were found to be fraudulent. The scandal surrounding the court cases exposing the fraud helped to sway public opinion in Nebraska to the suffrage cause.

After decades of arguments for and against women's suffrage, Congress finally passed the 19th Amendment in June 1919. After Congress approved the 19th Amendment, at least 36 states needed to vote in favor of it for it to become law. This process is called ratification.

On August 2, 1919, the Nebraska legislature voted unanimously to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. By August of 1920, 36 states (including Nebraska) ratified the amendment, ensuring that across the country, the right to vote could not be denied or abridged based on sex.

### **Nebraska Places of Women's Suffrage: Governor John Hopwood Mickey House**

Born in 1845, John H. Mickey was the governor of Nebraska from 1903 to 1907. Mickey was involved in politics well before he became governor. He was a state Congressman in the late 1800s when he voted in support of a women's suffrage amendment. He also attended and spoke at a women's suffrage meeting in Tecumseh after being elected governor of the state. Mickey is an example of the importance of male supporters in the fight for women's suffrage. His house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is now home to the Polk County Historical Museum.

Source: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/nebraska-and-the-19th-amendment.htm>

OFFICERS OF THE WOMEN'S LEAGUE IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, CIRCA 1899



# COMMEMORATE ACROSS YOUR STATE

-  **Issue Proclamations or Executive Orders:** Encourage your Governor and Mayors across the state to issue a commemorative proclamation or executive order to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or designate 2020 as "The Year of Nebraska Women." Find samples and templates at [womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders](https://womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders).
-  **Pass Resolutions:** Encourage your state legislature, city councils, and town councils to pass commemorative resolutions to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or reaffirm your state's or community's commitment to the 19th Amendment and to uplifting women's voices. Find samples and templates at [womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders](https://womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders).
-  **Join the Forward Into Light Campaign:** On August 26, 2020, buildings and landmarks across the country will light up in purple and gold to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. This nationwide celebration of the centennial is named for the historical suffrage slogan, "Forward through the Darkness, Forward into Light." Work with leaders, organizations, and communities in your state to celebrate women's right to vote in the official suffrage colors of purple and gold, from the State Capitol to skyscrapers to bridges to city halls.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN NEBRASKA

- **In August 2019, Governor Pete Ricketts issued a proclamation marking the 100th anniversary of Nebraska's ratification of the 19th Amendment.**
- **The Nebraska State Legislature voted to recognize August 2019 as Nebraska Women's Suffrage Month.**
- **The Nebraska History Museum featured an exhibit titled Votes for Women: Nebraska's Suffrage Story from August 2019 through January 2020.**

# GET INSPIRED

## COMING UP IN 2020



**FORWARD  
INTO LIGHT**



**PROJECT 19  
SKYDIVERS**



**VOTES FOR  
WOMEN TRAIL**



**CENTENNIAL  
RIDE**

**Forward Into Light:** As part of the WSCC's Forward Into Light campaign, states across the country will light their buildings and landmarks in purple and gold on August 26, 2020, the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Some states started commemorating the centennial with lightings in 2019, including Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Virginia. Are you in for August 26, 2020? Contact the WSCC for more information.

**Project 19:** Led by the Women's Skydiving Network (WSN), Project 19 is a planned jump of 100 women skydivers in July 2020 outside of Chicago in celebration of the centennial of women's right to vote. The WSN also has a sponsored all-women Professional Demonstration Team, which is scheduling jumps (at no charge!) during 19th Amendment celebrations around the country throughout 2020. For more information, contact Team Captain Melanie Curtis at [mel@melaniecurtis.com](mailto:mel@melaniecurtis.com).

**Votes for Women Trail:** The National Votes for Women Trail is a project led by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to place historic markers at locations relevant to the history of the women's suffrage movement in all 50 states. The WSCC is partnering with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to complete the Trail in 2020. Visit [womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail](http://womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail) to follow the Trail and find historic sites in your state.

**Centennial Ride:** In honor of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, hundreds of women and men will participate in a cross-country motorcycle tour in 2020. Riders will leave from ten different starting cities around the country, and more than 1,000 riders will converge on Washington, D.C. between August 20-23, 2020. Learn more at [www.centennialride.com](http://www.centennialride.com).

# PLAN AN EVENT



"WE KNOCK AT THE BAR OF JUSTICE, ASKING AN EQUAL CHANCE."

-Mary Church Terrell, suffragist & founder of the National Association of Colored Women, 1898

- **What:** Hold a press conference, reception, or public program commemorating the centennial of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. Keep reading for examples and ideas!
- **Where:** Host an event at your State Capitol or City Hall, or at a historic site, museum, school, university, or community center. Find a list of historic sites and places in Nebraska along the National Votes for Women Trail at [womensvote100.org/get-involved](http://womensvote100.org/get-involved).
- **When:** Events celebrating the centennial can be held anytime throughout 2020, but particularly important dates include Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March), and June-August 2020, building up to the official centennial date on August 26, 2020.
- **Who:** Invite members of your community to your event, as well as state or local leaders such as your Governor, First Lady/First Partner, Members of Congress, State Legislators, Mayor, or local Council Members. Invite a guest speaker, such as a women's suffrage historian, and invite historic performers to portray famous women of history. Find a list of historians and performers at [womensvote100.org/get-involved](http://womensvote100.org/get-involved).
- **Additional Details:** The suffragists wore white dresses to display their unity, and the yellow rose became a symbol of the movement's ultimate victory. At your commemorative event, decorate the room with yellow roses, suggest your guests dress in white attire, and offer replica Votes for Women pins, which can be provided by the WSCC.

## Relevant Organizations in Your State:

- Durham Museum: [durhammuseum.org](http://durhammuseum.org)
- Humanities Nebraska: [humanitiesnebraska.org](http://humanitiesnebraska.org)
- League of Nebraska Municipalities: [lonm.org](http://lonm.org)
- Nebraska Historical Society: [history.nebraska.gov](http://history.nebraska.gov)
- Nebraska History Museum: [history.nebraska.gov/museum](http://history.nebraska.gov/museum)
- Nebraska State Archives and Libraries: [statearchives.us/nebraska](http://statearchives.us/nebraska)

# PLAN AN EVENT



"MEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING MORE; WOMEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING LESS."  
Susan B. Anthony & Elizabeth Cady Stanton, c.1868

## MORE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IDEAS

**Street Renaming:** Through your Mayor's office, change the name of a street in your city in honor of a local suffragist.

**Suffrage Exhibits:** Work with your local historical society to create an exhibit about your community's suffrage story.

**Purple and Gold Fireworks:** At your State Fair, County Fair, or community gathering, feature a display of purple and gold fireworks.

**Musical Performances:** Hold a concert featuring female composers or original music from the suffrage movement, which can be found online through the Library of Congress's searchable archives.

**Film Screenings:** Host screenings of films focused on the suffrage movement or women's empowerment, such as *Iron Jawed Angels*, *Suffragette*, or *A League of Their Own*.

**Suffrage Floats:** Include a suffrage-themed float in state and local parades.

**Community Murals:** Hire a local artist to create a suffrage-themed mural in your community that tells the story of the suffrage movement in your state.

**Suffrage Centennial Races:** Take the lead from the National Park Service's Race to Ratification and hold a suffrage-themed 5K or 10k in summer 2020.

**Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon:** Work with Wikipedia to plan an "Edit-a-Thon" focused on your state and local suffrage history.

**Suffrage Essay or Art Contests:** Hold an essay or art contest for students on topics related to your state and local suffrage history.

**Suffrage Book Club:** Form a book club with a locally owned bookstore to read and discuss books about the women's suffrage movement.

**Plantings of Yellow Roses:** Plant yellow roses in your home, school, or community gardens and share photos on social media using the hashtags #WomensVote100, #SuffrageSisters, and #SuffraGents.

# JOIN THE CONVERSATION

## STAY ENGAGED

- Follow @WomensVote100 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Check out the “Suffrage Sisters” YouTube channel
- Subscribe to our e-newsletter at [womensvote100.org](http://womensvote100.org)
- Keep an eye on our Nebraska page at [womensvote100.org/Nebraska](http://womensvote100.org/Nebraska)

## FIND RESOURCES

- [womensvote100.org/learn](http://womensvote100.org/learn)
- [womensvote100.org/news](http://womensvote100.org/news)
- [womensvote100.org/states](http://womensvote100.org/states)

Use these hashtags on social media to engage with your community during this historic moment:

**#WomensVote100**  
**#SuffrageSisters**  
**#SuffraGents**

## SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

### Instagram



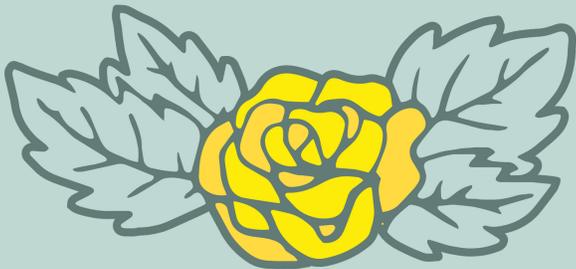
### Facebook



# THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



# QUESTIONS?

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