

The Voter

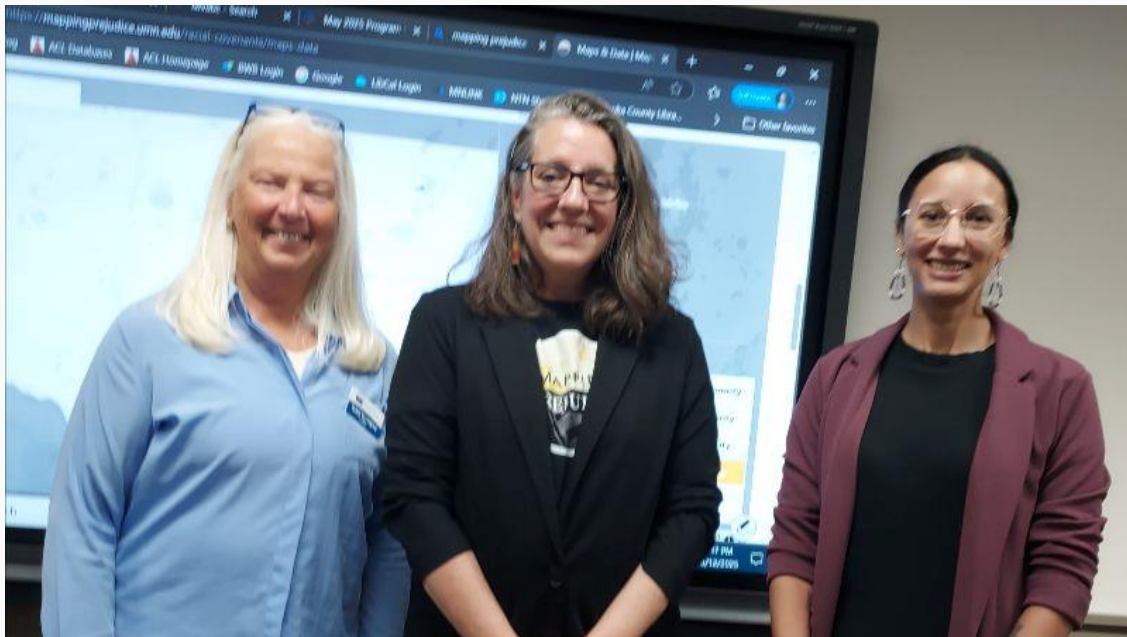
The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter
June 2025

No June or July Program Meeting

In August, we will hold our annual potluck summer picnic. Stay tuned for location.

The Andover Council Chamber is no longer available for our program meetings/presentations.

If you have any venue suggestions, please email us at lwwabc@gmail.com.



LWV ABC President Gretchen Sabel, Mapping Prejudice Community Engagement Lead Rebecca Gillett and Anoka County Library Associate Librarian Carissa Thomas.

Mapping Prejudice: Restrictive Covenants in Our Communities

In April, we were joined by Rebecca Gillette, Mapping Prejudice Community Engagement Lead. Beginning in 2016, Mapping Prejudice, with the help of over 12,000 volunteers, has been locating and mapping racial covenants in property deeds. Although not legal in Minnesota since 1961, these covenants have helped shaped housing patterns in Minnesota.

Reporter Elliott Steves attended our event and included our event in his Mapping Prejudice article on May 23, 2025 in the Life Newspaper.

[Watch Program Video](#)

[Life Newspaper Article](#)



Welcome New Members

Welcome New Members

Susan Senko of Blaine



Thank You

Thank you to all the members who have renewed your memberships! Also, thanks to everyone who included a donation for LWV ABC. So far we have received \$875 in online donations as well as some checks.

Grace Period Ends June 30

The new ChapterSpot system did not send dues reminder notices as expected. We still have **27 members who expired on April 30 who have not yet renewed**. The 60 day grace period for renewals ends June 30. If you have not renewed by that time, the ChapterSpot system will remove you as a member of League.

LWVUS prefers that you renew your dues online using the LWVUS ChapterSpot membership portal (just click below) but you can also renew by check. Click "Renew by Check" for directions.

[LWVUS Online Renewal](#)

Renew by Check



LWV ABC has Joined Bluesky
Our Handle: @lwvabcmn.bsky.social

LWV ABC has joined the social media app Bluesky to increase our outreach. In the last few months, LWVUS, LWVMN, most local media and many state offices are among those who have joined Bluesky, the fastest growing social media program.

Bluesky is incorporated as a Social Benefit Corporation which means the board is legally required to consider customers, employees, communities and the environment, not just stockholders, when making decisions. Unlike most other social media apps, Bluesky has no ads and no overall algorithm controlling what you do and do not see. Your home feed (the posts you see) is *only* the accounts you "follow". You can choose to switch to the "Discover" feed to see a wider variety of posts.

LWV ABC Facebook

Our informal poll at the Annual Meeting indicated that only a few members have a Bluesky account, while many members have a Facebook account. At this time we hope to be able to continue to use Facebook, but encourage members to also join Bluesky. The LWV ABC Facebook account is currently suspended.

Facebook has been an unreliable communication platform for us recently. LWV ABC, like other local Leagues, have had our Facebook account frozen twice, even after complying with identity requirements. The recurrent user boycotts of Facebook, an algorithm that does not necessarily show our posts to friends, reports of Facebook shadowing blocking legitimate users, and uncertain future of Meta (Facebook's

owner) due to the anti-trust investigation, were also strong incentives to seek a social media platform beyond products owned by Meta.

You can view our Bluesky in your web browser *without* creating your own Bluesky account.

LWV ABC Bluesky

Creating Your Own Bluesky Account

If you decide to create your own account, simply click on the blue "Create Account" button on our Bluesky page. All you need is an email and birthdate. You choose your own password and "handle" (public user name). After verifying your email by entering the code Bluesky will email to you, your account is active.

Below are step by step instructions to create and customize your account.

Step by Step Bluesky Instructions



Membership Co-Chair Paul Sitz and Treasurer Wes Volkenant at Annual Meeting

May Board Highlights

By Kathy Aanerud, LWV ABC Secretary

This was the first board meeting of the new year, following the April annual meeting and board elections. This "retreat" meeting focuses on getting organized for the new year.

- Many appointments to committees were made, with more in progress.
- Future monthly program meeting locations were discussed: Clarification was shared that Andover Community Center meeting room is available to a group our size despite previous conflicting information. Co-sponsored programs with Anoka County Libraries will be pursued, perhaps quarterly, following success of the May program at Northtown Library.
- A group was formed to prepare orientation methods for new members.
- Programs for summer months were discussed - an advocacy topic for June, no program in July, and an August program that perhaps tours a local utility.
- Future monthly board meetings will be held on the fourth Monday of the month via Zoom at 4:00 p.m.

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



Down the Drain

America's Wetlands

Down the Drain is a collaborative project of reporters and editors in 12 states. The project, an 8 part series of articles, tells the story of wetlands all across the Mississippi river Basin. *Down the Drain* also published a state by state list of wetlands to visit.

Wetlands are diverse ecosystems which face increasing threats from draining and flooding, as well as decreasing funding. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service report indicates an approximate 50% increase in wetland loss from 2009 to 2019 compared to the previous decade. Minnesota lost 140,000 acres of forested wetlands between 2006 and 2020. A 2023 U.S. Supreme Court decision removed federal protection from a large number of the nation's wetlands.

Duck hunters have been a significant source of funding for protection and restoration of wetlands. In Minnesota, wetlands funding from duck stamps, paid by duck hunters since 1934, has decreased as the number of duck hunters has decreased. In Arkansas, they have experienced a decrease in ducks which they fear will lead to less hunters, resulting in decreased sale of firearms and less revenue to improve wetlands.

See the UMRR Blog for links to all eight articles, including a Star Tribune article focused on Minnesota.

UMRR Blog

State by State Visitors Guide to Wetlands



Legislative Updates

LWVMN will continue to publish capitol letters to keep members updated on legislative actions related to League priorities. A special session is needed to pass a budget before June 30 to prevent a shut-down on July 1, the start of the new state fiscal year.

[Capitol Letter](#)

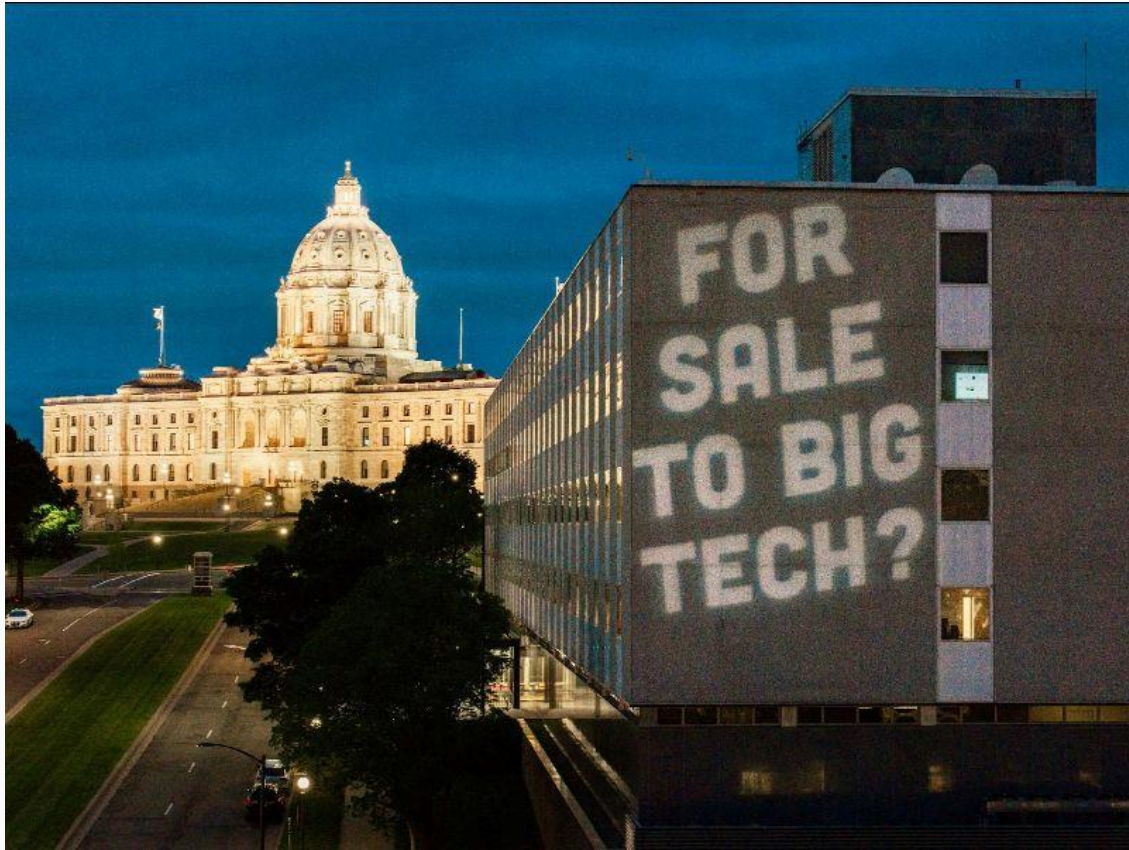
LWVMN Summer Internship

Application Deadline: June 6, 2025

LWVMN is seeking an intern to assist Amy Perna, Assistant Director, with Vote411. The intern will gather candidate information and enter into the Vote411 system.

- \$15/hour
- 10-15 flexible hours per week
- Roughly June 16 – September 30, 2025

[Internship Job Description](#)



Part of a series of images the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) projected onto the State Office Building on Saturday May 18. Image by Devon Young Cupery.

Data Centers

Pump the brakes?

Data centers are the physical buildings which contain the servers, storage drives, and other network equipment behind everything you do online - emailing, viewing websites, streaming movies, banking, downloading eBooks, shopping, searching for information, etc. All data centers need enormous amounts of electricity and water (for cooling equipment) to operate. Future data centers require considerably more acreage, electricity and water than the ones currently found in Minnesota due to the electricity demands of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Minnesota has at least [60 data centers](#) with a mega data center currently under constructions in Rosemount by Meta. Ten additional mega data centers have been proposed for the near future. Big tech has been lured from arid climates to Minnesota by our water and tax incentives. The proposed data centers, taken

together, could equal or surpass the electricity use of every household in Minnesota. The larger the center, the higher the need for water, water that is then contaminated by forever chemicals and no longer usable for drinking or agriculture.

Minnesota had been offering tech companies data center tax incentives of a 20 year sales tax exemption on most technology equipment and electricity use. **Recent legislation will eliminate the electricity tax incentive on July 1, 2025. Some Senate Democrats are currently proposing extending the sales tax break another 20 years to sunset in 2062.** When sales tax incentives were enacted in 2011, Minnesota was expected to forgo \$5 million a year in taxes. Actual loss of revenue have been much more. Current projections are at least \$100 million a year in lost revenue, with a **loss of \$219 million projected for 2029.**

In March, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ordered Xcel to come up with electric rates for data centers that will ensure data center costs fall on the data center developers, not other utility customers. Most of the big tech companies make pledges for zero net carbon goals, but their goals are usually met by purchasing carbon offsets, which do little to improve local environmental conditions.

Minnesota law does requires a water-use permit for industries drawing more than 1 million gallons a year, but some data centers bypass this law by getting their water directly from a city system. Local government, motivated by increased property tax revenue and construction jobs, are not required to consider how increased water usage impacts the surrounding areas. There are few financial incentives for companies to conserve water or invest in more efficient cooling technologies, as data centers do not pay the full economic cost of their water use.

The position of environmental groups can be summarized by the four point petition that the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) delivered to legislature on May 18:

- No Tax Breaks for Billionaires
- No Environmental Review Exemptions
- Hands Off Our Water

- Adhere to Minnesota Energy Goals

LWVMN's current position on data centers can be summed up as "Pump the brakes and consider the consequences!"

Check out the short video below to see consequences of mega data center in Georgia and read the short articles below to learn more about water and data centers.

Watch: "I Live 400 Yards from ..."

Read: "AI's Challenging Waters"

Read: "Data centers draining resources ..."



The League OPPOSES Cuts to Medicaid!

CONGRESS IS THREATENING TO **CUT** MEDICAID PROGRAMS



***600,000** MN CHILDREN HAVE ONLY MEDICAID HEALTH INSURANCE

***81,000** MN SENIORS HAVE MEDICAID NURSING HOME INSURANCE

***123,000** MN DISABLED PEOPLE HAVE MEDICAID INSURANCE

TELL YOUR SENATORS TO **VOTE NO!**

Amy Klobuchar - (202) 224-3244

Tina Smith - (202) 224-5641





Staying True to Nonpartisanship

LWVUS Executive Director Celina Stewart

Celina Stewart's recent blog post addresses non-partisanship in the election season and when advocating for public policy. **League advocates on issues with those in office, regardless of their campaign status, while not showing favoritism or opposition related to their candidacy.** Celina reminds us that:

- LWV's goal is to empower voters with facts, not to tell them who to vote for.
- We advocate for fundamental rights and freedoms regardless of which political party is in power or which officials are responsible.
- Once individuals are elected, they are no longer just candidates — they are public servants, responsible for representing all their constituents, regardless of party.
- Holding elected officials accountable to the public interest is not a partisan act; it is a vital function of a healthy democracy.

Read the full blog post of LWVUS Executive Director Celina Stewart

LWVUS Blog



No Kings Nationwide Day of Action

June 14, 2025

No Kings rallies to protest the actions of the current administration are planned across the country on June 14, the same day the president plans to hold a military parade. Locally, No Kings events are planned at the State Capitol (11am -3pm), Anoka (11am – 12pm) and Forest Lake (10am – 12pm). Note that location of the large Twin Cities event has been moved from Minneapolis to St. Paul due to the large number of registrants.

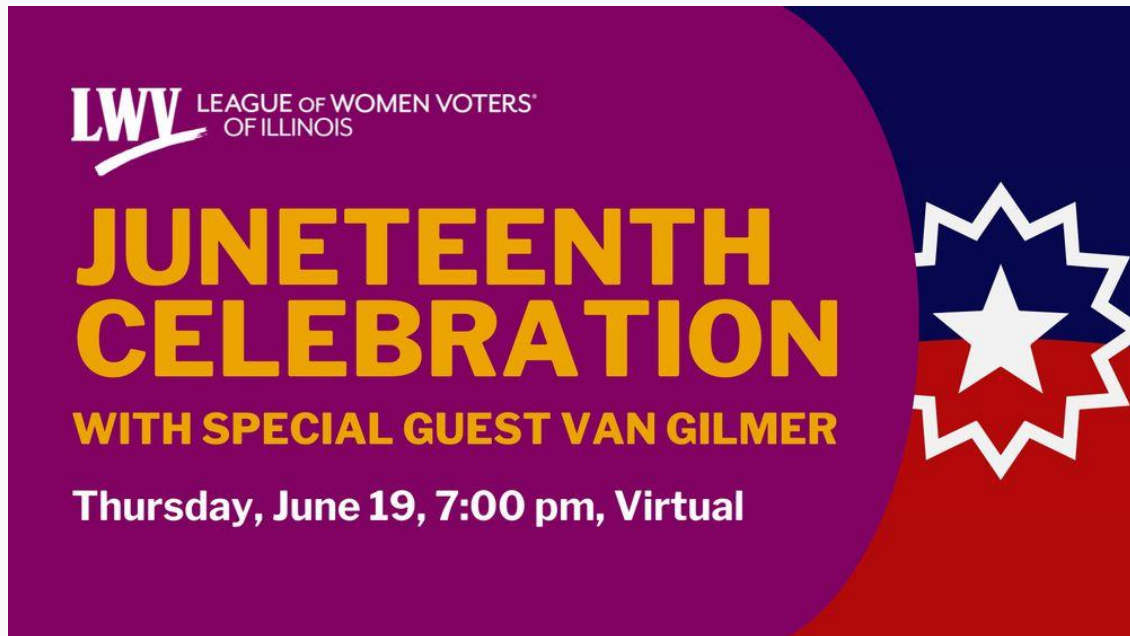
Indivisible Twin Cities, one of the Twin Cities organizers, is also seeking volunteers for the rally and donations to help with cost of accessible seating, permits, porta-potties, sound systems, etc.

Register for the Anoka or Forest Lake events to learn the exact location. Register, volunteer or donate for the Twin Cities event at the Twin Cities Indivisible webpage.

Indivisible Twin Cities

Anoka No Kings Registration

Forest Lake No Kings Registration



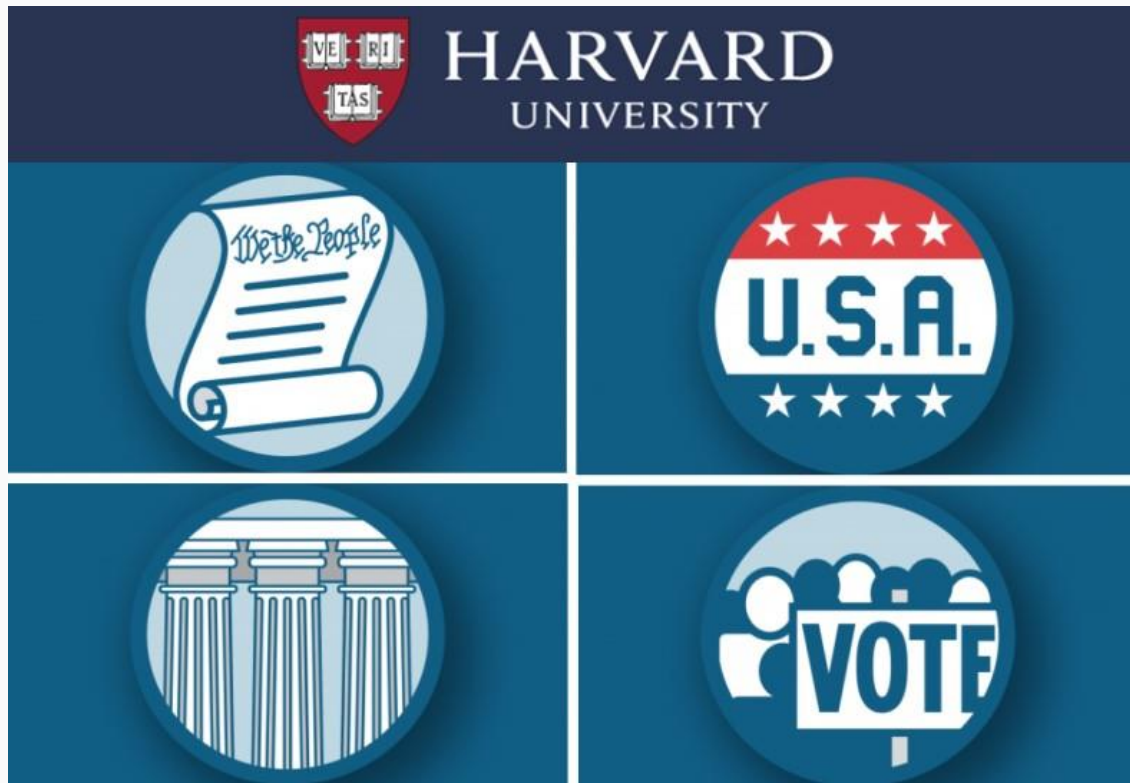
Juneteenth Celebration

June 19, 2025

7:00 PM - 08:00 PM CT via zoom

Celebrate Juneteenth with LWV Illinois and special guest Van Gilmer, civil rights activist, renowned vocal soloist, composer, choral director, and music director at the Bahai House of Worship. Come to hear inspirational music and Mr. Gilmer's stories of his civil disobedience at the Greenville South Carolina lunch counters in the 1960's.

Registration for Juneteenth Celebration



Free Harvard Civic Education Classes

Harvard University recently added some American government classes to their free online classes. All of these self-paced classes, of 6-7 sessions each, are free to audit.

Click on the hyperlinks below to register and learn more about the classes:

- [American Government: Constitutional Foundations](#)
 - [U.S. Political Institutions: Congress, Presidency, Courts, and Bureaucracy](#)
 - [Citizen Politics in America: Public Opinion, Elections, Interest Groups, and the Media](#)
 - [U.S. Public Policy: Social, Economic, and Foreign Policies](#)
-



Free Park Day

Saturday, June 14, 2025

On four days each year, all Minnesota state parks and state recreation areas offer free admission to everyone - no vehicle permits needed! The next Free Park Day will be November 28, 2025.

Coming in July ...

No July Program Meeting

7/16 - LWV ABC Book Club

7/29 - Candidate Filings Begin

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



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The Voter
The Monthly Newsletter of LWV ABC