

The Voter

The LWV ABC Monthly Newsletter
November 2025

Microplastics and Human Health

Mary Kosuth, PhD



November 10 | 12:00 noon | Via Zoom

Microplastics and Human Health

Monday, November 10, 2025

12:00 noon

Online via Zoom

Note Time - Zoom meeting opens at 11:45 am

Since the 1970s, scientists have known about the presence of tiny bits of plastic — microplastics — churning in the oceans and being ingested by birds and sea life. More recent research shows the particles are also in the Great Lakes, which thousands of communities rely on for fresh drinking water.

Join LWV ABC and our guest Dr. Mary Kosuth to learn about microplastics and

human health. Dr. Kosuth will also discuss some Minnesota policies that will encourage Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastics, as well as what still needs to be done policy-wise.

Mary Kosuth, a microplastics researcher and 2017 graduate of the U of M School of Public Health, is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment.

[Zoom Link](#)



Anoka County Commissioners Q&A

Commissioners Gamache, Jeppson, Meisner and Schulte

In October, Anoka County Commissioners Gamache, Jeppson, Meisner and Schulte joined us for a discussion focused on human services, the new county jail, mental health programs and appointments to county positions.

[Watch Program Video](#)



Friend of League Award

Tom Hunt, Anoka County Elections Director

On October 13, 2025, LWV ABC presented Anoka County Elections Director Tom Hunt with our 2025 Friend of League Award in recognition of his outstanding service in preserving our democracy by providing voters with safe, secure and accurate elections.

During 2024, LWV ABC and Tom Hunt completed a series of twelve Public Service Announcements explaining changes to Minnesota elections laws. The 2024 Post-Election Review (PER) found zero adjusted differences when compared to machine results. League of Women Voter Observers reported that Anoka County, under the leadership of Tom Hunt, conducted the PER in a transparent manner, followed state requirements and demonstrated professionalism.

As Jody Anderson, a LWV Member, an election judge and a PER observer, noted at the Anoka County Board Meeting last month, "Tom Hunt has been a reliable and transparent Election Manager. I appreciate his skill in helping all Election Judges become familiar with Minnesota Election Laws."

The LWV ABC Friend of League Award is awarded to a community member or group who assists LWV ABC in achieving our goal of good government. Artist and LWV ABC member **Cindy DeRuyter** (pictured above with Tom Hunt) painted this year's award.

[Watch QCTV News Story](#)

[Other Friend of League Recipients](#)

Watch the "Election Information 101" public service announcements Tom Hunt and LWV ABC taped in 2024.

[Election Info 101 PSA's](#)

Welcome New Members

Welcome New Members

Beth Bergmans of Nowthen

Mary Meschler of Blaine

Susan Smith of Coon Rapids



Book Club

Wednesday, November 19

7:00 pm on Zoom

Whiskey Tender: A Memoir (2024) **by Deborah Taffa**

In straightforward and affecting prose, Deborah Jackson Taffa writes about being brought up by a Quechan (Yuma) and Laguna Pueblo father and a Catholic Latina mother, both on and off the Yuma reservation. Although her parents were united in their approach to maintaining a family, their attitudes toward the world diverged in other ways, and Taffa received mixed messages about her Indigeneity, her

proximity to whiteness and how she was meant to carry herself.

Whiskey Tender, stitches together familial, societal, and governmental history that, together, intricately details a Native coming-of-age in the American Southwest.

[Book Club Zoom Link](#)

[Upcoming Books](#)



Women in Politics

A Persistence & Resistance Conversation

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

6 PM - 8 PM

**Circle Pines City Hall
200 Civic Heights Cir
Circle Pines, MN 55014**

Pick up a copy of *Until There is Justice* or *Her Honor: Rosalie Wahl and the Minnesota Women's Movement* and learn more about the essence of systemic change. How have women impacted our government? What challenges lay ahead?

Our Persistence and Resistance conversations are an opportunity to engage in a discussion regarding society's perception of women throughout history, the challenges they have faced, and the valuable lessons we can draw from that legacy. The conversations are not a book discussion, but our conversations will be grounded in published material and local research, establishing a solid foundation for the topics and discussion.

Co-sponsored by the Anoka County Historical Society and LWV ABC

Tickets are \$8. Make Reservations on the ACHS website

[Buy Tickets](#)



VP Julie Trude and President Gretchen Sabel at August picnic

October Board Highlights

- Confirmed plans for our November program on microplastics
- Directed Program and Action Chairs to determine which positions will be discussed at December program meeting

- Reviewed and discussed initial report of financial subcommittee on candidate forum costs
- Directed Paul Sitz to continue seeking information on use of personal contributions to LWVEF to offset the FY2026 PMP
- Directed President to send a fundraising letter to members

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





Where we work

The Driftless Region:

- 24,000 sq. miles
- 59 counties
- >600 spring-fed streams
- >5,700 miles of spring-fed streams
- Intensive Ag use
 - Sediment loss
 - Nutrient leaching
 - Pesticide loading
 - E. Coli concentrations

>400 miles of streams restored!

Every River
Needs A Champion



Protecting Public Waters - Knowledge and Litigation - October 28, 2025

Protecting Public Waters

On October 28, LWV UMRR hosted a discussion on the protection of public waters. Guest speaker Cameron Aker of [Trout Unlimited](#) talked about water protection in the Karst region and Jim Larew of [Driftless Water Defenders](#) (Iowa) discussed their litigation to protect and enhance Iowans' access to clean water.

Watch the video to learn how the Upper Mississippi River Driftless Area was formed (not by glaciers!) and how this unique landform is susceptible to pollution from concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and modern row crop practices. And learn about new inspirational efforts underway to bring about

change.

[Watch Protecting Public Waters](#)

[UMRR Blog](#)



Give Feedback on Minnesota's Climate Action Climate Action Framework Survey

Deadline: November 9, 2025

In 2022, the state of Minnesota adopted a Climate Action Framework setting a vision for how our state will address and prepare for the effects of climate change. That framework included specific action steps and measures of progress to guide and evaluate that work. Thanks to new funding and other opportunities, the state is set to adopt a new Climate Action Framework in 2026.

A draft Framework report is available to review. Minnesotans can help set these statewide goals by reviewing the draft and submitting comments through a survey

form. Comments will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, November 9, 2025.

[Draft Report](#)

[Take Survey](#)



Writing Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor (LTE) are helpful tools for advocacy as they reach a large audience, are often seen by elected officials and can cover information not addressed in news articles.

Tips for writing a LTE:

1. Keep it succinct and address only one issue.
2. Make it legible and traceable: Include your name, address and phone number.

3. When relevant, reference previous articles or topics covered in the paper.

Examples:

- "I was disappointed to see that (Paper)'s (Date) editorial '(Title)' omitted some of the key facts in the debate."
- "I strongly disagree with (author's name)'s narrow view on (Topic). (Name of Op-Ed, date)"
- "I am deeply saddened to read that (Topic). (Title of Article, date)"

4. Fact check and proofread.

ACLU Minnesota LTE Article

Common Cause Workshop on LTEs

New LWVMN Associate Director

Heidi Kloempken

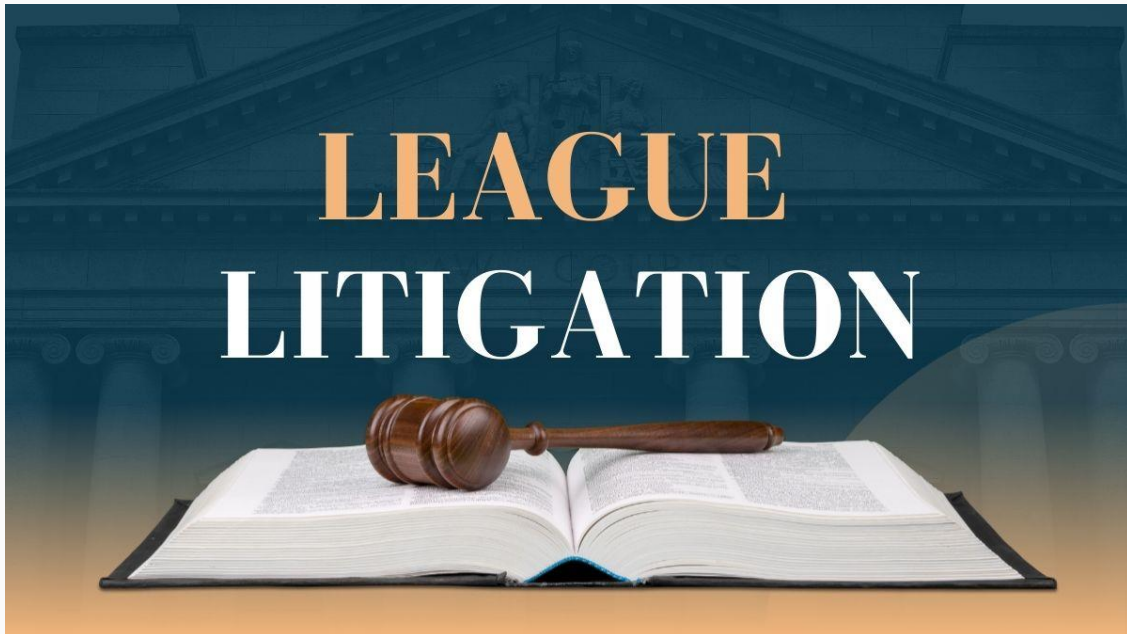


Heidi Kloempken started as our LWVMN Associate Director on November 4, 2025.

Heidi brings a deep commitment to civic engagement, education, and the power of informed participation. She is especially passionate about helping young people find their voice in democracy and ensuring that all community members feel empowered to participate.

Heidi spent the past 15 years as a Teacher Educator at the Minnesota Historical Society, following several years as a social studies teacher. Heidi has been an active

League member since 2016, serving LWV St. Paul as Secretary and co-President. Heidi also contributed to LWV Minnesota through the 2nd Century Task Force and served as the 2023–2024 Youth Civic Engagement Coordinator.



USA v. Simon

Minnesota Voter Data

On October 14, 2025 League of Women Voters of Minnesota, Common Cause, and two Minnesota voters, all represented by the ACLU, filed a motion to intervene in United States of America v. Simon. USA v. Simon was filed by Department of Justice on October 25, 2025 to force the Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon to turn over extensive and protected Minnesota voter information to the federal government.

What is a motion to intervene?

A motion to intervene is a formal request to a court to join an already existing lawsuit, as either a plaintiff or defendant, because they will be directly and substantially affected by the outcome. Once a person/organization is allowed to intervene, they fully participate in the rest of the case — filing briefs, participating in trials or oral arguments, agreeing to any settlements and appealing decisions if desired.

Background

In June, the Justice Department (DOJ) sent a letter to Simon requesting data about Minnesota's compliance with maintaining its voter registration list and for the full statewide voter registration list. In response, Simon's office provided data on maintenance, but declined to send the entire voting list until the DOJ identified the legitimate legal basis for sharing that list. Simon's office also sought assurances that any data it supplies would be protected and used properly.

The Department of Justice contends that federal officials should have access to Minnesota's list to ensure Minnesota is in compliance with the Help America Vote Act, citing a March executive order.

League Position

Marcia Johnson, chief counsel of the League of Women Voters of the United States stated that, "The Department of Justice should be focused on protecting voters from illegal invasions of privacy, not violating those very privacy laws." When filing a similar motion in California, Celina Stewart, CEO of the League of Women Voters of the United States noted that "Participation in a democracy should empower people, not force us to trade safety, privacy, or peace of mind to be heard...Safeguarding voter data is essential to safeguarding trust in our elections."

In addition to Minnesota, the League has filed motions to intervene where the Justice Department has brought similar cases - in California, Maine, New York, and Michigan.

Other October Litigation

Indiana - lawsuit challenging state laws that target naturalized citizens.

New Jersey - filed a friend-of-court brief arguing that the community trust policies enacted by Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, and Hoboken, promote the safety, health, and welfare of all residents, regardless of immigration status.

Follow us on Bluesky or check the LWWUS Press Release webpage to stay up to date on League litigation.

LWWUS Press Release



Immigration and Due Process

Saturday, November 15, 2025

10:00 AM - 11:15 AM via Zoom

The West Metro Alliance of LWV's is hosting a program on Immigration and Due Process. Karina Estrada of the Immigrant Law Center will discuss various immigration statuses, current laws and interpretations, and what is going on in Minnesota.

[Register for Immigration & Due Process](#)



***Join or Die* Film Screening**

Thursday, November 20, 2025

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Free

FK Weyerhaeuser Auditorium

Suite 315 Landmark Center

75 West 5th Street

Saint Paul, MN, 55102

Join or Die offers a powerful and hopeful message: belonging matters—and it's essential to the health of our democracy.

This award-winning documentary follows political scientist Robert Putnam (author of *Bowling Alone*) as he explores why joining groups—from book clubs to civic organizations—builds stronger communities and a stronger nation.

The event is free and open to the public—bring a friend and leave feeling renewed about the power of participation. Short discussion to follow the film.

The film is also available to view on Netflix.

Coming in December...

Dec 8 - Ice Cream Social

Dec 22 - Board Meeting

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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[Bluesky](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)

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The Monthly Newsletter of LWV ABC