

**LWVJC Officers
and Directors
2005-2006**

Co-Presidents

Pasquale Cancilla
644-2807
Pamela Stewart
683-2323

Vice-President

Linda Levey
351-5141

Secretary

Patricia Hayek
337-9333

Treasurer

Kathy Penningroth
645-1476

Director of Funding

Nancy Lynch
624-3014

Voter Editor

Patricia Ephgrave
466-9361

Directors

Barbara Beaumont
626-6227
Helen Burford
341-9889
Audrey Moeller
466-0945
Naomi Schedl
351-6140
Alison Smith
338-6140

Come to the Spring Celebration

The annual spring reception for the Johnson County League of Women Voters will be held on Wednesday, June 7, 2006, at the home of Frank and Gail Zlatnik, 1531 Phoenix Drive, Iowa City. The time is 5:30-7:30 PM.

Our legislators, supervisors, and council members are again invited to this special event. Just as noteworthy, it is a grand opportunity for all League members to get together for a fun evening.

Refreshments will be served courtesy of the Linn County Rural Electric Cooperative as a donation to the work of the League. All are invited—please come!



Vote on the 2006-07 Directions for LWVJC

Mark your calendar for Wednesday's May 17th meeting (see page 7), the time when League members determine the direction of the Johnson County League for the following year. We will vote on these matters at the business meeting:

- Election of officers and Board members (see page 2)
- Approval of Budget (see page 3)
- Adoption of local program (see pages 4-6)
- Proposed Bylaw changes (see page 6)

Be sure to attend and **Pay your 2006 Annual Dues**: \$50 individual, \$75 family.

REPORT FROM THE CO-PRESIDENT'S

This has been a busy year for our League but there is still very important and interesting times to come before it is over. We have learned recently, that our Annual Summer Reception will be sponsored by the Linn County Rural Electrical Cooperative and will be held in the beautiful gardens of the Zlatniks, 1531 Phoenix Drive, Iowa City on Wednesday, June 7, from 5:00-7:00 PM. This is the event where we show our appreciation to our elected officials and all who have contributed to our many and varied programs. Please plan to attend.

□

Then there is our 2006 annual meeting which will take place at the Coralville Holiday Inn on May 17, at 5:30 PM. We have some brief but important business to conduct which is included in this Voter but the highlight will be the presentation by Lori Erikson and Will Thompson on "Sweet Corn and Sushi." Plan to come and bring a guest.

□

Our Forums continue to attract great interest. As this Voter goes to press we will have heard about "Checks and Balances: What do they mean today?" A very timely topic by an outstanding panel from the

University Of Iowa. The meeting with Leagues from Cedar Rapids-Lisbon and Mt. Vernon-Lisbon was very well attended and raised important questions from the audience and very favorable reviews from the Cedar Rapids Gazette. Our Legislative Forums concluded on April 29 after a very important dialogue between the legislators and the public. As in the past, one of the highlights has been the participation of elementary students in the process.

□

Our Nominating Committee has done an outstanding job of attracting candidates for positions on our Board. The Board Continues to grow and to be continually energized to enhance the activities of the League.

□

This will be the last Voter for your Co-Presidents before the new Board takes office. It has been a pleasure to serve this wonderful organization and to work with such a willing and dedicated League. Thank you all very much.

□

*Pasquale Cancilla
Pam Stewart
Co-Presidents*

2006 Nominations Committee Slate

This year's nominations committee was composed of Karen Countryman, Eve Casserly, and Barbara Beaumont. The slate of officers and directors being presented for election at the annual meeting on May 17th is:

President: Barbara Beaumont
Vice President: Judith Crossett (one year term)
Treasurer: Julie Pulkrabek
Directors: Patricia Ephgrave, Polly Horton, and Audrey Moeller
Nominating Committee for 2007: Karen Countryman, Karin Franklin
Continuing are:
Secretary: Pat Hayek
Directors: Helen Burford, Naomi Schedl, and Alison Smith

Save for BUDGET

PROPOSED LOCAL PROGRAM

The following revision of the LWVJC positions was developed by an ad hoc committee, discussed at the January meeting, and approved by the Board of Directors as recommended program for 2006-07.

CITY GOVERNMENT IN JOHNSON COUNTY (NEW STUDY)

“A study of local governments in Johnson County, to include:

- **research on/examination of the incorporated local governments in the County (what kind of local government each city has, how it works, how/where it falls under the Iowa Code, etc.);**
- **and, research on forms of local government allowed under Iowa law, including the home rule option and current systems used in Johnson County.”**

RATIONALE: Because Johnson County is growing rapidly and a number of cities have administrators, provide more local services, etc., the League needs to better understand how the County’s local governments function. Also, the current positions on Iowa City government were reached years ago when the League was the LWV of Iowa City and focused only on one city, not the entire County.

IOWA CITY GOVERNMENT

Council-Manager Form of Government

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County supports a council-manager form of government for Iowa City. *Position reached in 1949; updated in 1972 and 1983.*

Home Rule

The League supports the concept of a home rule charter for Iowa City and the specific charter that was adopted in 1973. *Position reached in 1973; updated in 1983.*

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive Planning:

The League supports comprehensive planning for all governments in Johnson County and coordination of these plans among jurisdictions and school districts. Comprehensive planning should include:

- Protection and preservation of the natural environment, parks and open spaces
- Efficient use of land and services
- Adequate housing for various needs
- A transportation system that includes safe and orderly traffic patterns, public transit, and pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- Preservation of neighborhoods
- Buffer areas between residential and nonresidential zones
- Adequate infrastructure including quality water supply, waste water treatment and storm water disposal
- Shared use of neighborhood parks, recreation facilities and schools
- Public safety, including police, fire, ambulance and jails
- Excellent well-funded schools

Position reached in 1970; updated in 2001.

Economic Planning/Development

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County believes that economic development in the greater Johnson County area should be a cooperative venture between all governmental entities and the private sector. The League encourages local governments to continue funding for economic development and for organizations such as the Iowa City Area Development Group (ICAD). We also support the ongoing coordinated multi-county planning.

The entire community needs to maintain an infrastructure adequate to attract future economic development in the area. Important to future development are:

- Open and responsive local governments that provide their citizens with excellent public services, schools, transportation, and human services;
- Sensitive integration and preservation of the area's natural resources;
- Effective zoning, design control, and building codes;
- A wide range of cultural and recreational opportunities;
- Major academic institutions that contribute through education and research to the creation of businesses and jobs.

Study adopted in 1985; position reached in 1986; updated in 2003.

IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT (DROP)

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County supports an excellent and diverse education program for the Iowa City Community School District. To this end, the League supports an increased school budget. However, should cuts in the school budget be considered, the most important factors in determining selective budget cuts are impact on students and impact on education programs.

Study adopted in 1981; position reached in 1982.

HOUSING

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County believes that all individuals and families should have the opportunity for equal access to housing without discrimination and to a decent home and suitable living environment.

The League of Women Voters supports programs, legislation, regulations, and planning that expand home ownership opportunities at various prices and locations, create and maintain an adequate supply of sound, affordable rental housing; improve housing stock by promoting housing conservation and rehabilitation, and coordinate housing efforts between governments.

It is the responsibility of both the public and private sectors in Johnson County to find solutions to the problems of providing affordable housing in the area. Such efforts should involve all local governments, including county government, in the housing market area.

(See the LWV of the United State positions on housing criteria in *Impact on Issues*.)

Study adopted in 1990; position reached in 1992.

JOHNSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The League of Women Voters believes that good government for Johnson County should be accessible, goal-directive, cost effective and proactive. Elected county officials must exercise strong leadership, communicate openly, and be able to compromise. They must recognize the county's changing demographics, need for increased services, and have a coordinated vision for the future.

Home Rule

The League of Women Voters supports a Home Rule Charter for Johnson County. The process of developing a home rule charter will provide the opportunity for a systematic examination of the capabilities of county government. Any commission in charge of designing such a charter for Johnson County should strongly consider incorporating provisions in the charter which foster political leadership, professional management, and reorganization based on the functions performed.

Absent a Home Rule charter, the county's leaders should continue to improve county government in the areas of planning and goal setting, management, and citizen participation and communication.

Planning and Goal Setting

The county's planning -- the land use plan, the North Corridor plan, the five-year road plan, and strategic planning by the Board of Supervisors -- should continue with a focus on setting goals, prioritizing courses of action, and developing implementation and financing strategies.

Such planning must include mechanisms for review and official involvement of the county's citizens and local governmental entities.

Management

The League of Women Voters believes that to continue improvement of the management of county government, the following should be done: an annual review and update of basic goals and priorities and of county issues and procedures; the hiring of professional staff; continuation of interdepartmental cooperation; ongoing orientation and continuing education for all employees; and continued emphasis on technology planning, development and training

Citizen Participation and Communication

The League believes it is incumbent upon Johnson County government to increase citizens' understanding of and participation in county government. We encourage the county to: appoint diverse and representative citizens to boards and commissions; establish uniform county office hours and schedule county meetings that are accessible to the working public; designate a county information officer; and continue to videotape board meetings and distribute tapes to all Johnson County cable companies, public access and government channels.

Study adopted in 1995; position reached in 1996 and updated in 1998 and 2001.

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

The League of Women Voters supports the improvement of regional cooperation in the delivery of local government services within Johnson County. The current mechanisms in place to aid the cooperation and coordination of intergovernmental and regional issues are neither adequate nor adequately utilized. Elected officials and citizens need to 1) make better use of the mechanisms available, and 2) find other avenues to pursue greater and more effective intergovernmental coordination. The League will support measures that meet this goal including encouraging and participating in the establishment of a Charter Commission for Johnson County which would include representatives of the larger, contiguous cities.

Study adopted in 2001; positions reached in 2002.

May 2006

Proposed Changes to the LWV Johnson Bylaws

According to our Bylaws, Article XII. Amendments, the "bylaws may be amended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the League voting members at an annual or membership meeting provided that the proposed amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least two weeks in advance of the meeting," which will be on Wednesday May 17th at the Coralville Holiday Inn. Please attend so that you to vote on this and other matters.

*Note: additions are in **boldface**, deletions are underlined.*

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 2.

- a. Voting Members. Citizens at least 18 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of the local **League**, and the state Leagues of their place of joining and of the LWVUS: (1) **individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League**; (2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members-at-large; (3 2) those who make a lump-sum life membership payment to the LWVUS shall be paid life members; and (3) those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be honorary life members excused from the payment of dues.

ARTICLE XI. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in **the current edition** of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

THE TIME FOR CLEAN ELECTIONS HAS ARRIVED

Iowans who attend meetings on Clean Elections come away realizing that the need for clean elections, a form of public financing of political campaigns, has arrived for Iowa. The LWV of Iowa has been presenting discussions on Clean Elections across the state, sponsored by local Leagues for their members and the public. The LWV of Johnson County, with the Leagues of Cedar Rapids/Marion and Mt. Vernon/Lisbon, held a joint program in early April, with an large, inquisitive and enthusiastic turnout.

The League supports campaign finance reform and has a long-time position that "methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and, allow maximum citizen participation in the political process". Clean Elections meets these criteria. *(Continued on page 8)*

League of Women Voters of Johnson County's 2006 ANNUAL MEETING AND BUFFET DINNER

Speakers: **Lori Erikson**, Author & **Will Thompson**, Illustrator

Presenting their Book about an Iowa-Japanese Sister Relationship:

Sweet Corn and Sushi

Reception and Dinner

5:30 PM Social Time

5-45 PM Buffet

6:15 PM Welcome and introductions

Program

6-45 PM Erikson & Thompson

"Sweet Corn and Sushi"

Business Meeting

Approve Minutes of 2005 meeting

By- Law changes proposal

Local program Adoption

Budget for 2006-2007

Nominations of directors & officers

Recognition of Outgoing officers

Recognition of Valuable member

WHERE: Coralville Holiday Inn 1220 1 st Avenue Coralville, Iowa 52241

WHEN: Wednesday, May 17th 5:30 PM

COST: \$25.00

RESERVATIONS: Send your check to Treasurer KATHY PENNINGROTH, at 2097 IWV Rd,

SW, Oxford IA 52322. Phone 545-1476, e-mail aphistres@aol.com. RSVP by MAY 12TH!

Help Build League Membership! Bring a Guest to the Annual Meeting

(Please cut here and send with your check to the treasurer)

LWVJC MAY 17 TH ANNUAL MEETING AND BUFFET

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone/e-mail: _____

Guest(s)' Names: _____

Number of Reservations: _____

Amount Enclosed (Payable to LWVJC) @\$25.00 each: _____

DUES _____

Make this a banner year! Everyone pay 06-07 dues by June 15 \$50/Member \$75/Family

Continued from page 7

Why do we need reform? The current electoral system is broken. National political scandals, influence buying, and money laundering point out it is time for change. Political campaigns today are exceedingly expensive. Candidates must turn to political action committees, corporations, and wealthy individuals to raise money. In return, contributors buy access to the officials, and in some cases, they buy influence to set public policy and control legislation. Officials may become less responsive to ordinary citizens.

In Iowa, running for the legislature is also expensive. In 2004, State Senators raised an average of \$100,000 to run for office; for House members it was \$40,000! Legislative leaders raised much more: the seven House candidates (incumbents and challengers) raised over \$1 million dollars and the six Senate candidates raised nearly \$920,000. Only three of the six Senate leaders were up for reelection in '04.

LWVJC CALENDAR May—June 2006

MAY

- 1 Board Meeting—ICPL Room E @ 4 PM
- 17 Spring Annual Meeting @ Coralville Holiday Inn, 5:30 PM
- 22 Primary Candidate Forum JC Attorney—ICPL Room A, 7-9 PM
- 23 Primary Candidate Forum JV Bd of Supervisors— ICPL Room A, 7-9 PM

JUNE

- 3 Board Meeting—ICPL Room E @ 4 PM
 - 6 Primary Election
 - 7 LWVJC summer reception at Gail Zlatnik's home
 - 10-13 LWVUS Convention— Minneapolis
- SUMMER**
TBA Joint Meeting of the 05-06