

**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
6451476

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

**Johnson Count League of Women Voters
to Receive Award**

On Wednesday, November 2nd, the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights and the Iowa Women's Archives of the University of Iowa Libraries will host *Women at the Grassroots: Getting Out the Vote in Eastern Iowa*. The League of Women Voters of Johnson County will be honored at this luncheon for its innovative work of voter education and voter mobilization over many decades. In appreciation for the League's work, members of the League are invited to attend this recognition event

Women at the Grassroots is part of a larger celebration of voting in Iowa sponsored by the Iowa Secretary of State's office to commemorate the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the passage of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote in 1920. The purpose of the event is to recognize the impact women have had on the political process since gaining the right to vote. □ The sponsors will honor one organization (the League) and three women who represent the many unsung heroines in eastern Iowa—women who have made a difference in their communities, but whom history has overlooked. □

League members are invited to attend the event from 12 noon to 1:30 PM on Wednesday, November 2nd in the Green Assembly Hall on the 4th Floor of the Levitt Center for University Advancement for a luncheon and remarks about the accomplishments of each of the honorees.

REPORT FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

The League is well into its very busy season. We have held well attended forums for the membership and the public. The first featured Jim Larew and Terry Smith presenting opposite views of the Public Power Initiative that will be on the November Ballot. The second presented six of the At-Large Candidates for the Iowa City Primary on October 11. Then on the 12th, the public heard a debate from North Liberty candidates for both the Mayor Position and the City Council. Finally, the last candidate forum was held in Iowa City for three council seats on October 28th. All of these meetings were televised on Local TV stations. Elsewhere in this issue of the Voter you will find a report on State League Legislative Issues Briefing that was attended by a number of members from our Local League.

□

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County will be honored on November 2nd by the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights and the Iowa Women's Archive "for its innovative work of voter education and voter mobilization over many decades." This was a very fine recognition of all the work that the many members of the League have contributed to the community.

□

Our members continue to be active auditing the meetings of the County Supervisors, the Coralville City Council and the North Liberty Council. There is more to do. Let your Co-Presidents know if you would like to participate in this important activity.

□

On Nov. 16 at noon at the Cottage, County Auditor Tom Slockett will speak and answer questions on "Voting and Elections in Johnson County." We will have the experience of the November elections to draw from as well as information from our Legislative Issues Forum and questions that have been prepared for Mr. Slockett. Please plan on attending this important membership meeting.

□

The December General Meeting should be very interesting as well. Representative Mary Mascher, Supervisor Sally Stutsman and Iowa City Councillor Regina Bailey will discuss Electing Progressive Women. A reservation form and information is provided in this Voter.

□

The new year will bring a host of new activities. A Committee composed of Chairwoman Pat Jensen, Naomi Novick and Ann Bovbjerg have been charged with reviewing our Local Issues Statements , recommend any changes and propose any for action. We have one active Committee working on Issues and that is the Regional Government Committee. The Board recommended they review the current status of our Issues and report to the Board and the Membership at a January Membership Meeting. Another important meeting to attend!!

□

Beginning in January and continuing through April on the fourth Saturday of each month, legislative forums will again be held at Iowa City Council Chambers.

In February we will have a report of the activities of the Regional Government Committee on a series of dialogues with community organizations regarding the "Metro Agenda."

□

In March we are planning a combined meeting with the Cedar Rapids-Marion League, the Mt. Vernon-Lisbon League and the Johnson County League at a central location to work with a State group on "Clean Elections."

□

As Co-Presidents we have enjoyed working with such an active and dedicated Board and Membership as we continue our activities and contribute to the Goals of the League. Thank you all.

□

*Pasquale Cancilla
Pam Stewart*

Luncheon to Feature Tom Slockett Topic: Local Elections and Voting

Are you concerned about citizen participation in the election process of Johnson County? Then you are invited to hear a review of our county's elections at a luncheon meeting on Wednesday, November 16th.

Tom Slockett, the Election Commissioner of Johnson County will be the featured speaker at the November 16th General Meeting. He will discuss voting and elections in Johnson County and the changes made so far to conform to the Help America Vote Act. Mr. Slockett will also comment on the November 8th election.

Of particular concern to the LWV is the registering of new voters and increasing the voting turnout among all citizens. Training of poll workers and the voting equipment we can expect to use in 2006 elections are also topics of interest.

The lunch meeting will be in the upper room of The Cottage, 14 South Linn Street, Iowa City. Parking is in the adjacent Tower ramp. The price of the luncheon is \$10.00, and reservations may be made by contacting Pam Stewart at anna3@netins.net

JCLWV Hosted Two Candidate Forums for the Iowa City Council Race

On September 28th, the Johnson County League sponsored a candidate forum for six candidates running for two



Iowa City Council at-large seats. The candidates all stated their views on questions posed by members of the audience, and each offered a summary of why he/she should be elected and what

he/she would try to do.

Among the issues discussed were the alcohol ordinance, Iowa City growth

and character, and public power. At the primary, which followed on October 11th, a low voter turnout selected four candidates to run in the November 8th election.

On October 26th, the League again provided a platform to question the five candidates for three offices: Connie Champion running unopposed, and the four finalists from the primary contest: Amy Correia, Rick Dobyys, Garry Klein, and Mike O'Donnell vying for two seats.

The candidates again expressed their views on a variety of topics. Both forums were held at the Iowa City Public Library.

Pat Cancilla moderated both forums.

JCLWV Sponsored an Issue Forum on Public Power on October 20th

- 1. Shall the city of Iowa City in the County of Johnson, Iowa, be authorized to establish as a city utility an electric light and power plant and system?*
- 2. Shall the management and control of an electric light and power plant city utility be placed in a Board of Trustees consisting of five trustees as provided by law?*

These are the questions that will be on the ballot November 8th.

As a public education service, the League of Women Voters of Johnson County held a forum to discuss the issue of whether the City of Iowa City should explore the possibility of operating a municipal power company. Speakers were Jim Larew, representing Citizens for Public Power, and Terry Smith, representing MidAmerica Energy. The speakers each gave a fifteen-minute presentation, and then written questions were submitted by the audience. Each side presented financial information which was at odds with that presented by its opponent.

The forum was well attended and there were many more questions from the audience than there was time to answer them.

Pat Cancilla was the moderator.

Barbara Beaumont

"Where Do Your Dues Go?"

Just a reminder, your annual dues (\$50.00 (\$75 family) are due by December 5th. Checks should be sent to the treasurer, Kathy Penningroth (payable to LWVJC) at 2097 IWW Rd, SW Oxford, IA 52322.

You will be interested to hear that 97.6 % of your dues goes to pay State and National dues, known as PMP (per member payment). Membership dues are not tax deductible.

In addition to collecting your membership dues, the League also supports an Education Fund. We fund our education fund through donations, either those made in memory of a member or occasion, or those monies that are designated for the Education Fund "EF" during our annual finance drive. The designation EF, makes that donation tax deductible; other donations are not deductible. Education Fund monies can be used to pay a portion of the PMPs (both State and National) or as payment for an educational project that is approved by National LWV.

This complicated system enables the League, at all levels, to fulfill one part of our mission, EDUCATION, with tax deductible donations. This would otherwise not be possible because we are a politically active organization, albeit Non-Partisan.

And once again, all dues for 2005-2006 are due. December 5th is the deadline.

Kathy Penningroth

IOWA LEGISLATIVE ISSUES BRIEFING

□

On Saturday Oct. 15, four members from our League, Pat Jensen, Audrey Moeller, Naomi Novick and Pasquale Cancilla, attended the Issues Briefing in West Des Moines. It was a well attended meeting and covered a wide variety of important topics.

After a welcome from President Marla Scheffer, the first speaker was Gary Dickey, who is the General Counsel to the Governor. He updated us on the Restoration of Felon Voting Rights. On July 4 Governor Vilsack signed Executive Order 42 restoring voting rights to felons. Approximately 40,000 felons who had served their sentence had their rights restored automatically. An additional 1310 felons have subsequently been approved after completion of their sentence. On August 31, the County Attorney in Muscatine challenged the validity of the governor's order. The Judge still has it under advisement. Governor Vilsack's order is not permanent and could be rescinded by a future governor.

□

The next speaker was Cathy Callaway from the American Cancer Society speaking on "Why we need to raise the tobacco tax in Iowa." A series of statistics were presented which emphasized the lethal effects and the addictive properties of tobacco. The tax on cigarettes in Iowa is 36 cents a pack. She indicated that there is a need to raise the tax to \$1.00 to slow new smokers and to cause others to quit smoking. The average tax by states is 91 cents and in adjoining states to Iowa only Missouri has a lower tax. At \$1.00 a pack tax, it is estimated that there would be a 19% decrease in teen smoking. Iowa spends \$5 million on advertising while the cigarette companies spend \$191 million on advertising. It is estimated that 30-40% of revenues at places like quik-trips are derived from tobacco. The Iowa health Initiative will lobby for a \$1.00 increase, Governor Vilsack would support a 80 cent increase and legislators are at 36 cents. Since it did not get out of committee last session, their needs to be extensive lobbying for there to be an increase.

□ Judie Hoffman discussed the Clean Elections program of the

League (see below) which we will present to our local League in March.

An Iowa Lobby Corps, made up of volunteers, will be developed to focus on legislative issues and to lobby as needed. Volunteers will be recruited to lobby on individual issues for the duration of a session. Other items discussed included opposition to the proposed constitutional amendment to require a public vote if legislation would increase taxes by more than 1 per cent, support for a mandatory electronic filing of campaign finances and voting system security.

□

Finally, there were presentations on The Death Penalty and Mandatory Minimum Sentences. Roxann Ryan, a former Assist. Attorney General pointed out that the death penalty is not a deterrent, is more expensive than life sentences, is prejudiced against certain races and ethnic populations and that vengeance is the only argument for a death penalty. Mary Richards, a former Story County Attorney, pointed out that although crime is down, incarceration is up. At a present 8,719 prisoners, the state prisons are 20% overcapacity. Other forms of intervention and civil commitment were stressed.

Pasquale Cancilla

CLEAN ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN

The Advocacy Committee of LWVIA and the state board feel that campaign finance reform is crucial to preserving our democracy.

The Clean Elections approach is the best method currently available to achieve a significant reduction in the harmful influence of money on elections. The board has decided to begin the "Clean Elections Iowa" campaign by asking each local League to sponsor a community program on this topic during 2006. The Advocacy Committee of the state board will provide the actual program content.

The purpose of this program is to increase the understanding of Iowa citizens about the influence of money on the election and legislative processes, and about the alternative of Clean Elections (also called Voter-owned Elections).

Our Democracy, Our Airwaves....Part II

On October 5th a Town Meeting was held in Iowa City by two commissioners of the FCC. Last spring the FCC had changed media ownership rules that would allow one company to own more newspapers and radio and television stations in a media market. A judge ruled that the FCC could not make that change until it listened to public comment, so FCC members are traveling around the country to hear comments from the public.

One commissioner and the staff member of another commissioner were present to hear public comments. There were several speakers, and then members of the public spoke. Over 50 people signed up to speak, and all of them expressed their opposition to the proposed change in rules.

Barbara Beaumont, speaking for the LWVJC, did not get to speak until after 10:00, when most of the audience had gone home. Her message was that the League was concerned about the concentration of ownership, and was also concerned about issues that had been brought up at the June 2004 LWV National Convention: 1) that the FCC require all television and radio stations air candidate-centered or issue-centered programming – a minimum of two hours for six weeks preceding a primary or general federal election; and 2) that a voucher system for free air time be given to all qualified candidates.

Barbara Beaumont

The League's 47th National Convention

LWVUS 2006 Convention to be in Minneapolis

In 2006, midwesterners get a rare chance to attend the National LWV Convention in their own backyard. "Meeting in the Middle," is the title of next year's gathering. For five days in June, the delegates will attend training sessions, elect officers and directors, consider amendments to the bylaws, and work on program planning for the following year.

The Johnson County LWV is entitled to one delegate to the June 9-13th 2006 convention which will meet at the Hilton Minneapolis, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Two of our members (one an alternate for another district) attended the last national convention in Washington D.C. While we are again limited to one delegate, the JCLWV can send additional observers.

LWVIA 2005-2007 Priorities

Voter Service

Monitor HAVA (Help America Vote Act) implementation

Voter registration for qualified felons

Strengthen local Leagues

Provide information for international study groups to interested local Leagues

Provide local League Board and/or general League orientation by request

Continue local League liaison program

Complete the new state study

Identify a contact for study committee in each local League

Advocacy

Identify a *legislative liaison* from each local League

Sponsor Lobby Day

Combine efforts of Advocacy and Sentencing Committees regarding corrections and sentencing

Local League Web Site Development

Facilitate development of local League web sites that connect to LWVIA site

Only four local Leagues Ames, Johnson County, Metro Des Moines, and Upper Iowa currently have web sites.

League Legislative Priorities

Legislative priorities for the 2006 Iowa Legislative session were also set to include: increasing the State's tobacco tax, opposing reinstatement of the death penalty,

supporting several sentencing and corrections issues,

opposing the proposed constitutional amendment on taxes, and

supporting security in voting in Iowa.



Join Us for the Annual
DECEMBER 3RD HOLIDAY BRUNCH
for Members and Friends

Place: Coralville Holiday Inn
1220 First Avenue Coralville
Time: 9:30—11:30 AM
Program: How to Get More Women Elected
By Those Who Know:

Mary Mascher, Sally Stutsman, & Regenia Bailey

Cost: \$13.00 per person
Reservations: Send your check or call Linda Levey by
Friday November 28th: call (319) 351-5141,
email llevy0417@aol.com, or send your
reservation to 336 MacBride Drive,
Iowa City, IA 52246

This is a grand time to bring a guest and introduce friends to the League



(Please cut here and send with your check to Lind Levey)

LWVJC DECEMBER 3RD BRUNCH RESERVATION

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone/email: _____
Guests' names: _____
Number of Brunch reservations: _____
Amount enclosed (Payable to LWVJC) _____



IOWA CITY ELECTIONS ON NOVEMBER 8TH

Remember to vote in the upcoming general elections in Johnson County on Tuesday, November 8 th.

LWVJC CALENDER November - December, 2005

NOVEMBER

- 7 – Board Meeting, Iowa City Public Library Room E @ 4PM
- 8 – ELECTION DAY
- 16 – Luncheon Meeting with Tom Slockett Cottage, 11:30-1 PM. Reservations

DECEMBER

- 3 – General Meeting. Brunch at the Coralville Holiday Inn, 9:30-11:30 AM. Reservations
- 5 – Board Meeting, Iowa City Public Library Room E @ 4PM

