



THE VOTER

NOVEMBER 2011

WWW.LWVJC.ORG



A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF JOHNSON COUNTY.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan organization, encourages the Informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences Public policy through education and advocacy. We study, educate & advocate.

From the President

Election 2011 ballots have been cast and counted. I personally celebrated democracy by voting early at ICPL with no photo ID required. I am pleased with the local media's significant coverage of the issues, the candidates, the candidate forums, and the polling sites. Yet, a low percentage of voters cast ballots. The League must continue our efforts to empower and inform voters.

October 2012 was a VERY active month for our local League. LWVJC sponsored three candidate forums, a Membership meeting to form consensus on the Role of the Federal Government in Education, and the second program in our year-long Constitution series.

Upcoming events or opportunities to make democracy work through study, education, and advocacy, in November and December are listed below:

Wednesday, November 2 "Citizens United vs. The Federal Elections Commission": the third program in a series of seven community conversations.

Tuesday, November 22 ECICOG regional Legislative Reception in Coralville City Hall

Saturday, December 3 LWVJC Annual Brunch, 9:30 in Kirkwood Room

Monday, December 5 Board of Directors' meeting, 1:30-3:30 pm ICPL Room E

TBA December LWVJC Legislative Update

Tuesday, January 3 Iowa Caucus

Check inside the VOTER for details of events listed. Come join us and bring a friend!

Polly Horton

OFFICERS 2010-2011

President Polly Spenser Horton

621-1685

Vice-President Carol Spaziani

338-6140

Treasurer Katherine Valde

530-5933

Secretary Gaylen Wobeter

338-5218

Membership Pat Ephgrave

466-3057

DIRECTORS 2010-2011

Pat Cancilla 644-2807

Melanie Gross 354-3179

Barbara Haring 351-4164

Pat Jensen 338-8123

Margaret Murphy 309-331-4787

Naomi Novick 337-4649

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY FOR 2012

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF IOWA (LWVIA)

Prepared by Carol Spaziani

On October 15 President Polly Horton and Vice President Carol Spaziani attended the 2011 Issues Briefing of the LWVIA in Grinnell. They came home with an urgent message for local League members: We will need to flex our advocacy muscles in the 2012 Iowa legislative session as a number of big issues are on the “to do” list. Included are a bill paving the way for a new nuclear power plant and a massive redesign of the state’s mental health system.

Top League priorities for the upcoming session are:

Insuring that the complete (and needed) redesign of the state’s mental health system is adequately funded and best serves the people who need services—not just saves money.

Making sure that the state justice system incorporates “best practices” such as mental health courts, crisis intervention, and jail diversion programs and that the growth of the prison population is slowed while addressing the needs of the growing number of substance abusers and persons with mental illness entering the correctional system.

Opposing HF 561 that passed the House of Representatives in 2011 and that allowed the Iowa Utilities Board to consider nuclear power for additional energy generation. The bill raised strong concerns among environmentalists about safe storage of nuclear waste and among consumer advocates about allowing large, uncapped, and unrefundable rate increases assessed before a decision is made to build a nuclear power plant. [continued on next page]

Other Issues of Concern to the League: [continued from previous page]

Common sense gun laws

Predatory lending practices

Support current process of judicial selection and retention

Campaign finance and election reforms

Oppose requiring photo ID's to vote

Implement national health care reform

Policies that insure due process and protect children of immigrants

Horton, Spaziani, and Barbara Beaumont (626-6227) have background materials on all these issues. If you are interested in having a copy please contact one of them.

2012 Calendar, 84th Iowa General Assembly

January 3: Political party caucuses

January 9: First Day of session

January 20: Deadline for individually sponsored bills

FEBRUARY 15: LWVIA CAPITOL DAY (10 am) Calvary Baptist Church, Des Moines (members encouraged to attend; local carpools will be arranged)

April 17: 100thDay of Session (End of per diem expenses)

May 26: Primary Election Pre-Registration

June 5: PrimaryElection

LWVIA lobbyist information:

Amy Campbell and Craig Patterson, amy@ialobby.com; craig@ialobby.com, 515-554-5838 (Amy); 515-554-7920 (Craig)

LWVIA Bill Tracker (updated daily)

www.ialobby.com (go to "Bill Tracker" and select "LWVIA")

ANNUAL BRUNCH

By Audrey Moeller

December 3, 2011

Kirkwood Room, 515 Kirkwood Avenue, Iowa City

9:30 AM Registration and Social Time

10:00 AM Brunch Buffet [catered by The Leaf]

Program

Sharon Lake, PhD and Anna Flaming PhD Candidate

The Speakers will share their research on the progress of women in Iowa

since the 1960's. They will lead a discussion to follow.

Reservations are due by Friday November 25 with a check for \$20.00 per person

made out to LWVJC

And send to

Katherine Valde, Treasurer

523 N. Linn St. Apt.9

Iowa City, IA. 52245

.....
Name:.....

Amount: \$.....

Guests:

The buffet includes vegetarian and gluten free items.

Please join us Dec. 3 at the LWVJC Annual Brunch to help celebrate the completion of the

Education Study report

CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES FORUMS

By Naomi Novick

The LWVJC held forums this year for the city council candidates in Iowa City and North Liberty. We Held two forums in Iowa City, one for the primary and one for the general election. Our forum for Coralville was canceled because of a funeral for a candidate's family member. Audrey Moeller attended the Coralville forum sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and asked some questions for LWVJC.

Moderators for our candidate's forums were Alison Smith, Pat Jensen, and Naomi Novick. League members who helped our forums run smoothly were Gaylen Wobeter, Carol Spaziani, Polly Horton, Rebecca Reiter, and Nancy Lynch.

Local libraries and other public buildings put up small posters for our candidate's forums. Local TV channels provided live telecasts and many reruns. We always appreciate all this help to encourage informed voter participation in local elections.

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County is now **ON FACEBOOK!**

Actually we have been for some time, but our page has been relatively inactive. Now we are going to utilize this new social media forum as a publicity tool for the league. We are hoping this both improves attendance at our events and attracts new members from groups we have not reached before.

Facebook is now a very popular form of communication, and the LWVJC has had a "group" and "page" for while. To avoid confusion, the deleting the group and only using the page beginning November 1st, 2011. You can find our new page here:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Johnson-County/275461815804277?sk=wall>

LWJC is stepping up its use of Facebook because of the easy access it gives our group to a new audience of all ages and groups. The LWVUS encourages all its local affiliates to begin to make use of the new social media. We will be updating the page with information about our events, and community events we think our members may be interested in. It is a great way for us to stay involved!

To be most effective and expand our network, we are encouraging our members who have internet access to join Facebook if they are not already using it. If you do not have Facebook, you can EASILY fill out the information to create YOUR OWN PAGE at:

www.facebook.com

After you have your own page, type in League of Women Voters of Johnson County and click like in the right hand forum.

Remember to like our page by December 1st. We hope to be acting through our new page at this time.

Margaret Murphy

309-331-4787

IOWA CAUCUS EVENT

Delta Sigma Theta, Inc., is hosting a Q & A session on the Iowa Caucus on **Wednesday, November 16th, 2011** from **6:30--8:00pm Meeting Room A ICPL**. We would love for your organization to attend. We will have a small panel including a representative from the Republican, Democratic, Green, and Tea Party give 8-10 minute overviews of their key issues for the Caucus (and subsequently for the Presidential Election of 2012). We're hoping to give people in the community an opportunity to learn about the parties while also providing the parties with a chance to reach potential new volunteers. The forum will take place in the Iowa City Library. Here's a link to the announcement on their website. <http://calendar.icpl.org/view.php?did=20076>.

Our goal for the Candidate's Forum is to give Iowa City an opportunity to learn about the Iowa Caucuses and to help people who are not familiar with them gain greater understanding about how they can become involved before the Presidential Campaign of 2012. We are hoping to have a nice group of experienced voters in the audience so that the Q & A session is more a *discussion*.

At some point it would be great for our organizations to work together on a program. We greatly respect the work of the Johnson County League of Women Voters and would love for you to keep us in mind for future opportunities to collaborate. If any of your members plan to attend could you email me so that I can acknowledge your group during the opening?

Best,

Sylvea Hollis
Co-Program Coordinator
Iowa Caucus Q & A
Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.

The annual finance drive will be in February again this year. If you have names to add to our canvas, please contact Barbara Haring, b.haring@mchsi.com by November 30. Thank you.

Please welcome to LWWJC Donna Harr

Calendar of Upcoming Events LWVJC

By Polly Hortpn

November 22, 2011 EICOG Open House and Legislative Forum 4pm Coralville City Hall

December 2011

3 **Annual Holiday Brunch** 9:30 am Kirkwood Room, Iowa City

5 Board of Directors' meeting 1:30-3:30 pm ICPL meeting room E

TBA Legislative Update meet with local Legislators to share LWVJC priorities

January 2012

3 Iowa Caucuses

9 Board of Directors' meeting

21 Legislative Forum 9:30 am location TBA

February 2012

6 Board of Directors' meeting

9 Constitution series program 7-9 pm Old Brick

15 Lobby Day at Capitol (Des Moines)

18 Legislative Forum 9:30 am location TBA

TBA **Program Planning Membership meeting**

March 2012

1 Constitution series program "Women's Rights"

5 Board of Directors' meeting

17 Legislative Forum 9:30 am location TBA

April 2012

2 Board of Directors' meeting

21 Legislative Forum 9:30 am location TBA

May 2012

7 Board of Directors' meeting

TBA **LWVJC Annual Membership Meeting**