



THE VOTER

December 2011

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 and advocate.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello everyone:

We have a unique political opportunity to inform the rest of the United States about the Iowa caucus system. Mary Jo Brooks, producer of PBS New Hour, has contacted LWVIA President Myrna Loehrlein, who in turn contacted me, asking if we could suggest persons (male or female) who would be interested in participating in an interview program and who meet the following qualifications:

- they expect to attend a Republican caucus
- they are not committed to a particular candidate
- they can speak thoughtfully about issues
- they would be available to tape a program in Des Moines at 6:30 pm on December 29, 2011

Membership in the League is not required. I can think of at least one person who would be good. Can all of you make suggestions? You could suggest yourself, of course!

Thanks,

Polly Horton (pollyshorton@aol.com; 319-621-1685)

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Calendar of Upcoming Events League of Women Voters Johnson County, Iowa

January 2012

3 Iowa Caucuses

9 Board of Directors' meeting

18 Program Planning @ home of Pat Jensen 5pm

28 Legislative Forum 9:30 am @ Emma Harvat Hall in Iowa City Civic Center

February 2012

6 Board of Directors' meeting

9 Constitution series program (Lawrence Goldstone) 7-9 pm Old Brick

15 Lobby Day at Capitol (Des Moines)

25 Legislative Forum 9:30 am @ Coralville Public Library

March 2012

1 Constitution series program "Women's Rights"

5 Board of Directors' meeting

24 Legislative Forum 9:30 am @Iowa City Public Library

April 2012

2 Board of Directors' meeting

28 Legislative Forum 9:30 am @ North Liberty City Council Chambers

May 2012

7 Board of Directors' meeting

TBA LWVJC Annual Membership Meeting

LWVJC Announces Schedule of Forthcom- ing Legislative Forums

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County legislative forums will again be held in 2012. The first will be held Saturday, January 28th at Emma Harvat Hall in the Iowa City Civic Center, from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. The other forums are February 25th at the Coralville Public Library, March 24th at the Iowa City Public Library, and April 28th in the North Liberty City Council Chambers. All the legislative forums will begin at 9:30 a.m.

Senators Joe Bolckcom, Robert Dvorsky, James Hahn and Sandra Greiner, and Representatives Nate Willems, Jarad Klein, David Jacoby, Jeff Kaufmann, Vicki Lensing, and Mary Mascher have been invited.

The forums provide an opportunity for dialogue between the legislators and their constituents in Johnson County.

The legislators present five-minute summaries of critical issues before their respective houses that are of particular interest to them. The remainder of the forum is devoted to public comments and questions.

By Barbara Beaumont

MEETING WITH LOCAL LEGISLATORS BY MARGARET MURPHY

On December 11th, members of the League of Women Voters Johnson County met at The Brown Bottle in downtown Iowa City to share pizza and discuss upcoming issues with our local legislators. Sen. Joe Bolkom, D-Iowa City, Rep. Dave Jacoby, D-Coralville, and Sen. Sandy Greiner, R-Keota, answered questions from league members about the upcoming issues in the next legislative session.

The questions asked covered mental health reform, correctional institution reform and nuclear power. Each legislator answered all three questions, providing some insight into what will happen in the coming months regarding these issues.

The questions asked were:

Given the (pending) recommendations of the Mental Health & Disability Services Redesign, how far are you willing to go, and what resources will you commit, to restructuring the state mental health system and preventing more costly care? How will you make sure the changes you make best serve the people that need them – and not just save money?

How will you make sure best practices like mental health courts, crisis intervention, and jail diversion programs make their way to every corner of the state – and what more will you do to slow the growth of Iowa's prison population and address the needs of the growing number of substance abusers and persons with mental health illness entering our correctional system?

The League of Women Voters of Iowa opposes HF 561 because it does not protect Iowa utility customers from unfair rate increases and because there had been little discussion about making our current power plants more efficient. Would you oppose HF 561, and if not, what would you do to address concerns about safe disposal of waste and uncapped rate increases on consumers?

The answers from the legislators will be sent to the Iowa League of Women Voters to analyze.

PROGRAM PLANNING

By Pat Jensen

SAVE THE DATE

It's nearly 2012, so pull out your calendars and circle Wednesday, January 18! Pat Jensen will host a wine and cheese at 5 p.m. at her home for all League members who ALSO are interested in discussing any upcoming governmental or political concerns or issues that the League may want to study locally or nationally.

Each year, in January or February, we look ahead to decide if we want to study any local or regional issues in the upcoming year. We also, in even years, focus on national issues that we may want to recommend to the LWVUS for adoption at the late spring national Convention for study the following two years. In "off" years, we address state issues in the same way, looking toward the LWVIA state convention.

So save January 18 and plan to come enjoy intelligent discussion of emerging governmental issues. More information to come in the January VOTER!

"REPORT ON DECEMBER BRUNCH

Thirty-five member and guests attending the League's Dec 3 Brunch at the Kirkwood Room enjoyed hearing the three speakers, Linda Canney, Anna Flaming, and Sharon Lake. These women scholars with Ph.D.s in American Studies from the University of Iowa described their research on women's issues in Iowa and especially Iowa City in the 1960s and 1970s. Their stories stimulated audience members to ask many questions and to tell some of their own experiences working on women's issues not described by the three speakers. The meeting adjourned shortly after noon with attendees still ready to hear more and to remember and tell more stories."

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please join us in welcoming new members

KATHERINE HANSEN and

LILLIAN DAVIS