



The

VOTER

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Johnson County

**Notice of meeting on
Campaign Finance Issues
with
Richard Myers
Wednesday, January 14, 7 p.m.
Iowa City Public Library, Rm A**

The League of Women Voters of Johnson County is sponsoring a meeting on campaign finance reform on **Wednesday, January 14, at 7:00 p.m. at the Iowa City Public Library**. The guest speaker will be Richard Myers who has had extensive experience in politics as council member and then mayor of Coralville, supervisor of Johnson County, and legislator and Democratic minority leader in the Iowa Legislature.

Campaign finance reform is timely with the recent action of the Supreme Court affirming the McCain-Feingold Bill for Campaign Financing Reform and the decisions of President Bush, Governor Dean, and Senator Kerry not to use federal funds for their campaigns.

This promises to be a spirited presentation, and the public is encouraged to participate.

Brunch in February—League Birthday Party!!!

The League of Women Voters was born on February 14, 1920, which makes 2004 the 84th birthday of the national League. The League of Women Voters of Johnson County was among the first local leagues. We have been in continual existence since 1920, though the name was changed to the LWV of Iowa City for a number of years.

Come celebrate the birthday with a brunch at the Coralville Library. We will remember some of the early days or at least earlier days and meetings, when League members wore dresses, heels, hats, and gloves. Do you remember this attire?

Along with the party, we will discuss the LWVUS position update on the selection of the president. See the article elsewhere in this *Voter*, and bring the relevant *National Voters* to the meeting. Come enjoy a good discussion and **birthday party brunch at the Coralville Library on February 14**.

President's letter

Happy New Year everybody! I hope you all had a good family time over the holidays. I hope you have also thought about candidates for the 2004 elections. When you attend your precinct caucus, you will be asked to support candidates for other offices in addition to the president. The candidates for president have been receiving lots of publicity, and they deserve it. At most caucuses, the agenda

will also include platform issues, Iowa General Assembly Candidates, County Candidates, etc.

Though the caucus participants must be registered voters and party members, others may attend as observers. Anyone who moved recently may register at the caucus and participate. The bottom line here is: Don't stay home on Jan. 19, 2004.

Naomi Novick

Schedule of forthcoming legislative forums

The Johnson County League of Women Voters legislative forums will again be held the last Saturday of each month during the session. Site of the four forums will be the Emma Harvat Hall in the Iowa City City Hall, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on the following dates: January 31, February 28, March 27, and April 24.

Invited are Senators Joe Bolkcom, Richard Drake, Robert Dvorsky, and David Miller; and Representatives Dan Boddicker, Ro Foege, Sandra Greiner, David Jacoby, Vicki Lensing, and Mary Mascher. The forums

are an opportunity for dialogue between legislators and their constituents in this county. The legislators present five-minute summaries of critical issues before their respective chambers, particularly those of interest to them. The remainder of each forum is devoted to public comment and questions, beginning with questions from the co-sponsors. The microphone is then opened to members of the audience.

The Iowa City Education Association, the Iowa City Community School District, and AAUW will co-sponsor the January forum. February

co-sponsors will be the Government Relations Committee of the UI Faculty Senate and UI Staff Council. The Johnson County Soil and Water Conservation District will be a co-sponsor in March, and Tobacco-free Coalition will be a co-sponsor of the April forum.

Would another organization to which you belong like to co-sponsor a forum with the LWVJC? Call Ann Shires, Voter Service Committee, at (319) 338-7149 to reserve a forum date. Co-sponsors help widen the range of topics and enlarge the audience.

— The *Voter* is published approximately six times a year / LWVJC, PO Box 2251 / 356-6993 / www.lwvjc.org
— *Editor*: Claudine Harris

Selection of the president: LWVUS position update

The delegates to the LWVUS Convention adopted a League position update on the Selection of the President. This position originated from a 1970 study and was updated in 1982. The proposed new position will be printed with concurrence materials in the Jan./Feb. 2004 issue of the *National Voter*. There is a Presidential Selection Update Task Force composed of five appointed members. They are from Iowa, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Texas. Judie Hoffman of Ames is on this task force, which is chaired by Xandra Kayden of the LWVUS Board.

Two recent issues of the *National Voter* have information

on the current position and the issues to be considered in writing a proposed new position. So read May/June 2003 and September/October 2003 *National Voters*. Both articles also have lists of Recommended Readings, web sites on election reforms, web sites for LWVUS, and for the task force. The following information is from these *National Voters*.

LWVUS CURRENT POSITION:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct popular vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and

procedures for presidential elections.

The evolution of the nomination process has gone from Congress, to the parties, to the people. "Our goal is to get a better grasp on what is changing, how it affects the participants in the presidential election: the candidates, the parties, and the voters." The current system gives the nomination decision to the ordinary voters in primaries and caucuses rather than to organized parties. The question now is how can this process be improved.

National or regional primaries would make fundamental changes in the current system for selecting presidential candidates.

Everything you always wanted to know about "Clean Money"

- Passed by ballot initiative in 4 states: ME, VT, AZ, MA. Introduced in US House and Senate, and Iowa House and Senate.

- An alternative to raising and spending largely special interest money to finance election campaigns.

- Spending limits based on average costs of the previous two elections for each office.

- Clean Money candidates must attend at least one debate.

- Closes the loophole on independent

expenditures and soft money.

- Contribution limits and reporting requirements also for non-participating candidates.

- "Clean Election Candidate" qualifies by receiving a \$5 donation and signature from a minimum number of voters.

- In Iowa a candidate for Governor would need signatures and donations from 500 voters in each

Congressional District; a candidate for the Iowa

House, a signature and donation from 100 voters in that state district.

- \$5 donations are deposited in the Clean Election Trust Fund.
- Independent expenditures must be reported with the candidate's name and amount spent. The Clean Election Fund will release more funds to the candidate being opposed.
- This fund may include voluntary contributions;

appropriations from the general fund, allocations that candidates have not spent, as well as the \$5 donations.

- Candidates who choose Clean Money receive a debit card to ensure public dollars are spent on campaign activities only.
- Electronic filing is required for candidates who spend more than \$20,000.

(Had fun reading?)

**** CALENDAR ****

January – May 2004

JANUARY

- 12 – Board meeting, 4 pm
- 14 – General meeting, 7 pm,
Iowa City Public Library
Program: Campaign
Finance Issues
Speaker: Dick Myers
- 19 – Attend a caucus**
- 31 – Legislative forum, 9:30 am,
Emma Harvat Hall, IC

FEBRUARY

- 9 – Board meeting, 4 pm

- 14 – Birthday Party Brunch, 10 am,
Coralville Library
Program: LWVUS Position
Update
- 28 – Legislative forum, 9:30 am,
Emma Harvat Hall, IC

MARCH

- 8 – Board meeting, 4 pm
- 11 – Location TBA, 7 pm
Program: Criminal Sentencing
in Iowa
- 27 – Legislative forum, 9:30 am,
Emma Harvat Hall, IC

APRIL

- 12 – Board meeting, 4 pm
- 21 – Program: Regional
Government
- 24 – Legislative forum, 9:30 am,
Emma Harvat Hall, IC

MAY

- 10 – Board meeting, 4 pm
- 19 – Annual Meeting

Now you know... The correct statute name is the "**USAPATRIOT Act**" and the acronym stands for **U**niting and **S**trengthening **A**merica by **P**roviding **A**ppropriate **T**ools **R**equired to **I**ntercept and **O**bstruct **T**errorism.