



The VOTER

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Johnson County



League of Women Voters of Iowa SENTENCING AND CORRECTIONS STUDY *Be a part of the process on November 18th*

Come to the League meeting on November 18th at the Coralville Public Library at 7 PM, to help decide on the Proposed Concurrence Statements, which are printed on the next page and described in full in the LWVIA Voters for winter and for summer. At the meeting we'll review the material and discuss and decide about the statements. Some experts in Justice and Corrections will be there to give us further insight.

Our review of Iowa's current and recent history of corrections population and costs gives a base for studying our sentencing laws and practices so we can respond to crime in keeping with our beliefs, our safety, and our resources, using the best available evidence about effective justice/corrections practices.

With Iowa population and crime rate fairly stable over the past years, why are corrections populations and costs rising? There are several factors, both general and specific:

1. Changes in sentencing policy by the Iowa Legislature and/or federal government in response to felt needs;
2. Changes in type and severity of crimes and in offender criminal history, (recently, drug offenses, for example;)
3. Annual increases in basic costs for utilities, maintenance, building, food and clothing, wages as in the general economy;
4. New prisons: three in the late '90's at \$45 million to build and \$25 million to operate, expanded facilities at various prisons and CBCs;
5. New and expanded programs for offender needs.

"If current offender behaviors and justice system trends, policies and practices continues, Iowa's prison population may be expected to increase from 8,361 inmates on June 30, 2003, to about 11,925 inmates on June 30, 2013, or by about 42.6 over the ten-year period.!(CJJP: Iowa Prison Forecast, FY2003-2013, page 2.)

What does this mean for the people of Iowa? How can we respond?

1. We can increase the budget for justice and corrections to cover the increase in people and services, by shifting money from other state programs or by raising taxes.
2. We can decrease the anticipated population number by changing sentencing laws toward less costly placement or less time in the system.

All changes must maintain public safety and the safety and well-being of everyone in the system. All changes will require legislative action

Come join us at the Coralville Public Library November 18th

Presidents' Message

This fall we held three candidate forums. The first one was for candidates for Congress which we cosponsored with the Cedar Rapids/Marion and Mount Vernon/Lisbon Leagues and the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council at Kirkwood College in Cedar Rapids on September 18th. On September 30th we held the County Supervisors Forum and on October 12th the Sheriffs Forum. Both of those were at the Iowa City Public Library. All three forums have been rebroadcast on the government channel. Our thanks to management and staff of the Channel for making that possible.

Be sure to attend our general meeting on Sentencing and Corrections (see page 1). Members will be reaching consensus of the enclosed State League Position. On Saturday Dec. 4th at 9:45 am at the Bijou Theater at the IMU, there will be a viewing of " Iron Jawed Women, followed by a panel discussion and lunch. Everyone is welcome (see page 3.)

January will see the start of the Legislative Forums. Enjoy Thanksgiving and the Holiday Season. Remember to vote.!

Pamela Stewart and Pasquale Cancellia

League of Women Voters of Iowa 2004 SENTENCING AND CORRECTIONS STUDY

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a justice system that is fair and protects the public safety. LWVIA believes that mandatory sentencing has had an adverse impact on Iowa's justice and corrections systems.

The LWVIA supports an indeterminate sentencing structure. An indeterminate sentence is a sentence given by the judge that orders the maximum amount of time that is to be served. It permits the releasing authority such as the Iowa Board of Parole in consultation with the Iowa Department of Corrections to release the offender earlier if it is warranted.

The LWVIA supports legislation that considers offenders with special needs. Some examples of offenders with special needs are the mentally retarded, mentally ill, geriatric inmates, and medically needy.

The LWVIA supports Iowa's system of Community Based Corrections (CBCs) for offenders, CBCs should provide treatment, when appropriate, for offenders in the community while maintaining safeguards for the public. Iowa should maximize community corrections by providing adequate funding.

The LWVIA supports adopting sentencing legislation that is based on valid and reliable research. Such legislation should consider:

- Proportionality of all sentences to crimes committed
- Judicial discretion
- Budget constraints on the Iowa Department of Corrections
- Effectiveness of treatment and other programs for offenders

HOLIDAY LUNCH AT THE BIJOU THIS YEAR!

**LEAGUE MEMBERS AND GUESTS TO VIEW "IRON JAWED ANGELS"
THE TRUE STORY OF THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT**

WHAT: SPECIAL FREE SHOWING OF THE HBO SPECIAL: "IRON JAWED ANGELS", the true story of two defiant and brilliant young activists, Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, who took the women's suffrage movement by storm, putting their lives at risk to help American women win the right to vote. Starring Hilary Swank (Academy Award winner for "Boys Don't Cry"), Frances O'Connor, Julia Ormond, and Oscar winner Anjelica Huston.

Following the movie, a discussion of recent women's voting patterns (local and national) will be led by Bruce Gronbeck, Professor of Communications Studies, and David Redlawsk, Asst., Professor of Political Science at the University of Iowa.

WHEN: Saturday, December 4, (Movie at 9:45 A.M.; Box Lunch at 1 P.M. after the movie)

WHERE: Movie and Discussion: at The Bijou, 3rd Floor, Iowa Memorial Union
Box Lunch: Northwestern Room, 3rd Floor, Iowa Memorial Union

COST: Box lunch: \$11. Free movie ticket with each lunch reservation.

RESERVATIONS: Send your check or contact the Treasurer, KATHY PENNINGROTH by Saturday, November 20: call 645-1476, e-mail aphistres@aol.com, or send your reservation to 2097 IWV Rd, SW, Oxford, IA 52322

HELP BUILD LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP! We are asking each league member to bring at least one guest to this event. Additional free tickets to the movie only will be available as long as they last at the Iowa Memorial Union box office after November 20.

SPREAD THE WORD!

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

LWVJC DEC. 4 LUNCH AND MOVIE RESERVATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone/e-mail: _____

Guest(s)' names: _____

Number of lunch/movie reservations: _____

Amount enclosed (Payable to LWVJC): _____

Indicate choice of sandwich:

___ sliced turkey breast and Provolone cheese

___ sliced roast beef and Cheddar Cheese

___ vegetarian (Monterey Jack Cheese & vegetables, vinaigrette)

___ chicken salad

(box lunch includes sandwich, two salads, gourmet bar cookie and cold drink)

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ON ELECTION DAY



YOUR BALLOT, YOUR VOTE Don't panic if you registered to vote but your name is not on the list. Get help from a poll worker to make sure your vote is counted. You may be directed to another polling place or given a provisional ballot.

1. **I.D. – DON'T GO WITHOUT IT** You may need to show I.D. To be safe, bring your driver's license, or a paycheck, utility bill or government document that includes your name and street address.
2. **WRITING ON THE WALL** Look at signs at the polling place for directions on using voting machines, a list of your voting rights, and instructions for filing a complaint if your rights have been violated.
3. **WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK** Poll workers are there to help you. They'll show you how to work the machines and give you a provisional ballot if you need one. If you're at the wrong polling place, they should tell you how to get to the right one.
4. **IN AND OUT** You probably won't have to wait too long. But even if the line is long, don't leave without voting. The outcome of this election will be important!

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LWVJC CALENDER November - December 2004

NOVEMBER

- 1 Board Meeting, ICPL @ 4 PM
- 2 Election day
- 8 General Meeting Sentencing and Corrections consensus vote at Coralville Public Library, @ 4 PM

DECEMBER

- 4 General Meeting: film "Iron Jawed Angels," Discussion and Forum, The Bijou, U of I Memorial Union at 10 AM, Luncheon.
- 6 Board Meeting,

Remember to pay your 2004-05 membership dues Ind: \$50, Fam: \$75, Stu :\$25 to Kathy Penningroth