



Vol. 67

League of Women 2013 Voters of Iowa THE VOTER

Board 2013-14

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Issues Briefing

Saturday, September 21, 2013 • 10:00AM-3:00PM

Marshalltown Public Library • 105 West Boone, Marshalltown

9:30AM-Registration

10:00AM-Welcome & Quick Review of Priorities
Bonnie Pitz, LWVIA President

10:15AM-Focus Issue: Water Quality Panel
Steve Falck, Senior Policy Advocate-Environmental Law & Policy Center
Ralph Rosenberg, Executive Director-Iowa Environmental Council
Bill Stowe, CEO-Des Moines Water Works

11:30AM-Networking Lunch

12:15PM-Issue Update: Voting Rights & Absentee Voting
Myrna Loerhlein, LWVIA Advocacy Committee
Rep. Mark Smith, Legislation on Absentee Voting in Vets Home

1:00PM-Focus Issue: HIV/AIDS Criminal Code Modernization
Tami Haught, Community Organizer-CHAIN

1:45PM-Issue Update: MH/DS Redesign & MH Advocate Legislation
Amy Campbell, LWVIA Lobbyist-Review of issues pending in 2014

2:30PM-Plenary Session: Local League Planning
Bonnie Pitz, LWVIA President

- Important dates, legislator questionnaires, next steps & action plans.
- What can your local league do to promote these priorities?
- What do you need from the state league to do this?

3:00PM-Finish & Turn in Evaluations!

Register with Melissa Cahalan at melissacahalan@yahoo.com Cost \$12

President's Letter

Greetings to League Members,

Summer is rapidly finishing up and we are looking at Convention 2013 in Ames as history for our Iowa League. Many thanks from the LWVIA Board for the hard work by Ames to make the Convention so enjoyable. Our members enjoyed Ames hospitality and were impressed by our line up of speakers. Our National Guests, Janis McMillen and Tim O'Brien were very complimentary of their experience in Iowa. They saw lots of energy displayed by Iowa Leaguers.

When I attended Council 2013 in Leesburg, Virginia, Iowa was complimented on the work being done by MLD, Membership, Leadership and Development, lead by Tina Pace, Linn County and her Coaches across the State of Iowa. We expect to have another training of Coaches this year so that we can keep this program strong.

Iowa was also recruited to expand on VOTE411.org. In many Leagues across the nation, this website gives additional information about who is running for office and their viewpoints on questions submitted by League. E.J. Gallagher and I will be gathering information on the process to increase our use of this valuable website.

Voter Registration is a very high priority for LWVUS. The research shows that when voters are registered, they will vote. National Voter Registration Day is September 24, 2013. The Leaders Update from LWVUS, has information about signing up with other Leagues across the nation. A number of our Local Leagues have already made plans to have Voter Registration Drives and are signing up members to participate in the process.

The LWVIA responded to the Supreme Court Decision that weakened the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and opened the door to additional voter suppression. Myrna Loehlein, our Past President and Iowa expert on Voter ID, wrote an excellent article about the Supreme Court Decision and it was sent to newspapers throughout Iowa. The article is included in this issue of the Voter.

The LWVIA Board has reduced the number of Legislative Priorities for 2014. This was a recommendation of Johnson County League and we think we can have a greater impact if are selective about the issues we working on. Naturally Voting Rights is at the top of our list and we will be vigilant about fighting Voter ID and doing what we can. We are placing renewed efforts into protecting Water Quality. This has been a League Priority for a long time and the current situation in Iowa is very concerning. These issues and more will be covered at Issue Briefing 2013. Check our website lwvia.org and register today.

News Flash: Bill Stowe-DM Waterworks, Ralph Rosenberg-IA Environmental Council, & Steve Falck-Environmental Law & Policy Center will be speakers on Water Quality for Issues Briefing! How exciting this will be!

See You at Issues Briefing, September 21, 2013 in Marshalltown.
In League,

Bonnie Pitz

President LWVIA

Update from Agriculture Committee



LWVUS

The committee regrets to inform membership that it is behind schedule. A phased release of study materials will begin in September. Because material will take some time to read and absorb, it would be best to have Leagues schedule consensus meetings starting in January 2014. Consensus reports are not due until April 4, 2013. Watch the Leader's Update and Agriculture Update group the LWV Forums for further notices and discussions. Please contact Update Chair, Norman Turrill, at lwvturrill@mac.com for any questions.

Special Thank You to Ames LWV

All of the Ames League was welcoming and worked hard to make
Convention 2013

very memorable and special. The Convention Booklet organized by Lauris Olson was described by one of the members as "EXCELLENT" and we would all agree. Marcia Thompson was a Hostess and organizer that worked tirelessly to bring everything together from registration to menu and site selection. She could not have done more to make it the special EVENT it was. Jim Nolan was super as a photographer to keep this experience fresh in our memories. Jan Beran as parliamentarian, kept us all on task. Dianne Bystrom arranged for a tour of the Carrie Chapman Catt Center that was fitting finish to the day. Other contributors included Linda Murken, Maureen Wilt, Karen Shimp, and Carolyn Klaus. Our warmest Thanks for all you did for LWVIA.



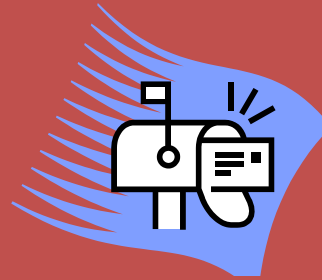
Bonnie Pitz, President LWVIA leads business meeting



Matthew Goodman welcomes members to convention.

Fire-EMS Study is underway. Mary Rae Bragg is joining Mike Coveyou in putting this study together. Details can be found on the LWVIA website, lwvia.org. Please refer to the information found there and contact material if you wish to join in on this League Study.

New Mailing address for LWVIA Book Keeper:
Sherry Griggs
Dimensions Accounting
PO Box 491 Newton, Iowa, 50208



LWVIA Covers Insurance Cost For Local Leagues and Board

A happy bit of news that we were able to share at Convention 2013 is that LWVIA State Board and all 12 Local Leagues have Insurance coverage as of June 1, 2013. League has purchased this insurance coverage for a total cost of \$1,809. The coverage includes:

Liability:

General Aggregate limit	\$2,000,000.
Employee Theft	\$50,000.
Theft of Money & Securities In/Out	\$2,000.
Portable Office Equipment	\$5,000.
D & O Liability	\$1,000,000.

The Insurance was purchased through Interstate Insurance Services, Ltd. Lureman / Steenhoek Agency in Newton. The Policy is with The Cincinnati Insurance Company, Policy number ENP 019 34 77. Details were mailed to all Local League Presidents on 6-12-13.

The coverage is for one year and we would like League members to know that if they are in the Insurance Business and wish to provide similar coverage for future years they can make contact with the State Board to make arrangements. Email dbpitz@iowatelecom.net

LWVIA Advocacy Committee

2013-2014

Chair: Judie Hoffman judiehoffman@yahoo.com

Voting Rights-Myrna Loehrlein mloehr@imonmail.com

Natural Resources and Water Quality- Jeri Thornsberry ngthornsberry@msn.com

Women's Health Issues-Dr. Deb Turner lwvdmetro@hotmail.com

Judicial Retention- E.J. Gallagher ejgallagher@glglaw.net

Criminal & Juvenile Justice Committee-Co-Chairs--

JoAnn Finkenbinder jo2@cfu.net

Karen Person kp19203@yahoo.com

These individuals are our experts in the different areas of our Legislative Priorities 2014. We consider them our "Go To" people who can answer questions and explain complexities of the any particular legislation or issue that might arise in the coming year.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF IOWA IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Official League Address: 330 North 8th Avenue East, Newton, Iowa 50208

Dues: \$25 to state, \$31 to national

Contact Information: League President dbpitz@iowatelecom.net

Important Websites:

LWVUS Website: <http://www.lwv.org> (National- find info on positions, issues, membership, etc)

LWVIA Website: <http://www.lwvia.org> (Iowa – find info on positions, local leagues, etc.)

League Lobbyists Website: <http://www.ialobby.com/> (For Iowa bills our lobbyists are following)

Iowa Legislature: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/>

Important Dates:

August 24, 10 am: Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony at IA Historical Building

September 10: School Board Election Day

September 21, **LWVIA Issues Briefing** 10:00 – 3:00—Marshalltown Public Library

September 24, National Voter Registration Day

November 5 - City Election Day

January 13, 2014 - Start of the 85th Iowa Legislative Session

February 14, 2014 – 94th Anniversary of Women's Right to Vote & Founding of LWVUS

February 18, 2014 **LWVIA Capitol Day**: Jessie Parker Building, Ia. Voc Rehab Services, 512 E. 12th, Grant Room

March 8, 2014- International Women's Day

April 4, 2014- Agriculture Study Deadline for consensus reports to be filed electronically

June 3, 2014 – Primary Election Day

May 17, 2014 – **LWVIA State Council** Meeting

June 6-10, 2014- LWVUS National Convention, Dallas, Texas

Voter Newsletter: Goal will be 4 issues:

Summer 2013: August 24: Articles due to Bonnie. Voter finalized and sent out by August 30.

Fall 2013: October 1: Articles due to Bonnie, Sue Wilson-----. Voter finalized and sent October 9.

Winter 2014: January 03: Articles due to Bonnie, Sue Wilson----- Voter finalized and sent January 10

Spring 2014: March 7: Articles due to Bonnie, Sue Wilson-----. Voter finalized and sent March 15

2013-14 Board Meeting Dates & Time: (10:00-3:00)

October 5, 2013 LWVIA Board Meeting, Grinnell, Drake Community Library, confirmed

November 16, 2013 LWVIA Board meeting, Marshalltown Public Library, confirmed

January 18, 2014 LWVIA Board Meeting, Waterloo

March 15, 2014 LWVIA Board Meeting, Grinnell, Drake Community Library, confirmed

May 3, 2014 LWVIA Board Meeting, Marshalltown

LWVIA Goals for 2013-2014

Continue Support for MLD—Members and Leaders

Increase Voter Registration

Increase League Visibility

Support Iowa Statewide Study-Fire-EMS

Improve Lobby Day participation

Continue attending and speaking up in State Legislature Hearings

Organize Fundraising connected to joining VOTE411.org—adding Voter's Guide

Increase contact with Members at Large

Encourage attendance at National Convention- June 2014

Continue Collaboration with other organizations

Participate in National Study-Ag Food Study

Develop new Local Leagues

AGRICULTURE STUDY UPDATE

by Karen Person, LWVMDM Board Member

At the LWVUS Convention in 2012, League members voted to update our Agriculture position. The scope of the study is to focus narrowly on: 1) current technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process. The LWVUS study committee has been busy putting together study materials on the LWVUS website. It is the expectation that local leagues will use those materials as well as use their own state and local resources to study the issue. Friday, April 4, 2014, is the deadline for locals to provide consensus reports on the study via electronic survey.

Process to find out information on the Study:

- ❖ Go to the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org
- ❖ At the bottom of the home page, there is a section for "MEMBERS" and at the bottom of that section is "Advoc., Proj. & Studies" - Click on that title.
- ❖ Scroll down to "Agriculture Update: Suggested 'Summer' Readings" and click on "MORE"
- ❖ Listed are three resources in as well as three websites; highlight the blue and click on each and you will have them come up where you can save them for reading on your computer or print them out.

"Challenges and Opportunities in U.S. Agriculture; Chapter 8" is a 28 page document printed by the government as part of the *Economic Report of the President 2013*. Although the content of this 28-page report goes beyond the specific topics in the Update Scope, it was selected as an excellent introductory document offering background on such topics as the role of agriculture in the U.S. economy, structural changes that have taken place since the 1920s, the development of new markets (e.g., organic, local), the contribution of research and development to productivity growth, agriculture in world trade, and the challenges of agricultural risk management. This is a fact-intensive document that will take me some time to digest. Go to: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/ERP-2013/ERP-2013-chapter8/content-detail.html>

The second document is a Union of Concerned Scientists policy brief entitled *The Healthy Farm: A Vision for U.S. Agriculture*. This 8-page position statement by the UCS and is, therefore, not entirely neutral. It was selected because it looks at farming from a variety of perspectives (production, economics, and environment) and a variety of farming systems (industrial, conventional, organic, etc.), offering examples of technologies and management practices able to contribute to the UCS vision of a healthy farm. The report contains many useful references and links. It is at: http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/food_and_agriculture/The-Healthy-Farm-A-Vision-for-US-Agriculture.pdf

The third document is a short article from Scientific America entitled *Will Organic Fail to Feed the World?* The article presents a summary of a recent analysis of 66 studies comparing conventional and organic methods for 34 different crop species. There are numerous live links providing definitions of terms and additional reading: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=organic-farming-yields-and-feeding-the-world-under-climate-change&page=2>

Additionally, League members are encouraged to explore the following websites:

- ❖ USDA site, *Know Your Farmer*: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF_RESOURCES
- ❖ The National Sustainable Agriculture Council: <http://sustainableagriculture.net/about-us/what-is-sustainable-ag/>
- ❖ The "Food Dialogues" website is a creation of the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance and brings together leaders and practitioners from all points of view for moderated, civil webinar discussions. This is the most difficult of the websites to navigate and caution must be taken to select a variety of webinars and views to get a balanced picture on issues covered. Starting at the home page of this website gives you an opportunity to link to some of the recent topics discussed on their Facebook page: <http://www.fooddialogues.com/>. From the home page you can also click on the "learn about agriculture/food sources" tab which brings you to links addressing a number of issues that will be covered by the Update Study.

Want to know the current agriculture policy for LWVUS? Go to: <http://www.lwv.org/content/agriculture-policy>

Iowa is an agriculture state so this topic is likely to bring folks of differing views to your local League meetings. Best of wishes with your study!

League Responds to Supreme Court Decision *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*

“By cutting the heart out of the Voting Rights Act, the Court has weakened our ability to keep our elections free, fair, and accessible to every voter while at the same time emboldening those who seek to create barriers to voting.” Elisabeth MacNamara, President, League of Women Voters of the United States.

MacNamara went on to say, “The Court weakened the Voting Rights Act (VRA) as mechanism to fight discrimination by striking down Section 4, which determines the states and jurisdictions that must secure federal approval before changing election laws. The fact that the Department of Justice blocked over 700 voting changes they found to be discriminatory from 1982-through the VRA’s 2006 reauthorization speaks for itself.”

The people of Iowa have challenges to maintain their own voting system. Will the people of Iowa allow laws and administrative rules to be put in place that will intimidate some voters and make voting unnecessarily cumbersome for the rest of the voters? Will elections in Iowa be subject to laws that block some qualified voters from the polls and make access to the vote more difficult for everyone?

Administrative rules recently set by the Secretary of State have greatly discouraged some qualified voters. Registration rolls are now purged using federal data bases that were never intended for that purpose, and are not appropriate for this use. Our driver license rolls are also inappropriate for use in voter registration questions and their use is costly for Iowans. Secretary of State investigations have used over \$200,000 and resulted in less than 10 alleged voter registration violations and no convictions.

There are Iowa Legislators that would have us believe that we need to spend millions of dollars to institute a voter photo ID law that would greatly decrease the efficiency of our elections and create an insurmountable barrier for qualified voters who cannot satisfy the bureaucratic red tape these laws create or afford the added expense they may put on the registration process. Think about everyone you know who is disabled and does not drive, lives in a nursing home, students, and people in cities who use public transportation. All would be affected by voter photo ID law.

Iowans deserve elections that are free, fair, and accessible. The recent Supreme Court Ruling has put the responsibility for elections squarely in the hands of the States. It is important that each Iowan be vigilant to insure elections are accessible to every qualified voter.

Myrna Loehrlein-Past President, League of Women Voters of Iowa
Bonnie Pitz-President, League of Women Voters of Iowa

All of us in the League of Women Voters of Iowa want to recognize the honor that our own Dr. Deb Turner recently received by being inducted into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. About 30+ League members attended the ceremony and luncheon that followed. The luncheon was organized by the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. What a special experience to celebrate by League Men and Women. Best Wishes to Deb on this recognition.

Mini Minutes from Summer Board Meetings for LWVIA

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES SET FOR 2014

VOTING RIGHTS AGAIN #1 CONCERN

- On-going concern over attempts across the nation to restrict citizens' right to vote moved the LWVIA Board of Directors to keep protection of voting right as LWVIA's Number 1 priority during the 2013 Iowa Legislature.
- The League's state board unanimously agreed to rank voting rights as its top concern as it met July 24 in a conference call and on July 27 at a meeting in Cedar Rapids. The board's action was in preparation for the LWVIA's Issues Briefing to be held September 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Marshalltown Public Library.
- Voting rights is the one and only issue in the board's top tier of priorities. Its second tier includes: guarantee access to mental health services; decrease use of incarceration and provide funds for substance abuse and mental health treatment; guarantee access to women's health services; and strengthen Iowa's environmental programs.
- During the conference call, LWVIA lobbyists Craig Patterson and Amy Campbell told board members they expect the 2014 Legislature to adjourn without delay and without taking on any difficult, time-consuming issues. Lawmakers are likely to feel they can rest on successes (such as property tax reform) that were hashed out during the 2013 session, plus, they will be anxious to get home to begin campaigning for the 2014 election, Patterson said. All House members and half the state senators will be on the ballot next year.

AMBITIOUS LIST OF GOALS SET FOR 2013-14

- LWVIA President Bonnie Pitz is challenging her board of directors with an ambitious set of goals for the 2013-14 League year, goals the board asked to increase even further during their July 27 meeting in Cedar Rapids.
- Pitz's original presentation recommended: increasing voter registration efforts; continuing collaboration with other organizations with special attention to environmental advocacy groups; increased League visibility; assist chapters' participation in the LWVUS Agriculture Update; assist in the LWVIA study of fire and EMS services; continued visibility at state hearings; attendance by League members at legislative committee hearings; organize a fundraising effort; and continued support of Membership and Leadership Development efforts.
- After discussion, the list grew to include: increased Lobby Day participation; increase contact with members-at-large; develop new chapters; and encourage attendance at the national convention in June of 2014.
- Success of last year's MLD program is generating new member involvement and enthusiasm that board members are optimistic will create a "can-do" attitude that makes the expanded challenge an exciting possibility.

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE EXPANDS

- LWVIA's commitment to activism at the state legislative level, promoting League priorities and vigilantly watching out for proposals that threaten League causes is a challenge best handled by spreading advocate responsibility, League President Bonnie Pitz told board members at their July 27 meeting in Cedar Rapids.
- To that end, Pitz's distribution of board assignments for 2013-14 includes expanding the Advocacy Committee into five subcommittees. The new subcommittees and chairs as announced are: Criminal and Juvenile Justice, headed by JoAnn Finkenbinder and Karen Person; Women's Health, chaired by Dr. Deb. Turner; Natural Resources, Jeri Thornsberry; Voting Issues, Past President Myrna Loehrlein; and Judicial Retention, Gallagher. Advocacy Chair will be Judie Hoffman, long time League member and past lobbyist for LWVIA.

Mini Minutes from Summer LWVIA Board Meetings
Secretary, Mary Rae Bragg