



# THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF IOWA

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## IOWA DELEGATES TO LWWUS CONVENTION

The National Convention of the League of Women Voters was held in Chicago from June 28 – July 1. The theme, “Creating a More Perfect Democracy,” was carried through in many workshops and plenary sessions. This issue of *The Voter* will be devoted to sharing the experiences of attendees. Attending from Iowa were (left to right): Linda Meloy, Sue Johannsen, Mary Rae Bragg, Paula Vaughan, Syndy Conger, Teel Salaun Thebeau, Myrna Loehrlein, Nancy Halvorson, Becky Coats, Cathy Eisenhofer, Gaylen Wobeter, Tam Prenosil, Melissa Brown, Jo Ann Finkenbinder, Gerri Perreault and Sue Willson. Photos courtesy of Geraldine Perreault.

## LWVIA CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

August 11, 10 am, LWVIA Board Meeting, Iowa City Public Library

September 25, Voter Registration Day 2018

October 20, 10 am, Restoring Civility Workshop, Iowa Valley Community College, Marshalltown

November 6, General Election Day

Nov 17, 10 am, LWVIA Board Meeting, Cedar Rapids Human Resources Bldg

Jan 19, 2019, 10 am, Board Meeting, Cedar Rapids HR Building

Feb 20, Capitol Day, Des Moines

March 16, 2019, 10 am, Board Meeting, Iowa City

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from Mary Rae Bragg, LWVIA President

If only there were a way to bottle up passion! I would send a jug to each one of you and guarantee democracy's future and the future of the League of Women Voters for centuries to come!

Coming home from the League of Women Voters National Convention July 1, as I drove west to Iowa from Chicago, I was tired but at the same time exhilarated by the experience. I'm fairly sure the rest of Iowa's 16 delegates must have had similar feelings. How could they not?

The speakers, workshops and opportunity to exchange experiences with League members from all around the nation filled our days, nights and minds with the passion we can, hopefully, bring back to all of you to keep those Iowa League home fires burning brightly.

Being "next door" to the convention site made it a short trip for us Iowans, but it was still a major commitment in time and money. Thanks to all of you Iowan Leaguers for making that effort. We're claiming it as the largest delegation Iowa has ever sent to a national convention, and it took us to the city where Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters, just six months before the 19th Amendment was ratified and women got the right to vote. That's our Iowa girl, Carrie, who was also featured prominently in the Saturday night banquet keynoter's speech!

Keynote speaker Elaine Weiss, author of the new book, *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*, gave our contingent plenty to cheer about with her dramatic tale of Carrie's efforts. On Sunday, we got to applaud reelection of our great friend and LWV Iowa's former co-president Deb Turner to the national board. During Saturday's plenary session, Deb acted as moderator for a discussion of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), which was followed in the afternoon by a DEI three-hour training session for every convention attendee. DEI is a major LWVUS thrust, as it addresses future challenges, and having Deb as a major player in the discussion only bodes well for the outcome.

We were also introduced to our new national CEO, Virginia Kase, who comes to League after serving as chief operating officer of CASA and CASA in Action, which advocate for Latino and immigrant people in Maryland. Of Puerto Rican descent, Kase's commitment ("We are the power of women... We are looked to as a moral guide...") and her call to action based on the League's history ("They did not back down then and we will not back down now!") sent chills through our collective body.

Former treasurer of the United States Rosie Rios was one of those fantastic speakers LWVUS conventions are known for: someone you've not heard of before, but whom you will never forget once you've heard them. After leaving the Treasury, Rosie launched EMPOWERMENT 2020 at Harvard. Its first project, "Teachers' Righting History," recognizes historic American women in the classroom. From America's money, to its cities' statues, to trading cards and Barbie dolls, there appears to be nothing that Rosie isn't ready to tackle when it comes to advocating for women and girls.

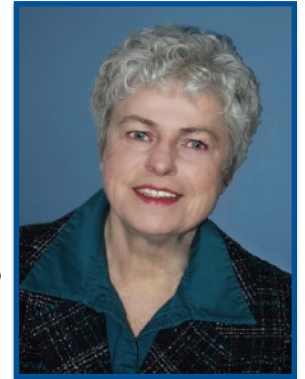
Throughout this issue of The Voter you will see pieces contributed by some of the Iowa Leaguers who attended our 53rd national convention, getting an idea of the many varied and important issues addressed at the workshops they attended. We held them to just one subject, but if you have an opportunity to chat with any of this year's delegates, give them an opportunity to tell you about their other highlights.

My personal highlights will include striking up new friendships with folks like Sioux City League member Melissa Brown and South Dakota's new state president Caitlin Collier. And I can't leave out the delightful Wares Market, filled with all kinds of fun things offered by various state Leagues. I'll show you my pin depicting a white-gowned suffragette, complete with placard!

I sincerely hope many of you will begin now to make plans to head for Washington, D.C. on June 25-28, 2020, to attend League's Centennial observance convention. Help your local to start now to set aside funds to make the trip possible and make that once-in-a-lifetime experience a reality!

Yours in League,

Mary Rae



# THE WOMAN'S HOUR

## THE GREAT FIGHT TO WIN THE VOTE

from Gaylen Wobeter, Delegate from Johnson County LWV & LWVIA Board Member

Our banquet speaker at the League National Convention in Chicago was Elaine Weiss, the author of the book in the title of this article. Although many of us League conventioners probably knew quite a bit of this suffragist history, she put some highlights together in her talk that were thoroughly engaging and made me want to read her book. The book is very recently published and Weiss is an established writer and journalist.

Many Leagues, including our Iowa League, are working toward ways to commemorate our 100 years of being a League, along with the 100 year anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment giving women the right to vote. Using "The Women's Hour" as a League book group choice, or as a program to educate people about the 72 year struggle from the Seneca Falls Convention to the 1920 passage, would be worthwhile and timely.

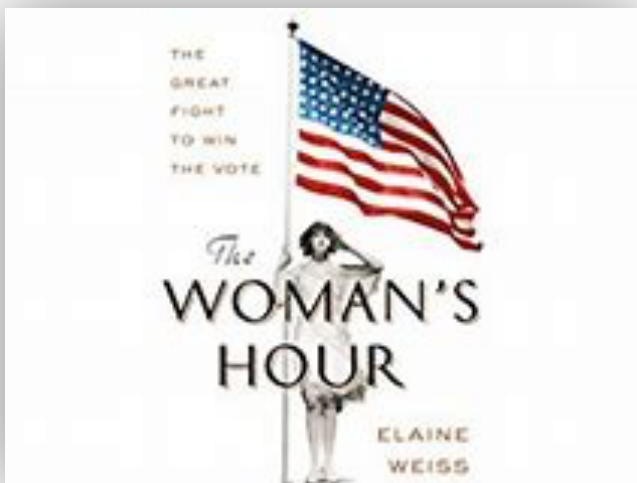
The Woman's Hour details all the complications, compromises, and conflicts involved in trying to pass this legislation. It is not a simple story. One reviewer, Jean Zimmerman, summarizes as follows: "Weiss brings a lucid, lively, journalistic tone to the story. Perhaps her greatest contribution is documenting the intricate contentious element of racism that almost crippled the struggle."

From our perspective in 2018 it might seem obvious that women would be able to vote, but in reading this book one finds, as is true with so many historical

events, that this victory only came after a long, difficult, and arduous struggle that we should never take for granted. Progress is not in a straight trajectory, and this is an important realization in the present time for us League members and all citizens to be vigilant to keep our democracy working. Hearing Elaine Weiss at convention was a forceful reminder of this truth.



Dubuque League President Tam Prenosil took a step back in time at the LWVUS convention, courtesy of a photo set offered by LWV of Missouri.





# USING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION LENS TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL IMPACT AND COLLABORATION

from Paula Vaughan, Delegate from Johnson County LWV

The leaders of LWVUS recognize that as part of the biennium (2018-2020) transformation journey, the membership must reflect a more diverse, and inclusive population. The goal is to weave Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into every plan and action at every level of the organization. For short, the plan is known as DEI.

DEI is best carried out at the local level. It is about building relationships within our communities by stepping out of our comfort zones, partnering with local organizations, and meeting people face to face who appear to be unlike us. DEI is not about jumping to the results we are trying to achieve, i.e. getting people in neighborhoods with low voter turnout to vote. Rather, it is about establishing meaningful relationships with people in those neighborhoods.

Begin with an honest, internal self-assessment. What are my biases towards other people, both recognized and unconscious (we all have them, maybe several)? What triggers my biases? Taking the Implicit Association Test (IAT) online may provide some helpful insight. Do not judge biases as good/bad; acknowledge them, accept them, move past them, and find a connection with the person you want to know.

When in conversation with someone else, do you find yourself thinking about what you are going to say next, rather than listening to the other person? Diversity Dimensions, who conducted the training at the National meeting, described three levels of listening. The one mentioned above is called 'Internal'. The next level is 'Curious' listening, which involves hearing, and affirming what the other person is saying. 'Deeper' listening, also called 'Beyond Words', includes both stated and unstated messages, the heart of the matter, and true understanding of the speaker's meaning. Listening is essential to building relationships, as is language that encourages conversation. Think about how much more inviting questions that begin with 'what', 'how', and 'what is at risk' are compared with questions that begin with 'why'. 'Why' questions imply judgment, and can easily trigger conversation shut-down.

Transforming the League through DEI will require each of us to risk reaching out to people in our communities, getting to know them personally, and engaging them in meaningful dialogue. Let's move LWVUS from equity to inclusion by inviting people we don't know to the party, and taking the next step of asking them to dance.

## BEYOND THE YOUTH VOTE & LEAGUE FUNDRAISING

from Myrna Loehrlein, Delegate from Linn Co. LWV

"Beyond the Youth Vote" was a workshop that described a year-long youth program in Alaska. It is presented in cooperation with the local high school. The youth take strong leadership roles (or are under the impression that they do). The program seemed to be thoroughly worked out, so I was not sure what decisions were left to be made. The program is guided by an adult coordinator who stays with the group throughout the school year.

The program has four interest areas: (1) a mock election, (2) "WAM" or "Wait A Minute," an examination of fake news, (3) a bullying prevention campaign, and (4) a candidates forum for high school students which is the culminating event of the year.

We should note that Alaska has a small population, just under 740,000 people, so these students have ready

access to their local, state, and national representatives. The population is concentrated in two major areas, and this made siting of the forum an easy decision.

This program might be hard to transfer as is, but it does have interesting aspects such as the four interest areas.

In the "Fundraising for the League" session, the following information was shared:

- Put your presentation in story form.
  - Make your audience care about your characters.
  - Create tension.
  - Show how your organization provides the best solution
- 70% of all giving to charities comes from individuals, 5% from corporations, 16% from fundraising.
- People give because they were asked.
- People give to your mission, not to your organization.
- Remember that you offering them an opportunity to be a part of something bigger than themselves.
- The amount doesn't matter, the support does.



**from Cathy Eisenhofer, Delegate from Johnson County LWV**

VOTE 411 -Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides nonpartisan information to the public with both general and state-specific information on the following aspects of the election process. VOTE411.org has served approximately 36 million voters since 2006. 5.3 million voters were served in the last biennium.

The 53rd LWV National Convention – June 28 – July 1, 2018 – Chicago, IL, had several VOTE411.org Voter's Guide System Training sessions as well as a new focus for PR and Fundraising. Several states were utilizing fundraising to support VOTE411.org existing costs as

well as costs associated with expanding the use to other leagues across the state. Expansion was not only by publishing information online but also exporting data and covering costs to create a printed voters' guide, advertising and more.

Since 2010, LWVEF had licensed "e.thePeople" software to power the candidate information on VOTE411. Due to LWVEF's long-term success in leveraging and growing the candidate and ballot measure information available on VOTE411, in 2017 LWVEF went through the complex and exciting process of accepting, as a gift, the "e.thePeople" software. This acquisition enables LWVEF to actively partner with state and local Leagues to solicit media partners across the country. In 2018, VOTE411 will provide more ballot and voting information to voters than ever before.

Iowa has three VOTE411 partner Leagues who have participated for up to five years: Ames & Story County, Johnson County & Linn County.

## Online Voter Guide Growth

2018 (as of June 27, 2018)

- Committed to cover races in 290 communities, in 34 states, where Leagues exist
- Over 637,000 voters viewed the candidate data
- Over 831,000 total sessions

Key:

Participated One Year	Participated Four Years	Participated Seven Years
Participated Two Years	Participated Five Years	Participated Eight Years
Participated Three Years	Participated Six Years	



## NEW LWV CEO VIRGINIA KASE:

Convention attendees were able to meet the LWVUS incoming CEO, Virginia Kase. Since 2011 Virginia has been a leader at CASA, an organization at the forefront of the immigrant rights movement representing nearly 100,000 members. CASA is also the largest human service and civil rights organization fighting for social, economic, and racial justice in the mid-Atlantic region. Virginia has more than 20 years' experience working in the non-profit sector and is a passionate activist and advocate for social justice. She starts in the national office on July 25.



# GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN AMERICA: ARM YOURSELF WITH FACTS, NOT FICTION

from Nancy Halverson, Delegate from Ames & Story County LWV, Co-President Ames & Story County LWV

Having just gone through the Parkland High School devastation by a shooter on February 14, 2018, Florida LWV is even more geared up to fight the complacency by government on the issues connected with ANY reasonable gun control. They are very disappointed and understandably angry about those, like Marco Rubio, who look past the dangers children and adults live with because of their narrow minded approach to protecting the 2nd Amendment at any cost.

Too many in power kneel to the NRA Lobby and their political bases. They are unwilling to participate in a meaningful conversation to see that the 2nd Amendment need not be dissolved or ignored in order to enact protections to save our children and put a stop to the increasing number of school shootings. It is no longer a matter of IF there may be another school shooting, but rather WHEN. The generations of young people now in our schools and colleges have grown up knowing it could happen in a neighboring school, a friend's school or their school. If they hear any unusual noise, they don't think that a door slammed, they think, "Hide, find cover or run." There is no in between.

We must fight at every level to have the AR15 outlawed – this is the weapon of choice for most mass shooters. This is a cause we must all take up in our local Leagues and we must pursue at every level. The Center for American

Progress on Gun Rights has a website that is worth checking out. LWVFL has offered to make the power point used for this presentation available to other Leagues and we plan to request it for Ames/Story County LWV.



## MORE ON GUN SAFETY

from Jo Ann Finkenbinder, Delegate from Jasper Co LWV & Member from Black Hawk-Bremer LWV

This workshop was presented by Patty Brigham, President of Florida LWV. A few of the facts brought out at this workshop.

- There were 38,000 firearms deaths in 2016, sixty percent of the deaths were from suicide and 36 percent from homicide. In 2015 there were 36,000 firearms deaths.
- Regarding domestic violence, abused women are 5 times more likely to be killed if the abuser owns a gun.
- There is one intentional school shooting a week on school grounds.

What can we do?

- The Center for American Progress has a conference call on gun safety, 7 pm Eastern time zone, on the first Monday of each month. It is a 1 hour call. A sign-up sheet for the call was passed around.
- Student leaders are rallying. They want a ban on assault weapons-usually AR15, a military style

weapon that has 100 rounds before the magazine must be replaced. It was used in the Columbine High School shooting, in the Aurora movie theater's shooting, and in the Orlando Pulse Night Club shooting.

- Join with the student leaders. Let's help make it happen through our grassroots efforts. Register students to vote, and urge students to join LWV as student memberships are often free. David Hogg and Emma Gonzalez, both survivors of the 2018 shootings at Marjory Stoneman High School, are student leaders.
- Activate local Leagues; bring it to the State Board. Do letters to the editor, news conferences...keep the issue alive. Join with other groups and build coalitions. Partner with inner city groups with communities suffering from gun violence.
- Gun manufacturers want to normalize guns on campus. They are setting up NRA gun clubs on college campuses. The gun lobby wants armed staff in our schools. However, police miss their target 70 percent of the time in assimilations of active shooter scenarios. How will panic impact that accuracy during a real shooting, and who might also get unintentionally shot?

# UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION ILO MEETING

from Sue Wilson, Delegate from Dubuque LWV, LWVIA Board Member, & UMRR-ILO Board Member

The Annual Meeting of UMRR-ILO was June 27 in Chicago prior to the start of the LWV Convention. The biggest accomplishment from the ILO annual meeting on was the following Resolution, which, since Convention ended, has been passed unanimously by the LWVIA Board:

## **RESOLUTION: DIVERSION OF LAKE MICHIGAN WATER TO MOUNT PLEASANT**

**Resolved: That the League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region (LWV UMRR) InterLeague Organization opposes the diversion of water from Lake Michigan to the Foxconn Technology Group in Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin.**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that does not endorse candidates for public office. Nearly 100 years old, it was formed for the purpose of educating and advocating on issues of public concern and supported the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Clean Water Act and holds positions on water transfer impacts on ecosystem integrity.



The UMRR is made up of 51 local Leagues of Women Voters chapters as well as the state Leagues of Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota. Its focus is the quality and quantity of water in the Mississippi River Basin from the source of the Mississippi River in Minnesota to its confluence with the Ohio in southern Illinois. We work on water issues in our four member states - Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois, two of which also share the Lake Michigan Watershed.

## **WHEREAS**

The City of Racine proposes to divert an average of 7 million gallons of water daily from Lake Michigan to meet the industrial needs of Foxconn Technology Group and manufacturing campus, a private company and other users and the return will be 39% less in amount and uncertain quality than what is required by the Great Lakes Compact Agreement.

## **AND WHEREAS**

The Great Lakes Compact, an eight state and two Canadian province "leadership pact," sets rules for the withdrawal and return of water from the Great Lakes, and states, "All the Water so transferred shall be used solely for Public Water Supply." LWV UMRR-ILO supports the compact goal of preserving and enhancing the environmental integrity and quality of the Great Lakes.

## **AND WHEREAS**

The proposed diversion could set a dangerous precedent for the diversion of water in any of the Great Lakes.

## **AND FURTHERMORE**

Foxconn Technology Group has been given permission to "mitigate" wetlands that currently protect the headwaters of the Des Plaines River and the Fox River, which eventually feeds into the Mississippi River, which will ultimately impact pollution in the river and cause watershed changes in surface and ground water due to runoff often through flooding.

## **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

We urge you to reject the proposal to divert water from Lake Michigan for the Foxconn Technology Group industrial project by all who have a role in the project.

*Approved by the LWVUMRR Board of Directors, June 21, 2018, along with directions to share widely including appropriate elected representative, investigate possible legal remedies, and track the monitoring of the legal and watershed effects of the proposed project.*



# DC VOTING RIGHTS

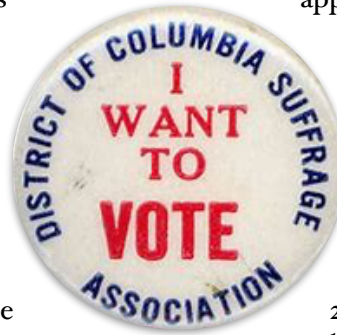
from Sue Johanssen, Delegate from Muscatine County LWV

Did you know that the residents of Washington, D.C. are not represented in Congress with Senators and Representatives? They are not. Yet they pay more federal taxes per person than all 50 states and have NO voting representation in Congress. Taxation without representation!

The people who live in the District want to become a state. In 2016, 86% of DC voters cast ballots to support Statehood for Washington, D.C. Statehood is a national issue and only Congress can admit new states to the Union. Legislation to create the 51st state is before both houses of Congress, H.R. 1291 and S. 1278.

Washington, DC, is home to over 700,000 people, including 30,000 veterans.

The District has a Mayor and City Council. They have balanced budgets and laws, but Congress has final approval. Congress has the power to block any laws it opposes and interferes with locally raised revenue.



You can get involved!

1. Write, email, tweet or call members of Congress and highlight a lack of democracy and full representation for residents of Washington, DC.
2. Follow @DCStatehood51 on Facebook and Twitter
3. Organize a rally, roundtable discussion or event that highlights DC's disenfranchisement. Every League received a box in the recent past with a thumb drive, poster and information sheet to encourage a meeting on DC Voting Rights.
4. Visit [statehood.dc.gov](http://statehood.dc.gov)



Gerri Perreault (right) with her niece Tracey King and Voter Girl at LWVUS Convention.

## WONDER WOMAN AT THE LEAGUE'S 2018 CONVENTION

from Linda Meloy, Delegate from Johnson Co LWV & LWVIA Board Treasurer

Yes, the 1970s Lynda Carter version of *Wonder Woman* held down the League of Women Voters of Kent, Ohio, Wares Market display table. In full costume, *Wonder Woman*, aka Sherry Rose, a staff member of that League, shared information about *The Voter Girl Project*, which was also a caucus presentation on Sunday of the Convention.

*The Voter Girl Project* is a licensed one-day curriculum program for Girl Scouts – Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors – where the Scouts not only learn about voting and advocacy but earn citizenship badges. The curriculum guide was developed by teachers and communicators with backgrounds in diversity as well as elementary and higher education. You can view photos of a 2017 *Voter Girl Project* on their webpage: [Kent OH LWV Voter Girl Project](http://KentOHLWV.com/VoterGirlProject) or connect/chat with them on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KentLWV/>

The License includes a package of files on a flash drive that includes all the information needed to plan and deliver the curriculum, along with logos in formats for printing, artwork for a Girl Scout patch, and tips for running the *Voter Girl* event. The license fee is \$150. You can talk directly to a staff member about this project by calling 330.688.9545 or you can email them at [votergirl@kent.oh.lwvnet.org](mailto:votergirl@kent.oh.lwvnet.org).

This appears to be a great idea for local Leagues in order to collaborate with Girl Scout councils in delivering this curriculum as part of 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment Commemoration activities, and to continue to offer it for years in the future.



# ELECTORAL COLLEGE RESOLUTION CONSIDERED AT THE LWV CONVENTION

from Syndy Conger, Delegate from Johnson Co LWV

The League of Women Voters of the United States has had a position recommending the direct election of the president by popular vote and the abolition of the Electoral College since 1970 to ensure free and fair elections for all. Since then, the position has been updated once (June 2004) and revised twice (1982 and 2010).

At this year's biennial convention, a resolution passed to make it a priority in the LWV's 2018-2020 program, "Making Democracy Work." Delegates from Illinois offered an Electoral College Abolition Caucus on the evening of the first day of the Convention to seek other delegates willing to speak to their resolution and offered a workshop in how to advocate for it.

One of the last debates held by the original Constitutional Convention, the electoral college was created but not endorsed wholeheartedly by the founders of the country. It was "the second choice of many but the first choice of a few."

It interposes a college of electors to do the direct voting for the president, in the process disregarding the ballots of any voters who opted for the "losing" candidate in their state. It renders hollow the notion of "one person – one vote," and breeds cynicism in voters convinced (and are they wrong?) that "their vote doesn't count." However, abolishing the Electoral College is a heavy lift. It will require a Constitutional Amendment supported by 2/3 of both the House and the Senate and ratified by 38 (3/4) of the states.

An interim solution is to have states pass National Popular Vote bills designed to give the presidency automatically to the winner of the popular vote. For this to work, states with enough electors to add up to 270 (number of electors required to choose a president) will need to pass such bills. So far, 11 states and the District of Columbia have passed such bills, with 172 electoral votes at their disposal, with 98 more electoral votes yet required.

Another frequently discussed solution—having electors approximate their citizens' wishes by dividing their votes—is not, according to experts, practical. More often than not, the result would be that no candidate would win 270 electoral votes, and the choice of the next president would default to the Congress. And that was something the founders wished to avoid above all else.

For more information, including a very useful Power Point on this subject, see <https://www.lwvwilmette.org/electoral-college-reform.html> or contact [abolishelectoral@gmail.com](mailto:abolishelectoral@gmail.com).

Iowa League members gather for the Convention Banquet. Left to right: Myrna Loehrlein, Sue Wilson, Tam Prenosil, Teel Thebeau, Sue Johannsen, Mary Rae Bragg, and Jo Ann Finkenbinder.



# NEW MEMBER'S REFLECTIONS ON THE 2018 NATIONAL LEAGUE CONVENTION

**from Melissa Brown, Delegate from Sioux City LWV**

I attended the 2018 biannual Convention of the League of Women Voters as a delegate from the LWV of Sioux City. I was asked to provide an impression of the conference as a newer member and 1st time conference attendee, as last year was my first year being involved with the LWV.

I was recently asked to serve on our local's board, and the opportunity to attend the convention seemed like a good way to learn more about the LWV, how it works, and the history of the organization. The conference did not disappoint.

The 4-day conference was jammed packed with informational sessions, plenary sessions, and social events. There was barely time to visit the nearby museums and attractions, which was frankly OK, since the summer heat of downtown Chicago was far more punishing than the schedule. I must admit that I didn't really know what a plenary was before this conference, but by the end of the conference I sure did! The plenary sessions were equal parts fascinating, nail biting, and exasperating which, I suppose, is an apt description of how legislation in this country works.

I learned that the League's founders implemented formal procedural processes not only to help organize the decision-making but also to teach civics and legislation to women who had never had an opportunity to be involved in governance. This gave me a wider appreciation for the how's and why's of League operations.

I went to some inspiring small group sessions that provided information about the wonderful works that are being done by locals throughout the country. However, my favorite part of the convention had to have been meeting and talking with the other attendees. Having the opportunity to be in the same room with so many intelligent, civic minded, and passionate people who are striving towards the continual improvement in our democratic process was truly inspiring.

There is an awareness by the LWV and by many longstanding civics and community organizations across

the country for the need to attract a more diverse and younger membership. As a way of addressing these needs, there was a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training that all were encouraged to attend. The meeting time was right after our lunch break, and I must admit I spent the beginning slide show part of the session pining away for a post lunch nap. As a so-called Generation Y/Millennial, I thought I already had a bit of understanding how unconscious bias effects many things including ethnicity, age, and sexual/gender orientation.

After the slide show presentation we broke off into one-on-one groups to discuss some of our unconscious biases. It was during these one-on-one conversations that I realized how unconscious bias can also affect how we see each other in regard to educational attainment, career and job status, and even party affiliation, and how all of our many combined biases can impact how welcoming we truly are when seeking new members.

The one-on-one conversations I had throughout the four days helped inform my final takeaway from the 2018 convention. The past several years have been traumatic for the people of this country regardless of where political affiliations lie. There have been great upheavals involving economics, technology, community demographic and population changes, and dramatic changes with how we communicate with one another. There is a tearing at the fabric of our country that feels sort of like a run in a pair of hosiery. What started as a small snag now runs up the entire length, and a repair seems impossible.

However, the 100-year history of the LWV lends some perspective to our current situation. This country has faced divides before. The fight for abolition and women's suffrage spanned across lifetimes. Through grass-roots work and personal relationships we can find a way to make the necessary civic repairs. I'm proud to be a member of the LWV, and this gathering helped me see that we all have very important work ahead of us, and we all have a part we can play.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO DIANNE BYSTROM

Dianne will retire from the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics at Iowa State University on Aug. 10 after serving as director for 22 years. The Catt Center was established by the Iowa Board of Regents in September 1992, and Bystrom has been instrumental since its early years in developing and building the nation's second oldest university-based center for women and politics. She is also a former LWVIA Board member.



## LWV CENTENNIAL RAP

by Johnie Hammond and Mim Patterson, Ames & Story County LWV

We're the League of Women Voters and we're here to say  
We practice being citizens a certain way.  
Research and careful study is where it's at.  
We're thankful to our founder, Carrie Chapman Catt.

One hundred years ago she said the vote is good  
For men and also women whom she said should  
Participate and vote and represent the nation:  
You can't have democracy with no participation!

We study on the question, looking for the best solution.  
Then we lobby the elected folks to deal with the pollution.  
The issues are diverse and the problems mixed.  
There are lots and lots of problems needing to be fixed.

Like sentencing reform and juvenile detention,  
Burgeoning poverty and preschool education.  
Environmental garbage must have our close attention,  
Not to mention issues of gross discrimination.

Every person voting is vital to our nation  
So we dedicate our time to voter registration.  
Suppression of the vote we cannot tolerate.....  
We really have to stop it to have justice in our state.

So now we are inviting you to celebrate with us.  
If you like what we are doing, just step up on the bus.  
Pick an issue needing fixing or a wrong that needs a right  
And, working all together, we'll bring it to the light.

If you're feeling short on issues, but would like to lend a hand  
To celebrate a hundred years of suffrage in our land,  
Well, the League of Women Voters are not quick to take offense  
At a contribution given with the kindest of intents!

## 2020 LWV ANNIVERSARY GEARING UP LOCALLY AND STATE-WIDE

from Gaylen Wobeter, Johnson Co. LWV & LWVIA Board Member

In less than two years the Leagues all over our nation will be in the midst of commemorating 100 years of our existence, along with the passage of the 19th Amendment giving women in our nation the right to vote. Both our Johnson County League and our State League are in the middle of many efforts to bring this important anniversary to the attention of the public and to use the occasion as a springboard for awareness and education about how far we have come, but also how far we have to go.

I am writing today as a member of our Johnson County League, but also as a member of the League of Women Voters of Iowa Board of Directors. One of our directors, Doris Kelley, has spearheaded an effort to make this commemoration noteworthy and important to Iowa citizens. She has enlisted the help of Amperage Marketing and Fundraising to begin the work of designing plans for communication and fundraising for our anniversary. Amperage has been very successful with Iowa clients such as the Hoover Presidential Foundation, Four Oaks, Finley Health Foundation, and Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation.

To help us get started with Amperage, we need to raise \$25,000 as seed money. We are presently over half way to that goal. If you are interested in helping with this major effort on behalf of the League, we would appreciate any donation you can make. This initiative with Amperage to do something much bigger and more widespread forces us to move toward the future in a new way and think beyond what the League has done in the past to meet present and future challenges. The League's visibility, work, and very existence will not be there without this kind of outreach.

There is an article with much more complete information about the planning for the 2020 LWV anniversary in the Spring Iowa Voter. If you would like more information and/or to donate, please contact Doris Kelley at 515-988-2344 or email her at [DJKelley@cfu.net](mailto:DJKelley@cfu.net)



# RESTORING CIVILITY

**Whodunnit?** This fall, League of Women Voters of Iowa will offer its members an opportunity to study and hopefully begin to solve the mystery of the demise of civil discourse.

Our annual fall meeting, usually referred to as “The Issues Briefing,” this year will have a different look, one that focuses on how America’s free flow of ideas has dried up to become a dangerous minefield.

How did it happen? What can the League of Women Voters be doing to insure that people not fear and hide from speaking and listening to one another? And can we possibly influence our elected officials to do the same?

**Mark your calendars now for:**  
**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20**  
**IN MARSHALLTOWN**

More information will follow!

League of Women Voters of Iowa - [lwvia.org](http://lwvia.org)  
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