

# The Iowa Voter



THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS®

Fall 2012 Issue  
Volume 64

A publication of the  
League of Women Voters  
of Iowa

[www.lwvia.org](http://www.lwvia.org)

The League of Women  
Voters Board 2012-2013

President  
Bonnie Pitz

Vice President  
Deborah Turner MD, JD

Secretary  
Carol Cooper

Treasurer  
Sherry Griggs

Directors  
EJ Gallagher  
Mary Rae Bragg  
Lauris Olson  
Dianne Bystrom  
Fran Henderson  
Tina Pace  
Dawn Suter  
Myrna Loehrlein

Administrative Assistant  
Melissa Cahalan

Lobbyists  
Amy Campbell  
Craig Patterson

## New LWVIA Interim Treasurer

Sherry Griggs Joins Jasper County League

At the August 25, 2012 Board Meeting in Marshalltown, Sherry Griggs was voted in as the new LWVIA Interim Treasurer. The board is delighted to have Sherry join the team and take care of our Treasurer duties after Karen Shimp resigned the position.

Sherry has joined the Jasper County League and is looking forward to getting to know the League's goals and activities. A long time Newton resident, Sherry graduated from Newton High School and then studied Accounting and Business Administration at AIB College of Business where she earned her AA degree in 1991. In later years, she gained experience working as a legal assistant and tax preparer at Matthias, Campbell Law Firm in Newton. In 1997 Sherry started Dimensions Accounting in her home as a side business with the hope of making it full time. In February 2009, she obtained office space on the square, and the business has grown to having nearly 30 businesses and 400 tax clients.

This year she and her husband sent their oldest daughter off to college in St. Paul, Minnesota; there is another daughter who is a junior in high school and a son in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Watching football at Berg Middle School keeps the schedule full.

We welcome Sherry to League.  
Bonnie Pitz



## Table of Contents

**Page 1**-New LWVIA Treasurer

**Page 2**-Letter from President

**Page 3**-IC Payday Loan Ordinance  
Voting w/Criminal Background  
MLD Update

**Page 4**-Correctional Facilities

**Page 5**-Why Vote Yes  
Tim O'Brien Summary

**Page 6**-Coalitions

Women's Health

**Page 7**-Shackling of  
Pregnant Prisoners  
Precinct Atlas

Hello Fellow League Members,

What a glorious fall, the colors seem more intense than usual and the temperatures more perfect. No wind just warm sunshine, grass that was restored from the drought of the summer. I feel like League is more intense this fall too. Every TV news show, every newspaper is filled with articles referring to the election and the topics of Voter ID, Voter Suppression, Voter turnout, Voter Registration. This is not happening only in Iowa but across the nation.

On Saturday, September 22, 2012 we had our Fall Issues Briefing in Grinnell, Iowa. Last year we had this event at the Grinnell Public Library but this year we felt like it needed to be moved to a larger space so we chose the Grinnell campus and they set us up in the Rosenfield Building. We are glad we made that adjustment because we had 70 members attend this event from Sioux City, Dubuque and everywhere between. What a fabulous audience, they want things done! When they learned about Secretary of State Schultz using HAVA Funds for DCI investigations of possible Voter Fraud, they wanted that information sent to our Senators and that has been completed. No word yet as to the response ...we are waiting.

**After Issues Briefing I had time to start to digest the material presented. *The Advocate's Guide to Mental Health and Disability Services Redesign* is critical information that every League needs to prepare for the work ahead during the 2013 Legislative Session. The need for funds at the county level to continue services for those who require help is vital. I will make sure each Local League has a copy of this material so that you know where you stand in this complicated process of understanding the changes made by the Iowa Legislature. With this material you will be able to answer questions, and identify opportunities for advocacy.**

In Ottumwa President Bev Versteegh is getting information out to the public on the Judges on the back of the ballot for Judicial Retention. She sent a list of questions to the local judges affected and then after she received their responses she is getting that information printed in several local papers. The local papers include the Ottumwa Courier, the Washington Evening Journal, and the Fairfield Daily. The League would like to thank Judge Annette Scieszinski, Chair of the 8<sup>th</sup> District Public Outreach Committee for her encouragement and assistance in this project.

Black Hawk/Bremer set up a Voter Education panel, partnering with UNI's American Democracy Project (ADP) Provost's Office. They invited Secretary of State Matt Schultz to attend and he did. Professors from UNI, presented background history on voting and the politics involved at the current time. Dr. Michael Blackwell of the Executive Board of the NAACP presented a moving talk about Black vote suppression in years past. He started out by reciting the Gettysburg Address, we all joined in and then pretty soon the audience did not know the words, he went on to give several other famous speeches, mostly we did not know the speeches by heart. We soon realized that in years past Black voters were required to recite these same speeches in order to vote. It was a memorable evening and many thanks to UNI Provost Office and Black Hawk/Bremer LWV for setting it up.

In Jasper County we have been doing Voter Registration in the High Schools, DMACC, libraries, and Alternative School. This has been happening all over Iowa. The Ames and the Des Moines Metro LWV partnered to apply for a grant to support First Time Voter Registration project. The two leagues were awarded the \$800 grant from the LWVUS Education Fund. They focused on community colleges, technical schools and vocational schools along with traditional high schools in the communities of Des Moines, Ames and Boone.

At our last LWVIA Board meeting we agreed to have Sherry Griggs of Newton serve as our Interim Treasurer for this 2012-2013 year. Sherry is a new member of the Jasper County League and is beginning to learn about League activities and goals. I have included an introduction to Sherry in this Voter. When you see her at League events be sure to welcome her to League.

In this Fall Voter we decided it would be useful to give some background information on League Priorities for this year. We were able to address a number of them at the Fall Issues Briefing. In this issue we will be covering Shackling of Prisoners by Judie Hoffman, Residential Facilities by JoAnn Finkenbinder, Judicial Retention by E.J. Gallagher, a brief introduction to Women's Health Issues and a more extensive article in the Winter Voter written by Deborah Turner M.D. Payday Lending another priority is making some progress too. Quite a few intense topics but fascinating to learn about. Enjoy the beautiful fall weather and enjoy your Fall Voter too.

In League,

*Bonnie Pitz*

President. League of Women Voters of Iowa

## Iowa City Moves Forward With Payday Loan Ordinance

Payday Lending has been on the LWVIA's Legislative Issues for a number of years. It was added again this year because over the last four years, Iowa's Legislature has failed to pass reasonable limits on payday loans. Enough of this nonsense! Cities have decided it is best to go their own direction and use local zoning powers to restrict payday lending. Iowa City is the fifth city to use this process. Ordinances have been passed in Des Moines, West Des Moines, Clive and Ames. Iowa City Council voted 7-0 to pass the first and second reading of the proposed ordinance. The final reading passed and now it is official. Many thanks to CCI for their attention to this important move.

## Voting with a Criminal Background

Registering voters and finding voters wondering if they can vote?

The ACLU of Iowa has prepared a how-to flier for those who have served time for an aggravated misdemeanor or felony and want to restore their right to vote or have questions if they can vote.

The ACLU's flier is a response to Governor Terry Branstad's Executive Order in 2011, which ended the former practice in Iowa of automatically restoring the right to vote to people after they had finished their criminal sentences.

A conviction of any crime punishable by more than one year makes a person ineligible to vote in Iowa. That means even if you are convicted of a second offense OWI or assault stemming from a bar fight in college, you will lose your fundamental right to vote. Getting it restored in Iowa is a complex and lengthy process.

This flier is ACLU's effort to help simplify that process and help more people vote.

Jo Ann Finkenbinder, LWVIA Sentencing and Corrections Co-Chair  
Black Hawk Bremer LWV

Please also enjoy the separate attachment included in The Voter email.



## MLD Update

Even though we are newbies to the Membership Leadership Development Program (MLD) there is already a renewed interest in recruiting new members and developing leaders from our existing membership. With a more intentional effort toward promoting LWV and reaching out to other groups and individuals we are adding members, increasing press coverage, and enhancing our reputation. Iowa Leagues have held membership coffees, voter registrations, many candidate forums, and begun leader mentoring programs. Through our state coaches we can compare notes and share successes. Keep up the good work. Tina Pace-Membership Chair

LWVIA Board

## Unfunded Community Residential Correctional Facilities

The Iowa legislature approved the building or expansion of community residential facilities, operated by the IA Judicial Districts of the Dept. of Correctional Services, (CBCs), in order to accommodate the wait for openings in residential facilities for offenders. However, the legislature has not allocated funds to operate these new facilities, some facilities have been empty for over a year.

Community Based Corrections provide a variety of offender services, parole and probation supervision of offenders are mostly commonly known. All 8 Districts of the Dept. of Correctional Services have residential services sometimes called half way houses.

The residential facilities serve offenders who are ordered by the court for placement into residential facility for a variety of reasons. The facilities serve offenders who have violated their probation, instead of going to prison the court orders placement in a residential facility. Offenders may be ordered to a residential facility for pretrial release, under the OWI statute or be a federal offender. Of serious concern are offenders waiting in prison for an opening in a community residential facility, these are offenders who are approved by the IA Board of Parole (BOP) and the IA Dept. of Corrections (DOC) for release from prison to a community residential facility but must wait in prison because there is not an opening. (See the waiting list below.) It is more expensive to house an offender in prison than in a residential facility. Residential facilities are a valuable resource for offenders who need more supervision at the time of release from prison rather than only parole supervision.

A variety of programs are provided by the CBCs to prevent a reoccurrence of criminal behavior, such services may be individual and group counseling, referral or onsite substance abuse or mental health treatment, sex offender treatment, batter's education programs. Services depend on the needs of the offender. The average stay in the facility is 3 1/2 months and offenders may work.

**Cost:** The average daily cost of keeping an offender in prison is \$80.83. The average daily cost of a CBC residential facility is \$66.88. The marginal cost (the cost to house a prisoner excluding personnel costs and to house one more offender one more day) is \$11.50 for a CBC and \$15.59 in prison. (Source: *Fiscal Topics*, Published Jan, 2012, by the Legislative Services Agency)

**Unfunded facilities:** The following are the Judicial Districts Dept. Correctional Services (CBCs) residential facilities that need funding to open or to use their added new space. (Source: Dept. of Correctional Services)

- First District Waterloo- 45 beds, new facility
- Third District- Sioux City 42 beds, new facility
- Sixth District Cedar Rapids- ANCHOR mental health treatment center, certain operating funds have been provided. 26 beds
- Seventh District Davenport 40 beds
- Eighth District Ottumwa 25 bed expansion

**Offenders waiting for a residential facility:** The average number of people waiting for residential openings is as follows, this figure fluctuates: (Source: Dept. of Correctional Services)

- Waterloo 45
- Sioux City 105
- Cedar Rapids 85
- Davenport 60
- Ottumwa 50

**Need more information call:**

- **First Judicial District** Karen Herkelman, Director, Waterloo, 319-292-1277 - Fax 319-291-3947
- **Third Judicial District** Steve Scholl, Director, Sioux City, 712-252-0590 - Fax 712-252-0634
- **Sixth Judicial District** Gerald Hinzman, Director Cedar Rapids, 319-398-3675 - Fax 319-398-3684
- **Seventh Judicial District** James L. Wayne, Director Davenport, 563-322-7986 - Fax 563-324-2063
- **Eighth Judicial District** Daniel T. Fell, Director Fairfield, 641-472-4242 - Fax 641-472-9966

**What you can do:** You may help by asking questions at your candidate or legislative forums or coffees. You may make the question specific to your community.

**Sample Question:** The Dept. of Correctional Services has completed expansions or built new residential facilities for offenders who are ordered to a facility by the court. Offenders maybe approved for release by the Parole Board or be violators of probation to name a few reasons for placement. Currently, the new facilities are not in use due to lack of funding. It is less expensive to keep an offender in a residential facility than prison. In addition, the offender can stay in the community, work, support their families, pay taxes, restitution and court fines. **Do you support the funding of these new facilities and expansions?**

Jo Ann Finkenbinder, Co-Chair, LWVIA Sentencing and Corrections Committee  
Black Hawk Bremer LWV

# Why ote Yes!

**Iowa's Judicial system is one of the finest in the country.** Iowa's merit selection and retention process keeps politics and campaign money out of the courts, safeguarding its fairness and impartiality. To keep it that way, Iowans from all political spectrums should resist efforts by out-of-state extremists groups who are funding efforts to politicize our courts.

**When politics and campaign money are allowed into the courts, justice becomes for sale.**

Iowa courts have a long history of protecting average citizens, and the retention of Iowa judges should be based on their ability to uphold the law fairly and consistently- not on the outcome of a single decision.

In the 2010 election, three Iowa Supreme Court Justices faced an unprecedented retention vote challenge and were not retained. In 2010 close to \$ 1 million in out of state funding from extremist groups successfully injected fear tactics into the judicial retention election and skewed the public perception of the role of the judiciary. And in 2012 those same tactics are being used and again unprecedented amounts of money are being spent on this election.

**Courts should be fair and impartial.** Removing justices from the bench is a direct attack on our courts and politicizes our judicial branch. Our courts are supposed to uphold the constitution and serve as a check on the other branches of government--not play partisan politics. When courts do that we all lose.

**No matter what political party you support, remember to turn your ballot over and protect our fair courts** (it is important to remember that even if you vote straight ticket, you still have to turn the ballot and weigh in on non-partisan offices.)

For more information on the attacks on our judiciary, you can click on this link: [Justice Not Politics](#)

This article is from Iowa Citizen Action Network (ICAN)

[www.iowacourts.gov](http://www.iowacourts.gov)

Submitted by E.J. Gallagher--Director LWVIA Board

## Tim O'Brien Talk at Fall Issues Briefing Power point presentation

His presentation was included in Issues Briefing Booklet.  
National Trends in Voter Suppression and what is happening in Iowa

How to Fight Voter Suppression in our State:

- \*letters to the editor
- \*OP-EDs
- \*Press Releases
- \*Working Coalitions
- \*Action Alerts
- \*Meeting with Editors
- \*Town Hall Meetings
- \*Unified Messages
- \*Earned Media
- \*Meeting with Legislators
- \*PAVP Funding





# Coalitions and Partnerships (US-EF 94-04)

January 18, 2012 | by LWV *Revised January 2003*

The appropriate board (or the Executive Committee, when timing is critical) must explicitly approve LWVUS or LWVEF membership in all formal coalitions and partnerships as well as the acceptance of a League position on the board/advisory board of another organization. Formal coalitions are those that have permission to use the League name.

In the case of informal coalitions or meetings, the appropriate board must be informed at its next meeting whenever the LWVUS or LWVEF begins participating in such a group on a regular basis.

## Criteria

The following criteria shall guide the LWVUS/LWVEF board in determining whether or not to join a formal coalition or to attend the meetings of an informal group on a regular basis:

- The group's major goals are in accord with LWVUS or LWVEF program and/or organizational priorities.
- The group's activities will bring added effectiveness to the League's overall efforts to achieve its advocacy, educational, and/or organizational goals.
- The group's major issues mesh with LWVUS positions or priorities, although there need not be a League position on every issue with which the group is concerned. The aims of the group must not conflict with LWVUS positions.
- The members of the group are organizations with which the LWVUS/LWVEF can work effectively. The LWVUS/LWVEF has confidence in the leadership of the group and may itself serve in a leadership capacity with the group.
- The goals and activities of the group as a whole are nonpartisan. Very few, if any, members of the group endorse candidates.
- Resource demands involved in working with the group (including staff and volunteer time as well as direct and in-kind expenses) are worth the investment.

The President/Chair shall make appointments or assignments for League representation with all coalitions, partnerships and regular meeting groups.

## Annual Review and Approval of Coalitions and Partnerships

Once a year, the LWVUS/LWVEF board shall review the list of coalitions and partnerships to determine whether continued membership should be approved. All groups to which the LWVUS or LWVEF is represented by a board member, staff member or off-board volunteer shall be included on the list.

## Women's Health

**Guarantee access to women's health services and protect women's reproductive health choices.** Women should have access to contraceptive services, including emergency contraception, and other reproductive health services. One in five women are uninsured, making access to high quality, comprehensive care even more difficult.

**Implement the Affordable Care Act in a manner that is coordinated, transparent and encourages public participation and comment.** Iowa's "essential health benefits" plan should include disease prevention, preventative screenings and testing, health promotion and education, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute care, long term care, and mental health care. In addition, family planning agencies should be included in ACA-accessible provider lists, so that women can continue to see their current providers.

**Develop and implement strategies at the state level to improve the health status of women, including both diagnosis and treatment.** These strategies should be incorporated into "health home" initiatives.

**When Dr. Deb Turner gave her talk at the LWVIA Fall Issues Briefing, she gave some real life examples of women who suffered because of the lack of medical coverage. These priorities go a long way toward making health care a "human right."**

**\*Let candidates know you expect them to help adopt the Affordable Care Act.**

**\* Write a letter to the editor expressing your views about Women's health.**

# Eliminate Shackling of Incarcerated Pregnant Prisoners During Transport and Delivery

The LWVIA supports eliminating shackling of pregnant women prisoners (in state prisons, juvenile detention centers or county jails) during transport and during delivery for the following reasons:

- (a) Restraining a pregnant woman can pose undue health risks to the woman and her pregnancy.
- (b) The vast majority of female prisoners or detainees in Iowa are non-violent offenders.
- (c) Restraining pregnant prisoners and detainees increases the potential for physical harm from an accidental trip or fall.
- (d) Freedom from physical restraints is especially critical during labor, delivery, and postpartum recovery after delivery, as women often need to move around during labor and recovery, including moving their legs as part of the birthing process.
- (e) Restraints on a pregnant woman can interfere with the medical staff's ability to appropriately assist in childbirth or to conduct sudden emergency procedures.
- (f) The Federal Bureau of Prisons, the United States Marshall's Service, the American Correctional Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Public Health Association all oppose restraining women during labor, delivery, and postpartum recovery because it is unnecessary and dangerous to a woman's health and well being.

Upon a prisoner or detainee's admission to a medical facility or birthing center for labor or childbirth, no corrections officers shall remain present in the room during labor or childbirth, unless specifically requested by medical personnel. If a corrections officer's presence is requested, the corrections officer shall be female if practicable.

## Action Steps

Write, call or visit with your legislators about shackling.

Write a letter to the editor of your newspaper.

Find medical professionals in your community to speak out on this issue.

Judie Hoffman



## PRECINCT ATLAS

"Precinct Atlas is a precinct election management system developed by Cerro Gordo County and used in 50-plus Iowa counties. Using off-the-shelf hardware, the program guides the precinct official through the correct process to check-in and validate each voter, based on the voter's specific situation." (Precinct Atlas brochure) This system was developed by County Auditor Kline after he visited a polling place in 2008 and witnessed the difficulties faced by precinct election officials in applying Iowa's many voting provisions to the situations of individual voters. He concluded that there must be a better way and went about developing it.

League Lobbyist Amy Campbell, Ames League member Linda Murken and Des Moines League member Sherri Taha recently attended a presentation by County Auditors Ken Kline (Cerro Gordo County) and Dennis Parrott (Jasper County) on this system. It does not rely on the voter showing any form of identification (although the bar code on the back of an Iowa drivers' license can be scanned to populate fields in the system if registering a person to vote at the polls, thus streamlining same-day voter registration). Also, by incorporating Iowa's voting laws into the programming of the software package and making the County Auditor's voter registration records available on-site to precinct election officials, its use increases accuracy of applying the laws to the individual voter's situation, reduces the number of provisional ballots that are cast and helps officials direct voters to their correct precinct.

If you are interested in learning more about this program, do an internet search on Precinct Atlas. There are many articles and a presentation that Mr. Kline made to a national group.

(NOTE: This article is not to be construed as an endorsement by the League of Women Voters. The intent is merely to provide information on a potential source of improving our voting processes.)