

VOTER

Board of Directors - FY2024

Co-President—Miriam Timmer-Hackert

lvjcpresident@gmail.com

Co-President – Paula Vaughan

vaughanp893@gmail.com

Vice President – Vicki Aden

vicki.a.aden@gmail.com

Secretary – Sally Stutzman

sstutsma@sharontc.net

Treasurer – Hazel Seaba

hazel-seaba@uiowa.edu

Jeanne Bancroft

jnn.bancroft@gmail.com

Rebecca Conard

rebeccaconard@gmail.com

Diane Duncan-Goldsmith

ddgoldsmith.icia@gmail.com

Bea Hicks

beacruz@aol.com

Kathleen Kamerick

kckamerick@gmail.com

Shannon Patrick

shannonpatrick@gmail.com

Voter editor—Vicki Aden

vicki.a.aden@gmail.com

In This Issue

From the Co-Presidents	1
Fundraising	2
Advocacy	2
Voter Services	2-3
UMMR-ILO	3
Membership	4
Education Committee	4
LWVIA 2024 Policy Priorities	4
Photo Gallery	5
Calendar of Events	6

LWVJC | P. O. Box 5452 |
Coralville, IA 52241

December 2023

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy

Join us for our Annual Membership and Legislative Luncheon, December 9, 11-1:30 p.m. at the Radisson Hotel in Coralville. You should have received an invitation via email. The deadline to RSVP and pay is December 1. If you received confirmation of your RSVP, we have your reservation. Iowa legislators will give their forecast for the 2024 legislative session. All of Johnson county's legislators have been invited. Members will have an opportunity to ask questions at the event or if you have questions now, email them to our Advocacy chair, Shannon Patrick. Shannon will emcee the program.

The political Presidential primaries will kick off the new year. Both major parties will hold caucuses on January 15, which is a federal holiday in recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. You must be registered with the party you want to caucus with. Republicans will hold a traditional caucus with gathering sites to be announced in the future. Find information at <https://www.iowagop.org/>. For the first time, Democrats are holding their vote with a mail-in Presidential Preference Card. To request a card or to vote by email, go to <https://iowademocrats.org/2024-caucus-2/>. The last day to request a card is February 1, 2024. Cards will be mailed out January 12. Democrats will hold an in-person caucus for those who want to be delegates or to volunteer, places to be announced.

We wish you a Holiday Season full of warmth and laughter shared with family and friends.

Paula Vaughan and Miriam Timmer-Hackert
co-presidents

The *Voter* is issued the last Friday of the month to provide members advance notice of activities.
The January *Voter* deadline is December 23.



Fundraising

The LWVJC 2023-24 Fund Drive Begins

This year's fund drive for the League of Women Voters of Johnson County is now beginning, with an ambitious goal for the coming election year of \$8,000. All LWVJC members will receive a letter about the fund drive. Many thanks to those who have already contributed!

Why does the LWVJC ask members for a donation beyond membership dues? The greater part of membership dues finance actions at the League's state and national organizations, leaving only about 12% for local expenses. This 12% is not enough to sustain our work, so the LWVJC asks its members for donations to fund essential activities in local Voter Registration, Advocacy and Education. The League of Women Voters of Johnson County needs your help to continue to sponsor legislative and educational forums, to study and advocate for policies that affect voters at the local level, to develop workshops, and to register and educate voters.

The power of the League of Women Voters comes from its members coming together to combine our work, talents, time and treasure. Please contribute today so that the LWVJC can continue to work for grassroots democracy in Johnson County.

Donations can be made by **check** and mailed to: LWVJC, P. O. Box 5452, Coralville, IA, 52241. Donations can also be made **online** at the LWVJC web site: <https://lwwjc.org/donate/>.

*Kathleen Kamerick
Fundraising Chair*



Advocacy Update

The last month has been a quiet one for the Advocacy Committee. We have continued to prepare for the next legislative session and, more pressingly, for our December member meeting and legislative preview.

A number of us were also able to join the LWVIA's November 16th online legislative preview. This excellent presentation was led by the League's lobbyist, Amy Campbell, and also featured speakers on different League priorities and legislators who joined the event and added their own expertise. Many of the themes were familiar, but there were also a number of specific and useful facts and talking points that we expect to make use of. If you are interested in the event but were unable to attend, look for coverage in the next LWVIA *Voter*, or you can also reach out to Shannon Patrick for notes.

*Shannon Patrick
Advocacy Chair*



Voter Services Committee

LWVJC Voter Services organized and hosted 7 candidate forums to help inform voters as they prepare themselves to vote in the 2023 general election. The League hosts forums for contested races only, so this year that led to hosting the Iowa City city council primary forum, followed by 5 city council forums in Lone Tree, Hills, Tiffin, North Liberty and Iowa City. We also partnered with the ICCSD Districtwide Parent Organization to sponsor the school board candidate forum.

continued on page 3

continued from page 2

Approximately 120 citizens attended these in person forums as well as many views on Facebook live and community recordings. Candidates and community members voiced appreciation of the opportunity to participate in these events.

We have started planning for the 2024 legislative forums which will be held on January 27, February 24 and March 23. Look for more information in next month's issue of the *Voter*. Save the dates!

*Jeanne Bancroft
Voter Services Chair*



UMRR-ILO

The LWV Upper Mississippi River Region InterLeague Organization which represents local leagues from Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois, (and currently working with Missouri) is a member of the Mississippi River Network with 68 other groups across the nation. Our representation has grown from 40 member organizations to the current 68 members since I have been your representative beginning in 2019. Because you belong to the LWV, you are also a member of the LWV UMRR-ILO. MRN's policy goal is to advance federal and state policies that promote just, equitable and resilient communities through protecting and restoring ecosystem form and function, reducing impacts of agricultural and urban runoff pollution, and defending bedrock environmental legislation.

The MRN annual meeting was held in October in Memphis. The meeting included planning for the upcoming year including policy, engagement, involvement and development. We heard from MRN staff about their equity work and discussed the equity work in our communities. We discussed and approved the 2024 policy priorities, learned about federal funding and received an update on the Mississippi River Region Initiative. We also discussed education

and outreach details for 2024 and how one can participate.

At the meeting, I met an Illinois farmer who is working for the government helping teach farmers sustainable methods and Codi Sharkey, the new education director at the National Mississippi Museum. It's fun to network and I hope both of these new friends will do programs for us in the future. It is always good to interact and share!

We left the meeting full of new information and a mission to increase membership and raise funds so we can continue to develop new ideas and people to protect and sustain our Mississippi River. We have a new direction for our Mississippi Days of Action and celebrating the river. Our goal is to bring in more groups and create educational opportunities to allow for better understanding and more interaction.

The Mississippi River is truly America's River. It is the third largest River in the world, it provides drinking water for over 20 million people, it is a diverse habitat for wildlife and the backbone of our economy. Along with weak enforcement of water laws, pollution from farms and factories, fertilizers and untreated sewage, our great River is in decline. Together we can protect the river for future generations.

What updated news do you have about our environment? Did you know Iowa City's landfill/recycling received one of President Biden's initiated grants for over 4 million dollars? Did you know that the same initiative is helping Victor, Iowa get drinkable water? Much of Iowa's water is too high in nitrates which makes the water unhealthy to drink. Did you know that only about 4% of Iowa's water wells are safe drinking wells and many wells being tested have too high a level of PFAS? So many things are happening for and against our environment. I'm glad I can help. Contact me for more information or ways to get involved.

*Nancy Porter
LWV Representative to the Mississippi River Network*



Membership

LWVJC currently has 146 active members. Welcome Diane Culver, Jennifer Breon, Molly Abraham, and Janet Weaver as new members in October. Twenty-four members have been moved to inactive status. We welcome them back as full members at any time. Thank you to all of you who helped to contact members reminding them to renew.

*Jeanne Bancroft
Membership Chair*



Education Committee

As we break for the holidays, Patty, Susan, and I wish all of you a season of peaceful encounters, joyful reunions, and time for reflection. In a short month, we'll be back with reminders of upcoming programs in the League Lecture Series.

*Rebecca Conard, Patricia McCarthy, Susan Enzle
Education Committee*



2024 Public Policy Priorities

★ VOTING

Promote equal access to voting and ensure all votes are counted. Adopt automatic voter registration. Enact ranked choice voting. Pass a constitutional amendment allowing lowans with felony convictions to vote after time served.

🏛️ TRANSPARENCY & CITIZENSHIP

Demand government accountability and transparency by requiring all amendments and bills discussed in committee to be available to the public prior to a vote. Demand timely processing of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Encourage direct citizen participation by continuing virtual committee and subcommittee meetings. Preserve gender balance requirements for state boards and commissions.

🎓 EDUCATION

Increase oversight and track public funds being used for non-public schools. Require any non-public school receiving public funds to meet the same standards as public schools. Fully fund public schools. Continue to expand access to affordable childcare and four-year-old preschool.

👩‍⚕️ REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Guarantee access to the full range of women's reproductive health services. Make contraception available without prescription. Ensure Medicaid services are comprehensive and accessible. Support new moms with 12 months of postpartum Medicaid coverage. Set policies that attract maternal health professionals and address the state's OB/GYN deserts.

👤 HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Prevent human trafficking in all of its forms, support its victims, and enact "Safe Harbor" legislation to protect human trafficking survivors from criminal prosecution.

💧 ENVIRONMENT

Increase funding for environment and water quality initiatives, including REAP, and develop state climate change strategies.

🔫 GUN SAFETY

Enact comprehensive common sense gun safety legislation to address increasing gun violence in the state. Enact background checks on all gun sales, close gun show loopholes, require gun safety locks, repeal "stand your ground" law, and resist efforts that expand carrying in public spaces and schools.



Photo Gallery



Above: The November Casual Coffee group is pictured above - around the table from the lower left: Mary McCarthy, Eileen Beran, Cathy Eisenhofer, Vicki Aden, Polly Horton, Jeanne Bancroft, and Gaylen Wobeter. We meet for conversation every second Wednesday of the month at 10:00 at Poindexter Coffee at the Graduate Hotel in Iowa City. Hope to see you at the December 13 casual coffee!



Like LWVJCA on Facebook!

League of Women Voters of Johnson County

OUR MISSION: *Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.*

OUR VISION: We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

OUR VALUE: We believe in the power of women and men to create a more perfect democracy.

Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Location	Program
Saturday, December 9	11-1:30 pm	Radisson Hotel, 1220 1st Ave, Coralville	Annual Membership Meeting and Legislative Lunch
Monday, December 11	6:30-8 pm	virtual	Board meeting
Wednesday, December 13	10 am	Poindexter Coffee, Graduate Hotel, Iowa City	Casual Coffee
Monday, January 8, 2024	6:30-8 pm	virtual	Board meeting
Wednesday, January 10, 2024	10 am	Poindexter Coffee, Graduate Hotel, Iowa City	Casual Coffee
Thursday, January 25, 2024	6:30-8 p.m.	Iowa City Public Library	<i>House File 68: Challenges & Changes for Public Schools</i> with Matt Degner
Saturday, January 27, 2024	9:30-11:30 am	To be determined	Legislative Forum: Education
Monday, February 12, 2024	6:30-8 pm	virtual	Board meeting
Wednesday, February 14, 2024	10 am	Poindexter Coffee, Graduate Hotel, Iowa City	Casual Coffee
Saturday, February 24, 2024	9:30-11:30 am	To be determined	Legislative Forum
Saturday, March 23, 2024	9:30-11:30 am	To be determined	Legislative Forum
Wednesday, April 17, 2024	6:30-8 pm	Iowa City Public Library	<i>Connie Mutel: Iowa, the Beautiful Land: Envisioning an Action Agenda for Nature and Agriculture</i>



December Membership Luncheon

December 9, 2023
11-1:30

* * * * *

Radisson Hotel Ballroom
1220 1st Ave, Coralville
Price \$35
Guests Welcome

*Program: Forecast of the 2023 Legislative Session from
Johnson County Legislators*

Please RSVP by December 1st. Payment by cash,
check, or credit card due before the event.