



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA

VOTER

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In This Issue

President's Message	1
Membership	2
Voter Registration	2
Education	2
Making Connections	3
LWVUS Annual Convention 2026	3
Fundraising	3
Advocacy	4
Letter from LWVIA Co-President	5
Upcoming Events	6
LWVIA Public Policy Priorities	7
Photo Gallery	8-9
Calendar of Events	10

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The *Voter* is issued the last Friday of the month to
provide members advance notice of activities.
The September Voter deadline is August 22

AUGUST 2026

Take Action.

A takeaway from last month's National Convention that has stuck with me is returning the League to our activist roots. The founders of LWV were activists and we should each do what we can to follow in their footsteps by taking action to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy. With that in mind, LWV is hosting a nationwide day of civic action on August 8 in honor of the anniversary of the *Voting Rights Acts of 1965*. Our League will center our actions on voter registration and increasing voter turnout among newly registered young voters through a *Voting is People Power* postcard writing campaign. Don't miss reading more about this event, as well as the National convention experience from our Vice President, Jeanne Bancroft, in her article in this newsletter. If you are interested in taking action with us on August 8, you can sign up here:

<https://www.mobilize.us/lwv/event/989198/>

If you can't attend our August 8 event in person, you can still take action from home. You can write to your representative on issues that matter, like voting rights, equality, and other League priorities. You can check your voter registration to ensure you are prepared for the 2026 midterms, and then show your friends and family how to check their voter registration too. You can spread the word and invite others to join us. Speaking of which . . .

I encourage you all to attend our annual Fall Reception and Membership Drive on Thursday, September 3, 5 – 7 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church in Iowa City, and please consider bringing a guest or two. This is a great opportunity to share what we are doing in the League and encourage others to join us. The event includes some social time, a light supper, a guest speaker, and is complimentary to all members and their guests. Our guest speaker this year is Kylie Spies with Common Good Iowa. She will be presenting *Iowa's Future on the Ballot Amendment 1*, about the constitutional amendment on November's ballot. Please RSVP to the event by August 29 here: [FallReceptionRSVP](#). Your RSVP will ensure we have an accurate headcount for the event. I look forward to seeing many of you there!

Check out the rest of this **Voter** to read about the work we are doing in our League and then choose to take some action. Thank you all for your dedication to Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy!

Vicki Aden
LWVJC President



MEMBERSHIP

Our League currently has 178 members with 21 new members in 2026. What a nice increase and a boon for this very important election year.

The League has so much important work to do! As members, if you know of anyone who might want to join our efforts, please be sure to invite them to join and to come to our Membership get-together on September 3 at First Presbyterian Church in Iowa City (see details in this issue). We have a speaker from Common Good to tell us about the proposed amendment to the Iowa State Convention. We are hopeful LWVIA will take a strong position on this amendment, enabling ACTION across the state.

I hope to see you all on September 3!

*Karin Franklin
Membership Chair*



VOTER REGISTRATION

We held two major community registration events in July, Jazz Fest and North Liberty Blues and BBQ, registering a total of 32 people. We added a kids vote activity at both events which was a big hit. Kids voted on the best animal (Capybara, Axolotl or Narwhal) and the best college football team (Hawkeyes, Cyclones or Panthers). They responded to a 'ballot initiative' asking whether kids should go to school in the summer. All kids voters got an "I Voted" sticker and another treat. At the Jazz Fest, 96 children voted and more than 50 at the Blues and BBQ event.

We have just two community events planned for August: National Night Out at Wetherby Park, August 4 from 5:30 – 8 p.m., and a new event,

Unite and Rise for Voting Rights, August 8 at the Iowa City Farmers Market from 7:30 a.m. – 12 noon. *Unite and Rise* is a national event sponsored by the League of Women Voters. In addition to registering voters, LWVJC will have a *Voting is People Power* table for postcard writing for those who have registered in Johnson County from January through July, 2026 reminding them to vote in the upcoming general election. If you would like to help register voters or with postcarding at *Unite and Rise* but are not on the signup genius list, please email me at mkathyclark@gmail.com.

*Kathy Clark
Voter Registration Chair*



EDUCATION

The Education Committee is sponsoring a forum in September on the Johnson County Jail. A bond issue for constructing a new facility that will house the jail and the Sheriff's offices will be on the November ballot, so we plan on a three person panel to present three perspectives to help voters better understand the bond issue referendum. The forum will be at the Iowa City Public Library on September 23, 6:30 – 8 pm.

In October, the Education Committee plans to host and introduce a program presented by Common Good Iowa on the proposed state constitutional amendment which would require a two-thirds majority of the legislature to pass any bill designed to increase corporate or individual state income tax rates or to create a new income tax. This measure will be on the November ballot. The LWVIA opposes this proposal.

The Education Committee welcomes new members! Please consider joining us at our next meeting to see if our work interests you on Tuesday, August 4, 11:00 a.m. on Zoom. If interested, to receive the link contact me at rebeccaconard@gmail.com.

*Rebecca Conard
Education Committee*



MAKING CONNECTIONS

In spite of the tornado warning at the same time as our July 20 Making Connections Social at the Green House, 16 League members joined us for an evening of visiting and connecting while enjoying special drinks purchased from the Green House and snacks furnished by the League. Thankfully, weather warnings passed and all was clear by the time we departed for home. We are grateful to the Green House for letting us use their space and for all the members who joined us. See those who joined us for the Social in the [Photo Gallery](#). The next Making Connections events beginning in the fall are still in the planning stages and will be announced in future *Voter* issues.

*Gaylen Wobeter
Making Connections Chair*

LWVUS CONVENTION 2026: WOMEN UNITE & RISE

In late June, I had the privilege of representing the LWVJC in Columbus, Ohio at the national convention. I along with members Vicki Aden, Karin Franklin, and Kathy Wandro were the four delegates representing our local league. I learned so much and pledge to bring that learning back here locally to make our league even stronger.

I have a couple big takeaways or reminders that I want to share in this article. First, the League of Women Voters is **nonpartisan but political**. Nonpartisan groups defend rules, support and advocate for issues, hold leaders accountable and inform voters. That is our work. We do not support parties or candidates. We engage with government policies, civic rights and public decision making.

Secondly, it is time to return to our activist roots. In April, 2025 the LWV declared that our nation

is in a constitutional crisis and that all Americans, no matter who you voted for in 2024, need to come together, stand united, and fight back to save our democracy. To that end, the national League has developed the **Unite and Rise** initiative to mobilize voters and use the power of voter engagement as a cornerstone of our democracy.

For our initial act we will participate in the national August 8 Date of Action. On August 6, 1965, the Voting Rights Act was signed. To mark that date, on August 8 we will be at the Iowa City Farmers' Market taking two actions: registering voters and conducting a postcard writing campaign. The postcards are targeting 1500 of the younger voters who have registered in Johnson County in 2026, reminding them to exercise their right to vote now that they are registered. Plan to stop by our table on August 8 and help us write postcards.

We have many other things to share from our experiences. Look for future *Voter* articles and Making Connections events. Thank you for your support of me as a delegate.

Jeanne Bancroft

FINAL FUNDRAISING RESULTS

The LWVJC Board set a 2025/2026 annual fundraising goal of \$9000 inclusive of both donations to the Operations Fund and the tax deductible Education Fund, a 12.5 percent increase from recent prior years. The campaign formally began November 1, 2025 and ran through June 31, 2026. Second, a goal to increase membership participation above the 20% attained in recent years was sought as well. **WE MADE BOTH GOALS!**

Total donations totalled \$9986.73 or 111% of our goal. Operations donations were \$7553.94 and tax exempt Education Fund donations were \$2432.79. We also raised the number of members participating to 25%, an increase over our previous experience of 20 percent participation. Expenses were 6 cents for every dollar raised.

Thank you Helen Dailey, Judith Pfohl, Diane Duncan-Goldsmith, Elizabeth Fosmark, and Vicki Aden for your support.

Bea Hicks, 2025/26 Chair



ADVOCACY

Summer offers a welcome change of pace. While the Iowa Legislature is not in session, these quieter months provide a rare and valuable opportunity to connect with our elected officials in a more informal setting. Away from the urgency of the legislative calendar, meaningful conversations become possible – conversations built on listening, learning, and strengthening relationships that will serve our communities long after the next session begins.

Members of the Advocacy Committee are currently engaged in our Legislator Outreach Program. We are actively connecting to Johnson County state legislators, learning about local concerns, sharing League priorities, and reinforcing the League of Women Voters' reputation as a trusted, nonpartisan resource committed to informed civic engagement.

Summer is also a season of renewal. It gives us time to reflect on the work accomplished, deepen our understanding of the issues that matter most to Iowans, and prepare for the opportunities that lie ahead. We see the horizon before us, and with it, an important election season that offers every voter the opportunity to help shape Iowa's future.

The Advocacy Committee remains committed to the mission to inform, empower, and activate our members and our community. Together, we are building the relationships, knowledge, and civic engagement needed to ensure that every voice is heard and every vote matters. The League of Women Voters of the United States' *Unite and Rise 8.5* initiative reminds us that democracy is strongest when people participate. Its call to

build a groundswell of informed, engaged, and motivated voters inspires our work here in Johnson County. Every conversation, every community event, every new volunteer, and every voter we help educate strengthens our democracy.

Please consider joining us on the morning of August 8 at the Iowa City Farmers Market to promote the vote. We join the LWVUS in hosting a nationwide day of civic action to honor the anniversary of the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*. The League and partners will lead hundreds of activations across the country centered on increasing voter engagement, turnout, and education, with particular emphasis on young voters and community partnerships. We are grateful to Jeanne Bancroft, Karin Franklin, Kathy Clark, Vicki Aden and the LWVJC Board for putting our League initiative on the national map.

Hope grows when neighbors engage one another, when citizens participate in public life, and when ordinary people choose to do the extraordinary work of strengthening democracy. As we look toward the months ahead, let's carry that hope forward. By reaching out to our elected officials, welcoming new voices into civic life, and encouraging every eligible Iowan to register, vote, and stay engaged, we can help reclaim and strengthen our democracy for all. Together, we can create a groundswell of informed and empowered voters who are ready to meet this moment. Democracy has always been its strongest when citizens rise in purpose and hope, determination, and the conviction that our collective voices can shape a better future.

Kathy Wandro,
Advocacy Chair



Like LWVJCIA on Facebook!



A No Vote on the Tax Amendment Is the Right Choice

As Iowans prepare to vote this November, they will be asked to consider a proposed amendment to the Iowa Constitution that would require a two-thirds supermajority vote in both legislative chambers to approve any increase in the corporate or personal income tax. While this proposal may sound like a reasonable safeguard at first glance, it raises serious concerns about governance, accountability, and the long-term fiscal health of our state.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa has long supported measures that promote transparent, responsive, and effective government. This proposed amendment does not meet those standards. Instead, it would embed rigidity into our state's foundational document, making it significantly more difficult for future legislators—regardless of political affiliation—to respond to changing economic conditions or unforeseen challenges.

Constitutions are designed to provide a stable framework for government, not to prescribe specific policy thresholds that limit legislative flexibility. By requiring a two-thirds supermajority to raise income taxes, this amendment would set an unusually high bar that few states impose in their constitutions. It would shift power away from majority rule and toward a small minority of legislators, effectively granting veto power to a fraction of elected representatives.

This matters because the ability to adjust revenue is essential to responsible governance. Economic downturns, natural disasters, public health emergencies, and evolving priorities—such as education, infrastructure, and public safety—can all require thoughtful adjustments to state funding. Under this amendment, even broadly supported, carefully considered revenue measures could be blocked despite majority agreement among elected officials.

Importantly, this proposal does not apply equally to all fiscal decisions. While it would make it harder to increase income taxes, it places no similar constitutional constraints on reducing taxes or altering other sources of revenue. This imbalance risks limiting the state's ability to maintain stable funding for essential services over time.

The League of Women Voters does not take positions based on partisanship, but on principles of good governance. We believe laws should be enacted through a process that allows for deliberation, accountability, and responsiveness to voters. The current legislative process already includes checks and balances, including public input, debate, and electoral accountability. Adding a supermajority requirement in the constitution is unnecessary and could have unintended consequences for Iowa's future.

Iowans deserve a government that can adapt thoughtfully and responsibly to changing circumstances. Locking in restrictive fiscal rules at the constitutional level reduces that capacity and limits the voice of voters as expressed through their elected representatives.

For these reasons, the League of Women Voters of Iowa urges a NO vote on this proposed constitutional amendment.

*Linda Serra Hagedorn, Ph.D.
Co-President – League of Women Voters of Iowa*

*** UPCOMING EVENTS ***



League of Women Voters of Johnson County

Casual Coffee

Wednesday, Aug 12, 10 a.m.

Poindexter Coffee
The Graduate Hotel
210 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City

JOIN LEAGUE MEMBERS FOR A
RELAXED COFFEE AND CONVERSATION



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA

INVITES YOU TO THE
*Fall Reception &
Membership Drive*

Thursday, September 3, 2026

5:00-7:00 pm

**First Presbyterian Church
2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City**

**Speaker: Kylie Spies, Common Good Iowa,
*Iowa's Future on the Ballot: Amendment 1***

Please invite some friends who might be interested in joining us

★ VOTING

Promote equal access to voting and ensure all votes are counted. Adopt automatic voter registration. Pass a constitutional amendment allowing Iowans with felony convictions to vote after time served. Promote open primary elections. Join the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.



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 requiring virtual committees and subcommittees.



EDUCATION

Provide 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. Restore statewide special education and disability services.



REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Guarantee access to the full range of women's reproductive health services. Repeal the six-week abortion ban. Make contraception available without prescription and promote programs that help prevent unplanned pregnancies. Ensure Medicaid services are comprehensive and accessible. Set policies that attract maternal health professionals and address the state's OB/GYN deserts.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Increase state funding for victim services; develop strategies to prevent human trafficking, domestic violence, and sexual assault; and enact "Safe Harbor" legislation to protect victims from criminal prosecution.



WATER

Prioritizing, protecting and improving Iowa water quality and ensuring its sustainable management. Enact policies that safeguard clean water and address challenges of health risks, pollution, overuse and climate change.



GUN SAFETY

Ban assault rifles and military-grade weapons for civilian use. Enact background checks on all gun sales, close gun show loopholes, require gun safety locks, repeal Iowa's "stand your ground" law, and oppose laws that allow carrying guns on school grounds.



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.

Photo Gallery

From the Voter Registration Event . .

Kids Voter Event and Ballot at Jazz Fest and North Liberty Blues & BBQ events



KIDS' ELECTION BALLOT

Vote by checking the box with your choice

Best Animal		Best Team	
☐	 Capybara	☐	 Iowa Hawkeyes
☐	 Axolotl	☐	 ISU Cyclones
☐	 Narwhal	☐	 UNI Panthers

Ballot Initiative

Should kids have to go to school in the summer?

☐ No

☐ Yes

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

From the Making Connections Social at the Green House . . .



Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Location	Program
Tuesday, August 4	5 – 8 p.m.	Wetherby Park, Iowa City	Voter Registration at National Night Out
Saturday, August 8	7:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Iowa City Farmers Market	<u>LWV National Day of Action; Voter Registration and Voting is People Power Postcard Writing; sign up here:</u> https://www.mobilize.us/lwv/event/989198/
Monday, August 10	7 p.m.	Zoom	LWVJC Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, August 12	10 a.m.	Poindexter Coffee, 210 S Dubuque St, Iowa City	Casual Coffee
Thursday, September 3	5 – 7 p.m.	First Presbyterian Church, 2701 Rochester Ave, Iowa City	<u>Fall Reception and Membership Drive featuring Kylie Spies presenting Iowa's Future on the Ballot Amendment 1, RSVP here:</u> FallReceptionRSVP
Wednesday, September 9	10 a.m.	Poindexter Coffee, 210 S Dubuque St, Iowa City	Casual Coffee