



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA

## VOTER

### Board of Directors - FY2025

President – Vicki Aden  
[vicki.a.aden@gmail.com](mailto:vicki.a.aden@gmail.com)

Vice President – Jeanne Bancroft  
[jnn.bancroft@gmail.com](mailto:jnn.bancroft@gmail.com)

Secretary – Diane Culver  
[guiltrunn@yahoo.com](mailto:guiltrunn@yahoo.com)

Treasurer – Helen Dailey  
[bjdhmd@outlook.com](mailto:bjdhmd@outlook.com)

Joan Cook  
[tomandjoanc@gmail.com](mailto:tomandjoanc@gmail.com)

Kathy Clark  
[mkathyclark@gmail.com](mailto:mkathyclark@gmail.com)

Elizabeth Fosmark  
[efinney23@gmail.com](mailto:efinney23@gmail.com)

Diane Duncan-Goldsmith  
[ddgoldsmith.icia@gmail.com](mailto:ddgoldsmith.icia@gmail.com)

Bea Hicks  
[beacuz@aol.com](mailto:beacuz@aol.com)

Gaylen Wobeter  
[gaywob@live.com](mailto:gaywob@live.com)

Kathy Wandro  
[kwandro@mac.com](mailto:kwandro@mac.com)

Sami DeRagon  
[sami.deragon@gmail.com](mailto:sami.deragon@gmail.com)

Voter editors –

Bea Hicks [beacuz@aol.com](mailto:beacuz@aol.com)  
 Paula Vaughan [vaughanp893@gmail.com](mailto:vaughanp893@gmail.com)

Visit our website <https://www.lwvjc.org>



Like LWVJJC on Facebook!

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

The Voter is issued the last Friday of the month to provide members advance notice of activities. The February Voter deadline is January 24.

### January 2026

#### Legislative Priorities and Advocacy

As we enter this new year, the Iowa Legislature will soon be in session. I encourage you to get Thursday, February 26 marked on your calendar, as this is our LWV of Iowa Lobby Day at the State Capitol. We will have more details as the plans for this event are solidified, but I hope many of you can join us to meet with our Johnson County state legislators to advocate for League priorities. The Voter Services committee is also planning the Legislative forums during this legislative session on January 24, February 28, and March 28 - great opportunities to hear directly from our legislators and ask them questions.

I would like to share some observations related to one of our state legislative priorities, Gun Safety. As I write this, I am currently in Australia, where a National Day of Reflection is being observed following the horrific terror attack on the Jewish community at Bondi Beach. The entire nation will stop today for a moment of silence on this final day of Hannukah, after a week filled with not just coverage of the incident and the funerals, but also debate on what legislative actions need to take place to ensure attacks such as this do not happen again. The reaction I have seen here related to this incident of gun violence compared to what is the standard reaction to incidents in the U.S. is starkly different. This incident happened here shortly after the Brown University attack in the U.S. While the U.S. seems to have quickly moved on, the incident here continues to dominate the news. In the day following the incident, the prime minister held emergency cabinet level meetings to discuss what changes need to be made to the laws to prevent incidents like this in the future. The state governments are also introducing changes to state laws. They are not debating whether changes to gun laws are needed, but what changes are needed. As the New South Wales state premier stated today, the primary job of any government anywhere is to keep people safe.

*continued on page 2*

*continued from page 1*

And Australians are overtly united on this point. Why are our representatives not equally dedicated to first keeping people safe?

Can you imagine in the U.S. if we had a National Day of Reflection after every mass shooting incident? Don't let legislators' inaction stop you from continuing to advocate for common sense gun legislation that will help keep people safe. Press your representatives for specifics: If they say they support mental health improvements - what have they actually supported? If they say they support enforcement of existing laws already on the books that keep guns out of the hands of those who wish to do harm - what specific laws are they talking about that are not being enforced? Ask them how universal background checks and required gun safety mechanisms impede the ability of people to exercise their second amendment rights? Ask them what legitimate need would anyone have to own military-grade weapons and assault rifles? Keep reminding our legislators that their first priority should be to keep people safe.

Thank you all for your dedication to Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy, and for continuing to advocate for our League priorities. I wish you all a safe and happy 2026.

*Vicki Aden  
LWVJC President*



## MEMBERSHIP

We currently have 166 members. I would like to welcome our League's newest members Teresa Mangum and Doris Montage. Please reach out and welcome them into our League as you meet

them at various League events throughout the coming year.

## New Member Spotlight

Teresa Mangum retired from the University of Iowa in 2024. She was a professor in two departments, English and Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies and director of the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies. She continues to read and write about nineteenth-century British literature, with special interests in both late life and human-animal relationships in Victorian literature and the visual arts. In the Fall of 2026 she'll be teaching a UI Senior College class on Charles Dickens' novel "Bleak House" and of course welcomes all fellow enthusiasts. She is an active member of the Iowa City Public Library's Friends' Board, 5224Good, and TRAIL.

## Casual Coffee

All members are always invited to attend our Casual Coffees on the second Wednesday of each month. It's a good way to enjoy a beverage and get to know other League members. Members meet at 10 a.m. at Poindexter's Coffee in the Graduate Hotel.

## Membership Renewal Reminder

This is a reminder to all members your membership renew date is the month in which you joined. Therefore, for any member who joined in December of 2024, please renew as soon as possible. All members should be receiving renewal reminders from the National League of Women Voters membership team with the heading of "Renew Your League of Women Voters Membership." In addition, for those whose membership has lapsed you should be receiving renewal reminders from our League's membership email: [lwjcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:lwjcmembership@gmail.com). If anyone ever has questions about their membership, please contact me at [lwjcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:lwjcmembership@gmail.com)

*continued on page 3*

*continued from page 2*

### How to Renew and Pay Dues

- Renewing can be online by going to our Leagues' website <https://my.lwv.org/iowa/johnson-county>. Under "Get Involved" click the "Join or Renew" link then click the "Fill out online membership form here" link. If renewing with a credit or debit card you will see 3 separate dues charges, one each for national, state, and local dues payments.
- Members can also renew online with a check by ACH (an electronic payment using the numbers on the bottom of a check). This method lowers fees for the League so more of your dues go directly to funding League work.
- If you send your dues renewal check to our League's PO Box, PO Box 5452, Coralville, IA 52241, please make the check out to either the LWVUS or LWV. Do not make the check out to LWV Johnson County.

*Diane Duncan-Goldsmith  
Membership Chair*



### **VOTER SERVICES**

The Legislative session begins on January 12. The League is working to plan legislative forums. The 2026 legislative forums will be held on January 24, February 28, and March 28. The committee will meet on January 6 to begin planning for these events. Identified focus areas for this year are Water Quality and Reproductive Rights and Women's Healthcare. This helps us to align with the work of the advocacy team. What other topics would you like to see us consider?

If you are interested in participating as a moderator or timekeeper for the legislative forums, contact Jeanne Bancroft at [jeann.bancroft@gmail.com](mailto:jeann.bancroft@gmail.com)

*Jeanne Bancroft  
Voter Services chair*



### **ADVOCACY**

The LWVJC Legislative luncheon in December was a great opportunity to engage with our elected officials as they shared their expectations for the 2026 Iowa session. Our gratitude to Sen. Janice Weiner, Rep. Dave Jacoby and Rep. Elinor Levin for joining us and providing their insightful conversation.

The members of LWVJC Advocacy Committee guided the panel discussion with questions grounded in all of our current LWVIA priorities. My thanks to all the committee members who facilitated another successful luncheon. We look forward to the LWVJC Legislative Forums in the months ahead.

As we anticipate the upcoming legislative session reconvening in mid-January, please consider joining our League's Advocacy Team. Sign up to receive

#### **Advocacy Action Alerts**

Send an e-mail to Kathy Wandro at [kwandro@mac.com](mailto:kwandro@mac.com)

Subject line: Advocacy Action Alerts

We will provide legislative updates, links and writing tools to share your voice and to participate by contacting your legislators. Please join us.

The Iowa Legislature is back in session, Monday, January 12, 2026.

*continued on page 4*

*continued from page 3*

We can only predict what our legislators will do with the power they hold. And we can certainly be ready to respond.

Next year is an election year and there will be new leadership in Iowa. Through your active advocacy, as a team we can make a powerful impact moving forward to a responsive, representative democracy.

The mission of the LWVJC of the Advocacy Committee is to Inform, Empower and Activate.

*Kathy Wandro  
Advocacy Chair*



## MAKING CONNECTIONS

**“Helping Adults Learn English Fluency”**  
All League members are encouraged to attend our Making Connections event on January 26, 2:30-4:30p.m. at Paula Sanan’s home, 361 Boyd Court, Iowa City, 52245. Our speaker for this event is Emily Kriegel, Community Outreach Educator at the Coralville Public Library. The Coralville Library sponsors several programs which are designed to help adults learn English and Emily will inform us about this outreach. There will be time for questions and discussion around the important topic of immigrants’ challenges, especially concerning language, in coming to Johnson County, Iowa.

Our Making Connections committee consisting of Joan Cook, Roxanne Hughes, Paula Sanan, and Gaylen Wobeter decided to try the afternoon time frame for our winter events. This will enable members to come

during the day and be home before dark. Members do not need to make a reservation to attend. Come with an open mind ready to listen, learn, and engage with fellow League members.

Future Making Connections meetings are in the planning phase. If members have suggestions for speakers or topics for future Making Connections meeting, please email Gaylen Wobeter [gaywob@live.com](mailto:gaywob@live.com)

*Gaylen Wobeter  
Making Connections Chair*



## EDUCATION

Are the Spring 2026 League Lecture Series programs on your calendars?

- March 10, “Child Care: Iowa’s Patchwork Approach”, with featured speaker Jana Garrelts, early childhood director, Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County.
- April 14, “Who Rules? Home Rule in Iowa: Then and Now”, with featured speaker and moderator Hunter R. Clark, law professor, Drake University Law School.
- April 28, “Iowa’s Water: It Doesn’t Have to be This Way”, with speaker David Cwiertney, Director, Center for Health Effects of Environmental Contamination, UI College of Engineering.

All programs are scheduled for 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room A.

*Rebecca Conard and Susan Enzle, co-chairs  
Maggie Elliot, Kathleen Kamerick,  
Donna Hirst, Audrey Moeller, Sami DeRagon*

## FUNDRAISING

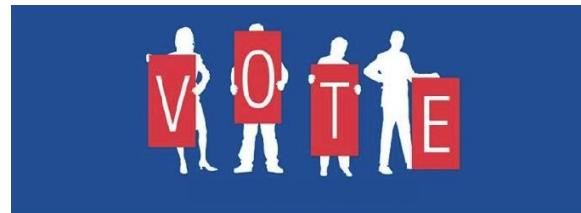
The Fundraising Committee kicked off the formal 2025/26 Campaign November 1 with a letter mailed to each member. The goal for this campaign is \$9000 and a secondary effort is aimed at increasing the numbers of members participating above the 20 percent experienced in the last few years.

As of December 19, a total of \$5775 has been received: Operations, \$3625, and \$2150 for Education. This is approximately 64 percent of our \$9000 goal; 43 members have contributed at approximately a 26 percent rate of our current membership count of 166. Donation cards will be available upon request at all League activities and donations can also be made online at <https://my.lwv.org/iowa/johnson-county/donate>. Thanks to all of you who have donated to our efforts, both operational/administrative support and in support of our tax deductible Education Fund.

We're almost 2/3 of the way to our goal. If you haven't made a donation yet, consider starting the year out with supporting the operational, administrative and tax-deductible Education efforts of your League. 2026 is going to be a busy year for the League with a plethora of state and federal candidates for House and Senate seats throughout the country, including in Iowa. Your League will continue to register voters, provide services to educate voters on the issues, forums to highlight candidates and issues of importance to Iowans, especially those of Johnson County. Won't you help us make this year one of our best efforts to affect the outcomes for us all?

The Fundraising Committee wishes you a happy new year!

*Bea Hicks  
Fundraising Chair*



### **"Progress in Voting Rights Endures Despite Setbacks" by Terese Grant**

Terese Grant, past-president of League of Women Voters Iowa was featured in a recent issue of "The Defender" newsletter of the American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa.

Terese has held many leadership roles with the League of Women Voters. It is a good reminder of the work the national, state and local leagues do to promote and protect voting rights. This is the kind of work your dues and donations support. This work is never done. Thank you!

<https://www.aclu-ia.org/news/our-progress-in-voting-rights-endures-despite-setbacks/>





## DEBORAH TURNER BOOK GROUP

We will meet on Zoom for January and February. If you are not on the mailing list for updates, please contact Jeanne Bancroft or Deanne Mirr so we can send you the Zoom link. Listed below are the remaining books and the member who will lead our discussion.

1. January 19 – “Murder the Truth” by David Enrich (Mary McCarthy)
2. February 16 – “Why Nations Fail” by Daron Acemoglu (Maurine Braddock)
3. March 23 (4th Monday due to spring break) – “Jesus and John Wayne” by Kristen Kobes du Mez (Jeanne Bancroft)
4. April 20 – “You’re the Only One I’ve Told” by Meera Shah (Elizabeth Fosmark)
5. May 18 – “Bad Laws” by Elie Mystral (Deanne Mirr)

All are welcome.

Deanne Mirr [dmirr@me.com](mailto:dmirr@me.com)  
Jeanne Bancroft [inn.bancroft@gmail.com](mailto:inn.bancroft@gmail.com)

*Jeanne Bancroft & Deanne Mirr  
Book Group Co-chairs*

**WARNING: CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS**

**Our country is in a constitutional crisis. It's time to take our democracy back.**

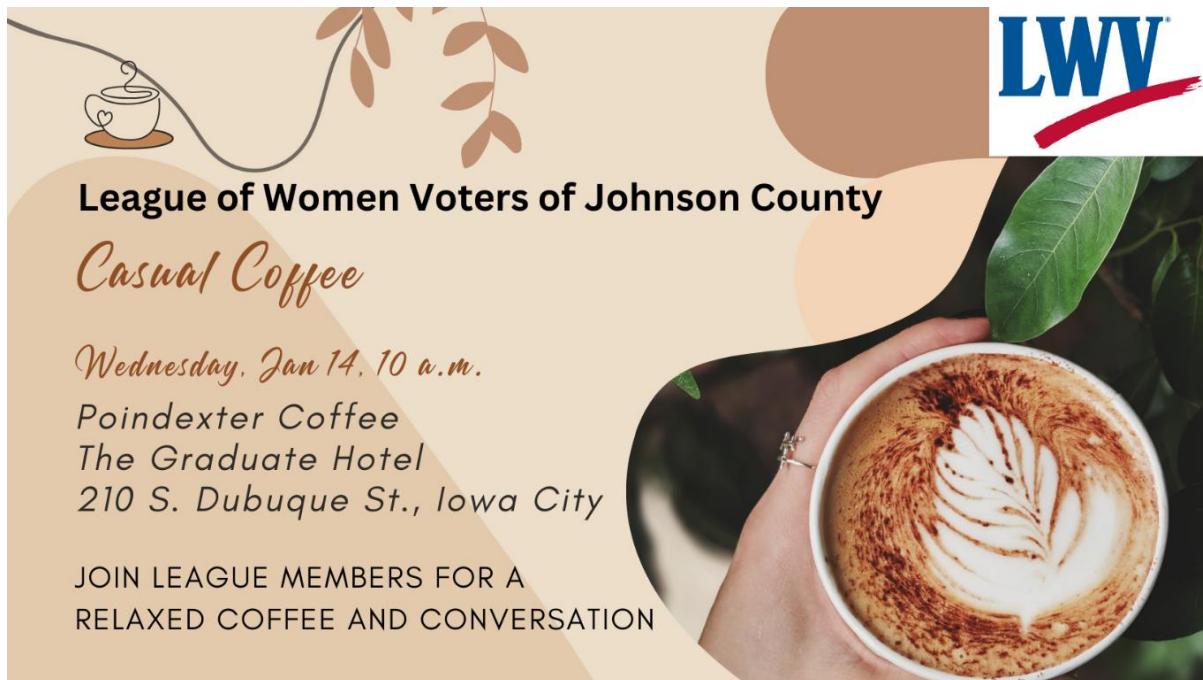
**Unite and Rise 8.5 will activate 8.5 million voices through civic engagement, education, and collective power.**

**8.5 Million Voices. Be One!**

**WOMEN DEFEND DEMOCRACY**

**LWV**

## \*\*\* UPCOMING EVENTS \*\*\*



The poster features a light beige background with a wavy line and leaf illustrations in the top left. In the top right is the LWV logo. Below the logo, the text "League of Women Voters of Johnson County" is in bold black, and "Casual Coffee" is in a stylized brown script. To the left of a large image of a hand holding a latte, the text "Wednesday, Jan 14, 10 a.m." is in brown script, followed by "Poindexter Coffee", "The Graduate Hotel", and "210 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City" in black. Below this, a yellow triangle contains the text "JOIN LEAGUE MEMBERS FOR A RELAXED COFFEE AND CONVERSATION".

### Deborah Turner Book Group

Please join us!  
January 19, 2026  
5:30-6:45 PM  
via Zoom  
Contact Jeanne Bancroft  
for the Zoom Link ([jnn.bancroft@gmail.com](mailto:jnn.bancroft@gmail.com))



**Book**  
***Murder the Truth***  
**David Enrich**



## 2026 LEGISLATIVE FORUMS



# SAVE THE DATES 2026 LEGISLATIVE FORUMS

JANUARY 24

FEBRUARY 28

MARCH 28

ALL FORUMS 9:30 - 11:30 AM

Forums will be in-person and live streamed to the LWVJC Facebook page,  
and recorded to the LWVJC and City Channel 4 websites



# Making Connections

Helping Adults Learn English  
Fluency with Emily Kriegl

JANUARY 26, 2026 2:30-4:30PM

361 BOYD CT

IOWA CITY

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS



### ★ 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

## December 6 Legislative Luncheon





## Calendar of Events

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Time	Location	Program
Monday, January 12	7 p.m.	Zoom	LWJC Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 14	10:00 a.m.	Poindexter Coffee at the Graduate Hotel, 210 S Dubuque St, Iowa City	Monthly Casual Coffee
Monday, January 19	5:30 p.m.	Zoom	Deborah Turner Book Club
Saturday, January 24	9:30 a.m.	TBD	Legislative Forum

Monday, January 26      2:30 p.m.      361 Boyd Ct, Iowa City      Making Connections

