

VOTER

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LWVJC | P. O. Box 5452
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The *Voter* is issued the last Friday of the month to provide members advance notice of activities. The **March Voter deadline is March 22.**

March 2025

Keep on Keeping On

Hello Leaguers! Where to begin? I strive to put out some words of inspiration here to keep us moving forward in our mission. Sometimes, it is hard to be optimistic, but we need to just “Keep on keeping on” as Dr. Turner would say. I find inspiration in seeing out members stand up for voting rights and women’s rights and the environment and education and gun safety and transparency in government and all the other League priorities that we share. With so much going on at both the state and national levels, you may need to just focus on those priorities that are most important to you and do what you can to help move us forward.

So, maybe today is the day you remind someone to vote in the Iowa City Council March 4 election. Maybe today is the day you call or write your legislator. Maybe today is the day you write that letter to the editor. Maybe today is the day you go to the legislative forum. Maybe today is the day you attend or watch the education program to learn more about DEI or immigrants or affordable housing or reproductive rights. Maybe today is the day you watch or attend a committee hearing in the Iowa legislature or go to the League coffee to share stories. Maybe today is the day you tell a friend about the League. Maybe today you do one little thing to empower voters and defend democracy. It takes all of us and I am truly inspired by and grateful for all you do.

Looking ahead to March, the LWVIA Lobby Day originally scheduled for February has been rescheduled to Tuesday, March 18. There is additional information about this event in this issue of the *Voter*, and an email will be sent to members about it as well.

Don’t forget our final Legislative forum of this session is scheduled for Saturday, March 29 at 9:30 a.m. at the North Liberty City Council Chambers. The focus of this forum is Immigration and Citizenship.

Vicki Aden
 LWVJC President



MEMBERSHIP

Our League currently has 179 active members. I would like to welcome our League's newest members Laurie and Adam Woods, Anne Barber, Deborah Gallagher, Rosemary Moore, Betty Brodersen, Lyla Asell, and Barbara Plakans. Please welcome them into our League as you meet them at various League events throughout the coming year.

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. We meet at 10 a.m. at Poindexter's Coffee in the Graduate Hotel.

ChapterSpot News and Updates

By now, every member should have received an email from the national league with an invitation to log-in and set up a **ChapterSpot** account. The national league used the email which was listed for you. If you have not received an email invitation to create your account or have had trouble creating an account or have questions about your membership, please contact me at lwjcmembership@gmail.com.

Automatic Dues Renewal

When you created your account there should have been an option to automatically renew dues. Members are encouraged to pay dues online using a credit/debit card or by ACH (an electronic payment using the numbers on the bottom of a check). As a reminder to renew, members will receive a dues renewal reminder 60 days and 30 days before a person's membership expires. Another reminder will be emailed if a member has not renewed by the member expiration date. Members will still be able to renew with a check. The member

renewal date for members who joined after August 1, 2024 is one year from your join date. Those who joined the league before August 1, 2024 have a renewal date of June 30, 2025. Please contact me with any questions about your renewal date.

Diane Duncan-Goldsmith
Membership Chair



VOTER SERVICES

The second of three legislative forums during the Iowa 91st Assembly was held on Saturday, February 22, 2025 at the Coralville City Hall. The following legislators participated: Senator Zach Wahls, Senator Janice Weiner, Representative Dave Jacoby, Representative Elinor Levin and Representative Adam Zabner. Representative Amy Nielsen was ill. We wish her a speedy recovery. Senator Dawn Driscoll, Representative Heather Hora and Representative Judd Lawler did not attend.

The focus of the forum was on the Environment and Water Quality. Interested local organizations were invited to send someone on behalf of their organization. Representatives from 100 Grannies, Iowa City Climate Advocates, Sustainable Iowa Land Trust, and Iowa City Sierra Club were represented and asked questions. Many questions also came from the large audience of around 60 people. Thank you to Barb Stein, who served as moderator, and Cathy Eisenhofer, who was our timekeeper. It was an informative session.

The third legislative forum will be on Saturday, March 29 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at North Liberty City Council Chambers. The focus topic will be Citizenship/Immigration. Please let us know if you have any organizations we should contact for this one.

See the **Daily Iowan** for more details about the February forum and remember you can see the entire event on the LWVJC website.

Jeanne Bancroft,
Voter Services Chair



EDUCATION

On March 27 through 28, a two-day symposium, “Locating Reproductive Justice: Global and Regional Perspectives”, will bring together scholars and artists from across the United States to share local, regional and global perspectives on the state of reproductive justice. The symposium, sponsored by the University of Iowa Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, is the launch event for a new book series by the same title to be published by the University of Iowa Press.

LWVJC is co-sponsoring the symposium, which will include two major public events. On Thursday, March 27, a panel of invited speakers will examine the “Changing Landscapes of Reproductive Justice”, looking at how people, past and present, have negotiated laws, policies, and structural deficiencies to access reproductive health care. On Friday, March 28, participants will consider possible future directions in reproductive justice.

Both events will take place 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. at the Iowa City Public Library.

Looking ahead, the Education Committee final program of the season will take place on Thursday, April 3, at the Iowa City Public Library, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.. Bram Elias, Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the UI Immigration Clinic, and Jennie Schmidt, Executive Director of the Free Medical Clinic, will discuss the “Legal and Medical Issues: Facing Immigration in Johnson County”.

Susan Enzle, Kathleen Kamerick, Laure Wess Peters, and Rebecca Conard
Educational Chair



CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT

It has been a tough winter for our group. We did not meet in January or February due to the extremely cold weather. Our next meeting is Monday, March 24 at the Coralville Public Library beginning at 5:30 PM. We will spend a few minutes discussing *Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here* by Jonathan Blitzen but will move ahead to our March selection. Our next book is *Shielded: How the Police Became Untouchable* by Joanna Schwartz. This book is the winner of the of the American Bar Association's Silver Gavel Award. It is an urgent and definitive examination of how the legal system prevents accountability for police misconduct, from one of the country's leading scholars on policing. Maurine Braddock will guide our discussion.

Please join us on March 24th at the Coralville Public Library. All are welcome.

Jeanne Bancroft
Book Club Chair



The Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics will again be offering Ready to Run Iowa, a nonpartisan campaign training program that is part of a national network founded by the

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Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, as a series of six workshops over three Fridays in February, March and April of 2025. Training is open to women and men. Information about the program and the 2025 schedule is posted at <https://cattcenter.iastate.edu/events/ready-to-run-iowa>



ADVOCACY

The Advocacy Committee has been busy this month with an onslaught of bills from the Iowa Legislature on topics ranging from education funding and new public school mandates, the elimination of DEI programs, voter ID requirements, and limiting the liability for agricultural chemical companies. As Johnson County legislators explained to a robust audience at the LWVJC Legislative Forum on the environment last week, Iowa continues to rank second nationally with newly diagnosed cancer cases. At the same time, SSB1051 (SF 394) was advanced by the Senate Judiciary Committee to limit the liability of pesticide companies stating the “a consumer warning label... shall be sufficient to satisfy any requirements for a warning.”

Another legislative action we are keeping a close watch on, SJR6, proposes an amendment to the Iowa Constitution that will repeal the natural resources and outdoor recreation trust fund established in 2010 “for the purpose of protecting and enhancing water quality and natural areas in this state.” When the fund was created, 63% of Iowa voters approved the amendment. The trust has never been funded with tax revenue; however, its existence provided a pathway toward cleaner water in the state, an issue that continues to be unhealthy with unimproved nitrate levels in many water sources.

Last week, Iowa Republican lawmakers also introduced HSB242, an all-compassing bill that

removes gender identity as a protected class from the Iowa Civil Rights Act in addition to making definitional changes to how “sex” and “gender” are classified and defined in Iowa Code. Protection from discrimination in employment, wages, public accommodations, housing, education and credit practices on the basis of gender identity would be removed from Iowa Code under the bill.

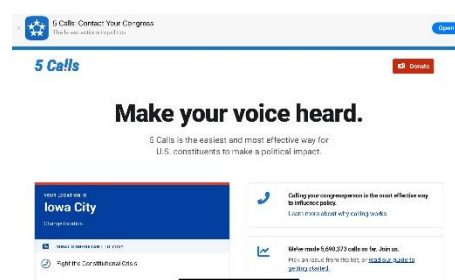
Use the links below to track legislative actions:

- 1) <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation>
- 2) Excellent instructional video on legislative bill tracking on the ICPL site:

<https://www.icpl.org/video/navigating-iowa-legislative-website-league-women-voters-and-iowa-city-public-library>

Many of the Iowa legislative initiatives mirror the current Washington D.C. agenda with cuts to essential programs that Iowans rely on. We urge all citizens to share their questions, thoughts and concerns with their elected officials. And it's never been easier to share your voice!

On the federal level, use the streamlined app



5Calls to connect with Senators Grassley and Ernst and Representative Miller-Meeks.

<https://5calls.org/>

On the state and local levels, the Writing Kit designed by Deb Gallagher shared by 100 Grannies in Iowa City is an excellent resource:

<https://100grannies.org/2024/09/24/toolkit-offers-helpful-hint-for-writing-for-climate-justice/>

If you want to receive a weekly e-mail update focusing on Iowa Legislative action and Johnson County Legislators on Record, contact Kathy Wandro at kwandro@mac.com to be added to The Advocacy Report e-mail list.

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All of our legislators attending last week's LWVJC forum stressed the power and influence of their constituents' voices. We hope you will stay aware, active and involved.

"Tyranny requires your fear and your silence and your compliance. Democracy requires your courage."

--J. B. Pritzker, in his State of the State (of Illinois) Speech, February 19, 2025

*Kathy Wandro
Advocacy Chair*

FUNDRAISING

This year the goal of the LWVJC Board was set at \$8,000 and donations could be designated for the Operations Fund to cover the costs of administration and/or the Education Fund for tax deductible consideration. Donation letters were done again by PIP Printing and PIP designed, printed in color, prepared and enclosed the response card, folded, stuffed, addressed, added postage and delivered to the post office for mailing; a QR code was added this year for convenience. Letters were mailed in late November 2024 and sent to 165 members of record. Total cost for this service was \$514.48 or \$0.06 per dollar raised. As the goal was reached during January, 2025, no follow-up was done except in the VOTER.

The Fundraising totaled \$8,030 with the Operating Fund receiving donations of \$4,955, similar to last year's yield of \$5,074; the Education Fund totaled \$3,075, slightly more than last year's \$2,925. Thirty-three member units participated in the fundraising campaign or 20 percent of those solicited, fewer than last year though the number of mailings increased by 19; the average amount given was \$164.99 per donation.

Thank you Judith Pfohl for sending donation acknowledgements to those who contributed; thank you Diane Duncan-Goldsmith for your guidance and support; and thank you Vicki Aden for your usual steadfast leadership and direction.

*Bea Hicks
Fundraising Chair*

*Nancy Porter
LWVJC Representative*

UMRRILO

In November, 2024, the Mississippi River Network, now known as ONE Mississippi, had its annual meeting in Minneapolis. The good news gained in discussions was talk about overcoming the political climate against environmental issues. Recent Iowa polls show people want clean water! An article in the LWV Des Moines newsletter, "Summit's Controversial Bid to Build a Carbon Capture Pipeline Wins Iowa Board's Approval" requires our pushback.

This article stated permits must be obtained in South and North Dakota before any construction can begin. The Iowa Utilities Board gave permission for eminent domain, one of the more controversial parts of the bill. Summit Carbon Solutions is partnering with 57 ethanol plants across five states, a threat to bedrock aquifer water supplies.

None of the states will experience public benefit because of construction of the pipeline. Investors, foreign and domestic, plan to score big monetarily with federal tax credits. There is no public benefit for Iowa residents. The insurance liability policy won't be able to replace the water in bedrock aquifers which can be depleted with the billions of gallons of water needed by ethanol plants to produce ethanol. Depletion will also affect the availability of water to rural residents and communities as it takes 3 gallons of water to produce 1 gallon of ethanol.

Safety also was a major issue during the months long hearing the board held on Summit's application in 2023 as many in attendance expressing concern about potential leaks as colorless, odorless carbon dioxide is an asphyxiant which can sicken, even kill, people exposed to it.

As a reminder, Mississippi River Celebration Days will take place June 1 – 15. If you have an idea for a project, activity or celebration. Please let me know. If you want to attend an Advocacy meeting with our coalition of 5 states, please contact me at nancy55555@icloud.com with UMRR in the subject line.

***UPCOMING EVENTS ***



LOBBY DAY 2025

The League of Women Voters of Iowa (LWVIA) has rescheduled Lobby Day at the State Capital in Des Moines to Tuesday, March 18, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. This will be a great opportunity to connect with fellow League members, hear from legislative leaders and trusted partners of LWVIA, and lobby your legislators on the issues that are important to you and your local League.

This visit is in conjunction with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and Equal Pay Day. We will have a table set up in the rotunda with information to distribute plus we will

hand out our Payday candy bars.

If you are interested in attending and/or carpooling, please RSVP to jclwv@gmail.com. We will consolidate the information for WVJC members attending and forward it to LWVIA.

SAVE THE DATE

The Defending Democracy Award Celebration

Thursday, April 24, 2025

The **League of Women Voters of Iowa** is awarding **Rekha Basu**, reporter, editorial writer, and columnist at newspapers in New York, Florida and Iowa, the **2025 Defending Democracy Award** which is given to an individual or organization who exemplifies leadership in our state

Where: Jasper Winery, 2500 George Flagg Pkwy, Des Moines

When: 4:00 – 7:00 p.m., Thursday, April 24, 2025

Guest Speaker: Caleb Rainey

What: Buffet Dinner at Baratta's

Tickets: \$75/per person (Cash Bar Available)

RSVP: lwvia.defendingdemocracy@gmail.com

Last day of ticket sales: April 15, 2025 (Debit/Credit Card or Check)



League of Women Voters of Johnson County

Casual Coffee

Wednesday, March 12, 10 a.m.

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

JOIN LEAGUE MEMBERS FOR A
RELAXED COFFEE AND CONVERSATION



JOIN US FOR THE MARCH LEGISLATIVE FORUM



SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2025

9:30 - 11:30 AM

**FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION &
CITIZENSHIP**

NORTH LIBERTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
360 N. MAIN ST., NORTH LIBERTY

In-person and live streamed to LWVJC Facebook page

LEAGUE LECTURE SERIES



***LEGAL AND MEDICAL ISSUES FACING
IMMIGRANTS IN JOHNSON COUNTY***

**Bram Elias, Clinical Professor of Law & Director
UI Immigration Clinic; Jennie Schmidt,
Executive Director Free Medical Clinic**

THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2025

6:30 – 8:00 P.M

IOWA CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

MEETING ROOM A

**CO-SPONSORED BY IMMIGRANT WELCOME NETWORK, CENTER WORKER JUSTICE
EASTERN IA, DELTA SIGMA THETA, TRAIL OF JC, ICPL, LWVJC**

★ 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 Iowans with felony convictions to vote after time served. End electoral college.

🏛️ 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. Reinstate gender balance requirements for appointed boards and commissions.

🎓 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 and reinstate all AEA functions. Continue to expand access to affordable childcare and free four-year-old preschool.

👩‍⚕️ 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.

💧 ENVIRONMENT

Recognize the need for and fund water quality initiatives. Fully fund REAP. Develop state climate change strategies.

🔫 GUN SAFETY

Enact comprehensive common sense gun safety legislation. Ban assault rifles and military-grade weapons. Enact background checks on all gun sales, close gun show loopholes, require gun safety locks, repeal "stand your ground" law, and oppose legislation that allows the carrying of guns in schools.



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



Above: At the Education program on February 13, Affordable Housing: Searching for Solutions, League member Laure Wess Peters introduces the speakers.



Below: Speakers Rachel Carr (left) and Jessica Andino (right) answer questions following their presentation.



Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Location	Program
Monday, March 10	6:30 p.m.	Zoom	LWVJC Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 12	10 a.m.	Poindexter Coffee, 210 S Dubuque St., Iowa City	LWVJC Casual Coffee
Friday, March 14	12 Noon	City of Washington Council Chambers, 215 E. Washington St., Washington, IA	Legislative Briefing with Sen. Driscoll and Rep. Hora sponsored by Washington Chamber of Commerce
Tuesday, March 18	10 a.m.	State Capitol, Des Moines	LWVIA Capitol Lobby Day; RSVP email jclwvoters@gmail.com
Saturday, March 22	9 – 10 a.m.	Mammitas Coffee, 224 S Linn St, Iowa City	Check-in with District 89 Rep. Levin
March 27 - 28	See Education item, p. 3	https://obermann.uiowa.edu/locating-reproductive-justice	Locating Reproductive Justice a 2-day symposium
Saturday, March 29	9:30 - 11:30 a.m.	Iowa City Senior Center, 28 S. Linn St., Iowa City	LWVJC Legislative Forum - Focus on Environment & Water Quality
Thursday, April 3	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room A	LWVJC Legislative Forum – Focus on Immigration & Citizenship
Thursday, April 24	4 – 7 p.m.	Jasper Winery, Des Moines	LWVIA Defending Democracy Award Banquet