

# LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup> OF JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA

## VOTER

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



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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 **June Voter deadline is May 23.**

### May 2026

#### Spring

Spring is well underway as evidenced by crazy weather, the end of the Iowa State legislative session (sometime soon...probably), primary elections approaching, and our annual spring membership meeting.

Our Advocacy committee has been doing a stellar job keeping us informed about legislation affecting our League priorities as it winds its way through the legislative process at the statehouse. I am sure they are being extra vigilant as this session approaches its end - continuing to call us to advocate for our priorities when needed.

The primary election is on Tuesday, June 2. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Iowa has a closed primary system, so you must declare yourself a Republican or Democrat to vote in that party's primary election. If you are registered as "No Party" you can vote in the primary, but you will have to pick a party's ballot when you vote and your registration will be changed to that party. If you change your party affiliation to vote in the primary election, you can change it again after the primary election.

If you wish to vote by mail, you must submit an Absentee Ballot Request form before May 18 at 5 p.m. - Instructions are here: [Absentee Ballot Request Form Instructions | Johnson County](#). Ballots will be mailed to you and the ballots must be returned to the county auditor's office by 8 p.m. on Election Day. In-person early voting begins May 13 and goes through June 1, and the early voting schedule can be found here: [June 2, 2026 Primary Election | Johnson County](#). You can see your sample ballot by entering your address here: [Johnson County, Iowa Polling Places](#).

Our annual membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19 at 5:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Coralville.

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Our special guest will be our Johnson County Auditor, Julie Persons, who will answer your questions about the new Supervisor districts and any other election questions you might have. Heavy hors d'oeuvres from Catering by Charlotte will be available to enjoy. RSVP information will be sent via email soon.

Check out the rest of this Voter to read about the work we are doing to empower voters and advocate for League priorities. Thank you all for your dedication to Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy!

Vicki Aden  
LWVJC President



## MEMBERSHIP

We currently have 169 members. I would like to welcome our League's newest members Allison Bettine, Kathy Fitzpatrick, Bonnie Orrick, and Joanna Savage. Please reach out and welcome them into our League as you meet them at various League events throughout the coming year.

I would also like to thank all our members who are renewing their memberships. In these perilous and changing times, your membership helps support the work of our League.

### New Member Spotlight

Coleen Hetzel graduated from the University of South Dakota with a double major in Social Work and Psychology. After graduation she worked as a social worker for the Department of Human Services for a few years and then managed a private sector of senior citizen housing for 31 years. She and her husband moved to Coralville in 2017. They have been enjoying many of the cultural events the area has to offer.

Her husband is a working professional artist and retired visual arts teacher. They have 2 children who live nearby with their families. In light of our country's current events, she is pleased to support

LWV and appreciates all the good work the League does.

### Casual Coffee

All members are always invited to attend our Casual Coffees on the second Wednesday of each month. 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 March, April or May of 2025, 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: [lwvjcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:lwvjcmembership@gmail.com). Please contact me about membership or your renewal date at [lwvjcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:lwvjcmembership@gmail.com)

### 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 League of Women Voters hosted three candidate forums on Saturday, April 18. They were held at the Iowa City Senior Center. Candidates from all three districts participated and had the opportunity to introduce themselves to potential constituents as well as respond to a wide range of questions from the audience. These forums are to inform voters before the June 2 primary election. The candidates are all Democrats. There are no Republican contested races for the primary. The candidate who wins the June 2 primary will face the Republican opponent in the November general election.

First was District 5 where candidates, Mandi Remington and Joe Reilly are running for a 4-year term. Mandi Remington is currently serving on the Board of Supervisors. District 5 includes University Heights and parts of west and south Iowa City. There were about 50 people present.

Next was the forum for District 4 and candidates Rod Sullivan and V Fixmer-Oraiz are running for a two-year term. They are both currently serving on the Johnson County Board of Supervisors. This district covers the north side of Iowa City. There were approximately 75-80 people in attendance for this one.

And finally, the forum for District 2 which covers the eastern part of the county, including Solon, Hills, Lone Tree, West Branch and a portion of eastern Iowa City was held with the three candidates, Jessica Andino, Jon Green and Jan Godwin. They are running for a two-year term. Jon Green is currently serving on the Board of Supervisors. There were 40 people attending this forum.

League members, Shannon Patrick moderated all three forums and Cathy Eisenhofer served as timekeeper.

*Jeanne Bancroft*  
Voter Services chair



## ADVOCACY

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world. It’s the only thing that ever has.” *Margaret Mead*

Over the past two months, our LWVJC collective efforts have been both visible and impactful. Through a steady stream of Action Alerts, you have engaged on critical issues—from environmental protections and women’s reproductive rights to gun safety, voting rights, and the preservation of local government autonomy. Each alert represented more than information; it was a call to action that you answered. Your willingness to stay informed and respond has strengthened our collective voice and demonstrated what sustained civic engagement looks like in practice.

As this legislative session draws to a close, your voice matters now as much as ever. Advocacy does not end when bills stall or momentum slows—it is sustained through consistent engagement, clear communication with legislators, and a steadfast demand for transparency. Every call, every email, every conversation reinforces accountability and reminds elected officials that their constituents are informed, engaged, and watching.

It is easy to feel discouraged in challenging political climates, but history—and the present moment—tell a different story. Look to Hungary, where last week voters in a record turnout-out demonstrated the power of persistence and participation reclaiming their democracy from the hands of a sixteen-year autocrat. Change is rarely immediate, but it is always possible when people refuse to disengage. Optimism is not naïve—it is strategic.

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It fuels the long-term commitment required to protect and strengthen democratic institutions.

The LWVJC Advocacy Committee members are planning an active summer continuing important conversations focused on our legislative priorities and promoting informal meetings with our elected officials. Moving toward the primaries and the election, we will promote the vote.

As League members, your role is both vital and enduring: to inform, to empower, and to advocate. Stay the course. Continue building relationships with legislators. Insist on transparency. And most importantly, prepare for what comes next—mobilizing voters, expanding civic participation, and ensuring every eligible voice is heard at the ballot box.

Democracy is not self-sustaining; it depends on active, informed citizens like you. Let's keep going.

*Kathy Wandro  
Advocacy Chair*



## VOTER REGISTRATION

This month LWVJC concentrated our voter registration efforts on senior living residences with great success. We held events at Oaknoll, Atrium Village (in Hills), Melrose Meadows and Walden Place, registering 53 people, and completing 106 Absentee Ballot Request (ABR) forms.

We will register at StoryPoint Hickory Hill (formerly Featherstone), Ecumenical Towers and Bickford yet this month. The residents are very interested in voting and greatly appreciate our help, particularly with the ABR forms. This enthusiasm makes our efforts very satisfying.

In addition to the senior living residences, we registered at Kirkwood College, Oakdale Campus and several community events including the

NO KINGS march, Shelter House book sale, the LWV sponsored educational programs at the Iowa City Public Library, and the County Supervisor candidate forums. On May 2, we will be working at the NAMI walk at Terry Trueblood Recreation Center.

As always, if you are interested in helping with voter registration contact Kathy Clark at [mkathyclark@gmail.com](mailto:mkathyclark@gmail.com)

*Kathy Clark  
Voter Registration Chair*



## MAKING CONNECTIONS

### Affordable Housing

Our May Making Connections event will be at the home of Donna Hirst, 810 N. Linn Street, on May 6 from 2:30 – 4:00. The topic of affordable housing in Johnson County will be addressed by representatives from Johnson County Housing Coalition, The Housing Trust fund of Johnson County, DVIP/RVAP, The Housing Fellowship, Shelter House, and Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity. All of these organizations work toward the goal of providing affordable housing in Johnson County.

This will be a time to listen, learn, ask questions, and enjoy the fellowship of other League members.

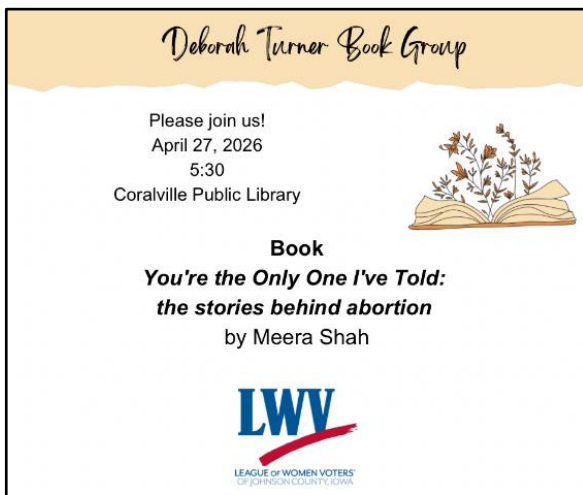
Please put this event on your calendars.

*Gaylen Wobeter  
Making Connections Chair*



## DEBORAH TURNER BOOK GROUP

Our next meeting will be on Monday, April 27 at the Coralville Public Library starting at 5:30 PM. The book selected is “You’re the Only One I’ve Told: The Stories Behind Abortion” by Meera Shah. Elizabeth Fosmark will guide the conversation. This book aligns with one of the League’s 2026 legislative priorities, reproductive rights.



The May meeting will be on Monday, May 18 at the Coralville Public Library starting at 5:30 PM. The book selected is “Bad Law: Ten Popular Laws That Are Ruining America” by Elie Mystal. Deanne Mirr will guide the conversation. All members are invited to join us for both sessions. The discussions are always rich.

At the May meeting we will discuss the 2026-2027 book club format and how we might select books. If you are new to the book group but have an interest plan to join us as we reflect on this past year and plan for the future.

Deanne Mirr ([dmirr@me.com](mailto:dmirr@me.com))  
Jeanne Bancroft ([jnn.bancroft@gmail.com](mailto:jnn.bancroft@gmail.com))  
Book Group Co-chairs

## CELEBRATE THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

June 2 is the National Mississippi River Day. The engagement team from One Mississippi has been working with mayors and city councils across the 31 states of the Mississippi watershed to nationally recognize this day.

The LWVIA and Interleague Organization of the Upper Mississippi River Region will celebrate on June 5. We have a day planned in Muscatine, Iowa. First, we will visit the Stanley Center for Peace and Security. Per the Stanley Center, “As global temperatures move toward the Paris Agreement target of a maximum 1.5C rise, the window for meaningful action is closing rapidly.” There is no charge to take the tour and I will be giving a donation from our group. There is so much to see and learn from this structure and surrounding grounds. We will eat lunch at one of the many restaurants nearby. I suggest Boonies next door to the Center-check out their menu online. In the afternoon we will tour the Lock and Dam 16.

All activities are optional. You may do a whole day or half day. Please text me to let me know what you would like to do: carpool, drive, eat lunch, participate in all activities, ½ day morning excursion to the Center, or ½ day afternoon to the Lock and Dam.

We will carpool for the hour drive to Muscatine. We will meet at 9:15 a.m. at the junction of Sand Road and Highway 6. We need drivers.

I will need a headcount for carpooling and for lunch. Please text me at 319-331-8088 to let me know which activities you would like to participate in.

Nancy Porter  
UMRRILO/One Mississippi

Linda Meloy, League member will be interviewed about her new book “Builder of River Businesses and Community.” It is about her great grandfather, Curt Logsdon and a boat stored at the National Mississippi River Museum in Dubuque. Information will be posted on [lwvmurr.org](http://lwvmurr.org).

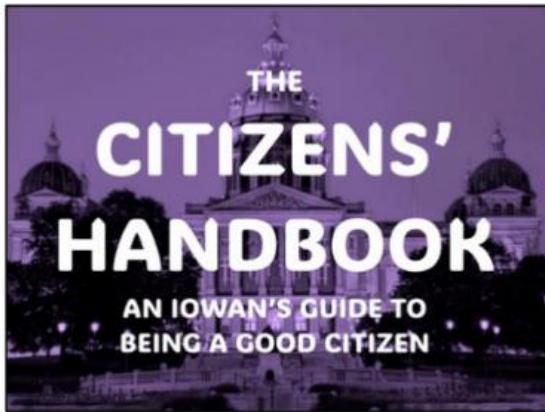
## CITIZENS' HANDBOOK FOR IOWA

LWV of Ames and Story County (LWV-ASC) took the lead with members from across the state in adapting the LWV of Indiana (LWVIN) Citizens' Handbook for Iowa and it is now available. The handbook was developed and closely patterned after LWVIN's original model with content adapted to incorporate Iowa's unique governmental structures, political processes, and civic participation opportunities.

The handbook is a great resource for helping citizens understand and participate in their government. The handbook is maintained on-line, so it can be more easily updated when needed. Individuals can use a QR code to download a copy of the handbook. The QR code will take you to the Canva site where the handbook resides, and you can download it from there (you may also be able to use this link to access the file for download:

<https://canva.link/6176uxa86hennea>).

Happy reading!



**OUR LIBERTIES WE PRIZE AND  
OUR RIGHTS WE WILL  
MAINTAIN  
THE IOWA MOTTO**

The League of Women  
Voters Iowa  
<https://lwvia.org>

Use QR code  
for your copy



Government and politics can sometimes be confusing, but everyone has the ability to understand the basic structure of our political system. Participating in politics is not difficult. The key is knowing who to talk to, what to say, how to say it and how to get involved. This Citizens' Handbook provides an overview of the U.S. political system's structure and explains how you can participate in various ways across all levels of government.

Use QR code for your copy



The League of Women Voters Iowa

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

Johnson County League of Women Voters Presents:

# Iowa's Water: It Doesn't Have to Be This Way

**David Cwiertny**

William D. Ashton Professor  
in the Department of Civil  
and Environmental  
Engineering and a Professor  
in the Department of  
Chemistry at the University  
of Iowa.



Iowa's water quality is among the worst in the nation. Water quality challenges impact the health and wellbeing of Iowans who require safe drinking water and clean lakes, rivers, and streams for recreation.

**Tuesday, April 28, 2026**  
**Iowa City Public Library**  
**Meeting Room A, 6:30pm**

Live stream on ICPL's YouTube channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/thelibrarychannel>



**UMRRILO**



**Johnson County  
Master Gardeners**



**SIERRA  
CLUB**







# Making Connections

**Talk with a panel of experts:  
Affordable Housing  
in Johnson County**

MAY 6, 2026, 2:30PM  
DONNA HIRST'S HOME  
810 N LINN ST, IOWA CITY  
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS







**League of Women Voters of Johnson County**

*Casual Coffee*

*Wednesday, May 13, 10 a.m.*


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




JOIN LEAGUE MEMBERS FOR A  
RELAXED COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

## Deborah Turner Book Group

Please join us!  
May 18, 2026  
5:30  
Coralville Public Library



**Book**  
***BAD LAWS***  
by Elie Mystal



*Please Join Us for*  
***Our May Membership Meeting***

*Tuesday, May 19, 2026*  
*Unitarian Universalist Society*  
*2355 Oakdale Rd, Coralville*  
*5:30-7:30 pm*

**A Q&A WITH OUR SPECIAL GUEST**  
**JOHNSON COUNTY AUDITOR**  
**JULIE PERSONS**

Cost \$32.50; Heavy hors d'oeuvres & beverages/wine

**Please RSVP by May 12**

Payment by cash, check, or credit card due before event



★ 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.

## Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Location	Program
Tuesday, April 28	6:30 - 8 p.m.	Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room A, 123 S Linn St, Iowa City	<i>Iowa's Water: It Doesn't Have to be This Way;</i> Education Program
April 28- May 3	various	Des Moines Civic Center DMPA.org	Suffs, the musical
Wednesday, May 6	2:30 p.m.	810 N Linn St, Iowa City	Making Connections: Affordable Housing in Johnson County
Monday, May 11	7 p.m.	Zoom	Monthly LWVJC Board Meeting
Monday, May 18	5:30-6:45 p.m.	Coralville Public Library	Book Group
Tuesday, May 19	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	Unitarian Universalist Society, 2355 Oakdale Rd, Coralville	LWVJC Annual Meeting
Friday, June 5	9:15 a.m.	Muscatine, Iowa	Mississippi River Days

