LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA

VOTER

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The *Voter* is issued the last Friday of the month to provide members advance notice of activities. **The December *Voter* deadline is November 21.**

November 2026

Your Vote, Your Voice, Your Power

Election Day is nearly here. I want to thank all of you in our League that have worked so tirelessly this year to empower voters and help get out the vote. From the Voter Registration volunteers that have been just about everywhere to ensure people are registered and have information they need, to the Voter Services committee members organizing forums to allow community members to hear from and ask questions of the candidates, to the Education committee members holding programs on issues on the ballot, to the members writing postcards to newly registered voters, to the members that work as election and poll workers, to the members sharing information with their friends and neighbors and colleagues - thank you, thank you, thank you! You truly exemplify our mission to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy!

If you have not yet voted, please do so on or before Tuesday, November 3. You can view early voting locations and times here:
https://johnsoncountyiowa.gov/auditor/elections
If you are voting on election day, November 3, the polls are open from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. and you can find your polling place here:
https://gis.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/pollingplaces/

Our December Membership Luncheon and Legislative Preview will be held on Saturday, December 5 from 11 - 1:30 at the Holiday Inn Coralville-Iowa City (same location as last year). This event will feature a buffet luncheon followed by an informal panel discussion with Johnson County legislators previewing the 2027 Legislative session. It is always a great event to get together with fellow League members and hear from our legislators. I hope you can join us. More details will be coming shortly with your email invitation.

Thank you to everyone who takes time to support our efforts to advocate, and to register and educate voters. You are indeed Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy!

Vicki Aden
LWVJC President

VOTER SERVICES

The Voter Services Committee had a very busy September and October fulfilling our goal to host the 8 Candidate Forums for contested races in this 2026 midterm election. Scheduling sought forum locations in each candidate's district with tech capability to livestream and record the forum and on a date not to conflict with City Council meetings and other scheduled LWVJC programs. Plus, we aimed at having forums completed prior to the October 14 start of Early Voting in Iowa.

The participation was 100% by candidates for the 5 Board of Supervisor races.
District 3 forum between Sue Dvorsky and Jennie Wunderlich was Wednesday September 16, from 7-8 pm in the Coralville City Hall Council Chambers. Karin Franklin moderated and Jeanne Bancroft timed the forum. Attendees filled the room to firecode capacity and a monitor was run in the foyer outside the room to accommodate the overflow.
District 1 forum between Greg Erceg and Lisa Green-Douglass was Thursday, September 17 from 7-8 pm in the North Liberty City Hall Council Chambers. Jean Donham moderated and Kathy Ryerson timed the forum.
District 2 forum between Jon Green and Phil Hemingway was Tuesday September 29 from 6:30 - 7:30 pm in the Solon Library meeting room. Nancy Dietz moderated and Jan Gorman timed the forum.
Districts 4 and 5 forums were held back-to-back on Wednesday September 30 in the Assembly Room of the Iowa City Senior Center. Shannon Patrick moderated and Gaylen Wobeter timed both forums. District 4 forum between V Fixmer-Oraiz and Wanda Foster was 7-7:45 pm. District 5 between Donna Dane and Mandi Remington was 8-8:45 pm. Candidate Dane hired an ASL Interpreter for her supporters in the audience. The Committee will be considering closed captioning as an accommodation in future forums.

Forums for the **Iowa House Districts 89, 91 and 92** were scheduled in locations in those districts.
District 91 forum between Mark Divitt and Judd Lawler was scheduled at the Springmier Library in Tiffin for Tuesday September 22. It was cancelled September 9 when Representative Lawler emailed that he would not be participating. The League cannot hold an "empty chair" forum where only one party's candidate participates.
District 89 forum between Daniel Arch and Elinor Levin was scheduled and held on Monday October 5 at the Iowa City Public Library from 7-8 pm. Jeanne Bancroft moderated and Lynn Ikach timed the forum.
District 92 forum between Brittany Erickson and Heather Hora was scheduled for Wednesday October 14 at the Kalona Village Museum from 7-8 pm. Invitation was sent to the candidates on both September 7 and September 18. Brittany Erickson responded that she would attend. Heather Hora did not respond, so this forum was also cancelled.

The Voter Services Committee will take a short break until December when our focus will be to set up the Spring 2027 Legislative Forums. Legislative Forums are traditionally the 4th Saturday morning from 9:30-11:30 am in January, February, and March at venues around Johnson County that have the tech capabilities to livestream and record the event.

Polly Horton, chair
Sally Stutsman, Joan Cook,
Cathy Eisenhofer, Maurine Braddock

VOTER REGISTRATION

October voter registration proved equally as busy as September. Sixty-four volunteers registered 187 people and obtained 69 absentee ballot request forms. We completed our second round of registrations at 8 senior living residences, held 9 days of voter registrations at the North Liberty, Coralville and Iowa City food pantries, 8 days at the high schools adding Tate and Regina to West, City and Liberty High, 3 days at UI Colleges of Nursing and Education, and at

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the Food Truck on the Health Science Campus.

This October also we held several miscellaneous, one-time events including the Indigenous Peoples Celebration and a manufactured home community meeting with county supervisors and some state legislators. We accepted an invitation to discuss voting and register voters at The Mayor's Youth Empowerment Program (MYEP) attended by about 25 people, 4 of whom registered to vote. We wrapped up the voter registration season October 17, with two events. The first was the Eulenspiegel Puppet Show, 'The Big Election' at the Iowa City Public Library, which, in addition to voter registration, featured our kid's voting booth. The second was a NO KINGS Vote Early event in conjunction with early voting at Dream City.

Finally, and importantly, I am extremely grateful to all the volunteers who were the critical cog in making our voter registration drive so successful.

Kathy Clark
Voter Registration Chair

UNITE and RISE: GET OUT THE VOTE and CELEBRATE ELECTION HEROES

In April of 2025, the League of Women Voters of the United States declared a constitutional crisis and committed to a movement called Unite and Rise. One of the major efforts of this initiative is to step up our continued efforts to encourage people to vote, and to advocate for the continuation of free and fair elections. LWVUS has taken action through the courts to block efforts to tamper with our voting system. We as local League members have continued our efforts to register voters and encourage participation.
This year as the national League highlighted actions to engage voters and joined the national Election Heroes movement, in Johnson County we elected to send postcards to all new voters under the age of 28 who had registered to vote between Jan.1 and July 13 encouraging them to act on their registration and vote. Over the course of a couple months, at the Farmers' Market and special gatherings we wrote 1572 cards which were mailed on October 14th, the first day of early voting.



Jeanne Bancroft and Karin Franklin mailing "Voting is Your SuperPower" postcards, October 14, 2026

Our other effort was to recognize and call attention to the work of the many people who work on the elections~our Election Heroes~who ensure our access to the polls and the safe and orderly process of voting and counting the outcome. This includes all of the employees of the Johnson County Auditors office, the poll workers, the poll rovers, and the party observers.

Thank you cards were presented to some of the key employees at the Auditors office, LWVJC President Vicki had an editorial in local papers, and proclamations celebrating all the people who work on elections were read at the meetings of the Johnson County Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of Iowa City, Coralville and North Liberty.

Karin Franklin and Jeanne Bancroft



Thanks to County Auditor Julie Persons, Deputy Auditor of Elections Bogdana Velterean, and Elections Tech John Deeth



ADVOCACY

Choose Hope. Vote. Stay Engaged.
"Hope is a choice. Using our voices to speak up is a choice. Voting is a choice. Believing that we still have the power to build a country that reflects us all is a choice." Michelle Obama

On November 3, we have the opportunity to turn hope into action. Our votes help shape Iowa's future—from the quality of our schools and the safety of our water to the protection of our rights and the strength of our communities. If you voted early, use these days to encourage a friend or neighbor, and help others make their voices heard. Every election is an opportunity to move our shared future forward.
This particular election is dramatically defining. Guided by our values, we will choose who we are as a community, a state and a democracy. In this divisive political climate, not every election result may be what we had hoped for. Not every voter will be satisfied with every outcome. However, on November 4th, the challenges we face still need solutions- clean water, quality education, equitable health care, economic stability, women's reproductive rights, affordable housing….the list demanding our immediate attention is daunting. The only authentic, sustainable solutions require that we work together, respectfully debate the issues, and pursue common ground.

In that spirit, the LWVJC Advocacy Committee continues our work. We prepare for the upcoming legislative session, building on the relationships developed through our summer Legislative Outreach Program. These connections give us opportunities to share community concerns, ask thoughtful questions, and advocate for responsive, transparent and accountable government.

Improving the quality of life for all Iowans and healing our divided political landscape will require sustained advocacy. To learn more about the work of the Advocacy Committee or to join us in the discussion, e-mail Kathy Wandro at kwandro@mac.com. We welcome your ideas and your energy.

Join us for the LWVJC Membership Legislative Luncheon on December 5 to meet our legislators and hear about their priorities and predictions for the upcoming session. Reconnect with our League members. Reinforce your commitment to Iowa's future. As we seek the best outcomes for Iowa, our voices matter—at the ballot box and throughout the year. And always choose hope.

Kathy Wandro
Advocacy Chair



FUNDRAISING
Support Our Local League

Coming to a Mailbox Near You . . .

The Fundraising Committee will kick off its 2026-2027 campaign November 1! We are aiming to increase the number of members who participate. Last year, approximately 25% of us contributed to our fundraising campaign. We hope to hear from you to push us past that 25% mark!

Remember that when you pay your dues, 80% supports the work of the national and state leagues. The work at these levels is important. For example, LWV joined in a lawsuit challenging an Executive Order targeting mail-in voting and voter eligibility This effort was successful, and the court granted the injunction. As a result, the USPS was prevented from refusing to deliver mail ballots for the November election. This is just one of many examples of LWVUS activity. The national league also offers some support for local league activities

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such as partial support for our “get out the vote” campaign. Their work represents important uses of our national dues.

Still, that leaves the responsibility of our local league efforts primarily up to us. While our dues provide support for some of our activities, donations are essential to continue many of the initiatives of our local league. We are asking you to join in supporting the Johnson County League with your gift at whatever level is manageable for you. Examples of our league’s work include:

- Voter registration
- Candidate forums
- Legislative forums
- Education programs for the community
- Programming for members, such as Making Connections
- “Get out the vote’ activities such as our post card campaign for the midterm elections

Our programs have associated costs for venues, materials, honoraria, and other expenses. In addition, we have basic operational costs for membership meetings, technology, paper, postage and all the costs of “doing business.”

In these challenging times, we need support from you to continue to serve our local community in ways that encourage engagement. 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://my.lwv.org/iowa/johnson-county/donate

or scan the QR code:

Jean Donham,
on behalf of the Fundraising Team

EDUCATION

New Members Welcome!

The Education Committee is currently discussing topics for programs for the first part of 2027. One possibility under discussion is a forum on the topic: How does the shifting media environment affect local decision making? The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 12, 11:00 a.m. at The Green House. If you might be interested in this committee, please come to the meeting. We hope to find new members and a new chair for the coming year.

Please contact Rebecca Conard at rebeccaconard@gmail.com or Kathleen Kamerick at kckamerick@gmail.com to get more information about the committee or to attend the next meeting.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

All League members are invited to come to Joan Cook’s home, 2835 Friendship St. on November 12th at 5:30 for our next gathering. We will hear from our four Johnson County League members, Jeanne Bancroft, Karin Franklin, Vicki Aden and Kathy Wandro who attended the League of Women Voters National Convention last summer. The League’s strength is partly due to our presence as a strong national force and voice for voters across the country. Our local League is where we focus, but it is important that we understand the larger picture from National and how we connect with that. Our presenters will summarize what they learned at the national convention and the new focus since National declared in the spring of 2025 that we are in a “Constitutional Crisis.”

Our meeting with include time for conversation, appetizers, wine, and soft drinks so please come prepared to learn more about the League and have a good time meeting old and new League members. Please park on the south side of Friendship Street or in Joan’s driveway. The gathering will conclude around 7:30. *Gaylen Wobeter, chair*