



The Voter

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Ames, IA

Web-site: <http://www.ameslww.org>

March 2009

From the President

Dialogue about the National Popular Vote Compact has come to Iowa. A bill has been introduced in the Iowa Legislature that would add our state to the list of states interested in modifying or eliminating the Electoral College process for choosing our president.

At the League of Women Voters—US national convention in Portland, Ore. last June, the compact was being marketed both as an intermediary step to eventual direct vote election of the president and an end unto itself which would not require amending the United States Constitution.

(Continued on page 2)

Volunteers Needed

One-time task assisting with assembling notebooks for the Ready to Run campaign training conference. The date for assembly is Sat, March 28. A three-hour commitment is requested. Maybe morning or afternoon depending on availability of volunteers. Volunteers must be able to be on their feet for most of the time period. Will take place on the ISU campus. If you can help, please contact Sharon Wirth: sharonwirth@yahoo.com or 233-2415 and let us know if you can help for a morning or afternoon period. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.



Celebrate Women's History Month 2 p.m. Sunday, March 21

Ames Public Library
See page 3 for more details



Mark Your Calendar for March and beyond

- March 19
Thursday** **7:30 p.m. General Meeting**
Local issue: Transforming Iowa's Mental Health System
Northminister Presbyterian Church
1416 20th.
- April 1
Wednesday** **7:00 p.m. President Obama's First 100 Days Forum with Arnie Arnesen and Steffen Schmidt**
Sun Room, Memorial Union
Iowa State University
- April 4
Saturday** **8:30 a.m. Legislative Wake-Up**
Ames City Council Chambers
515 Clark Ave.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President Obama's First 100 Days Forum	3
General Meeting Notice	4
League Studies/Statements	4
Ready to Run™ Training	5

(Continued from page 1) President

LWVUS has had a position statement on abolishing the Electoral College for 38 years.

The compact is an agreement between participating states to award all of the states electoral votes to the candidate winning the national popular vote. The compact does not activate until the total number of electoral votes covered by the agreement reaches 270—the minimum needed to win the presidency.

Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland and New Jersey have passed National Popular Vote legislation. Those four states have 50 electoral votes between them. At least 15 other states including California have bills pending.

Approval is expected by the state legislators in most of the more populous states considering the compact. In Iowa, the opposite appears true. Our local legislative team told a group of Ames Chamber of Commerce members two weeks ago that the Iowa bill “was going nowhere”.

LWVUS set a rather quick turnaround for their study of the national popular Vote compact, launching it last year and requiring local leagues to report their consensus results by May 1, 2009. Your Ames board felt we could not fit a national study into this year’s schedule.

But with the increased attention this legislative session and the impact it could have on Iowa’s votes, we want to offer our members an opportunity to participate the study consensus.

We will hold a study meeting, followed by a consensus vote following our annual breakfast meeting on April 25 at Bethesda Lutheran Church. If you want LWVUS to know what you think about the NPV compact, please reserve the entire morning of April 25 for the League.

More will be included in the Annual Meeting Voter at the end of this month.

In the mean time, you can find information for the national study at lww.org.

Last month, I put out a call for service on the board. Randi Peters, Barb Munson and Jane Halliburton continue to work on the 2009-10 slate. There are still spots open.

We need to get nominations wrapped up by March 23, the next Ames Voter deadline. Please contact one of the nominating committee if you are interested in providing service on the board.

The LWV-US is also looking for nominees to fill its 2010-12 national board of directors slate. Sandy Powell from Chadron, Neb., is our liaison for the national nominating committee. Sandy communicates the following:

“You will have an essential role to play in the process of building a slate for 2010-2012. We’ll make things as easy as possible by providing information and forms in LWVUS communications and on the For Members area of the web site. We have also initiated a nominating committee discussion list. It’s a place to ask questions and discuss nominating committee issues with members across the country.”

If you want to weigh in on who should next lead the national league, you can contact Sandy at masters@gpcom.net or 402.469.6289.

Thanks,
Lauris Olson, President



**Membership in the League offers personal involvement for the public good.
The League of Women Voters is
where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to
civic improvement.**

Sing to celebrate Women's History Month



The Ames League of Women Voters is joining the Ames Historical Society, the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics, and the Ames Public Library to present an afternoon of songs from the suffragette movement.

Janet Alcorn has organized this recap of special songs and promises the audience will be allowed to sing-along. The League has promised to bring snacks and drinks.

The performance is at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 29, at the Ames Public Library. We hope to see many of our members there. If you are willing to supply some treats or help tend the refreshments table that day, please contact Mary Richards at maryrich@isunet.net or 292-8174.



President Obama's First 100 Days

A Forum with Arnie Arnesen and Steffen Schmidt

Arnie Arnesen

**Wed, April 1, 2009, 7 PM, Sun Room, Memorial Union
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa,**

This free forum will feature political commentator and former **New Hampshire gubernatorial candidate**

Arnie Arnesen who hosts the New Hampshire television show "Political Chowder," is a commentator on WBUR's "Greater Boston" with Emily Rooney, a regular commentator on New England Cable News, and on SBS TV Australia. She is also a weekly guest on "Talk@12," on Iowa Public Radio. Arnesen is a frequent lecturer at Harvard University, The University of New Hampshire, and Dartmouth.

She will be joined by Iowa State Political Science Professor Steffen Schmidt best known as "Dr. Politics," who is the longtime commentator on WOI Radio's weekly political call-in show. He is also a CNN en Español election analyst.

Cosponsored by: The F. Wendell Miller Lectureship Fund*, **Ames League of Women Voters**, Political Science Department, Sociology Department, International Programs, LAS College, The Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics, National Affairs (funded by GSB), Schmidt Educational Authoring Services (SEAS) LLC, and campus political clubs.

* This lecture was made possible in part by the generosity of F. Wendell Miller, who left his entire estate jointly to Iowa State University and the University of Iowa. Mr. Miller, who died in 1995 at age 97, was born in Altoona, Illinois, grew up in Rockwell City, graduated from Grinnell College and Harvard Law School and practiced law in Des Moines and Chicago before returning to Rockwell City to manage his family's farm holdings and to practice law. His will helped to establish the F. Wendell Miller Trust, the annual earnings on which, in part, helped to support this activity.

LWV Ames March 19 General Meeting Notice

7:30 p.m., Northminister Presbyterian Church 1416 20th Street
 Topic: "Transforming Iowa's Mental Health System"
 Presenter: Nancy Brown

Ames member Nancy Brown, has been a member of the study of mental health delivery systems in Iowa since it was approved by the LWVIA at its 2007 state convention. She will present an overview of Iowa's mental health system, and then lead a discussion of the proposed state League position on mental health that has been developed throughout the course of the study.

Comments and suggestions at this meeting will be considered by the study group as it refines the proposed position, which will be presented at the state convention in Ottumwa on June 6, where delegates will vote to concur or not concur. **Your opinion counts!** So join us March 19 to add your voice to the Leagues deliberations.

Comprehensive Study of Mental Health Delivery Systems in Iowa

PROPOSED Position on Mental Health

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a centrally coordinated state mental health system that ensures convenient and equitable access to care for all Iowans (children and adults) who need mental health services.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports adequate funding of an

array of services, especially those that promote early detection and treatment of mental illnesses and co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Appropriate levels of care should be available that meet people's needs in or near their home communities.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a mental health system that individualizes care to meet a person's specific mental health needs and focuses on the person's strengths and ability to recover.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a mental health system that is accountable to its consumers and communities by providing efficient, effective, and evidence-based programs and services.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports eradication of the stigma of mental illness and believes persons with mental health needs should be treated with the same respect, and their illnesses treated with the same urgency, as persons with other physical health needs.

Related Statements from Other LWV of Iowa Positions

Juvenile Justice



The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a community response to juvenile delinquent behavior that advocates the use of public and private resources to:

—Establish and adequately fund a wide variety of treatment options to address children's underlying or contributing problems such as alcoholism, drug addiction, suicidal tendencies, illiteracy, etc.

—Encourage coordination among treatment agencies.

Sentencing and Corrections

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports legislation that considers offenders with special needs. Some examples of offenders with special needs are the mentally retarded, mentally ill, geriatric inmates, and medically needy.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa's supports Iowa's system of community-based corrections (CBCs) for offenders. CBCs should provide treatment, when appropriate, for offenders in the community while maintaining safeguards for the public. Iowa should maximize community corrections by providing adequate funding.

Health Care Position of LWVUS

Includes general headings of goals, basic level of quality care (the only specific mention of mental health care), financing and administration, taxes, cost control, equity issues, and allocation of resources to individuals.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports eradication of the stigma of mental illness and believes persons with mental health needs should be treated with the same respect, and their illnesses treated with the same urgency, as persons with other physical health needs.

Catt Center and the League 2009 *Ready to Run*™.



Although women comprise the majority of Iowa's population and it's voters, Iowa's record of electing women to federal, state, and local political office lags behind the nation in many respects.

To help reverse this trend, the

Carrie Chapman Catt for Women and Politics and the League of Women Voters of Ames are hosting the 2009 *Ready to Run*™ Campaign Training for Women on Friday, April 3, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Scheman Center at the Iowa State Center in Ames.

Registration is \$75 if received on-line or postmarked before March 21 or \$100 per person if received after March 21. The fee includes all sessions and training materials; breakfast, lunch and afternoon refreshments; a workshop notebook; and a comprehensive training manual on a CD. You can apply for a scholarship for tuition and/or travel by completing that section on the registration form.

Individuals can register on-line by credit card through this link on the Catt Center web site: <http://www.las.iastate.edu/events/readytorunform.asp>.

Or, you can download a registration form to complete and mail to the Catt Center at this link on the Catt Center's web site: <http://www.las.iastate.edu/CattCenter/runform.shtml>.

Although Ready to Run™ Iowa addresses topics unique to women as they seek greater participation in the political process, this non-partisan training program is for anyone considering seeking public office, working on a campaign, or becoming more involved politically. It presents a unique opportunity for potential candidates to hear directly from prominent elected and appointed women leaders, campaign consultants, and party officials about how to get Ready to Run™.

The training program will cover topics such as positioning yourself for public office, developing a campaign plan, fund-raising, interactive media training, and navigating political parties.

Ready to Run™ was established by the Center for Women and Politics at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. The Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics and the League of Women Votes of Ames have adapted this program to encourage women in Iowa to seek public office.

NATIONAL NEWS: ABOUT LWVUS FOR DETAILS ABOUT THESE ITEMS PLEASE GO TO <http://www.lwv.org/>

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.