



The Voter

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

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

April 2009

From the President

Times change, technology changes and long-loved friends decide to change their roles in our lives.

We've experienced it all this past year. So while your LWV-Ames board has chosen no formal motto for this year's annual meeting, "change" will certainly be the underlying theme.

As you read the individual directors' reports in this Annual Meeting edition of the Voter, you will see that we did more than just deal with change, we often instigated it.

We varied general meeting times, topics and locations. We tried new ways of community outreach and membership recruitment.

The board meeting schedule also underwent a period of change, as we tried holding meetings every two months instead

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Reservations now being taken for the Ames League of Women Voters 2009 Annual Meeting.

Date: Saturday, April 25

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Bethesda Lutheran Church

1517 Northwestern Ave., Ames

Menu: Brunch catered by Ames Best Catering

Program: Electronic Media and the 2008 Elections

Cost: \$10 (pay at the door)

Reservations due by April 17. RSVP to Bev Kruempel, 292-

5029 or kruempel@msn.com

Mark Your Calendar for April and beyond

Saturday, April 25 Annual League Meeting
9:30 a.m. Bethesda Lutheran Church
1517 Northwestern Ave.
Note: This is a change in location from what is listed in the program book.

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of monthly. Sixty days between meetings did not facilitate good communication or coordination, so in January, we went back to monthly board meetings.

We sent our heart-felt appreciation to Voter editor and webmaster, Selva Lehman, as she turned the duties over to Renee Jerman and we will do the same on April 25 when treasurer Jackie Manatt hands over accounting duties to Karen Shimp.

Selva and Jackie have gone above and beyond what was expected from them. Renee and Karen have some big sensible, but stylish, shoes to fill, but I'm sure they service us just as diligently and well.

Technology continues to affect how we communicate with and learn from each other. Your local board used e-mail a couple of times to make decisions when it was not practical or prudent to wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting. We continue to discuss how much information to provide via e-mail and the Internet, and how frequently to use these means.

Technology also became more important in keeping our communication with LWV- US open as our national office decided to suspend publication of the National Voter due to financial concerns.

In fact, technology is changing our lives so much that as you read this, I am finalizing the program for the annual meeting – a presentation on the electronic media's effect on the 2008 elections.

The final change of the 2008-09 LWV Ames year – or the first change of 2009-10 – will be a meeting after the annual meeting. Those interested in learning about the National Popular Vote Compact and providing input on national's study of the compact are encouraged to join us.

I'd like to thank each of you for giving me the opportunity to lead this wonderful organization.

Submitted by Lauris Olson

2008-09 Annual Reports

Observer Corps

During 2008-2009 the Ames LWV has had observers at meetings of the Story County Board of Supervisors, Mary Greeley Medical Center, and the Ames City Council. Our thanks to Barbara Munson, Nancy Brown and John Tait respectively for attending these meetings.

Observers form an important communication link between the government body they cover and the LWV Board as they identify issues and emerging issues of interest to the League. Equally important is the role observers play in ensuring that the open meetings law is being followed.

The Observers Corp is not at full strength, which means there are opportunities for new members to join the Corps. Because of League interest in all aspects of local government, we would really like to have an observer at the Ames School Board meetings, the Planning and Zoning Commission, Story County Conservation Board, and the Story County Medical Center. Consider the opportunity and volunteer. One present observer was heard to comment "attending these meetings is really quite addictive."

Voter Service

This past year, the LWV and the Ames Chamber of Commerce co-sponsored three candidate forums at City Hall.

On September 3, 2008, The Ames School Board Forum was held from 5:30-7 pm. The attendance was good. We thought that by holding it at 5:30 instead of 5:00, it would be easier for the candidates to all get there on time. Another city meeting was to be held at 7pm, so we needed to be out before 7pm. The meeting time worked well for our group.

On October 20, the Candidates Forum for State Legislators was held from 7-9pm. Attendance was good.

On October 27, a forum for the Story County Candidates was held from 7-8:30pm. Since only four people on the panel were running for these positions (Two of them unopposed) less time was allotted.

The LWV sponsored two opportunities for voter registrations on October 4 from 1-4pm at Borders and on October 17 at Prairie Moon Winery. The ISU Women's Studies fund raiser held at the winery was a nice venue to sign up new voters.

We realize that the forums and voter registrations are a valuable service to the community. We are honored to be given this task.

Submitted by Randi Peters

Membership Report

From May, 2008 through March, 2009 eight people joined the Ames League of Women Voters. Referrals from our members prove to be the most successful source of new membership. Candidate Forums and Legislative Wake-ups have provided good opportunities for Membership to recruit prospective members. In October, we were invited to staff a voter registration table at the first annual fund raiser for ISU's Women's Studies Program plus we were allowed to recruit members for League.

When the name of a prospective member is given to Membership, that person is contacted by phone and a follow-up invitation letter to join League, a program booklet and a brochure/application form are sent. Prospective members are eligible to receive the *Voter* three times which introduces them to all the activities, studies, and involvements of League and hopefully provides an inducement to join us.

After the Treasurer sends two membership renewal notifications, Membership does a personal reminder phone call, but we still had nine drop their membership. With the addition of eight new members, it is not difficult to calculate a negative growth in membership. Consequently, we are asking you to forward names of prospective members and any suggestions you have for recruitment. Your help is appreciated.

Submitted by Barbara Gwiasda and Angie Shirk

Community Outreach

The mission of the League is to encourage informed and active participation in government, to work to increase understanding of major public policy issues and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Three activities coordinated by the Vice President this past year supported the mission while increasing visibility of the LWV of Ames.

In October, several Ames league members participated in the re-enactment of the 1908 suffrage parade sponsored by the Boone Historical Society. The parade celebrated the 100th anniversary of the only woman's suffrage parade held in Iowa and one of the first held in the U.S. The parade and related events were an excellent opportunity to learn about the long road to women's right to vote. Attired in historically appropriate costumes, parade marchers carried banners and signs while following the original parade route in

downtown Boone. The League also contributed financially to the event.

In January we held our second annual "Ames Happening" event. OK, I should say we planned to hold the event. All arrangements were in place to hear from Mayor Ann Campbell, school board president Gail Johnston, and MGMC Board of Trustees chair person Sarah Buck. The purpose of the program was to have each speaker reflect on 2008 and look ahead to 2009 as well as to offer citizens the opportunity to ask questions and interact with these three top elected officials. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate and we received 7 inches of snow in the early morning hours before the event. This caused cancellation of the event. Due to scheduling complexities, we chose to tape the presentation of each participant and the program was broadcast on city cable channel 12 numerous times in addition to other media picking up the presentations.

We again partnered with the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics at ISU to present statewide campaign training open to all but focused on encouraging women to be more involved politically. This was held in early April with an excellent group of presenters and speakers. The conference presents a unique opportunity to hear directly from prominent elected and appointed women leaders, campaign consultants and party officials. The LWV of Ames was involved in planning the event, provided financial support and volunteers for organizing, printing and assembling the conference notebook supplied to participants and presenters. This year 60 participants registered. This is the second time this event was held in hopes of increasing the number of women in Iowa holding elective office.

I would like to thank each of the volunteers who responded to the call to be involved with these events. It has been a pleasure working with each of you throughout this past year. Together we have accomplished much and created wonderful memories.

Submitted by Sharon Wirth, Vice-President

General Meeting Planner Report, 2008-2009

This year's program planning for League of Women Voters of Ames was not without its difficulties. One of the two general meeting planners experienced some serious family health problems that caused her to resign mid-year. The other was out of Ames for seven weeks during the autumn. Between these two circumstances, general meetings got off to a shaky start. In fact, the November meeting on the City of Ames urban growth policy appeared to be without a speaker until board member Jim Popken jumped in at literally the last minute.

As has been customary for the last few years, the primary base of operations for general meetings has been Northminster Presbyterian Church, whose facilities and staff support are well suited to our group. However, we did try out meeting at other venues for a few of the general meetings this year.

The first general meeting of the year was held in August: a member potluck, with a review of the LWVUS national convention presented by president Lauris Olson.

The September topic was a review and discussion of Ames' electric utility, featuring a tour of the city electric plant and the subsequent discussion at Ames City Hall moderated by the mayor (Ann Campbell) and the two board members (Jim Popken and Matthew Goodman) who are League members.

The October general meeting convened at a Mary Greeley Medical Center meeting room and was organized and led by member Selva Lehman.

The January meeting, which was to have been in conjunction with the League-sponsored "Ames Happenings" organized by Sharon Wirth, was cancelled because of a winter storm.

In February, more than 30 people gathered at the Northminster location to hear Linda Voit (a member of AMOS) and Shazia Manus, President and CEO of the Greater Iowa Credit Union explain and answer questions about the Pay Day Loan industry in Iowa.

The March meeting drew two-dozen people to listen to and offer suggestions for Nancy Brown's presentation on the proposed LWV- Iowa position on mental health services in Iowa.

The April general meeting will also be the annual meeting of the local league, It will be held at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, April 25, at Bethesda Lutheran Church, starting with a brunch catered by Ames Best Catering. We are finalizing arrangements for a program on electronic communication during the 2008 campaigns. The April meeting will be followed by a one-hour presentation and consensus discussion on LWV – US' study of the National Popular Vote Compact.

The May meeting is anticipated to feature a legislative re-cap by our retiring state lobbyist, Judie Hoffman.

Submitted by Mary E. Richards

Annual Meeting Information

Openings remain on the 2009-10 Board of Directors Slate

The LWV Nominating Committee for 2009 has filled the slate of open offices as detailed below and presents this final report. Please note that the positions that are already filled and not up for election this year. The year the term expires is shown below the Board position.

President 2010 2011	<i>Lauris Olson</i> <i>Two-year term</i>
President – Elect: 2010	Vacant One year term
Secretary 2010	<i>Bev Kruempel</i>
Treasurer 2011	Karen Shimp
Membership 2011	Barbara Gwiasda Angie Shirk
Meeting Planners 2010	<i>Mary Richards</i> <i>Cheryl Binzen</i>
Finance 2011	Vacant (Off-Board committee Marlys Potter and Karen Bolluyt)
Publicity 2011	Vacant
Observer Corps 2011	Marcia Thompson Jean Prestemon
Voter Service 2009	Vacant

<i>Legislative Action</i> 2010	<i>Mary Ann Dilla</i>
Voter Editor 2010	Renee Jerman
Nominating Committee	To be appointed LWV board member and committee convener

Submitted by Jane Halliburton, Barbara Munson and Randi Peters

President's note: I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to Jane, Barbara and Randi. They have worked diligently to fill open board positions with a mixture of experienced members and enthusiastic newcomers.

I am sure they will continue to solicit candidates who may be nominated from the floor the day of the annual meeting. If they haven't had a chance to approach you, but you would like to provide service to the league, please let one of them know that you are interested.

I'd also like to draw attention to the effective use of co-directorships. Assuming responsibility for board duties can be daunting; many members have found service much easier to perform when sharing the load. So if you are interested, but don't want to go it alone, talk to your friends in the league. Ask them to share the service and the satisfaction.

Lauris Olson

Budget committee to present proposed budget at annual meeting

The budget committee has put together the attached budget to propose for 2009-2010. There are not any major changes, but we would call to your attention three things:

1. Propose dropping "Regional Meetings" and folding it into "Other Meetings." LWVIA used to provide regional meetings, but they haven't for several years.
2. Under "Other," propose dropping "Scarves" and substituting "Miscellaneous."
3. As last year, the beginning balance is projected to be higher than the ending balance.

Submitted by the 2009 Budget Committee
Carole Brown
Mary Kay Hogan
Jackie Manatt (ex officio)

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF AMES
PROPOSED
BUDGET
2009-2010**

	2008-2009 Budget	YTD (3/1/09)	Proposed 2009-2010 Budget
BEGINNING BALANCE (checking and CD)	9,100.00		7,824.00
INCOME			
<i>Dues</i>	5,800.00	3,327.00	5,803.00
<i>Contributions</i>			
Member			
Nonmember			
Subtotal	1,500.00	615.00	1,500.00
<i>Other</i>			
Interest (checking and CD)	200.00	105.00	200.00
Ed Fund*	0.00		0.00
Dinners/Misc	250.00	0.00	250.00
TOTAL IN- COME	7,750.00	4,047.00	7,753.00
EXPENSES			
<i>Board and Ad- ministration</i>			
President	100.00	0.00	100.00
Treasurer	150.00	65.00	150.00
Misc. Board Expenses	50.00	200.00	150.00
<i>Administrative Committees</i>			
Finance	150.00	0.00	150.00
Membership	100.00	75.00	100.00
Publicity	500.00	394.00	500.00
<i>Delegates & Travel</i>			
State Con- vention/Council	250.00	0.00	250.00
National Con- vention	2,000.00	1,617.00	2,000.00
Regional Workshops	75.00	0.00	
<i>Other Meetings</i>	25.00	0.00	50.00

	2008-2009 Budget	YTD (3/1/09)	Proposed 2009-2010 Budget
<i>Financial Support for the League</i>			
National PMP			
Local Account	1,414.00	1,456.00	1,540.00
EF Account*	--	--	--
State PMP			
Local Account	2,374.00	1,763.00	2,374.00
EF Account*	--	--	--
<i>Bulletins</i>			
VOTER	500.00	130.00	500.00
Membership Directory*	100.00	0.00	100.00
Web Page*	100.00	0.00	150.00
<i>Educational Activities</i>			
Publications	10.00	0.00	10.00
Study Groups	100.00	0.00	200.00
Observer Corps	10.00	0.00	10.00
Voter Service*	400.00	177.00	200.00
Local LWV Meetings	400.00	149.00	400.00
<i>Position Support</i>	50.00	0.00	50.00
<i>Other</i>			
Dinners/Scarves	150.00	0.00	250.00
Legislative Forums	150.00	25.00	150.00
Scholarships*	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ready to Run Workshop	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
Ready to Run Workshop	150.00	0.00	150.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	10,308.00	6,051.00	9,534.00
ENDING BALANCE	6,542.00		6,043.00
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF AMES			
PROPOSED EDUCATION FUND BUDGET, 09-10			
BEGINNING BALANCE	3,700.00		5,040.00
INCOME			
Member/Nonmember	2,000.00	2,405.00	2,000.00
<i>From Beg. Cash Balance</i>	--		
TOTAL INCOME	2,000.00	2,405.00	2,000.00
EXPENSES			
National PMP	1,414.00	1,456.00	1,540.00
State PMP	264.00	261.00	264.00
Membership Directory	0.00	0.00	
Web Page	0.00	0.00	
Voter Service	0.00	0.00	
Scholarships	0.00	0.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,678.00	1,717.00	1,804.00
ENDING BALANCE	4,022.00		5,236.00



(Photo by Lauris Olson)

Ames League of Women Voters member Mary Richards (in the hat) portrays Carrie Chapman Catt during a musical salute to the stalwart leaders of the fight to earn women the right to vote in the United States of America at the Ames Public Library on March 29.

“The Yellow Rose of Suffrage” also starred (alphabetically) Janet Alcorn, Kitty Fisher, Duffy Lorr and Sam Wormley. Virginia Molgaard was the accompanist.

The performance was part of the Ames Public Library’s observance of March as Women’s History Month. Co-sponsors were the Ames Historical Society, the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics and the Ames League of Women Voters.

Carrie Chapman Catt Award 2009 Martha Isaacson

The 2009 Carrie Chapman Catt Award selection committee is pleased to announce that Martha Isaacson is this year’s recipient. Martha was chosen for her varied contributions to the League and the community.

Among her many accomplishments, Martha guided the Ames League of Women Voters during the Story County Hospital Study and its resulting advocacy, giving outstanding leadership and guidance.

Martha is not only a long standing member of the League but was raised by a mother who spent her life as a community activist for the benefit of all citizens, which included the LWV in Marshalltown.

Jane Greimann recruited her to join the Ames LWV when she married Dean Isaacson, but was not able to join because, as the Marshall County Auditor, Martha maintained her legal residence in Marshalltown. She joined in 1995 as soon as she quit her position as Auditor.

Her professional involvement started as a systems analyst in the "Silicone Valley" of California. Martha has also been an administrator in the "War on Poverty," running Head Start programs and a Community Action Agency in Virginia; director of Iowa Gov. Robert Ray's Drug Abuse Authority; owner/operator of a small gourmet kitchen shop; a successful candidate for Marshall County Auditor; and manager of the Agronomy Department at Iowa State University.

During those years, if she was not working or raising kids, she was involved in community betterment of one

sort or another, including marching on the Washington D.C. Mall for equal rights.

Martha has also served as president of the local community mental health center, a board member for the United Way, and is currently the chair of the Clothing Room, which provides free clothing to the approximately 400 families per month visiting the food pantry at her church.

Her many involvements with the LWV include:

- Representing the Ames LWV on the "Add Women" (ERA) campaign for the State of Iowa in 1981.
- Serving as Treasurer for the 5 member state-wide Add-Women-Board. We succeeded in adding Women to the Iowa Constitution.
- Serving as President of the Ames LWV from 1998 - 2000
- Serving as Voter Services Chair from 2000-2002
- Serving as Board Secretary and Story County Hospital Board Observer from 2003 to 2005.

Congratulations Martha and thank you for all that you do!

The 2009 Selection Committee
Selva R. Lehman
Johnnie Hammond
Jackie Manatt

Three readings on the National Popular Vote Compact

President's Note: To prepare for the consensus meeting at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 25, please read the complete version of this paper (available at www.lwv.org) by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.

Background for the National Popular Vote Compact

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

Currently four states have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact. There are pros and cons to this plan, which are discussed in full in papers found on the LWVUS Web site.

Summaries of these papers are also available. League members can learn more about the plan from these sources and consider its ramifications at consensus meetings across the country. Be sure to participate! Who better than the

League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue?

Opposition to the National Popular Vote Compact

There is little respect for the Electoral College (EC). The League opposes it and most voters want a direct popular vote. But is the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) an appropriate way to achieve that result?

Evaluating Fairness Voters supporting the candidate who receives the majority of votes in their state want their state's electors to support their choice. Adoption of the NPV Compact may require a state elections official to direct its state's electors to cast their ballots in support of a candidate who was not favored by the voters of that state.

Passage of the NPV Compact will result in the emphasis of presidential campaigns shifting from the battleground states to areas of large concentrations of population. So, while some voters are disenfranchised by the EC, others might be disenfranchised by the NPV Compact. Because the Compact requires entry into a contract with other states which binds state elections officials to direct electors to vote in a certain way, regardless of the outcome of the election in their state, states' rights are diminished.

In addition, one can question the advisability of a method that bypasses the normal constitutional amendment process in this manner.

Constitutional Issues Many constitutional scholars argue that this plan will lead to extensive litigation involving challenges to the NPV Compact on issues such as the scope of constitutional powers, the Compact itself, the need for congressional approval, the concerns of non-compacting states, and constitutional protections of state interests and their role in elections.

Mechanical Issues/Flaws The methods for enforcement of this plan are unclear. Opponents question the power and timing to withdraw from the Compact and the power to enforce compliance.

Others express concern about an onslaught of lawsuits between compacting and non-compacting states, as well as procedures in close elections.

The plan, allowing the election of a president by a plurality of votes, does not improve on the current system; neither the present system nor the NPV Compact requires that the president be elected by a majority.

Other Issues The Voting Rights Act requires pre-clearance for legislative changes. This, too, has the capacity to engender lawsuits to ensure compliance.

League Issues This proposal does nothing to achieve the goal of uniform standards of voting. The NPV Compact is effective when passed by states representing 270 electoral votes, effectively negating the impact on presidential elections of the voters in states which represent the other half of electoral votes. A system which assures no voter disenfranchisement is a better way to assure that every person's vote counts.

The League has long supported the abolition of the EC. Although the NPV Compact purports to foster the same result, it creates additional concerns. Amending the U.S. Constitution is a difficult process, and we should seriously consider supporting the normal amendment procedures to abolish the EC versus this specific "work-around."

Support for the National Popular Vote Compact

Because the League already supports direct election of the president, arguments against the Electoral College (EC) are not included in the material supporting the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact).

Constitutional Issues The NPV Compact is a way to assure that every person's vote counts equally and that the person receiving the most votes is the winner of the presidency. The same result would be achieved by constitutional amendment but the U.S. Constitution is difficult to amend. The NPV Compact is a viable way to attain the same goal as amending the Constitution to eliminate the EC. A constitutional amendment is not needed to effectuate the NPV Compact because states already have the right to implement changes in how electors are appointed.

The NPV Compact is a compact between states—a method of concerted state action that has long been sanctioned by the Constitution and the courts.

Evaluating Fairness A candidate can be elected president by receiving the most electoral votes even though he or she did not receive the most popular votes. This is not a result voters expect or desire. As election campaigns are now waged, major emphasis and resources are concentrated in

key EC battleground states because that is where elections are won or lost. The NPV Compact would eliminate the emphasis on battleground states and would be more apt to assure campaign strategies that appeal to a broad spectrum of the electorate which would foster greater voter participation.

The argument that the plan would negatively impact states' rights is countered by poll results showing that most voters want their individual vote to count, rather than allotting them to electors representing the state as a whole.

Any claim that the NPV Compact is an unprecedented disregard for the U.S. Constitution ignores the reality that voting rights have been changed through state action many times. Women's suffrage, for example, was instituted by twenty states before passage of the constitutional amendment that made the right universal.

Mechanical Considerations Those opposed to the NPV Compact cite mechanical issues that might lead the NPV to fail, but the Compact includes provisions that address issues of enforcement, winning levels and recounts.

Other Issues The Voting Rights Act and the NPV Compact are in harmony, assuring equality of votes throughout the United States.

League Issues Opponents say that the NPV Compact conflicts with the League's support of uniform voting standards. Supporters of the Compact advocate its passage in all states, which would result in uniform voting standards. It is true that the NPV Compact could be in effect for an interlude when not all states had signed on to it. The same could be demonstrated for other laws, such as the Equal Rights Amendment. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that uniform voting standards are not now in effect. The NPV Compact could help assure that every vote would be counted equally.

Further, implementation of a method which assures direct election of the president by popular vote is in keeping with the League's long-held position.

League of Women Voters of Ames
Voter Editor: Renee Jerman
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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.