

The Voter

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

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

Annual Reports April 2008

Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 26, 2008 - Brunch at 9 am

Cost is \$ 9.00

Green Hills Retirement Community Dining Room

Make your reservations by contacting Barbara Munson

at 232-5077 or amesmunson@aol.com

PLEASE MAKE SURE TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION BY APRIL 21ST.

THE CATERERS AT GREEN HILLS NEED TO HAVE A COUNT

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PRESIDENT

As my term as president ends, I send a warm thank you to all who have served this past year on the Board. This has been a hard working enthusiastic team. Even with some vacant Board positions, we have accomplished much.

We have continued with excellent newsletters, informative general meetings, candidate forums and legislative wake ups to encourage informed and active participation in government. We took action and lobbied on issues related to Story County Hospital. We traversed through the maze of information and questions to complete participation in the national study on immigration.

I believe the Board should be especially pleased with three new activities that were planned during the year. In June, the LWV of Ames cosponsored (with the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics at ISU) the first Iowa statewide "Ready to Run" conference. This event provided valuable training to women running or thinking of running for office, either elected or appointed. We received very positive feedback and look forward to continued involvement and sponsorship of this event.

In late November, our "Introduction to Iowa Caucuses" was well attended. Partnering with Story County Democrats and Story County Republicans, non-partisan training was conducted. Over 60 people

attended.

First-time and infrequent caucus goers

were targeted. I think it is safe to suggest we helped to increase the numbers of caucus attendees and contributed to the record breaking attendance in the state of Iowa.

In January, the first "Ames Happening" was held. This event brought together Ames mayor Ann Campbell, Ames school board president Gail Johnston, and MGMC Board of Trustees chair Sarah Buck. Each reviewed events and issues of 2007 and looked ahead to 2008 for their respective entities. Broadcast live on Channel 12 and later available through other local media venues, we were able to reach a broad audience. This was an unusual opportunity to hear first hand from these elected officials at the same time. Positive feedback was received and we look forward to presenting the event again.

Thanks to Board members and League members who committed time and energy resulting in another productive, successful year for the LWV of Ames. Success is always a team effort and we are fortunate to have an exceptional team in the LWV of Ames. I look forward to seeing each of you at our annual meeting on Saturday, April 26th. The brunch event will be held at 9 am at Green Hills. See you there!

Sharon Wirth

PRESIDENT ELECT

Combined report: **Legislative Action, Voter Services and President-Elect**



The Ames League of Women Voters board of directors operated short two members during the 2007-08 year.

The Legislative Action position, normally held for a two-year term, became vacant after one-year when I moved into the President-Elect spot in May 2007. The Voter Services position became vacant at the same after Miriam Patterson completed her term and last year's nominating committee was unable to find a replacement.

The board itself also could not identify members willing or able to step into either position, so we began looking at other ways to complete the tasks and deliver the core services these two positions oversee in our community.

As a stop-gap, measure, I agreed to take on the Voter Services responsibility to co-organize the fall candidate forums with the Ames Chamber of Commerce. We co-hosted the Ames Community School Board candidates forum in September and the Ames City Council candidates forum in November.

Selva Lehman, our Voter editor, made certain our Voter Services Guide, complete with contact information on local officials, was updated and ready for distribution. Various board members placed the brochures in public information sites around the community.

The duties of the Legislative Action chair were divided a bit differently. Several members of our chapter attended the State League's annual Legislative Issues briefing in Altoona in October. Three of them then spent a day in Des Moines in February lobbying state legislators on league issues.

New Ames League member Mary Ann Dilla volunteered to organize and moderate this year's series of monthly televised Legislative Wake-Up Sessions. Attendance at the forums has been up this year, with over 30 in-person audience members at the February event and about 20 in the audience at the March session, even though it was held the first Saturday of spring break. Audience questions and comments continue to cover a broad range of issues outside the scope of State League priorities.

This year's board vacancies have underscored the fact that it is time for us to examine our organizational structure and our by-laws to determine whether they can still guide us effectively and efficiently in fulfilling our mission and role in the

community. Just this month, the board has been exchanging e-mails about the possibility of conducting some business via – yes, you guessed it – e-mail.

And last month, I wrote about proposed changes in our programming next year, with some of the most significant ideas proposing that we forego a local league study in 2008-09 and that we vary our meeting times and locations to accommodate members who cannot attend during regular times.

During the April 26 annual meeting, should you elect me president, I will ask you and our fellow members to authorize the 2008-09 board to move forward on researching these issues and calling for volunteers interested in serving on an ad hoc committee that could help the board. Please consider saying 'aye' when the vote is taken and the call is put forth.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the annual meeting.

Lauris Olson

FINANCE

Fund-raising requests are managed in two ways. Each member is invited to make a contribution, in addition to paying dues, in the renewal notice letters. Contributions are solicited for two funds—a local fund and the Education fund, which is a national fund. Rules for expenditures from the Education Fund are set at the national level. Contributions to the Education Fund are tax deductible. Contributions to the local fund are not.



A group of members addressed each fundraising letter to a nonmember by hand, to differentiate this letter from many other fund-raising mailings.

More than 240 fund-raising letters (at a cost of approximately \$.55 each) were sent to non-member individuals and organizations. Most of those letters (approximately 200) were sent to individuals.

After the first two quarters, total contributions were \$2837.50, including a large foundation contribution of \$2,000 to the Education Fund.

Karen F. Bolluyt

PROPOSED BUDGET, 2008-2009

	2007-2008 (3/1/08)	YTD 2008-2009	Proposed 2008-2009
BEGINNING BALANCE (checking and CD)	9,500.00		9,100.00
INCOME			
<i>Dues</i>	6,200.00	3,300.00	5,800.00
<i>Contributions</i>			
Member			
Nonmember			
Subtotal	2,000.00	833.00	1,500.00
<i>Other</i>			
Interest (checking and CD)	250.00	123.00	200.00
Ed Fund*	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dinners/Misc	250.00	20.00	250.00
TOTAL INCOME	8,700.00	4,276.00	7,750.00
EXPENSES			
<i>Board and Administration</i>			
President	100.00	0.00	100.00
Treasurer	150.00	65.85	150.00
Misc. Board Expenses	50.00	0.00	50.00
<i>Administrative Committees</i>			
Finance	150.00	37.50	150.00
Membership	100.00	83.75	100.00
Publicity	30.00	299.51	500.00
<i>Delegates & Travel</i>			
State Convention/Council	250.00	0.00	250.00
National Convention	1,500.00	0.00	2,000.00
Regional Workshops	75.00	0.00	75.00
<i>Other Meetings</i>	25.00	0.00	25.00
<i>Financial Support for the League</i>			
National PMP			
Local Account	1,454.00	1,437.20	1,414.00
EF Account*	--	--	--
State PMP			
Local Account	2,455.00	2,441.25	2,374.00
EF Account*	--	--	--
<i>Bulletins</i>			
VOTER	500.00	205.64	500.00
Membership Directory*	100.00	74.47	100.00
Web Page*	160.00	100.00	100.00
<i>Educational Activities</i>			
Publications	10.00	0.00	10.00
Study Groups	100.00	227.50	100.00
Observer Corps	10.00	0.00	10.00
Voter Service*	500.00	121.05	400.00
Local LWV Meetings	400.00	266.25	400.00
<i>Position Support</i>	50.00	30.00	50.00
<i>Other</i>			
Dinners/Scarves	150.00	0.00	150.00
Legislative Forums	150.00	0.00	150.00
Scholarships*	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ready to Run Workshop	500.00	161.86	1,000.00
Awards	150.00	0.00	150.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	9,119.00	5,551.83	10,308.00
ENDING BALANCE	9,081.00		6,542.00

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF AMES EDUCATION FUND BUDGET, 07-08			
BEGINNING BALANCE	2,700.00	3,700.00	
INCOME			
Member/Nonmember	2,000.00	2,145.00	2,000.00
From Beg. Cash Balance			--
TOTAL INCOME	2,000.00	2,145.00	2,000.00
EXPENSES			
National PMP	1,454.00	1,437.20	1,414.00
State PMP	270.00	271.25	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	1,724.00	1,708.45	1,678.00
ENDING BALANCE	2,976.00		4,022.00



VOTER AND WEBSITE

At the end of last year Julie Snyder Yuly, co-chair of the Committee, had to resign due to her work load at the Catt Center. Thanks for all your hard work Julie.

I agreed to continue on my own and took over the editor responsibilities that had been carried mainly by her.

I have continued add new features to our Website <http://www.ameslww.org> and make sure that the information is updated regularly. One of the new features is the capability of sending the VOTER and all communications through the site. That has streamlined the process, plus the fact that they go as personalized individual communications and avoid being stopped by some of the ISP that at times will stop what they consider 'bulk mailings.

This spring we are planning to evaluate the content of the VOTER and look at how we can make it more useful to those that receive it. One possibility is adding articles on subjects that will enrich our work.

If you have concerns or ideas on how to make the VOTER more valuable to you, please contact any of the Board members. We are always open to try new ideas to meet the current interest of our readers.

Selva Reissig Lehman
The Voter editor and Webmaster



NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The LWV Nominating committee has partially completed its business and provides the following report. Please note that the positions listed below in italics are positions that are already filled and not up for election this year. The year the term expires is shown below the Board position.

- President:** *Lauris Olson*
2010 Two year term
requires bylaws amendment see below
- Vice President:** Sharon Wirth
2009 One year term
requires bylaws amendment see below
- Secretary:** Bev Kruempel
2010
- Treasurer:** *Jackie Manatt*
2009
- Membership:** Barbara Gwiasda
2009 assisted by Angie Shirk
- Meeting Planners:** Discussions pending
2010
- Finance:** Discussions pending
2010 assisted by Jeri Prescott
- Publicity:** *Jim Popken*
2009
- Observer Corps:** *Sandra McJimsey*
2009 *Meg and John Tait*
- Voter Service:** Randi Peters
2009
- Legislative Action:** Mary Ann Dilla
2010
- Voter Editor:** Selva Lehman
2010 assisted by Martha Isaacson-Voter
- Nominating Committee:**
2009 LWV Board Member to be named,
committee convener
Barbara Munson
Jane Halliburton

The committee is working to identify and draw on the interests and talents of League members. In particular, we hope to foster "mentor-mentee" relationships that link active long-time League members with members who are new or are ready to become more actively involved.

We're pleased that the following League members have agreed to serve as mentors: Miriam Patterson - Voter Services; Jeannette Bohnenkamp - Membership.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve the League and please contact any of us if you have questions or suggestions.

Betty Baird, 232-5415
Joyce Hertz, 292-7782
Barbara Munson, 232-5077

PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENT (FOR PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT-ELECT POSITIONS):

The nominating committee proposes the following change to the bylaws to allow flexibility when filling Board positions. As the League moves forward and adapts to changing times and life styles, we feel this is necessary. This year we find ourselves in the situation of being unable to fill the position of President Elect, but, have been successful in getting commitments for the leadership structure as proposed in the committee report. The proposed language allows the needed flexibility to go forward with this proposal and also allows options that may come up in the future.

Article V - Officers

Sec. 1. Enumeration and Election. The officers of the League of Women Voters of Ames shall be a President, a President-elect, a Secretary and a Treasurer. One president-elect shall be elected each year and continue to the office of president the following year, unless otherwise decided by majority vote at the Annual Meeting or by the Board. The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected for terms of two years with the Secretary to be elected in even numbered years and the Treasurer to be elected in odd numbered years. Officers will be elected at the Annual meeting and take office immediately, with the exception of the Treasurer, whose term of office shall be concurrent with the fiscal year.



GENERAL MEETING PLANNERS

The September meeting began the year with a panel on *Transportation Needs of Low-Income People in Story County* planned by Alissa Stoehr. Instead of ending our Ames LWV year with a salad supper, we began anew with food and visiting after a summer break followed by an excellent program.

Since our League had voted to participate in the national study on immigration, we devoted two meetings, October and January, to arrive at consensus (or not) on questions proposed by LWVUS. Deadline for our consensus report was early February.

In November information was presented on the LWVIA State Legislative Priorities by Nancy Brown, Barbara Gwiasda, Judie Hoffman, Bev Kruempel, Selva Lehman and Lauris Olson. Their presentations were based on the speakers and materials from LWVIA Fall Workshop and gave us a basis for advocacy on LWVIA priorities.

At the February meeting, national and local study topics were considered, but none were proposed. Meeting topics and advocacies were suggested for the 2008-2009 year.

Nancy Brown organized an outstanding panel on *Delivery of Mental Health Services in Story County* for the meeting in March.

The April Annual meeting and brunch will be held at Green Hills.

In May we are again fortunate to draw upon Judie Hoffman's expertise as LWVIA Lobbyist to review the recent legislative session.

A special thanks to the many League members who have participated in several programs this year and also those who have worked behind the scenes to see that we have informative and interesting programs. The job of program planners could not be accomplished without your help.

*Jeannette Bohnenkamp and
Barbara Gwiasda*

OBSERVER CORPUS



This past year LWV of Ames has had observers at meetings of the Story County Board of Supervisors, the Story County Medical Center Board of Trustees, Ames Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Mary Greeley Medical Center Board of Trustees. Thanks to Barbara Munson, Martha Isaacson, Miriam Patterson, and Nancy Brown, respectively, for their attendance at these meetings. In addition, Martha Isaacson began observing at the Story County Conservation Board's meetings—a new addition to our observer coverage. We appreciate the time and careful attention that our observers give to cover the proceedings of local government bodies. Being the eyes and ears of League, these observers help the League Board identify emerging issues of interest to the League. Equally significant, the observers help ensure that local public officials follow Iowa's open meetings law.

Speaking of the open meetings law, we hope you saw that LWV of Ames and Barbara Munson were featured in the Sunday Des Moines Register on March 23, 2008. Editorial staff writer Rox Laird profiled the League's exemplary work—along with a photo of and quotes from Barbara—in a full-page analysis of openness in Iowa and changes to the current law that are being considered by the legislature. What great visibility for the League—thanks, Barbara!

Traditionally LWV of Ames has also covered the Ames City Council, and the Ames School Board. Please consider joining the Observer Corps to help restore our coverage of these significant public entities.

*Sandra McJimsey and
John and Meg Tait*
Co-chairs

**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.**

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LWVUS IMMIGRATION STUDY BY AMES LWV

At the LWVUS National Convention in June 2006 the delegates adopted a 3 year Immigration Study. The Ames LWV officially chose to take part in this Immigration Study at its annual meeting in April 2007. However, in anticipation of this decision, the Ames League scheduled two general meetings in 2006-2007 with Immigration themes.

They were:

- October 5, 2006 "What You Need to Know about New Immigrants in Iowa", shared program with AAUW
- March 15, 2007 "The University and Immigration", program presented by Deb Vance

The Ames LWV Immigration study committee was formed in May 2007. Twelve members met faithfully every two to three weeks throughout the summer and fall of 2007. Those persons were Jan Beran, Jeannette Bohnenkamp, Barbara Gwiasda, Joyce Hertz, Selva Lehman, Randi Peters, Jeri Prescott, Mary Richards, Jeanette Smithson, John Tait, Meg Tait and Marlene Weisshaar.

On August 15, 2007 the Ames LWV co-sponsored with the Ames Public Library a viewing of the documentary, *A Little Salsa on the Prairie: The Changing Character of Perry, Iowa*. This film explores the significant change that began in Perry in the early 1990s when the complexion of a once predominantly white community shifted dramatically. An influx of Latino workers and their families came from as far away as Texas, California, Mexico and Central America to work at the local meat packing plant. Perry's Latino population increased from 47 in 1990 to 1,873 in 2000, accounting for 24.5% of the total population.

A panel discussion followed. The panel included Jody Swilke, film producer and professor of English at Drake University; Kent Newman, film producer, owner of Full Spectrum Productions and president of Iowa Motion Picture Association; Vivvi Shirley, mayor of Perry; and Eduardo Diaz, director of Immigrant Advocacy Center in Perry. The Library auditorium was packed and the discussion afterwards was excellent.

On September 16, 2007 Ames LWV members were invited to participate in an "immigration road

show" sponsored by AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy).

The LWVUS provided excellent background materials for this study. There were eight comprehensive background articles posted on the LWVUS website and printed in the national VOTER. Four condensed summaries of these papers were also provided. Many additional references were available on the website including a superb video of a panel discussion presented at LWVUS Council meeting in June 2007. Local League members were all encouraged to read and think about these materials.

During the summer of 2007, LWVUS changed their timeline from a three year study to a two year study. February 1, 2008 was set as the deadline for consensus response forms. The consensus form was very lengthy and fairly complex.

The Ames Immigration Study committee elected to do the consensus process in two sessions. Part one was done at the general meeting on October 18, 2007. Betty Baird moderated. By way of introduction, a video clip of Doris Meissner's LWVUS Council presentation, "Get Back to the Basics-6 Key Facts", was shown. Doris is a Senior Fellow at the Migration Policy Institute and a former Commissioner of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Part two of the consensus process was held at the general meeting on January 17, 2008 with Sandra McJimsey moderating. 21 persons participated and discussion was excellent. At the conclusion of both consensus meetings the Immigration Study Team met to confirm the recorded results and to draft the 150 word "Comments" section. The LWV Board approved and the results were communicated by email to LWVUS.

At the time of this report we have not learned whether national consensus was achieved on this difficult and complex issue or whether a new position has been adopted. We anxiously await news of the national effort.

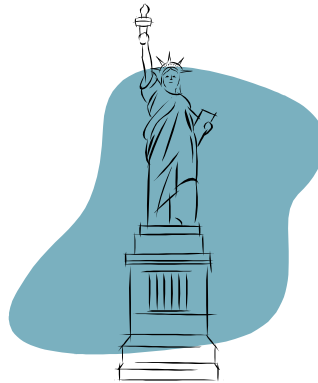
Thank you to the Immigration study team members and to all of the Ames League members who spent time and energy in trying to better understand our national immigration history, problems and opportunities.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Hertz

chair of Ames LWV Immigration study

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League of Women Voters of Ames
4037 Fletcher Boulevard, Ames, IA 50014
President: Sharon Wirth
Voter Editor: Selva Lehman

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.

**CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT
AWARD 2008
SELVA REISSIG LEHMAN**



We are very pleased to announce that the 2008 recipient of the Carrie Chapman Catt award is Selva Reissig Lehman.

Selva was born in Argentina and emigrated to the U.S.A. in 1955 during the Peron regime. She started work in her field of chemistry in New England but felt called to the ministry and was ordained in 1964. When she married Harold Lehman she moved to Alleman, Iowa where she served as a Supply Pastor for UCC churches, Chaplain at the Madrid Home for the Aging and then as an Interim Minister within the Iowa UCC Conference. Throughout this time Selva and Harold were very involved in programs to promote international understanding. Harold died of a brain tumor in 1990 and Selva moved to Ames in 1994.

Selva joined the Ames League of Women Voters in 2000. Since 2002 she has served on the Board, first as Vice-president and then as Co-President with Jeannette Bohnenkamp from 2004-2006. In 2006 Selva co-chaired the LWVUS Ukraine Civic Hosting Program for the Ames League. She developed the Ames LWV website and currently serves as VOTER Editor and Webmaster. Our local League, and increasingly the Iowa League, look to Selva for all computer and digital communication needs.

Her volunteer involvement with the Ames community has been channeled through many church activities including international dialogues, the Food at First program and AMOS. She served as interim director of the Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance Cooperative (GNEAC) in 1997-98. Currently she is a member of the AIOFA Board and a member of the Community Conversations on Diversity. Congratulations, Selva!

Joyce Hertz, Martha Isaacson
Committee members