

# The Voter

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

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

## May 2008

### From the President



"Task specific" is a term Ames League of Women Voters board members will use frequently this year as we launch a yearlong study of our purpose, programming and organizational structure.

Like many other community service groups, we are finding that individual members have just as much interest in maintaining our services – some even would like to see our programs and services increase - but many of those same members have fewer hours available to volunteer. We are being told repeatedly by members that they do not have the time to take on board service or committee work, but that they would be happy to volunteer for smaller duties with one or two of the league projects. Their lives are becoming more task specific and they would like the local League to take a serious look at becoming task specific, too.

The outgoing board of directors had already started talking about removing some responsibilities

from directors and asking members to form committees to take them on. Breaking some of these duties down further into specific tasks with tight beginning and ending periods will be a key discussion point for your 2008-09 board of directors.

We met for the first time on May 1. One of our first 'tasks' that evening was to say, "thank you" to the outgoing board members.

Jeannette Bohnenkamp and Karen Bolluyt left the board after years of service in a number of positions, most recently of Program Planning co-director for Jeannette and Finance director for Karen. Sandra McJimsey took an early retirement from the board position as Observer Corps co-director in March, noting a change in her personal responsibilities. Barbara Munson's term as Secretary ended and she opted out of another two-year stint, although she has agreed to serve on next year's nominating committee.

Each did a wonderful job in their service.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Mark Your Calendar

#### May 15 - Thursday

**General Meeting 7:30 PM**

**This Year at the Legislature**

Judie Hoffman, LWVIA Lobbyist

Northminster Presbyterian Church

Fireplace Room 1416 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Ames

#### May 28 - Wednesday

**Book Club - I Feel Bad About My Neck: And Other**

**Thoughts on Being A Woman** by Nora Ephron led by

Randi Peters as hostess, 3127 Greenwood

Rd.

#### June 3 - Tuesday

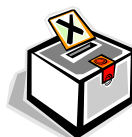
**Primary Elections**

**Make sure to vote**

**If you have**

**VOTE TODAY or VOTE TUESDAY signs**

**Please put them out on your yard**



### Inside this issue:

2008-2009 Officers and Board of Directors	2
May General Meeting	3
Report on March Meeting	3
Mark Jackson speaker at Annual Meeting	4
2008 Catt Award	4
Building Bridges with Nigerian Women	5
Meet a New Board Member	5

*(Continued from page 1) President*

Board member Barbara Gwiasda moved from being one of the board’s Meeting Planners to being this year’s Membership chair (assisted by Angie Shirk)

Incoming board members for 2008-09 are Mary Ann Dilla for Legislative Action director, Bev Kruempel for Secretary, Randi Peters for Voter Services director, Mary Richards and Ellen Fairchild as Meeting Planners. Jeri Prescott will be the assistant to the Finance director.

Welcome. I look forward to working with you.

Treasurer Jackie Manatt, Publicity director Jim Popken, Observer Corps co-directors Meg and John Tait and Voter Editor are returning for the second of their two-year terms.

Selva Lehman (assisted by Martha Isaacson) will serve a new two years term.

They also deserve applause and our appreciation for the time and effort they will put in this year. There is one other member of last year’s board who has agreed to devote another year to making us a stronger, more effective local league – Sharon Wirth

Sharon, our 2007-08 president, stepped out of the president’s role and into the vice-presidential spot

for 2008-09. Her movement may seem unusual to many of our members, and indeed it is. Sharon and I, as president-elect, had many conversations about continuity, long-range planning and the league’s future.

We felt a one-year presidency did not offer enough continuous leadership to examine our situation and implement changes, but I was hesitant to commit to a two-year term guaranteed to be filled with decisions about membership, purpose and change without having an experienced League member as my VP for the first year. Sharon and I also talked about the conflict of interest that could arise if I, a community journalist, were called upon to advocate publicly for a local league policy position.

The more we talked, the better seemed the idea to have Sharon on board as vice-president for 2008-09. (Even if I did have to agree to a specific list of tasks that she would and would not do.)

Start thinking about what tasks you might be willing to do for the League over the next year. There will be a lot of them.

*Lauris Olson*  
President

### 2008-2009 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>President:</b> 2010	Lauris Olson	<b>Voter Service:</b> 2009	Randi Peters
<b>Vice President:</b> 2009	Sharon Wirth	<b>Legislative Action:</b> 2010	Mary Ann Dilla
<b>Secretary:</b> 2010	Bev Kruempel	<b>Voter Editor/Webmaster:</b> 2010	Selva Lehman
<b>Treasurer:</b> 2009	Jackie Manatt	<b>Nominating Committee:</b> 2009	LWV Board Member to be named, Convener Barbara Munson Jane Halliburton
<b>Membership:</b> 2009	Barbara Gwiasda		
<b>Co-Meeting Planners:</b> 2010	Mary Richards Ellen Fairchild		
<b>Finance:</b> 2010	Vacant		
<b>Publicity:</b> 2009	Jim Popken		
<b>Observer Corps:</b> 2009	Meg and John Tait		



## GENERAL MEETINGS

**May 15 Thursday**

### **Judie Hoffman to speak on "This Year at Legislature"**

The May General Meeting will be held 7:30, May 15 in the Fireplace Room at Northminster Presbyterian Church, 1416 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Ames. Judie Hoffman, LWVIA Lobbyist and Ames member of LWV, will speak on "This Year at the Legislature".

Judie will share her insights on the Iowa Legislative session that ended on April 25. This meeting will give you an opportunity to ask questions concerning your favorite League priority, and to hear of our successes and near successes in this session. For new members, this meeting is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the Iowa League's priorities and lobbying efforts.

**Note: that there is no meal with this meeting.**

### **March Meeting on "Delivery of Mental Health Services in Story County"**

Over 30 people representing league and interested community members listened to a panel of experts from several entities that provide Mental Health Services in Story County.

The program was offered in association with a position on mental health that the state league is expected to put before us next year and to help members of the community better understand issues related to mental health needs.

Their presentation helped us learn about the various programs, particularly as they affect low-income people. It also covered how agencies and services are funded, and how they interact and coordinate with each other.

The panelists were: **Jane Halliburton**, Story County Board of Supervisors; **Anne Armknecht**, Executive Director of The Richmond Center; **Deb Schildroth**, Director of Story County Community Services and Central Point of Coordination; **Amy Peters**, Intensive Case Manager, Story County Jail Diversion Program; **Christy Krause**, Director of Behavioral Health, Mary Greeley Medical Center and **Deb Niehoff**,

Executive Director of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Central Iowa



## ANNUAL MEETING HAPPENINGS

### Mark Jackson, Story City Manager, was the speaker at the annual meeting.



Mark Jackson recently returned from a three-day trip to Kiev Ukraine, where he was one of the speakers at the International Conference on Poverty Alleviation in Kiev, Ukraine, a one-day large-scale international event to discuss issues of

poverty from the global, regional and Ukrainian perspectives. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Ukraine sponsored this conference

In February of this year, our League received a call from one of the members of the Ukraine Civic Hosting Program delegation that visited us in 2006. They wanted us to recommend an official from a small city who could speak on how small cities in the Midwest deal with economic development.

Due to our recommendation, they invited Mark Jackson to participate on a panel dealing with the private sector and poverty reduction.

During the Conference, participants had the

opportunity to discuss main poverty patterns in the Ukraine and learn about best international practices and instruments that were successfully applied in other transition economies. One of the conference goals was to promote business practices and strategic public-private partnerships that help reduce poverty.

Jackson participated on a panel moderated by *Christophe Nuttall, Director, UNDP Geneva office*, that focused on best core business practices and strategic public-private partnerships that help reduce poverty. Mayors and CEOs discussed the common ground between the private and the public sectors to engage in win-win relationships, such as employment generation, health, education and community development.

In his presentation at our Annual meeting, Jackson shared his observations about the culture. Jackson said that Ukrainians had not had many freedoms in the past due to a long history of conquest and occupation by other nations, but that they now embrace the freedoms that the dissolution of the Soviet Union has brought. He also said that the country, which had no official poverty base under Soviet leadership, was learning to cope with a poverty level around 30 percent. It is also a country, he said, where alcohol and tobacco are a serious problem, and where cell phones and internet are common.



### 2008 CATT AWARD RECIPIENT

Selva Reissig Lehman was presented with the 2008 Carrie Chapman Catt Award at the 2008 League of Women Voters of Ames annual meeting. Selva is the 16th recipient of the award as she joins a long line of distinguished award winners. A brick for Selva will be placed in the Plaza of Heroines at the Carrie Chapman Catt Hall in honor of the award.

### National Convention, June 13-17

The LWVUS National Convention will take place in Portland, Oregon from June 13-17. Delegates will adopt the national program, elect officers and adopt the LWVUS budget. Educational sessions will include topics such as financial management, diversifying your League, empowering new citizens, growing membership and marketing the League.

To receive more news from National League, why not subscribe to their e-letter?  
You can do that at:

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>

## Building Bridges

Several members of the LWV of Ames met with five visiting women leaders from Nigeria during April. The women were visiting through Iowa Resources for International Service (IRIS) as a part of the Women in Nigeria Leadership Program. The women included a manager of the state immunization program, a presentation officer and producer for Kaduna State Media Center, an attorney who is assistant director of the Plateau State Ministry of Justice, and a lecturer at Kaduna State University working on gender equity and poverty alleviation.

The diverse backgrounds and experiences of individual members of the League were apparent in our interactions with the group from Nigeria. Jan and George Beran hosted two of the women. Jan shared information about her many community activities. Selva Lehman shared

information about being a poll worker. Sharon Wirth shared information about being an elected official and the ups and downs of interacting with citizens. One of the women did a job shadowing experience with Lauris Olson and gained valuable exposure to a wide variety of people and events.

The women were anxious to learn about good governance and how women are impacting politics and communities. They were passionate about corruption in government and elected officials, how to prevent it, and about gaining access to elected officials. This visit and interaction pointed out how much we take for granted in our country and our community. We hope they are able to take back and put into practice some of the information and methods we shared with them.



**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.**

### Meet a New Board Member Mary Richards Co-Meeting Planner

Mary Richards has been a resident of Story County since 1969, with a three and one-half year hiatus starting in 2000 when she worked for a non-profit in Washington D.C. She has been a member of the Ames League of Women Voters for much of the time she has been in Iowa, but her level of activity varied from initial active board member to membership only during the twenty years she was Story County Attorney. Since her retirement in 2003 she has served on the LWVIA Sentencing and Corrections Study Committee, lobbied for League positions at the Iowa Legislature, and participated in the LWV book club. She is a member of the board of Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault and a member of the Prosecutor Review Committee appointed by the Iowa Attorney General to review cases of persons alleged to be candidates for civil commitment as sexually predatory offenders. She is active in her faith community and in various local amateur music performance groups in the community, and counts music and photography among her hobbies.

