

The Voter

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

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

November 2008

From the President

Delegation hopes LWV principles will work in Nigeria

Hannatu Biniyat and four of her companions from Nigeria will return to their countries next month with the League of Women Voters US website address and copies of a presentation on the many successes of our own Ames League of Women Voters.

The five women say they want to use the League's principles, procedures, and processes to create a new grassroots organization focused on advancing equality and equity for women.

Their current organizations, said Hannatu, don't seem to be working well anymore.



(Left to right) Jim Popken, Ames LWV; Ladi Yarima; Johnie Hammond, Ames LWV; Lydia Tsammani; Marlene Weisshaar, Ames LWV; Tongnaan Bawa; Lauris Olson, Ames LWV; Hannatu Biniyat; and Rachel Adanchin.

(Continued on page 2)

Ames Happenings: A Community Update January 10, 2009 at 9 AM City Council Chambers, Ames City Hall, 515 Clark Ave (note the date change)

Read more ...

(Continued on page 2)

Mark Your Calendar for November and beyond

November 20 Thursday 7:30 p.m. General Meeting
Local issue: Land Use-Development
"How does your city grow?"
Northmintser Presbyterian Church
1416 20th.

November 19 Book Club A woman in charge
by Carl Bernstein.
Barbara Gwiasda as hostess,
3420 Eisenhower Ave.

NO GENERAL MEETING IN DECEMBER

January 10 Saturday 9:00 AM General Meeting
"Ames Happenings"
Ames City Council Chambers
515 Clark Ave

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Simple ways to help	3
Directory corrections	3
Issues briefing	4
Suffrage parade	5

(Continued from page 1) President

"There is much politics in our women's organizations," she said. "It affects what we can say about issues, what we can do about issues".

"A woman can run to be an elected official, but she must have help from the male politicians. She cannot win without their say so."

Hannatu Biniyat, Ladi Yarima, Lydia Tsammani, Tongnaan Bawa and Rachel Adanchin were in Ames the first week of October as members of the Women in Nigeria Program operated by Ames-based Iowa Resource for International Service (IRIS).

Hannatu Biniyat has run for public office several times. She operates a non-profit organization and has been appointed to a senior position in the Bauchi state government.

Ladi Yarima is a barrister (lawyer) and works for her state's Attorney General. Lydia Tsammani is a teacher working on her PhD. Tongnaan Bawa is a journalist. Rachel Adanchin has served in local government as mayor, achieving the post various times through both election and appointment.

This is the second group of IRIS program participants that the Ames League has been asked to meet with this year. They are here to learn about government and female leadership in the United States. They are fighting the battles that some of our League members fought decades ago.

In April, Sharon Wirth and a couple of other Ames board members met with the first delegation. This time, I coordinated the meeting, deciding to use a PowerPoint presentation I had recently created about the history of the League of Women Voters and

voting in U.S. elections.

Two long-time members of the League, Johnie Hammond and Marlene Weisshaar, joined us to provide first-person accounts about the creation of CyRide and the campaign to get covered garbage trucks, just two of many public policy issues the Ames League has studied and created positions on over the years.

Ames LWV board member Jim Popken joined us later, reinforcing the message on the lapel pins I had brought along as gifts: The League of Women Voters - not for women only.

The dialogue between Johnie, Marlene and our guests from Nigeria was fascinating. Johnie and Marlene brought past League activities listed on the PowerPoint presentation to life.

Our new Nigerian friends kept asking how to get started. Johnie pointed her finger in their direction and moved it in a circle.

"Here is how you get started," she said. "You have what you need right here. Talk to women and find out what issue they want to know more about. Study it. Discuss what you learn. Take action."

Johnie and Marlene have given hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of service to the League. I appreciated their willingness to donate a couple more hours and to partner with two relatively newcomers.

It is my hope that the board will be able to offer seasoned members and new recruits many more opportunities to partner.

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.**

(Continued from page 1)

Ames Happening

Here's your chance to hear about the 2008 year in review and look ahead to events and issues of 2009. We're pleased to have the participation of Ames Mayor Ann Campbell, Ames School Board President Gail Johnston, and Mary Greeley Medical Center Board of Trustees Chair Sarah Buck at this event.

Plan to attend and hear about the issues these elected officials are dealing with, listen to their thoughts about the upcoming year, and share your thoughts and questions. The League encourages informed and active participation in government. Take advantage of this opportunity to hear first hand from these three important elected officials at the same time, in the same room. Mark your calendars for January 10.

Sharon Wirth

Four Simple Ways You Can Help

Now that the 2008 elections are over, many of us may have a bit more time to focus on local League-related goals and activities.

Engaging current members is a top priority for your Ames League of Women Voters 2008-09 board. Perhaps one of the following short-term, task-specific service opportunities is tailor-made for you:

1. Look for photos to add to a recently created presentation on the Ames League of Women Voters. (Mentioned in this month's President's Column.)

I am told that there are photos in our archives at the ISU Parks Library. I assume the Ames Historical Society might also have some - I believe the Tribune turned over many of its photos to the AHS. We will need 10 to 12 photos.

2. Stuff and address envelopes for our annual end-of-the-year fundraising campaign.

The board and I are hoping that we can schedule a morning or afternoon session at one of the retirement communities where some of our senior members live. Perhaps we could also arrange rides for our senior members living elsewhere and make a regular party out of the task.

Former Finance Chairman Karen Bolluyt has offered to oversee the writing of the letter and getting the supplies organized if at least 10 members will volunteer. So far, four League members have stepped up.

Tentatively, this would be in mid-November, possibly the week of Nov. 17.

Time commitment should be 3-4 hours.

3. Monitor content and input Iowa member information into the League of Women Voters' membership database.

Estimated time per month is about two to three hours.

4. Mail Iowa legislative update newsletters three to four times during the 2009 General Assembly to approx. 200 state league members who do not have e-mail.

The Iowa League's lobbyist Judie Hoffman will create the newsletters. They will be printed locally and mailed using first-class stamps. No bulk mailing hassles!

To learn more or to volunteer, contact me at president@ameslww.org or lauris_olson@mac.com or 451-7293.

When asked to be involved, plan to say "yes"

2008-2009 Program and Directory books

Please notice the following change to the directory



CHANGE ADDRESS

Betty Haviland
1100 Adams St, Unit 105, 50010

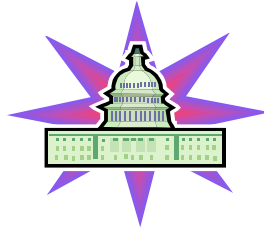
NEWS ABOUT LWVIA ISSUES BRIEFING

Four members of the Ames League, Elizabeth Baird, Barbara Gwiasda, Jackie Runyan and Jeannette Bohnenkamp, attended the LWVIA Issues Briefing in Newton on October 11, 2008. Judie Hoffman, LWVIA lobbyist, asked local Leagues to use information from this program to question candidates at LWV forums, to lobby newly elected members at local legislative interviews, and to follow up at Legislative Wake-ups during the session.

Predatory Lending. Vic Elias from Child and Family Policy Center spoke on the need for capping fees on payday loans at 36% per year, the rate cap used by the federal government for payday fees to military families, and for car title loans in Iowa. He also pointed out that Iowa is the only state that does not allow lawsuits brought by consumers, and he supported the LWV position to allow such suits. The Attorney General's office only handles class action suits, and does not have time or staff to handle all consumer complaints.

Water quality. Susan Heathcote, Iowa Environmental Council, presented background on water related legislative priorities: 1) a comprehensive water plan for Iowa and 2) state implementation and enforcement of the federal Clean Water Act, covering rivers, lakes and streams. Heathcote said that the exemption to comply with the Clean Water Act given to small communities should be eliminated. This was given because they could not afford to comply. They would now need state funding to comply if no longer exempted. She said that the major pollutants in Iowa waters are soil and excess fertilizer.

Judie Hoffman has posted excellent material on the LWVIA web site (www.lwvia.org) on these priorities. The speakers gave two sites for further



information: www.responsiblelending.org for predatory lending, and iecmal@iaenvironment.org for water quality. Both organizations are non-government, non-profit agencies.

Immigration. Rob Denison, President of DMACC, and representing the Iowa Immigration Education Coalition of which LWVIA is a member, gave a summary of the immigration situation in Iowa. He identified the following issues for the next Iowa Legislative session: enforcement of work laws, expansion of English as a second language programs, and discrimination against Hispanics in hiring. The coalition is against the use of state and local police to enforce federal laws on immigration.

The Legislative Internet. Emily Meyer, Computer Analyst for the Legislative Service Bureau (a state agency) gave us a guided tour through the Legislature's web site, www.legis.state.ia.us. Daily schedules, legislative committee membership, legislators e-mail addresses, and, during the legislative session, texts of bills and laws are included, as well as much more information about Iowa Government.

Sentencing Reform. JoAnn Finkenbinder, Chair of the LWVIA Sentencing Committee, spoke briefly on the work of her group. The goals for this legislative session are for 1) return of sentencing discretion to judges, and 2) reduction in minimum sentences, i.e., the amount of time a convict must serve before being considered for parole.

The Issues Briefing is an annual event that is open to all LWV members. It continues to be an excellent way to understand state legislative issues and to meet LWV members from across the state.

Jeannette Bohnenkamp

**DO YOU WANT TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE LWVIA ?
GO TO OUR UPDATED WEBSITE AT**

<http://www.lwvia.org>

Sharon Wirth, John Tait, Meg Tait and Bev Kruempel, all dressed in Edwardian costumes, marched in the reenactment of the first and only suffrage parade in Iowa. Led by musical instruments, the group of over 100 women and men followed the same route on Saturday, October 25 as the original marchers did in Boone in 1908. They sang suffrage songs and listened to speeches by people representing the original speakers such as Rev. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Several marchers carried signs depicting the same messages used in 1908.

Also during the day, the Suffrage Monument was dedicated in Boone and a play "Take Your Places, Ladies" written by E. Joyce Schulte was presented by the Boone Theatre.



Reenactment of Boone Suffrage Parade, 1908-2008



Do you know someone who may be interested in joining the LWV of Ames? Pass the information along to Barbara Gwasda at bgwasda@iastate.edu or Angie Shirks at ashirk1@hotmail.com. They will make contact, provide information and follow up with prospective members

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

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.