



The Voter

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Ames, IA
Web-site: <http://www.ameslww.org>

August 2007

From the President



As we resume our schedule of general meetings following summer break, I would like to share with you the outcome of the June retreat/planning meeting. This important meeting establishes a framework for upcoming activities. The goals are ambitious, but, the Board is confident that with your help we can accomplish much.

Where are we going?

--**Increased focus on advocacy.** Advocacy is at the core of our mission along with education.

(Continued on page 2)

Opportunity to Advocate for LWV position on the Story County Hospital

On Friday, July 13th Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Iowa filed suit in Polk County seeking an order that Story County Medical Center (Story County Hospital or SCH) could not proceed with its replacement hospital building project until it receives certificate of need (CON) approval from the Health Facilities Council of the Iowa State

(Continued on page 2)

RE-ORGANIZING THE HANDLING OF VOTER SERVICES AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION

By Lauris Olson, President Elect

Your Ames League of Women Voters board of directors has decided it's time to change the way we handle Voter Services and Legislative Action, two of the most important public services a local league takes on. For some time, responsibility for these large tasks has rested with two separate individuals who were also required to be part of the Ames board. Those of us currently on the board would like to try shifting responsibility from two board members to a committee comprised of 7 to 9 members.

There are three reasons for this.

First, while the two directors often recruited other members to help with specific duties, the time commitment demanded from each director was quite great at times.

Each fall, the voter services director has been responsible for organizing local candidate forums with representatives from the Ames Chamber of Commerce, staffing those

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THE AMES LWV IMMIGRATION STUDY TEAM HAS AN UPDATE OF THEIR WORK ON PAGE 4

Mark Your Calendar

NO General Meeting or Book Club until September

Wednesday evening, August 15 7 PM

REEL CONNECTIONS AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

A Little Salsa on the Prairie: The Changing Character of Perry, Iowa

Sponsored by the Ames LWV Immigration Study Team and the Ames Public Library

Read more about the study on page 4 and 5

Wednesday September 5, 4:30 to 6 PM

AMES SCOOOL BOARD CANDIDATES' FORUM

Ames City Council Chambers

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(Continued from page 1) *From the President*

Watch for changes in the Voter, on our website, at legislative wake-ups, at program meetings, and with the observer corp.

--Encouragement of citizen participation in the political process, including running for office. The Board, along with the Carrie Chapman Catt Center, is committed to continue the successful "Ready to Run" program (campaign training for women). This will be offered every other year.

--Work toward broad based accessibility to the "State of the City" message. Consider expansion to other elected boards (school, hospital, county).

--Participate in the LWVUS Storybank Project. This initiative collects the stories of achievement from League members across the country. The LWV of Ames has many accomplishments that have significantly shaped our community. It's important to document our achievements.

How will we get there?

With your help, of course! Although your Board is a committed and energetic group, we cannot accomplish these things alone. We look forward to working with our talented membership base. **Plan to say "yes" to being involved when asked.** We would love to hear from you. Please contact us if you see something in particular you would like to help with. A separate survey is also being developed to determine your interests. Plan to complete the survey and send it in so we can all work together and continue the LWV's impressive history of shaping our community.

Sharon Wirth

(Continued from page 1) *Story County Hospital*

Department of Public Health. The CON process would require the SCH to publicly present the need for the new building when for the last 10 years the SCH has averaged less than 2 patients per day while using more than \$1,000,000 in property tax money.

Now is the time for LWV members to advocate for our position which is, in part, to "discontinue acute care (inpatient) services" at the Story County Hospital.

Please send an e-mail or letter to thank John Forsyth and the Wellmark organization for ensuring that the Story County Hospital must go through the certificate of need (CON) process before building a new hospital. The addresses are forsythjd@wellmark.com or John Forsyth, CEO, Wellmark Blue Cross/ Blue Shield, 636 Grand Ave. Station 77, Des Moines, IA 50309. A simple thank you for allowing citizen input into this hospital construction is sufficient.

At the Story County Hospital Board meeting on Monday, July 23, 2007 Todd Willert, CEO said that SCH had three choices for action as a result of the lawsuit:



1. Convince Wellmark to withdraw Story County Hospital from the lawsuit. (SCH staff is working very hard on this effort by e-mailing John Forsyth with requests that SCH be removed from the lawsuit and along with advocate's statements regarding the need for the hospital. The Iowa Hospital Association is also working to support SCH)
2. Request approval from the CON board. Willert thought that the next CON meeting would be in September and he was not sure SCH could get on the agenda. (According to the CON web site http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cert_of_need/filing_deadlines.pdf the next meeting is Sept 18th with filing deadline of July 30 so it appears that Willert is correct and the September meeting is not an option. The following CON meeting will be January 15, 2008 with a November 2007 filing deadline.)
3. Wait for the lawsuit resolution. Willert estimates this could be up to 2 years.

Martha Isaacson
 Story County Hospital
 Board Meeting Observer

- **DO YOU WANT TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE LWV OF AMES?**
- **DO YOU WANT TO FIND LINKS TO LWVUS STUDIES AND POSITIONS?**
- **DO YOU WANT TO FIND HELPFUL LINKS TO VARIETY OF RESOURCES RELATED TO LEAGUE POSITIONS?**

GO TO OUR NEWLY DESIGNED WEBSITE AT

<http://www.ameslww.org>

(Continued from page 1) Voter Services and Legislative Action

forums, coordinating placement efforts for our "Vote Tuesday" signs, and creating an updated Elected Officials guide after the elections.

Just about the time that the voter services director is winding down, the director in charge of legislative action begins gearing up for pre-session meetings with state legislators and planning the monthly Legislative Wake-Up Forums that are broadcast from Ames City Hall. The legislative action director must attend a one-day training on Iowa League priorities for the Iowa General Assembly and coordinate schedules to finalize the pre-session briefings.

Tasks assuring a successful series of wake-up forums include keeping track of legislation before the legislature, booking appropriate reaction panelists for each forum, moderating the forums or finding suitable moderators, and overseeing all logistics and staffing for the four forums, including making coffee for the hospitality table.

Whew, no wonder our voter services and legislative action directors always looked a little glassy-eyed at the April annual meeting!

Second, our requirement that these duties be tied to membership on the board of directors appears to be a roadblock to us recruiting people to fill the positions.

Ames League of Women Voters bylaws do not allow the holder of either of these positions to be politically active. This extends beyond just running for an office during the League term of service, it also includes

actively campaigning for or the endorsing of any political candidate.

Several league members the 2007 nominating committee spoke with indicated that with the 2008 presidential election looming, they would not consider any position in the Ames LWV that would forgo personal political activism.

Committee members would elect a chair, but that chair would not sit on the board, Instead, the chair and the president-elect (this year, that is yours truly) would work together to keep the committee moving forward, and the president- elect would be the liaison to the board of directors.

Third, we are hearing from more of our members (and many of those we are recruiting for membership) that they would love to be active in our local league, but in a limited or task-specific, capacity.

We think this new Voter Services/Legislative Action committee could be just what they – maybe you – need to become more involved in League.

Serving on this committee should be especially easy this year. The candidates' forum and wake-up forum dates have already been set. Kori Heuss, chair of the Ames Chambers' government affairs committee, and I have already met and worked out many of the details for the candidates forums.

Your first chance for service is at the Ames School Board Candidates Forum on Sept. 5.

For more information, contact me at 233-3220 or lauris_olson@mac.com.

Ames School Board Candidates' Forum

The Ames League of Women Voters and the Ames Chamber of Commerce will host a Candidates Forum for the open seats on the Ames Community School Board from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on **Wednesday, Sept. 5**.

The forum will be held in the council chambers at Ames City Hall and will be broadcast live on Cable Channel 12. Rebroadcast times for cable channels 7 (ACSD channel) and 16 (public access) will be announced the night of the forum.

Candidates for a one-year term are Pat Brown and Mary Jurenka. Candidates for three-year terms are James McCurdy, Paul Soddors, Jim Stafford, and Francis Todey. Brown and Todey are incumbents. Brown is a member of the Ames League of Women Voters.

Four volunteers from the Ames LWV are needed to staff this event. Likely duties will be to serve lemonade and crackers at the hospitality table, answer the call-in phone line, help guide people to the microphone OR set up and tear down chairs in the council chambers.

To volunteer, contact Lauris Olson at 233-3220 or lauris_olson@mac.com

Lauris Olson
President-elect

LWV IMMIGRATION STUDY UPDATE

By the team that meets regularly and often but is still amazed at how elusive this topic is!!!!

The local LWV Immigration study team began meeting immediately after League annual meeting in April. Our mighty band of 12, more or less, has been meeting regularly throughout the summer months.

Together we monitored the Senate bill on Immigration Reform, watched it die, observed its resuscitation and then saw it killed once again. However, studying the different components of the bill helped us better understand the complexity of U.S. regulations on immigration law. These proposals included:

- Border security and enforcement
- Tools for employers to verify the eligibility of workers they hire
- Temporary worker program
- No amnesty for illegal immigrants
- Strengthening the assimilation of new immigrants (English is the language of U.S., etc.)
- Merit system for future immigration
- Ending chain migration (change balance between family connections and economic needs of U.S. in immigration law)
- Clearing family backlog in 8 years

We are excited to present with the Ames Public Library Reel Connections a public screening of

A Little Salsa on the Prairie: The Changing Character of Perry, Iowa.

This will be held on Wednesday, August 15 at

7:00PM. See other article in VOTER.

This documentary should help us understand some of the forces that are involved with immigration in Iowa. We hope many Leaguers will plan to attend and please, invite neighbors and friends.

Much to our surprise, the national consensus questions appeared on the LWVUS website in July. We were frankly a little bewildered by the format of the questions and even by the selection of questions. However, as of this writing it is our intention to split the consensus questions into two parts. Part one will be **Question 1**, parts **a** and **b**. We will attempt to do consensus on this question at the October General Meeting. In January we will complete the rest of the consensus questions, #2 – 6.

The Immigration Committee invites all Leaguers who are able to go to the LWVUS website to read all the questions (www.lwv.org). Question 1 is reprinted on page 6 of this VOTER. We also want to urge all members of the LWV to read the eight background articles on the web. Our committee will not attempt to duplicate this information. Notebooks with these articles will also be available to borrow at the August 15 library meeting.

Thank you for doing your part to prepare for this important study on Immigration. We hope to see you August 15.

Joyce Hertz, chair

***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.***

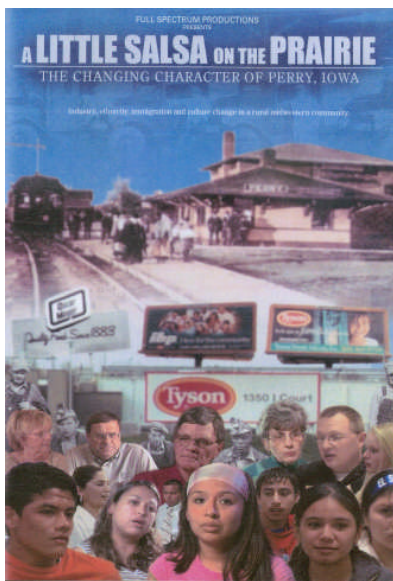
YOU ARE INVITED BY THE LWV IMMIGRATION STUDY TEAM TO A PUBLIC SCREENING OF

"A Little Salsa on the Prairie: The Changing Character of Perry, Iowa"

Wednesday, August 15, 7:00PM
Ames Public Library

This 55-minute 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.

At the conclusion of this film, there will be a panel discussion. The producers



of this documentary, Jody Swilky, Drake professor of English, and Kent Newman, owner of Full Spectrum Productions and president of the Iowa Motion Picture Association, will both be present. Two residents from Perry, one Latino and one Anglo, will also be there to share their stories. Since this documentary was filmed, the raid in Marshalltown and the national debate on immigration have taken place. There are many complex issues surrounding the topic of immigration in our national and local life. Come participate in an up close and personal view of this situation.

Background on Iowa Immigration

Iowa's population grew between 1990 and 2000 by 5.4 percent to nearly 2.9 million. Importantly, about two-thirds of this growth was due to immigration, particularly by the arrival of Latino newcomers. In the 1990s, the Latino population grew by 153 percent to 83,000. Latinos are now the state's largest minority population, outnumbering African Americans by more than 20,000.

There has been a dramatic shift in terms of the home regions of newcomers in Iowa. In the 1990 Census, 42.8 percent of foreign-born Iowans came from Asia, like Tai Dam and Vietnamese refugees, and only 13.9 percent came from Latin America. But in the 2000 Census, 36 percent of foreign-born Iowans were from Latin America.

In Iowa's Hispanic/Latino population (which includes Hispanics born in Iowa and the United States), the largest group (61,154 or 74%) came from Mexico. Others came from Puerto Rico, Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama and other Latin American countries.

Source: The New Iowans, UNI, 2003

OUR LOCAL LEAGUE IS INTERESTED IN KNOWING MORE ABOUT EACH OF OUR MEMBERS. THEREFORE WE DID SEND TO ALL AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF A SURVEY FORM. IF YOU HAVE NOT RETURNED PLEASE DO SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. YOU CAN USE THE E-MAILED FORM BY SAVING IT TO YOUR DESKTOP AS A WORD DOCUMENT, COMPLETE IT AS PER INTRUCTIONS AND RETURN IT TO selvarl@mchsi.com AS AN ATTACHED WORD DOCUMENT. IF YOU PREFER YOU CAN PRINT THE ENCLOSED FORM AND MAIL IT TO:

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF AMES
 4037 FLETCHER BOULEVARD, AMES, IA 50014

LWVUS IMMIGRATION STUDY CONSENSUS PREVIEW

Question 1: Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as the following (not listed in any particular order or hierarchy):

Part a:

- a. **Ethnic and Cultural Diversity**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- b. **Economic, Business and Service Employment Needs**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- c. **Environmental Impact/Sustainability**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- d. **Family Reunification of Authorized Immigrants and Citizens with Spouses and Minor Children**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- e. **History of Criminal Activity**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- f. **Humanitarian Crises/ Political Persecution in Home Countries**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- g. **Immigrant Characteristics (health and age)**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- h. **Rights of All Workers to Safe Working Conditions and Liveable Wage**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- i. **Rights of Families to Remain Together**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- j. **Rights of all Individuals in U.S. to Fair Treatment Under the Law (Fair Hearing, Right to Counsel, Right of Appeal, and Humane Treatment)**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus
- k. **Education and Training**
 High Priority Lower Priority Disagree No Consensus

Instructions: In Question 1, Part a, you marked items as "High Priority." Of these items, please take a moment and select the three most important criteria and list them, in order (1, 2 and 3, with 1 being the most important) below.

Question 1, Part b:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



MEMBER'S SURVEY

PRINT THIS PAGE AND AFTER COMPLETING IT RETURN TO:

**League of Women Voters of Ames
4037 Fletcher Boulevard, Ames, IA 50014**

Name:

Phone:

Address:

e-mail:

Street:

City and ZIP:

Areas of interest

- Immigration Housing Living Wage
- Environment Book Club Voting –equipment and processes
- Finances (Others) indicate area of interest

Would you be willing to help:

- organize Candidates Forums? organize Legislative hearing?
- address mailings? lobby Legislators with other LWV members?
- reach new members? do phone calls to other members?
- register voters? Fundraising?
- observe government meetings such as school board, city council, planning and zoning board?

(Observers do not speak at meetings but observe the meetings.)

Do you have skills on the following areas?

- | | |
|--|--|
| Do you have experience with publisher programs? | Would you be willing to learn? |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have experience working with web sites? | Would you be willing to learn? |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have experience working with Spreadsheets? | Would you be willing to learn? |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> |

Biographical information

Tell us about yourself in 300 words or less: (include some family, professional involvements and hobbies) Enclose picture if possible

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.