President’s Column

Gear up, folks! The groundhog says only six more weeks of winter. And let’s hope that the rest of February is milder than what we’ve been having, because we have some great events coming up. The Program Planning Meeting, snowed out in January, has been rescheduled to February 10 at Northminster. We have moved the time back to 6:30, and instead of a soup supper, board members will provide coffee, tea and desserts. (See p. 3)

The nation listens to the “State of the Union” address, we Iowans hear the governor give the “State of the State”, and we sponsor the State of the Community event on February 13, at 7:00 at City Hall. You can read more about that on page 4.

If we have to cancel anything due to bad weather, we will try to make the decision early in the day. So make sure to check your email before heading out. But let’s think positive!

Speaking of weather, I was able on a snowy Wednesday last week to participate in a webinar in which Tim O’Brien, Public Advocacy Voter Protection (PAVP) Project Manager with LWVUS, gave an update on state legislation on voting issues in 2013. There is actually some good news as well as some bad. You can read my report on this webinar by going to the AmesLWV website, and finding my entry on the blog space. (We want more folks to use the web site regularly, so I really hope you will look for this.)

And, I encourage you to attend our General Meeting where we will once again examine the provision of mental health services in our community. Providing treatment for the mentally ill has been difficult, but we should not give up on seeking better ways to do this and finding funding to make good treatment programs and facilities a reality.

(Continued on page two)
Finally, get on board with the League’s efforts to impact the state legislative process by participating in Capitol Day. You can read all about it, and find out how to sign up on page three of this newsletter.

Happy participating!

— Linda

Agriculture Study Report

The LWVIA Agriculture Study is an update from the original position taken in 1988. (Remember that Leagues cannot take action without first taking a position.)

The following is taken verbatim from the national committee’s direction for this update: “The Agriculture Update will focus narrowly on: 1) current technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process.” The items in category 1 are new, and would not have been around at the time of the original position, or they were not considered to be issues at that time. In category 2, the items have existed, but are in need of re-consideration.

As you may know, the national committee gave us a leaders’ guide on January 14. As you may also know, there has been a lot of grumbling about the tardy appearance of the leaders’ guide, as well as the lateness of the papers we were expected to read, but now they all have been published. You may want to read some of them, even if you are not in the local study group. On the LWVUS website, enter “LWV agriculture study” into search, and click on whatever papers you wish to read. If you have trouble accessing them, please let Angie Carter or Jeannette Bohnenkamp know.

For those of you who wondered what the committee was doing when we met so often in the fall, we dealt with having no leaders’ guide by reading and discussing the original position and the three papers that were available at the time. Huge thanks to our local study group which includes people extremely knowledgable in various areas of agriculture. They identified a problem with the original position that is not in the update, and therefore, not likely to change: national League position favors free markets, even for food. Further, some of our group felt that topics of specific concern to Iowans were not given appropriate attention in the questions. We had difficulty addressing that.

Other Leagues’ members wrote to the national forum with concerns about the limited time for this consensus, and several people suggested carrying it over for further study, but the national committee responded saying that one convention cannot obligate the next, and suggesting that the states might want to individually address topics that are specific to their circumstances. Our group felt that a state study specifically addressing the topics of concern to midwestern agriculture is needed, and our local president, Linda Murken, made that recommendation to the LWVIA Board.

The local study committee met on January 30 and is planning to meet again February 18.

We have scheduled a meeting for March 8 at 9 am to take consensus meeting of Ames LWV members. Please put this on your calendar, because it is not on the bookmark.

— Jeannette Bohnenkamp
Advocacy Day! Capitol Day! Lobby Day!
Whatever you want to call it
Let’s go to the State Capitol and Have some Fun!

When: February 18th
Where: Jessie Parker Building-Grant Room • Iowa Voc. Rehab
512 East 12th Street • Des Moines, Iowa
9:30-Registration and Coffee
10:00-Background information from Amy and Craig
Topics:
✓ Water Quality
✓ HIV Modernization
✓ Funding Mental Health
✓ SF 385 Court to review special sentences
✓ Shackling of Pregnant Prisoners

Not expected to be a topic this year: ✓ Photo ID
(Remember legislation changes quickly during the session, there may be changes in Lobby Day.)

11:15-To the Capitol
11:30-Make lunch arrangements with your Legislators-Capitol Cafeteria
12:15-Call out Legislators on house and Senate Ag Committee, House and Senate Natural Resources & House Environmental Protection
Attend Committee Meetings as available
2:30- Regroup at Capitol Cafeteria to review day
LWVIA plans to have a table on the first floor rotunda with copies of the LWVIA Legislative Priorities for this 2014 session. We will pass out treats to all who come by.

Representatives Wessel-Kroeschell, Deyoe, Heddens, and Senator Quirmbach listen to a question at Jan. Legislative Wake-up
Attend Legislative Wake-Ups

Find out what’s happening in the state legislature from the people who know! Attend the remaining Legislative Wake-Ups on Saturday mornings in the Ames City Hall Council Chambers. Refreshments are served from 8:30-8:45 a.m. From 8:45-10:00 a.m. participants can ask questions of their local area Iowa representatives and senators. Dates and the four co-sponsors who will provide refreshments and ask the first question are:

Feb. 22   NAMI
Mar. 29   AMOS
Apr. 26   AAUW

For further information, contact Legislative Chair, Carol Alexander Phillips caphill@mchsi.com

State of the Community
Thursday, February 13,
7:00pm-8:30pm,
Council Chambers, Ames City Hall
515 Clark Ave, Ames

The following speakers will share important events and accomplishments of 2013 and also look ahead to special events, issues, and challenges expected for the current year. The speakers will take comments and questions from the audience.

§ Ann Campbell, mayor of the City of Ames
§ Luke Deardorff, president of the Ames School Board
§ Sarah Buck, chair of the Mary Greeley Medical Center Board of Trustees
§ Paul Toot, chair of the Story County Board of Supervisors
§ Miles Lackey, Chief of Staff for President Leath of Iowa State University

to have several new members who have joined our ranks this program year. Welcome to:

Gloria Betcher,
Cornelia Flora,
Susan Koehrsen,
Sophia Magill,
Jim and Julie Popken (returning members),
Shirley Riney,
Claire Yetley

Growing All the Time

The Ames League of Women Voters is so pleased
Catt Award Nominations Solicited

The Catt Award Selection Committee (Jan Beran, Judie Hoffman and Bev Kruempel) is accepting nominations of League members to be considered for the 2014 Carrie Chapman Catt Award.

The selection criteria are: long time membership in the League; significant contributions to the community outside one's active profession; not actively holding a party-affiliated elected office; and significant contributions to the League. A letter identifying community and League contributions of a nominee should be sent to Bev Kruempel (kruempel@msn.com) by February 14.

(Executive note: see the website for a list of prior recipients and their accomplishments.)

Reducing the Average Age of the Ames LWV

On February 1st membership co-chairs Barb Brodie and Nancy Halvorson, president Linda Murken and Carolyn Klaus as well as invited guests Monica Leier, representing our student members, and Sophia Magill, one of our young professional members, met for brunch to discuss recruitment and retention of students and young professionals.

Lots of exciting suggestions were offered:

- Ways of getting past myths generally attributed to the League (“only women can be members,” “the League is partisan,” etc.)
- How we can jointly work on our image/approaches/strategies
- How to make it easier for students to join
- How to increase LWV visibility with students and young professionals

Everyone who attended was pleased with the outcome of the meeting, but agreed that it was a good beginning with a whole lot to be done to actually bring all the good ideas to fruition.

Do you have good ideas on this topic? Do you have a passion for working on growing the diversity of the Ames League? Let one of the Membership Co-Chairs (Barb Brodie dbbrodie@msn.com; and Nancy Halvorson mnhalvors@msn.com) know of your interest.

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February General Meeting

bring a friend and join us at

6 p.m. Thursday, February 20, Northminster Presbyterian Church

**Topic:** Providing mental health services in Story County

**Speakers:** Deb Schildroth, Director of Story County Community Services (and an Ames League member)

A law enforcement officer to be named (possibly Jerry Spencer)

Do you ever get the uncomfortable feeling that as a society we are regressing to the days when the mentally ill were held in prisons? Come hear how Story County is coping.
Keep an eye on democracy—be part of the Observer Corps.

The Observer Corps needs YOU, either regularly, or once or twice a month, or as an occasional substitute, to sit in on one of these meetings: Story County Board of Supervisors; Ames School Board, or Ames City Council.

League observers cannot participate in the meetings they are observing. Contact Nancy Marks for more information: nancymarks@me.com, 515-233-6953

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**Book Club Schedule**

**February 26** -

*Lies My Teacher Told Me*

2008 revision, by James W. Loewen

**Host:** Marlene Weisshaar, 1703 Pierce Court

**March 26** -

*Down the Up Escalator: How the 99% Live in the Great Recession*

by Barbara Garson (2013)

**Host:** Jeannette Bohnenkamp, 2222 Barr Drive

*Please notify host if you will attend*

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Ames League of Women Voters
3217 West Street
Ames, Iowa 50014