

September 2011



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF METRO DES MOINES

## *The Voter*

### 2011-2012 Calendar of Events:

Sept. 7, 7:00	Des Moines Public Schools Board Candidate Forum @North HS
Sept. 8, 7:00	WDM School Board Candidate Forum @ 3500 Mills Civic Pkwy
Sept. 13	School Board Election Day
Sept. 21, 6:00	Membership Kickoff Event @ Robert W. Mickle Center, 1620 Pleasant St. Des Moines
Oct. 15, 11:00	LWVIA Issues Briefing, Drake Public Library, Grinnell
Oct. 18, 6:30	Federal Role in Public Education Meeting, Plymouth Church
Date TBD	Consensus Meeting on LWVUS Study Federal Role in Public Education
Nov. 8	City Election
Nov. 15, 6:30	Pay Day Lending Meeting, Plymouth Church, Ingersol and 42nd
Dec. 3, 11:30	Holiday Luncheon, Johnny's Italian Steakhouse on Fleur
January Date TBD	Book Study: Crazy in America: The Hidden Tragedy of our Criminalized Mentally Ill, by Pfeiffer, DM Public Library
Feb. 6	Iowa Caucuses
Feb. TBD	LWVIA Capitol Day, Des Moines
March 8, 6:30	Global Warming Meeting held on International Women's Day
April 17, 6:30	Iowa Water Quality Meeting, Place TBD
April 28, 11:00	LWVMDM Annual Meeting, Wesley Acres
June 2	LWVIA Council
June 8 - 12	LWVUS Convention, Washington D.C.

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# President's Message

By Deborah Ann Turner, M.D.

The song, "It Has Been a Very Good Year," summed up my first year as president of LWV Metro Des Moines. I have had the opportunity to learn a lot, and to get to know and work with some amazing, dedicated, and determined people whose support and help made it possible to do my job.

Our program of study in 2010-11 was Domestic Violence /Violence Against Women. It was an eye-opening journey that helped us understand that violence in our city, state, nation, world, and most specifically against women impacts all our lives daily.

Last year we have gained some new members this year and with sadness lost some. We continued to forge even more new relationships with other organizations, which is vital in this era of limited time, and resources. We hope to continue with these relationships and build on them in the future.

As a local league we have defined our plans for the coming year keeping in mind the Program of Work outlined and encouraged at both a state and national year.

LWVUS is conducting two consensus studies this year. The first is "The Federal Role in Education". Educational articles have been prepared and study guides are available. Go the LWVUS website to obtain study materials and articles; look under the section "For Members", then under "Projects & Programs," and finally click "The Education Study." Des Moines Metro will be participating with plans being made for

October consensus building. The second study will be on "Privatization of Public Education" It is to get off the ground in late fall.

LWVIA with the help of national experts will be conducting a leadership-training workshop in place of our officer-training workshop. Leadership development is a major concern locally, regionally, and nationally and is important to the maintenance of local Leagues.

My pledge to you for 2011-2012 is to work hard toward again increasing membership and getting the word out about the work and importance of LWV. Toward this end I would like to challenge you to think of ways to do so and to suggest any groups or organizations that might be interested in hearing about League. Civil Discourse in America is rapidly becoming a thing of the past in our political world, in our Courts and in all walks of life. It is our kind of organization that will help to sustain a civil conversation in America. I believe the League Message is an important one and League Issues are fundamental to a healthy society.

It is an exciting time to be part of the League of Women Voters and I encourage each of you to participate as much as possible. Thank you for your time, commitment, and support. I look forward to seeing you at League events and at board meetings, where your input will truly be welcome.

*Deborah*

Metro Des Moines LWV President Deb Turner appears with members Karen Person, Dorothy McGinnis, (Turner) and Phyllis Franklin-Devine at the 2011 League Capitol Day.



# Iowa Women's Hall of Fame Ceremony

## Two League Members Honored

By Karen Person

**Charlotte Bowers Nelson** was a 2011 Inductee into the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women selects four women annually, and Charlotte was honored along with Nancy A. Dunkel, Jacqueline Easley McGhee, and Dr. Mildred Hope Fisher Wood. The ceremony, held on August 27 at the Iowa Historical Building, shared the following:

Charlotte Bowers Nelson has elevated the status of women and girls in Iowa through her leadership and advocacy for justice and equality for everyone. With her grace, dignity, intelligence, and perseverance, Nelson has addressed issues impacting women and girls. She was a YWCA teenage program director, Office Manager of LWVIA, State Director of the LWVUS "Sex Equity in Vocational Education" project, and coordinated the first women's studies course at Drake University. For 22 years, she served as the Governor-appointed executive director of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. With her knowledge of public policy, she represented women and girls with legislators, government, and the people of Iowa. From reforming Iowa's welfare system, establishing gender balance on state boards, initiating equity-related legislation (including naming two state office buildings for women, sporting family planning, and combating domestic violence and sexual assault), Nelson led a compassionate, multi-faceted effort that made a difference. This soft-spoken radical continues her advocacy on boards like the Iowa CareGivers Association and Iowa Friends of Legal Services. Her degrees are a Duke B.A. (summa cum laude), a Columbia M.A., and a Drake M.P.A. Born in Bristol, Virginia in 1931, and raised in Bristol, Tennessee, Nelson has lived in Des Moines, since 1974.



### *Congratulations Charlotte!*

**Marti Anderson** was the recipient of the 2011 Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice. The award is named in honor of Cristine Wilson, the first chair of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. The Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice is awarded selectively to an individual who has made significant contributions to the principles of equality and justice in the state of Iowa. At the August 27 Iowa Women's Hall of Fame Ceremony, the following was shared:



Marti Anderson, a native of Des Moines, is committed to crime victim services and victim justice leadership and has developed pioneer services for victims. She helped establish 17 rape crisis centers in Iowa; the Polk County Coalition Against Domestic Abuse, which was the first Iowa domestic abuse shelter and services program; 34 Child Abuse Prevention Councils in local communities; and developed the state's first three day training curriculum to address child sexual abuse. Anderson was appointed founding director of the Iowa Attorney General's Crime Victim Assistance Division and under her direction, the division developed seven victim service programs. Although Anderson retired in June 2011, she continues to consult with national organizations regarding victim rights and service, organizational development, and management and is a nationally recognized crime victim advocate, trainer, and speaker. She has been a generous mentor to scores of Social Workers and crime victim advocates. She has received many awards and recognition for her work and volunteer service including Lifetime Achievement Award from the Iowa Organization for Victim Services and Des Moines Woman of Achievement from the YWCA. Anderson earned a bachelor degree in social work from the University of Northern Iowa, a MSW from the University of Iowa, and is a Licensed Independent Social Worker (LISW).

### *Kudos Marti!*

# Wine & Cheese Membership Kickoff Event:

Joy Corning and Sally Pederson to speak on  
***“A Fair and Impartial Judiciary”***

Wednesday, September 21

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Robert W. Mickle Center

1620 Pleasant Street, Des Moines

League of Women Voters of Metro Des Moines will have its annual Wine and Cheese membership event at the Mickle Center in the historic Sherman Hills neighborhood on September 21. The event is free and open to the public. League members are encouraged to attend and to invite potential members. From 6:00 until 6:45 will be ‘meet and mingle’ time with the actual meeting starting at 6:45 with a welcome from League president Deborah Ann Turner, M.D.

This year the speakers will be former Lt. Governor Sally Pederson and former Lt. Governor Joy Corning, speaking on, “A Fair and Impartial Judiciary.” Corning and Pederson co-chair the organization, ‘Justice, Not Politics’ of which League of Women Voters of Iowa is part of the coalition. The coalition is based on the premise that Iowa’s merit system and retention process keeps politics and campaign money out of our courts, which safeguards fairness and impartiality. Iowa courts have a long history of protecting average citizens, and the retention of Iowa judges should be based on their ability to uphold the law fairly and consistently - not on the outcome of a single decision.

In the 2010 election, three Iowa Supreme Court Justices faced an unprecedented retention vote challenge and unfortunately, were not retained. With close to \$1 million in out-of-state funding from extremist groups, Bob Vander Plaats and his organization Iowa for Freedom successfully injected fear tactics into the judicial retention election and skewed the public perception of the role of the judiciary.

The fight for Iowa’s judiciary is not over. Public statements from potential Presidential candidates and state legislators on the right signal an ongoing fight to influence the judicial process in Iowa.

**About the Speakers: Joy Corning** began her service in public office when she was elected to the Cedar Falls School Board, serving as president nine of her eleven years on that board. In 1984 she was elected to the Iowa Senate

and served six years before becoming Lt. Governor in 1991. During her two terms, many of the special projects she initiated promoted diversity and strengthening families. Joy continues her public service by serving on several boards: Iowa Public Television Foundation, UNI Foundation Board of Trustees, Planned Parenthood Board of Directors, and 50/50 in 2020 ( helping women run for public office). She has three daughters and nine grandchildren. Joy’s husband is deceased.

For many years **Sally Pederson** has been an advocate for those whose voices often go unheard - the developmentally disabled, women, children, racial minorities and LGBT youth and adults. Sally served as Lieutenant Governor of Iowa from 1999 to 2007. During her time in office she led successful efforts to expand access to health care for children, require insurance coverage for mental illness, and create 1000 new units of affordable housing for people with disabilities. She has served as President of Polk County Health Services, as Board President for the Autism Society of Iowa, and as a member of the boards of the National Alliance for Autism Research (now Autism Speaks), Blank Children’s Hospital, the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation, and as a Trustee of Union Theological Seminary in New York City . Currently she is chair of the Advisory Board for the REACH program at the University of Iowa , a model 2-year college program for students with multiple learning disabilities and a director of the Northwest Area Foundation in St. Paul , Minnesota . Sally is the Executive Director of the Iowa Initiative, a non-profit working to reduce unintended pregnancies among women 18-30.

For more information on the membership kickoff event, contact Phyllis Franklin-Devine at [pfranklindevine@yahoo.com](mailto:pfranklindevine@yahoo.com) or call Deborah Ann Turner, M.D., at #515-710-6168.



**“The retention of Iowa judges should be based on the ability to uphold the law fairly and consistently, not on the outcome of a single decision.”**

**Justice, Not Politics Co-Chairs:**

- Joy Corning, Former Lt. Governor, Republican

- Sally Pederson, Former Lt. Governor, Democrat

## Iowa Mental Health System Legislature Approves Redesign

By Teresa Bomhoff

In the last legislative session, Senate File 525 was passed and signed by the Governor for the Iowa Mental Health System to be redesigned. Senate File 209 repealed the present mental health system as well as the county's ability to levy funds for mental health care effective 7-1-13.

The summary of workgroup responsibilities, workgroup meeting information, lists of workgroup members, copies of both pieces of legislation and other pertinent information can be found on the DHS website at <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Partners/MHDSRedesign.html>

Please continue to check the website for new information and updates as the workgroup meetings and redesign process moves forward. All meetings are open to the public.

The League of Women Voters has had mental health issues as part of their legislative platform in 2010 and 2011. From 2007 to 2009 LWVIA did a state study which resulted in the "Report on Comprehensive Study of Mental Health Delivery Systems in Iowa." This also led to LWVIA adopting the following advocacy position:

"The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a coordinated and comprehensive state-funded mental

health system that ensures convenient and equitable access to an established menu of mental health services for Iowans of all ages who need mental health services, and elimination of legal settlement.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports adequate funding of a comprehensive menu of services, including those that promote early detection and treatment of mental illnesses and co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Appropriate levels of care should be available that meet people's needs in or near their home communities.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a mental health system that individualizes care to meet a person's specific mental health needs and focuses on the person's strengths and ability to recover.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports a mental health system that is adequately funded and accountable to its consumers and communities by providing efficient, effective, and evidence-based programs and services.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports sustained funding to expand effective programs that divert mentally ill individuals from the criminal justice system. Examples include mental health crisis intervention teams, jail diversion programs, and mental health courts.

The League of Women Voters of Iowa supports eradicating the stigma of mental illness and treating persons with mental health needs with the same respect, and treating their illnesses with the same urgency, as persons with other health needs."



## School Board Candidate Forums Sponsored by LWVMDM

By Karen Person

Metro League is sponsoring - not just one - but two forums for school board candidates. League has co-sponsored candidate forums for Des Moines Public Schools for many years. This year we are also co-sponsoring a forum for the West Des Moines School District.

### DMPS Forum:

On Wednesday, September 7, there will be a DMPS forum from 7 - 9 pm at North High School, 501 Holcomb Avenue. League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Des Moines is co-sponsoring the forum with the Des Moines Citywide PTA, Interfaith Alliance of Iowa Action Fund, AMOS and The Links. Audience members may not wear candidate promotional attire such as t-shirts, hats, etc. Buttons are allowed. No signs, banners, charts, displays, or demonstrations of any kind will be allowed. For more information, call (515) 279--8715.

### West Des Moines Forum:

On Thursday, September 8, there will be another school board forum but this will be for the candidates running for the West Des Moines school district. It will be held from 7:00 - 8:30 at the West Des Moines Learning Resource Center, 3550 Mills Civic Parkway and co-sponsored by LWVMDM with the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. For further information, contact the Chamber at #225-6009, or go to their website at [info@wdmchamber.org](mailto:info@wdmchamber.org).

# Join LEAGUE

## Its Renewal Time for Membership

Annual membership dues are \$60 per person or \$90 per household.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send dues and above information to:

LWVMDM  
PO Box 65752  
West Des Moines, IA 50265

# LWVMDM Board Sets Goals for 2011-12

By Deborah Ann Turner, MD.

At the August 10, 2011 meeting, the LWVMDM Board set as its goals for the coming year

1. Develop educational programming that supports the positions of the League
2. Plan all educational meetings in collaboration with other organizations
3. Increase membership
4. Increase awareness/visibility
5. Participate in the LWVUS studies
6. Increase visibility in the legislature – attendance at committee hearings, etc.
7. Coordinate at least one event with another League
8. Develop a program of voter education

Board meetings for the coming year will be from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. on October 19, January 11, March 14, & May 9. Board meetings deal with the business of League - setting up events, determining priorities, and working out the details of how League can fulfill it's mission within the budget approved. Board meetings are open to all members. Contact Jackie Elfmann, [jkelfmann@aol.com](mailto:jkelfmann@aol.com) for information on location.

## LWVIA Hiring Part-Time Administrative Assistant:

League of Women Voters- Iowa is looking for a part-time employee working approximately 10 hours per week. Membership in League is not a requirement but would be preferred. The job description is as follows:

**Purpose of the Position:** To provide on-going administrative support for the League of Women Voters of Iowa including outreach, records retention, and technology services

**Responsibilities:**

Support on-going administrative functions:

- Maintain updated roster
- Provide basic LWV information to local leagues and board members
- Maintain master schedule and track board task list – provide reminders to board members
- Receive routine mail and distribute to board members or provide routine response as appropriate.
- Receive LWV phone calls and forward to board members or provide routine responses
- Maintain LWVIA legal and tax documents, permanent records, and archives
- Support tech services and outreach to State and Local boards and MALs
  - Including photographs and video in electronic state newsletter, The Voter
  - Maintain LWVIA web site
- Researching and/or maintaining electronic communications such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.
- Researching and/or maintaining electronic payment and donation options for the LWVIA
- Coordinating electronic meetings including Skype meetings, telephone conferences, and other current communication technologies
- Providing support for technologically-based training opportunities

Contact LWVIA President, Myrna Loehrlein, #319-365-3199, [lwvia@live.com](mailto:lwvia@live.com) if you are interested in this position.

## LWVMDM Board Seeking

### Voter Editor

No Pay

### Great Benefits

(the undying admiration of League members throughout Des Moines and surrounding communities)

**Job Requirements:** A computer with either Microsoft Word or Pages programs; a willingness to get out 3 (ONLY 3!) newsletters in the coming year; and the willingness to receive training from the current temporary editor. Apply by calling Karen Person at #225-8304 or emailing: [kp19203@yahoo.com](mailto:kp19203@yahoo.com).