



THE VOTER

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

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CELEBRATE DEMOCRACY

Every election, we get the chance to
shape our democracy with our vote.
This is democracy in action!



President's Message

By Terese Grant, LWVIA President

This past election season created a lot of work for League members across the state of Iowa as they registered voters, held candidate forums, and encouraged voter participation. Many members also worked on Election Day in a variety of ways. We can feel a sense of accomplishment in all of these efforts, as this was the second highest voter turnout for Iowans in a midterm election according to our Secretary of State Paul Pate. In addition, our elections were fair and secure, and this is how democracy should work. Thanks to all of you who helped us to live up to our mission statement: Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

(Continued on page 2)

Save the Date

Thursday, April 13, 2023
4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Defending Democracy Award
Presentation to the Iowa Freedom
of Information Council

Dinner catered by
Baratta's Restaurant

Admission \$75.00

Jasper Winery
2400 George Flagg Parkway
Des Moines

This is a fundraiser for LWVIA to support our activities in our various efforts to defend democracy. We expect each local League to help support this effort by promoting the event to their local memberships and to attend. When you help support us, we can do more to support you. Please help us honor this organization and also have a lovely evening with your fellow LWV members from around the state.

We are also working with area hotels to get a special rate for out-of-towners who may like to spend the night in Des Moines. Details to follow when we have something firmed up.

-Nancy Halvorson, LWVIA Vice
President

(Continued from page 1)

January will be the beginning of the 2023 Legislative Session. This year our top Legislative Priorities will be: Voting, Education, Transparency, Reproductive Rights, Human Trafficking, and Environment. We held our first Mini-Issues Briefing on Public Education in November, which provided a great deal of information that we can use to speak with our legislators about the importance of public education in Iowa.

We plan to hold more mini-issues briefings in the future. We will need to have all of our members talking with their legislators about these issues and why they are important to you, the League, and the people of Iowa. We will encourage all members to talk with their legislators during legislative forums or coffees, via emails, or phone messages. Advocating for issues this year will be more important than ever.

Looking forward, we will need for everyone to be ready for the upcoming Legislative Session that begins on January 9, 2023. In the meantime, I hope that everyone enjoys the holiday season that is upon us.

In League,
Terese Grant



Criminal and Juvenile Justice Committee (CJJC) Update

By Myrna Loehrlein, CJJC Chair

We have been working on assembling information about the cost of being incarcerated or even just accused of a crime.

Some of the information we are developing:

- If a person is arrested, but cannot post bail, he/she is likely to receive a sizable bill for their own incarceration - even if the person is found to have done nothing wrong!
- The person who cannot post bail is much more likely to be sent to prison on disposition of their case. There is a "poverty penalty."
- The debt currently discussed as owed to the state can cost the state more in collection efforts than the revenue it will ever receive.

If you'd like to learn more and be prepared to ask meaningful questions at your next forum, just let Terese know. She will put us in contact.

Book Club

We meet on the third Monday of the month at 5:00 p.m. This month, I am suggesting *The Good Neighbor* by Anne Fowler. It is a nicely readable story about the unintended consequences of accusing someone of a crime. If you'd like to be included on the Zoom invitation, just let Terese know.

Hope to see you there.



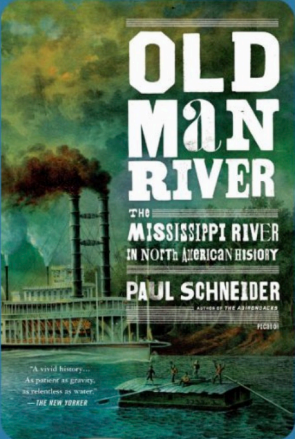


Special Online Event



Wednesday, Dec. 7th at 12 pm CT

Featuring Paul Schneider,
author of *Old Man River*

And readings from Cole W. Williams'
*Hear the River Dammed: Poems from
the edge of the Mississippi*

Register and enter to win a copy
of these signed books!

Go to <https://mississippirivernetwork.salsalabs.org/specialauthorevent12722/index.html> for more information.

League of Women Voters of Iowa T-Shirts

Christmas is coming, and you have plenty of time to order our fantastic League of Women Voters of Iowa t-shirts!

A variety of colors and styles are available.

Order yours today at:
https://stores.inksoft.com/league_of_women_voters

Wear your LWV pride!

News from the West!

We have been approached by an individual, who along with other interested folks, is hoping to develop a local League of Women Voters in Council Bluffs and the Pottawattamie County area.

Terese and I have both spoken with her recently. I had a Zoom meeting with her just this week, and she is working up an invitation list, as well as a location to have an introductory meeting such as we had in Mason City - likely in late January or early February.

We are growing, and it's really very exciting! I will share more details as they become available.

In League,

Nancy Halvorson

Attention Dedicated League Members

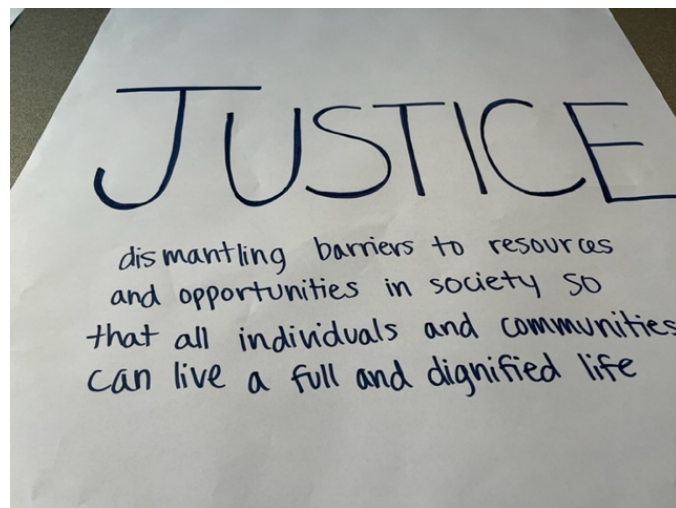
By Nancy Halvorson, LWVIA Vice President

Last call, y'all!

We are inviting you to take the next step to the state level of LWV Governance. We need you to be more involved and would be so please to have you help us grow and develop our statewide communities as we move forward in this next decade that is so important to all of us in Iowa and in this country. We have positions available in June 2023 for two-year terms for several Board positions of folks whose terms are expiring.

We have a very talented volunteer member who is going to be on the ballot as our secretary, but we still need someone to step up for the state presidency. That position is a really big job. If you have a concern about that, perhaps you would like to consider a co-presidency - a share-the-load situation. Job descriptions for president and other roles can be found in the LWVIA Bylaws document on the LWVIA website: <https://lwvia.org/about/publications/>

If you have an interest or have someone in mind who you feel would be a valuable addition to our Board, or if you have any questions, please contact Nominations Chair Nancy Halvorson at nancyh.lwvia@gmail.com or call 515.231.3746. The nominations team looks forward to hearing from you. Thank you on behalf of your League of Women Voters of Iowa.



From the MRN Annual Meeting in New Orleans: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion needs Justice to balance the DEI and make it happen.



2022 Election Report: At a Glance

The 2022 midterm elections demonstrated the power of women, young people, people of color, and all voters who care about democracy.

Across the country, the League of Women Voters powered the elections. **750+ state and local Leagues** registered voters, trained volunteers, served as poll workers, and organized to get out the vote!

The following data represents a snapshot of our impact in the 2022 midterm elections as of **November 10, 2022**.

Contacted
22+ million
voters
with election info

Protected
17.7+ million
voters through
legal action

Shared election info with
4.6+ million
voters
via VOTE411.org

Reached
3+ million voters
with English and Spanish-
language ads

Drove
225k+ visits
to VOTE411's
Spanish-language pages

Covered
52k+ candidates
in voter guides

Mississippi River Network (MRN) Update

By Nancy Porter, MRN representative from LWVIA

The Annual Meeting of the Mississippi River Network (MRN) was held in New Orleans during the week of October 4 - 11. Next year it will be held in Orlando. I do hope someone will join me in this educational, stimulating, and social event. The people who care about and work for the Mississippi River have many different roles and talents to support the River. In the northern part of the River we are more focused on our carbon pipelines, the restoration of the Great Lakes, containments for animal production organizations.

We are all concerned about flooding. I had no idea how flooding has impacted the rainforest areas of Florida until several of us at the meeting visited a long-time resident of Florida who had documented the desecration of the rain forests through the years. The deforestation of the rainforests using the cedar trees to make furniture or mulch has contributed excessively to the damage from Hurricanes Katrina and Ian.

We are all concerned about water usage. Twenty million people get their drinking water from the Mississippi River. As was documented in Jackson, MS, following Hurricane Ian, water had to be brought in for weeks because of the flooding. Barges and cruises were stuck on the River because the water level was at its lowest in thirty years.

Our Mississippi River is full of life, but cannot remain that way unless we care for it and respect its needs. Some of you will remember Jarod McGovern. He was our superior guide when we visited the National Mississippi River Museum in Dubuque for the River Days of Action 2022. He was at the MRN Annual Meeting as well as 55 friends and friends-to-be. We are already in the thought process of planning our River Days of Action for June 8 - 18, 2023. If you are interested in helping, let me know, because we will begin meeting on December 3, 2022. Any and all MRN friends are invited. If you want to offer ideas or are just curious, you will be welcome at planning meetings.

I have a detailed outline of the MRN Annual Meeting by Kelly McGinnis, Mississippi River Network CEO. If you want to see the 19-page copy, let me know. All League members can access the links on our MRN website (1mississippi.org), because your local League of Women Voters joins the Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization (UMRR-ILO), and the UMRR-ILO (website: lwumrr.org) is a member of the Mississippi Regional Network (MRN). Your local League only needs to pay \$25 to join. Anyone can join or be an active part of either network by going online to 1mississippi.org or lwumrr.org to donate, see activities, or view previous events.

It may be too cold to enjoy the Mississippi River right now, but its impact on all of us is constant. Our UMRR-ILO Board meetings are held in even-numbered months on the first Monday of the month. Our advocacy committee has been working hard meeting monthly to increase our political knowledge and impact for the four-state area of Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. On October 3, 2022, we had a very interesting presentation from Ms. Jess Mazour of the Sierra Club, Iowa Chapter, concerning the carbon pipelines. If you missed this valuable presentation, visit lwumrr.org/blog.

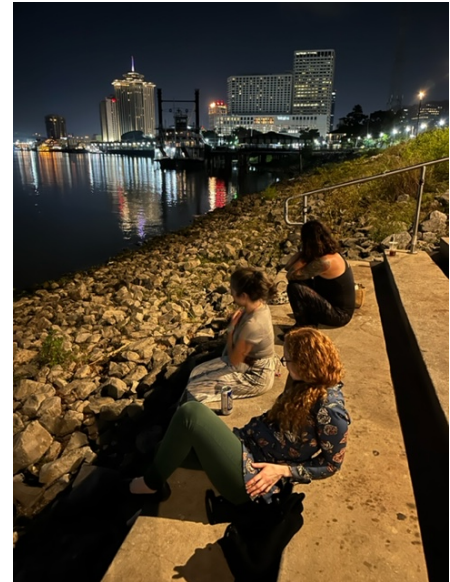
View photos from the MRN Annual Meeting on pages 7 and 8.



Photos from the Mississippi River Network Annual Meeting in New Orleans

From top left, clockwise:

- Our Canopy meeting room was full.
- Lots of discussion in small groups.
- Mississippi River Network CEO Kelly McGinnis, center, listens to ideas for the future of MRN on the patio outside of our meeting room in New Orleans.
- An organized meal was one day's extension of getting to know each other. Kelly McGinnis stands in front of artwork created for MRN.
- DEI/J in background. Several attendees also presented.
- MRN Advocacy Director Maisah Khan and Kelly McGinnis in the Canopy Hotel lobby.



Photos from the Mississippi River Network Annual Meeting in New Orleans

From top left, clockwise:

- Victoria Bradford Styrbicki ran the length of the Mississippi River in 120 days. She attended the MRN Annual Meeting in New Orleans in October 2022. She has a podcast about her run, the Mississippi River, and the people she met.
- Time to reflect and expand notes.
- The annual meeting of the MRN was not all work and included some evenings like this perfect place alongside the Mississippi River.
- Maisah Khan, MRN Advocacy Director, is on the right of the photo and joined our field trip to discuss slave recognition in New Orleans.
- Any trip to New Orleans has to include a walk on Bourbon Street, where we also found a place to dine.