Dear Members,

I'm Linda Duckworth, Co-President of the League of Women Voters of Nebraska. I wouldn't be surprised if we are already acquainted, because I've been active with the League since moving to Omaha from St. Louis 15 years ago. In fact, I was President of LWVNE from 2011 to 2013. This time is different for me, though, because I have the privilege and the pleasure of sharing this office with Dr. Dianne Bystrom.

Dianne brings valuable experience to this position, including her background as director of the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics. She will tell you more about herself, but you should also know she has studied our history of woman's suffrage extensively. The timing is fortunate I think, as we mark the 100th anniversary of our gaining the right to vote!

I also feel very honored to work with a leadership team that has impressed me right out of the gate. We have a terrific mix of veteran and newer members who have already rolled up their sleeves to work on our political priorities and our day-to-day operations. I hope you will read their reports in the following pages.

Our local communities, our state, our nation, and our world desperately need the leadership of selfless, determined people who are all about working for the public good. We – all of us in the League of Women Voters – are those people. I look forward to hearing from you!

Unlike Linda, most of you do not know me—LWVNE Co-President Dianne Bystrom. I was born and raised in Fremont, NE, but have been working out of the state for 39 years—including 17 years at the University of Oklahoma and 22 years as the director of the Catt Center at Iowa State University. I retired in August 2018 and moved to our house on Beaver Lake, south of Plattsmouth.

I, Dianne, have been a member of the LWV since 1995, when we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the League and ratification of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. I am happy to be back in Nebraska to help celebrate our 100th anniversary in 2020. Although a longtime member of the LWV, I don't have the leadership experience with the organization that Linda brings to our co-presidency of the LWVNE. I served on the Board of Directors of the LWV of Iowa from 2012-16 and have been involved with the LWVIA-led 19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration Committee since 2017. I look forward to learning from Linda's wealth of LWV experience in this partnership.

Although my research focuses on the communication styles and strategies of contemporary women political candidates and their media coverage, I have also studied and given presentations on the women's suffrage movement. As co-president of the LWVNE, I am looking forward to working with our board and LWV members across the state to advance our goals and engage more people in the political process. As our founder, Carrie Chapman Catt, noted on August 26, 1920, when the 19th Amendment was ratified: "The vote is the emblem of your equality. . . Prize it! . . . Progress is calling to you to make no pause. Act!"

2019-2020 LWVNE CALENDAR

Following are meeting dates the LWVNE Board set for the year. Any member is welcome to attend the Board meetings and is especially encouraged to participate in the Annual Meeting.

October 12, 2019: Board meeting
January 11, 2020: Board meeting (snow date January 18, 2020)
February 1, 2020: Board meeting to set priority bills (snow date February 8, 2020)
TBD: Legislative Day
March 14, 2020: Board meeting (snow date March 21, 2020)
April 25, 2020: Annual Meeting (in Seward)
NATURAL RESOURCES:

Wind Farm Development
LWVNE is keeping a close eye on attempts to stop wind farm development in Nebraska, such as Legislative Bills 155 (which passed and was signed into law) and 373 (which remains in committee), introduced by Senator Tom Brewer of Northwest Nebraska.

Climate Change
Senator Pansing Brooks introduced LB 283 to provide that UN-L would develop an action plan to mitigate the impacts of climate change. This bill remains in committee; however, Pansing Brooks also introduced LR 241, which created a committee to develop an environmental action plan for the state to address “highly destructive weather events.” Note “climate change” does not appear in the resolution. The committee members are Senators Bostleman, Brandt, Brewer, Kolterman, Lowe, McCollister, and Pansing Brooks. If any of your senators are on this committee, please contact them and urge action in developing an action plan. LWVNE will continue to monitor along with several other environmentally concerned groups.

Agricultural Practices
LB 243 (Gragert) created the Healthy Soils Task Force, with goals of improving health, yield, and profitability of soil, increased carbon sequestration, and improved water quality. Passed and signed into law on April 17th.

LB 729 (Walz) provides a financial incentive to farmers to plant cover crops with a direct focus along waterways to help prevent nitrate runoff. It remains in the Ag Committee.

HEALTH DIRECTOR - Phyllis Salyards

Family Planning
LB 498 (Wishart) directs DHHS to submit a state plan amendment to the federal centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for the purpose of covering family planning services. The bill remains in the HHS Committee.

LB 629 (Pansing Brooks) stipulates that DHHS shall grant funds received under Title X (federal dollars) only to entities licensed to provide services under the Medical Assistance Act, are compliant with HIPPA, able to diagnose and treat STDs and infections, and are able to provide gynecological exams. It remains in HHS Committee.

With regard to Title X funds, in 2019 the grant was awarded to a non-profit for administration, keeping the money out of the state DHHS budget. The Family Planning Council of Nebraska received the grant after applying for the first time. Marj Plumb, Council spokeswoman, said that the Council wants to prioritize health care over politics after the devastating loss of funding for family planning care through Title X funds administered by DHHS in 2018.

VP ACTION REPORT

WINS AND LOSSES IN SOCIAL POLICY LEGISLATION

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

LB 154 (Brewer) to improve reporting and investigation of missing Native American women - League SUPPORTED, passed and signed by Governor March 7th.

LB 147 (Groene) provides for use by teacher or administrator of necessary physical force for removal of student from class as a response to behavior. League OPPOSES.

Advanced to General File May 21st.

CRIME, COURTS AND CORRECTIONS

LB 141 (DeBoer) creates offense of assault by strangulation or suffocation. League SUPPORTED. Passed and signed by Governor March 27th.

LB 519 (Slama) changed statutes of limitations for certain sexual and trafficking offenses. League SUPPORTED. Passed and signed by Governor May 31st.

LB 532 (Hilkeman) changed provisions relating to harassment, sexual assault and domestic abuse protection orders. League SUPPORTED. Passed and signed by Governor May 30th.

LB 630 (Morfeld) created offense of sexual extortion. League SUPPORTED. Passed and signed by Governor May 30th.

LB 179 (Hilgers) statutorily authorized interlocutory appeal from the denial of sovereign immunity or the immunity of a government official. League OPPOSED. Passed and signed by Governor May 17th.

HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION
LB 396 (Howard) changes landlord and tenant provisions relating to continuances and rental deposits. League SUPPORTS; reached General File March 12th.

**HUMAN SERVICES**
LB 327 (Bolz) appropriations bill for an increase in rates paid to behavioral health service providers. Amended into LB 294 (Budget Bill). League SUPPORTED. LB 294 signed by Governor May 27th.

**JUVENILE JUSTICE**
LB 230 (Pansing Brooks) provides for humanitarian room confinement for juveniles. League SUPPORTS; advanced to General File March 18th.
LB 231 (Pansing Brooks) changes provisions relating to legal defense of juveniles. League SUPPORTS; advanced to General File March 18th.

**LABOR**
LB 217 (Pansing Brooks) prohibits retaliation against employees for communicating about wages. League SUPPORTED. Passed and signed by Governor April 17th.
LB 305 (Crawford) Adopt the Healthy and Safe Families and Workplaces Act. League SUPPORTS; advanced to General File March 7th.
LB 400 (Hunt) changes the minimum wage for persons compensated by way of gratuities. League SUPPORTS; advanced to General File February 19th.
LB 627 (Pansing Brooks) prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity. League SUPPORTS; advanced to General File February 19th.

**PAYDAY LENDING**
LB 379 (Kolterman) changes provisions under Delayed Deposit Services Licensing Act. League OPPOSED. Speaker Priority Bill.

**POVERTY**
LB 169 (Hunt) changes provisions relating to eligibility for SNAP (Food Stamps) to allow ex-felons convicted of possession or sale of controlled substances to access SNAP. League SUPPORTED. Advanced to General File March 15th.

**WOMEN’S ISSUES**
LB 13 (Blood) to provide sales tax exemption for breast feeding supplies and to exempt breast feeding from public indecency offenses. League SUPPORTED Indefinitely postponed May 31st. The language regarding public indecency was amended into OB 209 which passed and was signed by the Governor June 4th.
LB 209 (Albrecht) requires information of the possibility of a reversal of a medication abortion. League OPPOSED. Albrecht priority bill; passed and signed by the Governor June 4th.

**NEBRASKA TABLE FOR CLEAN ENERGY**
Sherry Miller, VP Action

Earlier in 2019 LWVNE was invited to join the Nebraska Table for Clean Energy, a group which meets by teleconference every Monday morning. The agenda usually focuses on news from the three major public energy districts-OPPD, NPPD, and LES. We also discussed legislation introduced during this year’s Unicameral session, focusing especially on LB 155 and 373, both introduced by Senator Brewer and both with the intention of limiting wind farm development statewide. LWVNE vigorously opposed these bills, along with the groups listed below.

The Table group is composed of Sierra Club, Center for Rural Affairs, Nebraska Wildlife Federation, New Power Nebraska, Nebraska League of Conservation Voters, Nebraska Farmers Union, Nebraskans for Solar, BOLD Nebraska, Audubon, and The Nature Conservancy, and Citizens Climate Lobby. Two major goals are to reduce the carbon footprint by persuading smaller Public Power Districts to move from coal generated power to wind and/or solar; and to encourage the development of more wind farms, utilizing one of our state’s most abundant resources.

OPPD and NPPD have already adopted live streaming and archiving of their board meetings. The group will now encourage LES to do the same for the convenience of its customer consumers.

The influence of the League is strengthened multi-fold by joining the Table and working for attainable goals of wise and clean energy production and usage by customer consumers.
Library of Congress Seeks Help to Transcribe Women’s Suffrage Papers

The Library of Congress is asking for volunteers to help transcribe more than 16,000 historic papers related to the women’s suffrage movement. It has launched a crowdsourcing platform, “By the People,” to ask the public to help type up written documents word for word, which will make it easier to find and read original sources.

The Library of Congress project coincides with the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which Congress passed in June 1919. Women officially gained the right to vote in August 1920, when the amendment was ratified.

The Library of Congress’s collection includes letters, speeches, newspaper articles, personal diaries and other materials from famed suffragists like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton; accounts from Carrie Chapman Catt, who served twice as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, including during the final successful ratification campaign; and the diaries of Mary Church Terrell, a founder of the National Association of Colored Women, which shed light on minorities’ laborious suffrage struggles and her own dealings with civil rights figures like W.E.B. Du Bois.

Elizabeth Novara, an American women’s history specialist and curator of the Library of Congress’s new “Shall Not Be Denied” suffrage exhibition, said she hopes the transcription endeavor will give people an opportunity to “engage with our collections and feel a connection with the suffragists.”

“This project may be of interest to members of the League of Women Voters as we begin to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution,” said Dianne Bystrom, LWVNE co-president. “This would also be a great project for college classes to help them learn more about the women’s suffrage movement.”

As of now, more than 4,200 documents have been transcribed. However, thousands more need initial transcriptions or a review of completed transcriptions. You can donate your time and typing/proofing skills to the project by following these step-by-step instructions:

1. Go to the Library of Congress crowdsourcing page for the suffrage project: https://crowd.loc.gov/topics/suffrage-women-fight-for-the-vote/
2. In the upper righthand corner of this page, click on “register.” This will bring up a page where you can register for an account to track your work, add tags, and review transcriptions. To sign up, please provide a username, email address, and a strong password. Once you click register, the Library of Congress will send you an email to confirm your address.
3. Once your account is confirmed in an email from the Library of Congress, you can choose to review and approve transcriptions completed (“needs review” button at the bottom of the main suffrage crowdsourcing page) or initiate a transcription (“not started” button).

Join the LWV at the Opening of the Nebraska Suffrage Exhibit!

League of Women Voters members will be gathering at opening of the Votes for Women Exhibit at 5:00 pm on August 16 at History Nebraska, 131 Centennial Mall North in Lincoln. We want to have a large presence at this event so we hope you will attend!
Vote by Mail Survey

Voters Service directors would like to hear from you.

With the huge success of Nebraska’s Vote by Mail pilot in Garden county for the 2016 primary (a turnout of 76%), other counties followed suit with Merrick (73% turnout), Morrill (70% turnout), and Dawes (62% turnout) in the 2016 general election. Typical turnout on election day in Nebraska is around 25%.

So, more county election officials are interested in requesting Vote by Mail for their voters, as it significantly increases turnout and lowers costs.

At this point, only rural counties with populations under 10,000 qualify for this method of voting in Nebraska, which sets up unfair and unequal opportunities for all Nebraskans, across all voting classes and counties, to equally exercise their right to vote.

Currently held up in the Nebraska state legislature committee during the 2019 session is LB163, which would remove the 10,000 population cap. But each county would still require individual approval by the Secretary of State to officially implement vote by mail.

There are a few alternatives to LB163, of which are cited in our survey. The LWV would like to hear from as many Nebraskan voters and non-voters as possible, from all demographics, to get a clear picture of how popular - or unpopular - voting by mail would be for your household.

Click on the link below to take a short 3-minute survey indicating your voting experiences and preferences. If you have been a non-voter, we especially want to hear from you. (If clicking doesn’t work, copy and paste this address in your browser.)  https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KXS3MYM

Since we are asking organizations across Nebraska to send this survey to their membership, please take the survey only once if you receive this request multiple times.

Please complete the survey prior to Sunday, August 25, 2019. Your answers will remain confidential.

Thank you for sharing your input with us.

League of Women Voters
Voters Service Co-Directors
Caryl Guisinger            Toni Monette
  caryl.lwvne@gmail.com     toni@lwvgo.org

You’re Invited to the
Nebraska League of Women Voters
Kick-off for the Centennial Celebration

Please join the LWVGO for a kick-off to our celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment and the League of Women Voters on Monday August 26, 2019. August 2019 is the 100th Anniversary the Nebraska passage of the 19th Amendment. August 26 is also Women’s Equality Day! We hope you can join us for a presentation on the 19th Amendment by Judge Laurie Smith Camp, Senior District Judge of the United States District Court, District of Nebraska.

The kick-off will be at the AIM Building in Omaha, 7th floor, Grain Exchange Room (1905 Harney St.) We hope you can join us to celebrate. Please RSVP to candide@lwvgo.org so we will know how much food to order. We hope to see you there!
Event Schedule for Centennial Celebration—Mark your calendars!

**August 16, 2019** – Opening of *Votes for Women: Nebraska’s Suffrage Story* Exhibit, History Nebraska, History Nebraska, Lincoln. See page 4.

**August 26, 2019** – LWVNE Kickoff to 100th Anniversary hosted by LWVGO, Omaha. See page 5.

**February, 2020** – LWVNE Lobbying Day and Luncheon Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters, Lincoln

**TBD** – LWVNE 100th Anniversary Gala, Omaha

**April 2020** – LWVNE Annual State Meeting in Seward

**July 4, 2020** – Seward 4th of July Parade & Exhibition, All Nebraska Leagues are invited to march!

**August 5-7, 2020** – 8th Circuit Conference (League Coordinating Exhibit Space)

**August 5-7, 2020** – League Event in conjunction with the 8th Circuit Conference TBD

**August 28, 2020 – September 7, 2020** – Nebraska State Fair Booth Celebrating Suffrage

Contact MaryLee Moulton, at marylee@lwvgo.org for more information.