

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Linda Duckworth, LWVNE Co-President

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

I like the LWV's mission statement because it's easy to remember and gets to the heart of what we are about. And, it works at all three levels of League.

If you joined the League of Women Voters on the local level you automatically became a member of three organizations, each of which has a role to fill in your activist life.

As a member of a local League you have the opportunity to learn from local community experts and to become a leader in your community, through the League of Women Voters.

As a member of LWV-Nebraska you are represented by our state board and volunteer lobbyists as we work for state legislation that benefits our citizens and adheres to our League positions. We also encourage you to volunteer for LWVNE committees and to let our nominating committee know if you are interested in becoming a member of the board of directors.

At the national level there are opportunities for service as well. Our long-serving LWVNE parliamentarian, Caroline Sedlacek, is beginning her second term as a member of the Parliamentary Committee with LWVUS. Omaha member Deborah Turner is a Director on our LWVUS Board. And, a few months ago I was invited to serve on the LWVUS Futures Committee.

The Futures Committee is tasked with finding a way to help all of our Leagues—local, state and national—move along on our Transformation Journey. Here is a chart you may find interesting: <https://files.constantcontact.com/37d635eb001/b5219316-c7b3-4aea-aea0-7b53d0e7ca09.pdf>

These dynamic and forward thinking committee members, from all over the United States, are passionate about the impact we can have on our society, and it has been a great pleasure to get to know them. We have met in person once and electronically three times. We have agreed that four goals should dominate our next few years:

1. Fair Maps
2. Money out of Politics
3. Democratic Elections
4. Voting Rights for All

At the same time we need to ensure the longevity of this beloved organization, which will require:

1. Inclusive, welcoming and growing Leagues
2. A culture of planning, tracking and evaluation
3. League leaders who collaborate, partner and are willing to confront power
4. The capacity and resources needed to impact real change

As we continue our work, I encourage you to reach out to me with your thoughts and suggestions. I'm always happy to talk about anything, and please know the longevity and well-being of LWV is near to my heart.

ACTION VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sherry Miller

Most of my activity since the last issue of the VOTER has been joining conference calls with the Nebraska Table for Clean Energy, representing the League co-chairs for Natural Resources and the League membership.

The Table for Clean Energy has a large membership but the organizations usually participating include the following: Center for Rural Affairs, Citizens Climate Lobby, Farmers Union, Interfaith Power and Light, League of Conservation of Voters, League of Women Voters of Nebraska, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Nature Conservancy, Nebraska Climate Caucus, Nebraskans for Solar, New Power Nebraska, Sierra Club, Wildlife Federation, and elected board members of OPPD and NPPD. The last includes Janece Mollhoff, former Natural Resources Director for LWVNE, now serving on the OPPD board.

The weekly call agenda includes reports on the three largest energy districts in Nebraska, namely, Lincoln Electric System, Nebraska Public Power and Omaha Public Power. While NPPD and OPPD boards are made up of elected directors, the mayor of Lincoln appoints members of the LES board.

It has been very encouraging to hear of the progress made by OPPD toward zero net carbon goals; unfortunately, NPPD lags far behind with LES somewhere in the middle of such efforts. LES does purchase wind power from Oklahoma and a large solar array is planned for east of the city. There is resistance to developing wind power by the NPPD board, bolstered by ranchers and farmers whose property is in the Sandhills. The fragility of the Sandhills, unique in the United States, creates the biggest hurdle to developing wind farms and transmission lines.

OPPD livestreams its board meetings; the group has been pressuring LES to do the same and has been promised that when LES moves to new headquarters, it will add livestreaming. If you are an LES consumer, you are encouraged to contact LES at its website and advocate for livestreaming of its board meetings. Other city boards, such as the school board, city council, and planning commission already livestream.

Many good resources are shared by the members of the Table, including the following:

<https://www.oppd.com/> and click on the Power with Purpose link (<https://www.oppd.com/community/oppd-listens/power-with-purpose/>).

<https://www.les.com/> and click on Sustainability Initiatives (<https://www.les.com/pdf/renewables.pdf>).

<https://www.nppd.com/> and click on Energy Resources (<https://www.nppd.com/powering-nebraska/energy-resources>) for information on its renewable energy practices.

LWVNE SIGNS on to “PEOPLE POWERED FAIR MAPS” INITIATIVE

Sheri St. Clair, LWVNE Government Director

\$10,000 LWVUS Grant Secured; Committee Looking for LWVNE Members to Join the Effort

The June 27, 2019, decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in three partisan gerrymandering cases (including *Rucho v. League of Women Voters of North Carolina*) was a “call to action” for the League of Women Voters. When the court decided to take a hands-off approach to redistricting, LWVUS initiated “People Powered Fair Maps,” a campaign to ensure fair representation throughout the 50 states and the District of Columbia. This 50-state redistricting campaign lasting through 2022 is intended as a collaboration among national, state, and local Leagues with an aim of building power in communities across the country, with LWV as the leading organization fighting for fair redistricting.

Through this campaign, the League expects to engage in many different activities with each state choosing its course. Some may defend existing systems, implement recent reforms, or look for

opportunities to put the power of redistricting into the hands of the people, not politicians. Areas of focus include:

Education/Advocacy
Organizing and Mobilizing
Partnership Building
Ballot Initiatives/Referendums
State Constitutional Options/Litigation
Federal Legislative Fixes



To assist state Leagues in implementing their state’s campaign, LWVUS is providing grants and materials to educate communities as well as key decision makers. LWVNE is actively supporting this campaign. At the October board meeting, a Fair Maps committee was formed consisting of MaryLee Moulton, Kate High, Sherry Miller, and Carol Dennison, with Sheri St. Clair as chair.

The state Fair Maps committee has secured a \$10,000 grant from LWVUS that will be directed toward a statewide education campaign. Another effort will focus on legislative action. A more extensive effort, a petition drive for a ballot initiative, is underway through other organizations. Potential language and partners are being discussed. LWVUS encourages collaboration with stakeholders, and it only makes sense to find others working for the same fair democracy policies to share information and multiply the effort. A contact list of organizations, agencies, and all interested community groups is being made to enlist their cooperation. Help us think of community and state organizations in which you belong that would be interested in partnering to achieve voter-centered fair maps in Nebraska.

Legislative action will involve getting a redistricting bill onto the floor for debate and a vote. Three bills were introduced in the 2019 session, but none emerged from Executive Committee. This route to redistricting may be the best and easiest solution. Other states, Iowa, for one, have handled redistricting through legislative avenues and achieved fair and balanced systems for drawing district lines.

A public relations campaign has already been discussed with the help of American Advertising Federation Omaha, working through the Omaha League. These consultants have designed a Fair Maps logo superimposed on our state map to identify “People Powered Fair Maps” for Nebraska. An extensive social media campaign is taking shape and, again, we will need your support to share redistricting information to your Facebook, Instagram and Twitter friends.

LWV members across the state are asked to join the fair redistricting education effort. This may include mailing postcards, writing letters to editors, contacting state legislators, reposting educational materials to social media, and/or making presentations to a variety of groups and organizations. Please share contact information about any organization that might partner with us. Send to Sheri St. Clair (stsheri4@gmail.com) and let us know ways in which you can help.

We’re counting on you!

EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Lynne Elwood, LWVNE Education Director

If you like to follow education bills in the Unicameral, then the Education Committee is for you. As per the Nebraska League’s program, we track bills dealing with the financing of Nebraska’s public schools, bills that support policies promoting a quality education for all Nebraska children (PreK–12), student assessment, early childhood education, providing services to children in key transition years, academic freedom, school safety and evaluation of education professionals. If interested or if you have questions, please contact LWVNE Education Director Lynne Elwood: Lelwood2@gmail.com or 402-980-9043.

NATURAL RESOURCES CO-DIRECTORS' REPORT

Janelle Stevenson and Megan York Lyons

We recently joined LWVNE as the Natural Resources Co-Directors. Over the past six months, we have familiarized ourselves with organizations dedicated to sharing knowledge about climate change and local environmental issues. We've already met with organizations including Women in Green Meetup (USGBC), Lincoln Mayor's Environmental Task Force, Citizens Climate Lobby, and the Youth Climate Strike.

Omaha Public Power District

Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) is seeking an RFP (request for proposal) for 600 megawatts of solar energy, and up to 600 megawatts of natural gas generation from peakers (power plants that generally run only when there is a high demand). If OPPD goes forward with 600MW of solar, it would be the largest solar installation in the country. OPPD also announced a goal of net zero carbon by 2050. Both of these decisions are a huge win for both rate-payers and the environment.

Keystone XL Pipeline

Considering the recent oil spill in North Dakota, we need to be following developments on the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. Nebraska should continue to be cautious of TC Energy using eminent domain to gain land. These structures are guaranteed to leak (not just droplets, but thousands of gallons) causing environmental harm to our clean water, communities, and our wildlife

Lincoln Earth Day

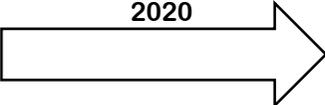
Lincoln Earth Day is coming up on April 25, 2020, and we'd like to have a booth. The event marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and is a chance to engage a mostly informed and already active sector of voters. If you are interested in volunteering, please email naturalresourceslwnv@gmail.com.

SIGN UP TO JOIN ROAD TRIP TO IOWA TO CELEBRATE LWV CENTENNIAL

Dianne Bystrom, LWVNE Co-President

IOWA EVENTS

February 13–14,
2020



LWVNE co-presidents Linda Duckworth and Dianne Bystrom are organizing a road trip to Iowa on Feb. 13–14, 2020, to celebrate the centennial of the founding of the national League of Women Voters and participate in events leading up to the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.

Those interested in participating in the road trip to Iowa—which will include stops in Charles City, Mason City and Ames—should email lindabduckworth@gmail.com or dianne.bystrom@gmail.com as soon as possible and **no later than Jan. 2, 2020**. Reservations for Feb. 13, 2020, in the block of rooms being held at the Historic Park Inn in Mason City—the last hotel in the world designed and built by Frank Lloyd Wright—are also due by Jan. 2. Members can make reservations by calling 641-422-0015 and asking for a room in the LWVNE block. The website for the Historic Park Inn is <http://www.stoneycreekhoteles.com/hotel/travel/masoncity-parkinn/home.do>.

Duckworth and Bystrom will help organize carpools for the road trip, based on the emails they receive from those interested in participating. The trip will include a tour of suffrage leader and LWV founder Carrie Chapman Catt's Girlhood Home in Charles City on Feb. 13, a stay at the Historic Park Inn in Mason City on Feb. 13, and participation in the Iowa 19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration Committee's kick-off events at Iowa State University in Ames on Feb. 14.

The Iowa kick-off events on Feb. 14 include a lecture by Elaine Weiss, author of *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*; a performance of *The Yellow Rose of Suffrage*, a one-woman play about Catt by Iowa State theatre professor emerita Jane Cox; and presentations on such topics as suffrage in

the South, the role of women of color in the women's suffrage movement, women's political participation from 1920–2020 and the history of voting rights.

Carpools will depart from Omaha by 7:30 a.m. on Feb. 13 to arrive in Charles City by noon. Participants will gather for lunch in downtown Charles City before a tour of Catt's Girlhood Home. After the tour, participants will depart for Mason City, a 40-minute drive from Charles City, to check in at the Historic Park Inn. Efforts are underway to schedule a conversation, perhaps over dinner, with a local retired educator who is writing a book, *Amazing Women of Early Mason City*, about suffrage leaders from Mason City, including one with Omaha ties.

On Feb. 14, the LWWNE road trip will depart around 9:30 a.m. for Iowa State University in Ames, a 90-minute drive. Events celebrating the founding of the national League of Women Voters on this date in 1920 and the upcoming 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment on Aug. 26 will begin at 11:30 a.m. with a screening of an excerpt from a new documentary on Catt produced by Iowa Public Television. Weiss's lecture is scheduled for 1:00–2:15 p.m., followed by the *Yellow Rose of Suffrage* from 2:30–3:15 p.m.

Two concurrent sessions will be held from 3:30–4:15 p.m. and 4:30–5:15 p.m., with presentations on "Suffrage in the South," "Women's Political Participation: 1920–2020," "Iowa Stories," including women of color in the suffrage movement; and the "19th Amendment as Voting Rights History." According to organizers, all concurrent session presentations will address diversity and inclusion. The Iowa kick-off will end with a reception from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. with suffrage displays, including "Missing Faces and Silenced Voices: African-American Women's Involvement in the Iowa Suffragist Movement," a suffrage "selfie" station and suffrage songs.

"Although the events at Iowa State continue until 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 14, carpools can be organized to leave Ames earlier that day," Bystrom said. "Anyone interested in participating in the road trip should email Linda or me to let us know when they wish to leave Ames on Feb. 14. It is most important that those interested in the road trip make their room reservation at the Historic Park Inn in Mason City on Feb. 13 by Jan. 2."

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska will hold its Legislative Day at the Nebraska State Capitol on Feb. 12, 2020, paving the way for a road trip to Iowa on Feb. 13–14.

MONEY IN POLITICS PROJECT

Kate High, LWWNE Treasurer and MIP Project Chair

The League's Money in Politics (MIP) project is continuing with several activities. Project Chair Kate High has presented findings from her Money in Politics in Nebraska Reports at the following:

- ★ Hastings League of Women Voters, September 27. The *Hastings Tribune* covered the event. http://www.hastingstribune.com/nebraska-lags-behind-neighbors-in-campaign-finance-regulation/article_d7b712fa-e16e-11e9-99a6-8b2a6ec62c30.html;
- ★ Seward League of Women Voters, November 30;
- ★ OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) at UN-L class "Dark Money, Montana to Nebraska and Beyond" was held in October and November. This was a four-session class featuring the documentary, "Dark Money". Co-presenter was Jack Gould, Common Cause Nebraska. LWWNE Co-President Dianne Bystrom moderated a panel discussion on Dark Money featuring Sen. Sue Crawford, former Senators Al Davis, and Jerry Johnson and journalist Joe Jordan.

Money in Politics reports, Parts 1, 2, and 3 are available on the League's website, www.lwv-ne.org. High's research is continuing with an examination of the donors who contributed to 2018 Unicameral candidates.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE 101: IT'S SUFFRAGIST, NOT SUFFRAGETTE

Dianne Bystrom, LWVNE Co-President

As Nebraska and the United States prepare to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment in 2020, confusion has once again surfaced about the terms “suffragist” and “suffragette.”

The correct term is suffragist, **not** suffragette, to refer to advocates of the women’s suffrage movement in the United States. In fact, suffragette was considered a derogatory term in the U.S. women’s suffrage movement.

The terms suffrage and enfranchisement mean having the right to vote. Suffragists are people who advocate for enfranchisement. According to the National Parks Service, “Although we often see suffragist and suffragette used as though they mean the same thing, their historical meanings are quite different.”

In the early 1900s, the battle for women’s suffrage was in full force in both Britain and the United States. According to the National Parks Service (and other resources), reporters covering the suffrage movements took sides. In 1906, a British reporter used the word “suffragette” to mock those fighting for women’s right to vote. “The suffix ‘-ette’ is used to refer to something small or diminutive, and the reporter used it to minimize the work of British suffragists,” according to the National Parks Service.

Although some women in Britain embraced the term suffragette, as a way of reclaiming it from its original derogatory use, the term was viewed as offensive in the United States and not embraced by the U.S. suffrage movement. Instead, the term “suffragette” was wielded by anti-suffragists in their fight to deny women in the United States the right to vote.

So, when referring to people who advocated for women’s right to vote in the United States, use “suffragist” and not “suffragette,” a term considered derogatory.

LWVNE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, APRIL 25, 2020

Sharon Nemeth, LWVNE Office Administrator

Suggested Bylaws Amendments Due January 25

According to Article XIV of the LWVNE Bylaws, one method of amendment is by a two-thirds vote at any LWVNE Annual Meeting, using the following procedures: Proposals for change shall be submitted by any local League board or committee appointed by the president to the board of directors **at least three months prior** to the Annual Meeting. All such proposed amendments together with the recommendations of the state board shall be sent to the presidents of local Leagues and members-at-large at least 30 days prior to Annual Meeting.

The bylaws are on the LWVNE Web site (www.lwv-ne.org) in the left-hand column. Please review the bylaws and send your proposed changes to LWVNE Office Administrator Sharon Nemeth (lwv-ne@inebraska.com). The first three articles must remain the same to be consistent with LWVUS requirements. The deadline for submitting proposed amendments is January 25. If you have questions, please contact Caroline Sedlacek, Bylaws Committee Chair (csedlacek@cox.net).

Suggested Program Changes Due February 25

Local Leagues and individual members may suggest LWVNE program changes for adoption at the Annual Meeting set for April 25, 2020, in Seward. Any suggested changes should be sent to LWVNE Office Administrator Sharon Nemeth at lwv-ne@inebraska.com; the bylaws require that they be submitted by February 25 (**two months prior** to Annual Meeting). All suggestions will be compiled for the Board to make its recommendation on them at its March 14, 2020, meeting. Only minor changes may be made without undertaking a study. The current 2019–2020 Program is on our Web site (www.lwv-ne.org) in the left-hand column.

League of Women Voters of Nebraska (LWVNE)

LEGISLATIVE DAY

at the State Capitol, First Baptist Church, and Governor’s Mansion

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Featured luncheon speaker:

STEVE DUNBAR

Professor Emeritus, UN-L Mathematics Department

“Neutrality and Fairness in Redistricting”

8:30 to 9:00 Registration and Refreshments, **First Baptist Church**, 14th and “K” Streets
Fellowship Hall open at 8:30 am

9:00 to 10:15 Legislative process; LWVNE Priorities presented by LWVNE Action Directors

10:15 to 11:50 Visit with senators, observe Unicameral in session, tour Capitol

11:50 to 1:00 Luncheon (Menu TBA) at the **Governor’s Mansion**

Deadline for Reservations is **Thursday, February 6, 2020**

*Luncheon seating capacity is 64; the first 63 PAID registrants will be guaranteed a place.
A waiting list will be used.*

*******YOU MAY PAY ONLINE AT www.lwv-ne.org*******

To make your reservation, please fill out the form below, detach, write a check payable to LWVNE for the total number of reservations, and mail the reservation form and check to:

Sharon Nemeth, Office Administrator
LWVNE
4600 Valley Road, Suite 306
Lincoln, NE 68510

Questions?
Call: 402-475-1411
or
Email: lwv-ne@inebraska.com

Name _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

Guest(s) _____ Legislative District # _____

_____ \$35 per registration, includes morning refreshments, workshop, and luncheon

OR

_____ \$23 per registration, luncheon only

_____ I want a vegetarian luncheon (entrée not specified)

OR

_____ \$12 per registration, morning only (refreshments and workshop)

_____ Also enclosed is a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____



NEBRASKA VOTER

Linda Duckworth & Dianne Bystrom, Co-Presidents
Annette Conser, Editor
4600 Valley Road, Suite 306
Lincoln, NE 68510

402-475-1411

www.lwv-ne.org

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TIME DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT DELAY

LWVNE SEEKS COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska has an opening on its board of directors for a Communications Director to promote its activities, events and programs through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram); its Web site; quarterly newsletter and news releases with the input and assistance from the Communication Committee and other LWVNE staff and volunteers. If you are interested in learning more about this volunteer opportunity, email Dianne Bystrom, co-president, at dianne.bystrom@gmail.com.

LEGISLATIVE DAY 2020—PLAN TO BE THERE!

Sherry Miller, LWVNE Action VP

Legislative Day 2020 will be part of the celebration of the League's 100th birthday. Plan to be there on **Wednesday, February 12**, to get informed on League legislative priorities, to lobby ALL of our 49 senators, to enjoy a wonderful lunch at the Governor's Mansion and to listen to our special speaker, Steve Dunbar, Professor Emeritus UN-L, whose topic will be neutral and fair redistricting. Efforts have been made for the past two legislative sessions to bring redistricting reform to Nebraska before the 2020 Census, but the Executive Board of the Unicameral has not voted any bills out for debate by the full body. It's time for this impediment to representative voting to be removed!

Seating for luncheon at the Mansion is restricted to 64, including the speaker. So, take time to send in your early registration (page 7 of this VOTER) for Legislative Day right away. Be part of the grand celebration!