



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS®

June 2008

President: Patte Newman
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***Editor's Note:** At its February 12 meeting the LWVLL board of directors voted in opposition to the so-called "Nebraska Civil Rights Initiative" which would attempt to override Affirmative Action policies in Nebraska. The following article was received from supporters of the effort to stop the petition; although the sentiment is similar in spirit to the feelings expressed by the LWVLL Board in February, the particular wording of this article has not been put before the Board for approval. We chose to print the article as an educational item, and we encourage our members to find out more about the issue before being asked to sign a petition (and/or before deciding whether to request that your signature be removed, if you have already signed.)*

Please Decline to Sign Petition to Ban Affirmative Action

ALERT

Nebraska is being targeted by outside forces who seek to divide our communities and deny equal opportunities for Nebraskans by using misleading language and making erroneous claims. Paid petition circulators, propped up by well-financed, out-of-state political groups, are working to amend Nebraska's Constitution to eliminate affirmative action and its principles of equity and fairness.

***Affirmative Action is not preferential treatment –
it levels an unbalanced playing field.***

Things you can do...

- *Decline to Sign* a petition to change Nebraskan's Constitution and ban affirmative action.
- Report to www.nebraskansunited.org on activities of petition circulators including problems you may encounter with circulators providing misleading information or applying undue pressure.
- Visit www.nebraskansunited.org to join in the work to defeat the proposed amendment and to obtain more information.

Facts: The Proposed Constitutional Amendment...

- *Is intentionally misleading.* It reads, "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting."

It suggests the intent is to eliminate discrimination and racism but it actually works against civil rights.

- Undercuts Nebraska's ability to develop a diverse workforce which is essential to being competitive in a 21st century economy.
- Eliminates scholarships to Nebraska's community and state colleges, and the University.
- Diminishes the ability of state and community colleges to attract diverse student bodies and faculties.
- Threatens women-owned businesses, funding for domestic violence programs and women's health initiatives.
- Hinders Nebraska's ability to create public policies aimed at fostering the "good life" – fairness, opportunity and the inclusion of all citizens.
- Risks the continuation of countless other education, business development and public health programs targeted to women and minorities.

For more information and to join in the effort to defeat the unacceptable and harmful anti-equal rights petition, please visit: <http://www.nebraskansunited.org>



A word from your LWV president:

Two years ago I personally called several dozen League members to remind them their memberships were lapsing. Some comments were made that your League Board has taken to heart.

Several members said that the League used to take stands on local issues that impacted the community. Study groups were formed to do research, discuss the pros and cons and come up with a summary statement of what their findings were for a vote of the general membership.

At the June 10th board meeting, the LWV-LL Board recommended asking for LWV volunteers to serve on a study group to meet over the next two months. This is your chance to get informed and involved on a local issue!

The issue at hand: a local ballot initiative which states in part: **No elected city official or city department director shall contract with the city, individually, or through a business in which he or she has a direct or indirect significant financial interest.**

The petition affects 19 officers and department heads (Mayor, 7 council members, 11 department directors). Volunteer petition circulators are currently seeking 4,712 signatures to put this on the ballot.

As background, a charter amendment was forwarded on a unanimous vote from the Charter Revision Committee to the City Council to put this on the ballot earlier this year. The Council voted 4 to 3 to deny voters this opportunity. The amendment was modeled after a similar amendment that has been in place in Omaha since around 1970. Similar legislation exists in Topeka, Kansas, Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Iowa. The petition affects 19 officers and department heads (Mayor, 7 council members, 11 department directors). Volunteer petition circulators are currently seeking 4,712 signatures to put this on the ballot.

If you are interested in serving on the LWV Charter Amendment Study Group, please contact Mary Boschult at 483-0415 or mary4now@aol.com.

Names will be compiled in the next two weeks, group meetings held until the group is ready to make a League recommendation. If the petition drive is successful to get this issue on the November ballot the hope is that the Lunch & Learn committee will plan an evening educational forum which viewpoints from each side and comments from the study group. After this presentation, the membership of the League will vote on taking a stand on the issue.

*Patte Newman
LWVLL President*

Know your Board Members

Again this month, *The Voter* features short bios of some of our LWVLL Board members. This month: Karen Dienstbier and Nancy Intermill. Watch for more articles next month!

Name - *Nancy Intermill*

Hometown – Encino, California (San Fernando Valley – yes, that makes me a Valley Girl)!

Family Status – Married to Mark for 29 years

Favorite TV shows – CNN/MSNBC News – I'm a junky

Favorite Movies – *Breakfast at Tiffanys*

Mode of transportation (what kind of car?) - Volkswagen Jetta

Last / current book read – I've been reading A LOT lately – 2 or 3 novels per week. It's a great escape, and healthier than alcohol. My current read is *The Friday Night Knitting Club*.

Most Prized Possession – What I prize most is my family.

Something everyone probably knows about me - I'm a candidate for Lancaster County Commissioner.

Something few people know about me – I'm related to Monica Lewinsky (true story)!!.

Current Pets – BooBoo, a 20 year old black and white cat who is beginning to show signs of dementia. He goes into a trance and howls – it is rather disconcerting.

Secret Passion – I don't think anything about me is secret! **Surprising prior occupation or hobby?** I love to knit, although I'm not very good at following patterns!

What's the craziest thing you've ever done? Ask me in November!!!

Name – *Karen Dienstbier*

Hometown – Cranston, R.I.

Family Status – Married to Dick. We have two grown sons Dana and his family live in Overland Park, KS where our granddaughter Alexandria, (Lexi) lives. She will be a sophomore in high school next year. Our son Scott lives in Omaha with his family. Our granddaughter Katrina is soon to be third grader.

Favorite TV show – *Boston Legal*

Favorite Movie – *Big Chill*

Mode of transportation (what kind of car?) – 1992 Honda Accord

Last / current book read – Last book: *Circle of Karma*, don't ask me for the author's name. It was written by a Bhutanese woman. - Good book

Current book: *The Shanghai Union of Industrial Mystics* - A Feng Shui Detective novel.

Most Prized Possession - My sense of humor and my family

Something everyone knows about me – I love to travel

Something few people know about me – At the age of 19 I married Dick who was in the Army at the time. He was sent to Izmir, Turkey a month after our wedding. A month after he left, having never left the state of R. I. I boarded a Pan Am jet to fly to Turkey. I was completely on my own with no contacts along the way. The only thing I did have was a base phone number where I could reach Dick. It was the most exciting thing I have ever done in my life. Planes were late in leaving - I was left for four days on my own in Athens before I could get a flight to Izmir. What an adventure!

Current Pets – One calico cat named Aspurr

Secret Passion – To fly my own plane....it won't ever happen.

Surprising prior occupation or hobby? – It is quite surprising that I became an artist. No one, including me, ever thought that I had any talent in painting and drawing. It just turned out that after years of practice it worked and I am! I still do spend part of my time painting in watercolors.

What's the craziest thing you've ever done? - See above the answer to "something few people know about me.

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