

THE VOTER



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF INDIANA

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FEBRUARY 2012

Government Consolidation of Yorktown and Mt. Pleasant Twp. in Delaware Co.

Sharon Cheslik and Kay McNitt, LWV Muncie-Delaware County



Last November citizens of Yorktown and Mt. Pleasant Townships in Delaware County overwhelmingly voted to consolidate under Indiana Code 36-1.5, the Government Modernization Act. Consolidation will provide for a simpler, more efficient form of government. Both the town and the rural areas will retain their own identities while providing cost savings for both. Farming will be protected and preserved. Planning and zoning will not change. Tax rates will be lower and based on services provided and current debt will remain with the taxpayers who incurred it. The Mt. Pleasant Fire Department will be part of the consolidated community. Current services will be maintained; however, there will be fewer elected officials. Interlocal agreements are being drawn up to continue current county services to the rural area. Voting districts have been redrawn in such a manner that each of the five districts contain both urban and rural areas. Voters will elect a new seven-member council in November. They will take office on January 1, 2013.



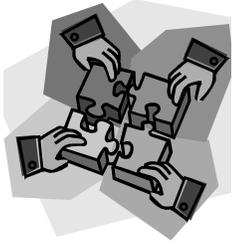
LWVIN Presidents Day is scheduled on the third Saturday of February because so many local LWVs hold legislative meetings either the first or second Saturday of the month. This year's event will occur in Indianapolis. What is its purpose? One aim is to allow presidents and the local leaders they invite to get acquainted with others who are or have been in similar roles across the state. Another is to provide inspiration and information to strengthen local Leagues' work. But perhaps the most important is to glean ideas, which, like seeds, may grow surprisingly well in the new soil where they are planted.

This year, from **10am to 3pm on Saturday 18 February**, we hope to see a team from every local LWV at 5610 Crawfordsville Rd, Indianapolis 46224. A rich day is planned: We'll have a morning nibble ready at 9:30 and box lunches will be served at 12:30 pm. **Our keynote speaker (Tim Berry, Auditor of Indiana) will discuss transparency in government.** Paulette Vandegriff will update us on what's happening in the General Assembly, and Susanne Gaudin on LWV-Brown County's work to help establish state guidelines for community fire service. Morning and afternoon workshop sessions will cover topics ranging from maintaining local LWV status, use and handling of Education Funds, to modern-day voter suppression efforts. Carrie Sosbe will introduce us to LWVUS's recently-unveiled web site. And, of course, every League will have opportunity to trumpet its accomplishments.

We Need Your RSVP

Presidents Day Registration for Three League Members:

- Send email to event@lwvin.org (include your phone number, email, and League name, and e-contact information for each attendee)



Yoked Together From the President's Pen

Dear League of Women Voters of Indiana,

Have you ever felt that, in joining League of Women Voters, you yoked yourself to a team pulling a cart filled with passion for the common good? I refer to topics such as school organization, campaign finance, natural resources, human services, fair elections, community responsibilities, workers' rights, non-partisan justice, educational practices, reproductive choice, paths to privatization, just redistricting, etc. LWV does not have positions on every subject, nor could it act on all if it did. But we have positions on many, and we live in a time when citizens' rights are under attack. Various analysts help us point out the obvious, whether it concerns deliberately deceptive acts or statements, agency or institutional purposes and practices, management of natural resources, or fair and equitable human services. All should contribute to the common good.

Deceit – Much political posturing relies on misrepresentation. Paul Krugman's phrase, “our postmodern, fact-free politics” should send us to <FactCheck.com> or similar web sites, to read more about the actual underpinnings (or lack of same) for the claims made.

Agencies and Institutions – Experiences such as Indiana's failed remission of FSSA procedures to IBM are sufficient to remind us that hybrid incorporation – part non-profit, part for-profit with a social improvement goal – is an idea to be carefully analyzed before commitments are set. Who can be on the lookout for all the possible regroupings? Nobody alone! To monitor, we must work together, talk to one another, contact our representatives, etc.

Natural Resources – As the Sierra Club and the Environmental Defense Fund effectively show us, the voiceless must have advocates. Non-profits must speak for entities that cannot speak for themselves. Proposed regulation and legislation may relate to trees, oceans, mineral extraction, or animal life, as well as to the resulting effect on society. Currently, Indiana Leagues have before them a LWV-Michigan position with which the inter-league organization, Lake Michigan-LWV, hopes every Indiana local League will concur, thereby giving greater force to the four-state ILO in its efforts to protect the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

Human Services – Paulette Vandegriff's advocacy at the State House, as well as our association with Indiana Coalition for Human Services and Common Cause, tends to focus on justice for the vulnerable. So do Health Access and Privacy Alliance (HAPA) activities. If we ignore unfair redistricting efforts, efforts to politicize judgeships, or additional efforts to control a woman's decisions about her own body, we weaken a societal weak point even further.

The effort never ends. The need for vigilance never slackens. Thank you for joining other Leaguers in the traces. None of us can pull absolutely all the time, but, together, we mean to keep the load moving.

Karen Kay

In Remembrance of Millie Pilot, President of LWVIN 1965-67

Millie Pilot, who passed away December 3 at age 93, had a remarkable LWV career and life. A League member since 1950, Millie served as president of the Hammond LWV 1954-56, was elected LWVIN Director 1957-59, First Vice President 1959-61 and 1963-65, and then Indiana President 1965-67. She chaired Indiana League study on Taxes and Schools for many years as well as serving as state Voter Service Chair.

A graduate of University of Colorado, Millie and her husband Dr. Jean Pilot had three children. Millie was named a member of State Commission for Reorganization of School Corporations, Chairman of the Governor's Committee on School Finance, Chairman of Governor's Committee on School Aid Distribution, and National Citizens Committee for Support of Public Schools as well as many local organizations. Millie was a world traveler and political reporter hosting “30 Minutes with Millie” on WJOB Radio in Hammond for 15 years. She received numerous awards and honors including being named “Sagamore of the Wabash.”



Local League Activities Around the State

Bloomington-Monroe County

In December and January, League members and the public heard from area legislators about the current legislative session. With six other organizations, the League co-sponsored a public forum on "The Future of Indiana's Public Schools" at which a panel of five local and state-wide educators, as well as state Representative Matt Pierce, focused on issues of school funding, grading of individual schools, and teachers' collective bargaining. The League also partnered with the IU Libraries and the Monroe County Public Library to sponsor three citizen forums on "Reclaiming Our Democracy."

Elkhart County

Elkhart has upcoming programs on TIFs and voting with the re-districting. We are also looking forward to working with South Bend, for the two Leagues are again in the same Congressional district.

Greater Lafayette

Following the November election LWVGL held its Legislative Coffee to discuss the upcoming Legislative Session. We had a good give and take with our local representatives. The New Year has kept us hopping with the ongoing calendar sales, updating the officials' directory and planning the Legislative Breakfast for February. We are looking forward to an active spring and summer with voter registration and voter ID education. Program planning is crucial this year as so many issues are presenting themselves. Please like us on Facebook.

Fort Wayne MAL Unit

We continue to work toward becoming a "full-fledged" League. Dr. Andy Downs, from the Downs Center for Indiana Politics, will be a speaker this fall. Jan Flapan, Chicago, visited with us and helped us work more on the areas we wish to study and Gail Pebworth has twice visited to work on various aspects of getting our league up and running. We had a booth at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ecumenical service and reception in December. In January, Nancy Hansen is presenting a talk to the American Business Women's Association.

Hamilton County

Our fall candidate forums were another success with interested attendees wanting to know more about the League. We have geared up again with our first meeting discussing what our goals are for this year. One educational community project is underway. We are also waiting to see what contested candidate races will be available before the primary. One leaguer, Marcia Dougherty, has been attending the Carmel council meetings regularly and reports to us the ever changing news and views of Carmel residents.

Howard County

League of Women Voters of Howard County Area turned attention to other subjects after the elections. In November, Joe Hoage, an Indiana Public Access Counselor, talked about government in the sunshine and access to public records. In December, we had our holiday dinner party. In January, we brought a local judge from Superior Court to tell us about the appointment, election, and retention of judges. Like so many things in Indiana, there are different rules in different counties.

Indianapolis

Our League highlights for 2011 include: Reprinting the *Unigov Handbook*, passing a resolution in support of dedicated mass transit funding, and conducting 10 voter registration drives and two city-county council candidate forums. We provided testimony in support of satellite voting in Marion County, speakers for the International Center of Indianapolis, and letters to the editor. Co-sponsorships included programs with "Step Up for Kids," Indiana Women's Commission, and the Hoosier Environmental Council. The "Lunch with LWV" series is a continued success and we even held a dinner-movie night for Women's Equality Day.

Muncie-Delaware County

In October, we sponsored 2 candidate forums. Our November public program created an open discussion on vote centers with guest speakers Betty Doversberger, LWVIN Election Monitoring Chair, and Christy Coffey, Tippecanoe County Clerk. We hosted a Holiday Brunch with LWVIN Legislative Network Coordinator, Paulette Vandegriff, as our guest speaker. Five new members and resurrection of our observer corps are encouraging evidence of progress toward meeting our goals. Our publicity/historian chair is updating our scrapbook. Currently, we are writing a government officials' pamphlet, reviewing by-laws and planning future programs.

Montgomery County

This fall was very busy for the LWVMC. In addition to holding two national study consensus meetings, we also hosted a Candidates Forum for the Crawfordsville Mayoral and City Council election, a public meeting on Healthcare in Montgomery County, a member meeting on Local Option Income Tax and Property Taxes, and a member meeting on national program planning and the state position concurrence. We also continued to host our popular Lunch with the League series and participated in the LWVIN Poll Monitoring project on Election Day.

Porter County

The Porter County Member-at-Large Unit met for the first time to plan our 2012 activities. Members expressed interest in voter services opportunities, League studies, and hot topics with possible other activities. We are newly reorganized, and we encourage anyone interested to join us.



Local League Activities Around the State continued

South Bend Area

The LWV of the South Bend Area's "NO VOTE. NO VOICE" High School Voter Registration blitz started strong. Well over 200 new voters were registered at the first two high schools visited in December and January. Presentations are set at four other high schools in February and March. Some 20 League volunteers and friends lead classroom information sessions, helped students complete registration forms, and passed out Citizen's Guides and "No vote. No voice." pins (made by our members) to them. Grants from LWV state and national education funds help cover costs. New voters who consent will be reminded by text messages near Election Day.

South Central Indiana

Having organized in July of 2011, the South Central Indiana League of Women Voters MAL UNIT feels confident and eager to begin serving Clark, Floyd and Harrison counties by helping educate and build relationships between the citizens and their local League. The public was invited to meet local elected officials at our "Holiday Meet and Greet." Our League is excited about the future and the possibilities to better serve our community.

Southwestern Indiana

The LWVSWIN co-sponsored a Meet Your Legislators Forum on January 14th with over 200 attending. Six state legislators from Southwestern Indiana answered questions and discussed current legislative action, particularly "Right to Work." SWIN will have two spring Lunch with the League programs. One will feature the new director of Wesselman Woods, a nature preserve within the City of Evansville, and the other will feature the new director for the Evansville Department of Metropolitan Development.

Annual Fund Drive

Development Committee, LWVIN

There is still time to donate to our Annual Fund Drive to support the League! Fill out the form below and send your check or money order to League of Women Voters of Indiana, 5610 Crawfordsville Rd, Ste. 1500, Indianapolis, IN 46224. LWVIN contributions are not tax-deductible, but gifts to LWV/IEF are.



- Contributions made to **LWVIN** are non-deductible and will go to our General Fund. These funds support projects such as development of local Leagues, leadership development, as well as advocacy.
- Contributions made to **LWV/IEF** are 501(c)(3) tax deductible to the extent allowed by IRS regulation. These funds support voter service, election reform efforts, educational projects, and political forums.
- Contributions made to the **Barbara E. Zimmer Memorial Fund** are tax deductible to the extent allowed by IRS regulation. These funds support the preservation and publication of the history of LWV of Indiana.

1. I designate my gift to the following fund(s):

___ A non-tax deductible gift made out to **LWV of Indiana** in the amount of
___ \$30 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$200 ___ Other

___ A 501(c)(3) tax deductible gift made out to **LWV Indiana Education Fund** in the amount of
___ \$30 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$200 ___ Other

___ A 501(c)(3) tax deductible gift to support the Barbara E. Zimmer Memorial Fund, made out to the **LWV Indiana Education Fund** (please write "**Zimmer Fund**" on the memo line) in the amount of
___ \$30 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ \$200 ___ Other

IF YOU WISH TO CONTRIBUTE TO TWO OR MORE FUNDS, PLEASE WRITE SEPARATE CHECKS

2. Please write your name and address: _____

3. We would like to recognize your gift by listing your name in the member newsletter. If you do not wish to be listed, please indicate here:
_____ Please do **not** list my(our) name(s).



IN THIS ISSUE

Government Consolidation

Presidents Day Information

President's Pen

In Remembrance of
Millie Pilot

Position Review Update

2012 Get out the Vote
Campaign

Membership and Leadership
Development

Local League Activities

Annual Fund Drive

League of Women Voters of Indiana

Mission Statement: The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership is open to all women and men who are ages 18 years or older and are U.S. citizens. All others who join the League shall be associate members.

Activities are funded through membership dues and donations. If you would like to help fund this important work, please send a donation to: LWVIN, 5610 Crawfordsville Rd, Ste. 1500, Indianapolis IN 46224. Checks should be made out to LWVIN. Donations to our Education Fund are tax exempt. Checks for the Education Fund should be made out to LWVIEF.

For additional information, visit www.lwvin.org.

Submissions to *The Voter* can be sent to
Dee Naylor (dnaylor@lwvin.org)
Deadline for Next Submission: March 23, 2012

Editors: Dee Naylor and Carrie Sosbe

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