

# THE VOTER



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF INDIANA

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OCTOBER 2012

## Debates, Debates, Debates

Carrie Sosbe, LWVIN Board Member  
and IDC Representative

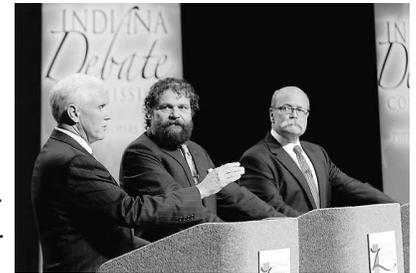


Image from the first gubernatorial debate, Zionsville

The League of Women Voters of Indiana is a founding member of the Indiana Debate Commission (IDC), a non-partisan, statewide group representative 13 citizen and media affiliates. This fall, the IDC is holding gubernatorial and senatorial debates throughout the state. The first debate took place on October 10, 2012, in Zionsville, with Republican Mike Pence, Democrat John Gregg, and Libertarian Rupert Boneham participating. Two more gubernatorial debates are scheduled for: Wednesday, October 17, Broadcast time: 7 p.m. EDT, South Bend, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, South Bend, live audience – seating up to 840; and Thursday, October 25, Broadcast time: 7 p.m. EDT, WFWA-TV PBS 39, Fort Wayne, in studio/no live audience.

U.S. Senate debates with Republican Richard Mourdock, Libertarian Andrew Horning, and Democrat Joe Donnelly are scheduled for: Monday, October 15, Broadcast Time: 7 p.m. EDT, WFYI-TV, Indiana, in studio/no live audience; and Tuesday, October 23, Broadcast Time: 7 p.m. EDT, Paul W. Ogle Cultural & Community Center, Indiana University Southeast, New Albany, live audience – seating up to 500.



Information about tickets and viewing the debates can be found at <http://indianadebatecommission.com/>

## Lt. Governor Forum

LWVIN partnered with Hoosier Environmental Council and others to sponsor a debate between two of the candidates for Indiana Lieutenant Governor, held on Thursday, October 11th, at the Indiana History Center in Indianapolis.

## Upcoming Presidential Debate Broadcasts

- October 16th - Presidential debate, foreign and domestic policy, moderator Candy Crowley
- October 22nd - Presidential debate, foreign policy, moderator Bob Schieffer



## Keep talking. Keep listening. Repeat. From the President's Pen

Dear League of Women Voters of Indiana,

You may have seen the sign that inspires my title. It appears at every Goodwill outlet, "Donate. Shop. Repeat." In matters of citizenship, the pattern seems a good one to imitate. Having recently attended the Athenaeum program featuring Jill Bolte Taylor, neurologist, Sandy Sasso, rabbi, and Carrie Newcomer, folk singer, followed one week later by my first experience at a *Healing the Heart of Democracy* discussion circle, I feel certain that honest talking, deep listening, and the repetition of same are keys to civic life in a democracy.

How do we talk honestly and listen deeply? In the book named above, Parker Palmer suggests that we must make it a point to speak and listen in groups where trust and confidence are established by allowing people who do not share our views to speak from their hearts, without interruption, correction, or argument from us. They, of course, need to extend us the same courtesy. Silence and a creative tension must be allowed to persist. Eventually, Palmer says, our hearts will "break open" (as opposed to "break apart"), exposing sympathetic spaces which accommodate discussion of differences. Then, if we have a task to accomplish together, and if we keep talking and keep listening, we may be able to compromise on a consensus solution. I have seen such a pattern described in the Fall 2012 *OnEarth* article, "Common Sense in Kansas," by Kim Larson. In a town plagued by unemployment, citizens stood divided both over whether Sun Electric should increase its polluting power plant and whether climate change matters or even exists. Without attempting to reach agreement on the climate issue, community conversations resulted in Siemens establishing a nacelle factory, bringing in 400 cleaner jobs and a fervor for wind energy. (The nacelle houses a wind turbine's generator, gearbox, drive train, and brake assembly.) Nancy Jackson, who spearheaded the discussions, commented, "It's about genuinely listening to our audience and then engaging on their terms. . . . not about 'framing.' It's about honoring a different way of knowing."

Walter Lippmann said virtually the same thing in his 1930's article, "The Indispensable Opposition." He argues that we must talk to our opponent, listen to our opponent, and avoid repairing only to the views of people with whom we agree. The reason? Only then can the truth be found. This variety of truth-search is slow and complicated, attributes not popular in today's world. After all, we easily can visit only sympathetic web sites, read only columnists of our own persuasion, and insulate ourselves against neighbors with whom we deeply disagree. Electronic connection magnifies ways in which we can isolate ourselves from others.

Yet Palmer, Larson, and Lippmann agree about a method on which League of Women Voters has relied for more than 90 years: Come together face-to-face. Keep talking. Keep listening. Repeat. In that cumbersome and messy process, slow as it is, we rethink our views, process the opponent's views, and sometimes change our minds. Eventually, we may reach a consensus that allows the emergence of a unified position. If not, we are likely at least to attain a fuller understanding of others' views.

*Karen Kay*



League of Women Voters of Indiana

Check out the new  
LWVIN website:  
[www.lwvin.org](http://www.lwvin.org)





## Local League Activities Around the State

### Bloomington - Monroe County

Focusing on voter services, the League has been registering 18-year-old high school students, nursing home residents and students at IU's Jacobs School of Music, SPEA, and the School of Education. In August, we embarked on a project at the public library to assist those who do not have a photo ID. We also helped people register to vote or change a name/address for registration purposes and answered questions related to the November election. September kept us busy with multiple forums for thirteen different races at the county and state levels.

### Cass County

We again co-sponsored a Candidates Forum with the Logansport Cass County Chamber. This program was also broadcast live on the local radio station and will be re-played on the local cable TV station plus, front page coverage from the local newspaper. The panelists consisted of several members of the media with League member Elizabeth Billman as moderator. We are also going to 3 local high schools to register voters. In October, we will sponsor a School Board Candidates forum for 2 of the corporations in our county. We also plan on serving as Media Observers during the election.

### Elkhart County

The Elkhart County LWV held voter registration at the libraries on September 25th. Our first meeting was also that day and the speakers were several long-time members.

### Fort Wayne Area

On August 27, we celebrated Women's Equality Day by partnering with the local YWCA, AAUW & Women's Bureau to sponsor a panel discussion on "Why Women Should Vote." Dr. Susan Hannah, IPFW; Dr. Ruby Cain, Ball State; and Harriet Miller, founding mother of the Women's Bureau, were our speakers. We had both television and newspaper coverage for this event. We have registered new voters at both Ivy Tech and the Educational Opportunity Center. Nancy McCammon-Hansen, our convener, partnered with Dr. Cain on a discussion of "Politics and Culture" for the monthly meeting of "It is Well with My Soul." Also, Nancy will be on Indiana's News Center to promote voter registration.

### Greater Lafayette

Voter service and registration continues to consume our time and energy. Voter registration occurred throughout Lafayette and West Lafayette at the bus depot, farmer's markets, college campuses, street fairs, naturalization ceremony and more. VOTE 411 for Tipp. Co. and Congressional District 4 is being posted. We co-sponsored a debate with our local state representatives and are in the planning stages to co-sponsor a District 4 debate. Congratulations to our members who have stepped up and volunteered for these many activities.

### Greencastle

On September 20th, we co-sponsored a community meeting featuring Joe Hoage, Indiana's Public Access Counselor. There were 32 people in attendance. We are actively working on Public Access issues concerning our local school board. We are also holding a Voter Registration drive at our local McDonalds. Next month, we will participate in the Reality Store sponsored by our local Kiwanis. This event "walks" 8th grade students through life lessons. We are responsible for the voting booth. Finally, our Voter Service committee is preparing for our Candidates Forum and candidates' questionnaire.

### Hamilton County

The Hamilton County League registered voters at the Noblesville Judicial Center on October 8th and 9th. We are also hosting a forum in Fishers, Indiana where the community of Fishers is debating on the issue of remaining a town versus becoming a city. Two questions relating to this issue will be on the Fishers' residents ballot.

### Howard County Area

We are busy informing the public about reorganization of our townships. Two areas have three townships which will become one if the people vote "yes". We are holding 4 informational meetings. The league studied consolidation of local government and this is the first question on the ballot. A large "get out the vote" display is in the main entrance of the public library. LWVHCA sponsored a District 30 Indiana House Seat forum October 4<sup>th</sup>. We continued to register voters until the registration deadline.

### Indianapolis

Thanks to Voter Service Chair Carol Fowler, the LWV of Indianapolis partnered with the Indianapolis Public Library on voter service drives at nine library branches. Carol also coordinated four Statehouse candidate forums. Becca Loofbourrow organized an "LWV Night" at a WNBA Fever game where we registered voters and received special recognition. Samantha Steele and K.D. Thurman led the charge on exploring Common Cause's new redistricting software and the LWV-Indy Leadership Team had a letter published in the *Indianapolis Star* which brought attention to inconsistent redistricting maps found on various governmental web sites.

### LaPorte County

We have sponsored several candidate forums that have been very successful. A friend of the League made a generous donation making it possible to acquire VOTE411. This has truly moved the League into the 21st century. With all the electronic devices at our disposal, we have moved our activities into the present and, maybe the future. Voter registration can occur almost anywhere there is a willing person and a computer. The schools have been helpful in allowing us to use their computer labs for registering students.



## Local League Activities Around the State continued

### Montgomery County

This summer we held our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual "Green Issues Movie Series." Each month, we showed an environmentally-themed movie, open to the public, with discussion time afterwards. By partnering with the Wabash College Library, we were able to show movies at no cost due to the fact that the college has already purchased public performance rights. In September, we partnered with our county's Carnegie Museum and Sustainable Indiana to host an author discussion panel for the book "Food for Thought: An Indiana Harvest", which features Indiana food producers.

### Muncie-Delaware County

We were delighted to host the Northern Regional LWV conference September 8. Our first online voter guide is on the website and the second round (school board candidates) is ready to go, thanks to our partnership with Bowen Center at Ball State University. We are involved in four forums, including one co-sponsored with the BSU young Democrats and Republicans. The commitment and working relationship of these young people give us hope for the future. We continue to grow our new membership numbers and strengthen our board and membership leadership positions.

### South Bend Area

The League of Women Voters of the South Bend Area's "No Voice No Vote" High School Voter Registration project continues into the fall of 2012. Thanks to the positive press and community response, one high school not included in the original project, has contacted us and requested that we come to present and register their senior class of 900 students! We are thrilled to be doing this on National Voter Registration Day! We also hosted our second annual Friend Raiser on October 11, 2012.

### Vigo County

On August 27 around 200 people took part in the first Terre Haute Women's Equality Day March organized by the LWVVC. Several participants dressed in vintage garb and many carried signs. The march was covered by the local media. We planned a voter registration blitz on September 29 at numerous businesses and organizations in Terre Haute. Three candidate forums for Vigo County and State Representative candidates are scheduled for late October. The Knox County and Vigo County Leagues are co-sponsoring a debate for the 8<sup>th</sup> District U.S. Representative seat.



## Regional Workshops Reprise: Fall 2012, Evansville and Muncie

Professor John L. Dion of the University of Evansville served as keynote speaker for the workshop in Evansville and Professor Joseph Losco of Ball State University for the one in Muncie. Both are political scientists who have plentiful information on voters, voting, and trends. League participants commented that they are ready to take either professor's classes!

The small-group workshops highlighted empowerment – first, of League members through local organization and planning; second, of citizens through education (specifically the construction of a voters' guide to candidates); and third, of voters through access to the ballot. An important part of every statewide meeting is the interaction of members. We gather hints and idea sparks from one another. Thanks to all who came.

Chair Susanne Gaudin, along with her husband, Anthony (who teaches in the Ivy Tech system) planted the seeds of the workshops' success. Our host Leagues, Southwestern Indiana and Muncie-Delaware County, handled local arrangements with grace and aplomb. The Ivy Tech system has a number of fine facilities in which LWVIN has been privileged to hold meetings over the years. Staff members at each campus were exceedingly helpful, and LWVIN expresses its gratitude for their support.

## Get Out The Vote Campaign

Along with the State Fair Booth, Voter Registration highway billboards are part of the LWVIN "Get Out the Vote" Campaign this fall. For the four weeks before the November General Election, "VOTE: Your Right, Your Responsibility!" will appear. In the north, the billboards will be on Interstate 65 in Tippecanoe County just south of Lafayette and Interstate 69 in Grant County. In the south, slightly small poster billboards will be in seven communities: Bloomington, Evansville, Greensburg, Martinsville, North Vernon, Salem and Terre Haute.





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# 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](http://www.lwvin.org)>.

Submissions to *The Voter* can be sent to  
Dee Naylor <[dnaylor@lwvin.org](mailto:dnaylor@lwvin.org)>  
Deadline for Next Submission: January 16, 2013

Editors: Dee Naylor and Carrie Sosbe

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