

THE VOTER



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF INDIANA

APRIL 2013



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Connect at League of Women Voters of Indiana Convention

Bring your devices!

LWVIN Convention will be held at Turkey Run State Park on Saturday and Sunday, 27 and 28 April 2013. "The League for the Future" is the theme. As always, there will be personal interaction, plenary sessions (for LWVIN business such as budget and program adoption, election of officers and directors, etc.), a silent auction, and entertainment. Workshops will be aimed at increasing your own mastery of social media and at insuring your League's ongoing mastery of Election Practices, Visibility, Finances, Membership and Leadership. Speakers include:

- Julia Vaughn of Common Cause Indiana, on the 2013 legislative session
- Dr. Robert Steele of DePauw University, on the values of civility
- Susanne Gaudin of the LWVIN Board, on the next generation of voters
- Pat Donath of LWVUS (Secretary/Treasurer and our Liaison), on LWVUS services to us
- Dr. Raymond Scheele of the Bowen Center at Ball State University, on the 2012 Hoosier survey

Bring stuff -- your 'pad, 'pod, 'phone, or computer. Our "youngsters" will be available with personal tutorials in use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)! Consider donating something for sale at the silent auction. Gather display items highlighting your local LWV to arrange on a side table.

Do not miss this opportunity! Each local League may have two delegates, plus one for each 20 members after the first 20. If you are interested in participating and don't know about your local League's delegation, call your local president or convener today! The cost is \$68/delegate, plus room. (Lodging is reserved on your own at 877-563-4371. Ask for the conference rate, using code 0427wv.) Preregistration is easy. Visit www.lwvin.org to find out more.

Lisa Plencner Selected as Ruth S. Shur Fellow

Lisa Plencner, Co-President of the LWV | As a Fellow, Lisa will work to strengthen all of South Bend, has been selected to be a Ruth S. Shur Fellow for the 2013-2015 term. LWVUS President Elizabeth MacNamara has welcomed Lisa to this "elite national team of volunteers dedicated to improving the League to better support our democracy."



levels of League by building upon the successful Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) program. Lisa will attend the Ruth S. Shur Leadership Institute April 11-14 in Maryland where she will engage with LWVUS Board and staff members as well as other Ruth S.

| Shur Fellows.

Hope President's Pen

Dear League of Women Voters of Indiana,

Every hope is tied to some dreamed-of outcome or result. In this legislative season, when few of LWVIN's priorities are encountering wide support (whether that would involve adoption or defeat of a bill), it seems important to read, as Winnie-the-Pooh says, "an encouraging book – one that would help a bear in great tightness." *The Impossible Will Take a While*, an essay collection compiled by Paul Loeb in 2004, is such a book. Its chapters remind me that small acts of kindness, protest, or principle may produce surprising outcomes.

One of the stories burned into my memory is of prisoners in a concentration camp during World War II: Having lived, starved, and worked until they were near collapse, a group was stuffed into the truck that they assumed would carry them to their death. However, when it stopped, the first man out turned and offered to read everyone's palms before they fell into line. Quietly, he predicted to every anxious prisoner that there was yet a long life ahead. Expressions relaxed; smiles appeared. Watching, the Nazi guards were so struck that they did not deliver the group to its intended destination, the gas chamber. Instead, they loaded the men back on the truck and returned them to camp!

In the history of the women's and civil rights movements, examples of persistent, unreasonable hope still inspire. I am reminded of Susan B. Anthony, who went to Washington annually for many years, to lobby on behalf of votes for women. Although she did not live long enough to see the franchise granted in 1920, Anthony was so reliable that congressmen, seeing her approach in her red cloak, are said to have remarked, "It must be spring. Here comes Susan." Similarly, when the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965 became law, experienced Leaguers expressed satisfaction, avowing, "The League has been working toward these improvements for more than 20 years." Yet, *right now* LWV and other groups are refighting a piece of that battle, as Section 7 (under attack from those who seem to think that no checks are necessary in order to ensure voting rights) is considered by the U.S. Supreme Court. Sadly, political work, like housework, may not stay done. Anyone who follows issues surrounding women's reproductive rights would certainly agree.

It is true that the price of justice is eternal vigilance. Our LWVIN legislative priorities for 2013 are:

First Tier -- Election Law, Education, Reproductive Choice

Second Tier -- Health Care, Environmental Concerns, Redistricting, Gun Control

These are our shared concerns. As a local LWV or an individual citizen, you have others.

I urge you to listen to the tune in *your* soul and to be utterly faithful to your convictions. Indiana League of Women Voters members are among the fortunate of the earth. We have dreams and goals, plus a community in which to work. We live in a land where the system allows a variety of approaches -- protest and disobedience, the unexpected or humorous, the rational and organized. We are persistent. Look up! Let us lift not our eyebrows, but our sight lines. Thus, we will keep our dreams in view and can continue working toward them.

Karen Kay



League of Women Voters of Indiana

Check out the
LWVIN website:
www.lwvin.org

*Hope 'is the thing with feathers --
That perches in the soul --
And sings the tune without the words --
And never stops -- at all --
Emily Dickinson*



“Going once, Going twice, Sold!!”

This isn't the usual conversation heard at the LWVIN annual Silent Auction, but the room is always buzzing with excitement over whose bid is the highest for the most coveted items. Please consider any items that you would like to donate from your local leagues. All donations are welcome, and we especially look forward to those items that share a little piece of your local league's city, town, or history. Auer prints will also be available for purchase. The auction planning committee thanks you in advance for helping to make this annual event fun for participants. Questions about donations or assisting with the auction? Please email Kimber Sorenson-Brugh at <ksorensonbrugh@lwvin.org>.

***** ★ Katherine Greenough Membership Award ★

★ The Katherine Greenough Membership Award will be presented to the LWV of Hamilton County at the LWVIN State Convention at Turkey Run State Park April 27. This award, named for one of LWVIN's earliest Presidents and membership advocate, is in recognition of Hamilton County's 82% membership increase during 2012. Not only did Hamilton County have the highest percentage increase in Indiana but also the highest percentage growth of all Leagues in the United States! **Congratulations to Hamilton County LWV members!**

★ Other Indiana Leagues with outstanding growth in 2012 were:

- ★ ●Howard County +33%
- ★ ●LaPorte County +20.6%
- ★ ●Greencastle +18%
- ★ ●Muncie-Delaware County +18%
- ★ ●Vigo County +13%

LWVIN Website

Be sure to check out the new LWVIN website <www.lwvin.org>. To include events from your local League, you can email Geri Pawelski <gpawelski@lwvin.org> with your information.



A Feather in Her Cap!



Roberta Heiman (LWV of Southwestern Indiana) was named by the Indiana Commission for Women as a recipient of a 2013 Torchbearer Award. Women chosen for this honor have devoted faithful and energetic service to their communities, becoming an inspiration to others. Leaguers know that Roberta richly deserves this recognition.

Lisa Plencner (LWV of South Bend Area) has been selected as a Shur Fellow by the LWVUS. She will receive special training before being assigned as an advisor to Leagues outside Indiana. Nevertheless, Indiana will continue to benefit from her leadership and skills.

Karen Kay Leonard (LWV of Indianapolis) recently was honored with an Indiana House Concurrent Resolution, brought by Rep. Christina Hunt and announced in the Senate by Sen. Karen Tallian (LWV-LaPorte Co.), for service to League of Women Voters.

CoverIndiana

In February, the LWVIN Board agreed to join CoverIndiana, a coalition supported by more than 30 organizations representing consumers, religious institutions, labor organizations, and health care providers. Its goal is to expand Medicaid during the 2013 session of the Indiana General Assembly. Its web site <www.CoverIndiana.org> provides access to news, information, and advocacy tools. Covering Kids & Families of Indiana <www.ckfindindiana.org> is a statewide organization committed to ensuring that all children and families eligible for health coverage programs are enrolled.

In the State Office Building on Friday 15 March, an all-day conference provided information to about 250 participants, at least 6 of whom were LWV members from across the state. Beginning with reasons why the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is important to Hoosiers, the topics unfolded to cover how the federally-facilitated exchange (FFE) may operate, ways technology should drive efficiency and modernization, and how tapping community-based infrastructure can help maximize outreach and assistance. Electronically, Paulette Vandegriff has provided a link to the conference's materials, but, in case you missed that e-mail, here is the link again: <<http://www.coverindiana.org/aca-symposium/>>.



Local League Activities Around the State

Anderson

The LWV of Anderson sponsored a public meeting on education on March 9. A panel consisting of Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz, State Representatives Terri Austin and Sue Errington, and Anderson Community Schools Superintendent Dr. Felix Chow spoke and answered questions from the audience of about 100. The group also decided to begin an observer corps with volunteers observing meetings of the City and County Councils.

Bloomington - Monroe County

Beginning in January our League has held monthly Legislative Updates, in which Monroe County legislators have discussed issues such as the budget, an expansion of Medicaid, education funding and reform, and voting rights. In March, we honored Vi Simpson for her many years of service to the community and the state. When asked what the League could do to improve things, she suggested starting with the redistricting issue since neither party will create competitive districts.

Elkhart

We had an excellent program on water quality in March and are looking forward to a talk on food safety and genetically engineered food in April. In May, Elkhart County Sheriff Brad Rogers will speak at our Annual Meeting.

Fort Wayne Area

In March we sponsored a showing of "Iron Jawed Angels" with The History Center, Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society museum. In April, we will partner with the YWCA, AAUW, the Women's Bureau and Ivy Tech for a three-day rally centered around Pay Equity. We continue with our News You Can Use from LWV on a weekly basis and received many compliments. In May, we will partner with our Pay Equity Day cohorts in a lunch-time discussion of *Lean In* about women in the workplace by Sheryl Sandberg of Facebook.

Greater Lafayette

LWV of Greater Lafayette continues with the mission of advocacy and education. Our annual Legislative Breakfast, February 23, was a great success with five legislators and a full house of community participants. Questions were spot on and some responses raised a few shackles but no riot. The 2013 Government Officials Directory for Tippecanoe County is now available. We had the opportunity to work with four Purdue students on a service learning experience which culminated in a parade and rally (March 22) at Purdue University to commemorate the 1913 Suffrage March.

Hamilton County

Hamilton County League had a whirlwind of activity just before fall elections. We finished out the year with a December league luncheon hosted by president Mari Briggs welcoming our new members. Connie Price was instrumental in inviting new members to join our league which has doubled in size. We are currently studying and discussing the central Indiana mass transit issue which will affect both Hamilton and Marion County taxpayers.

Howard County Area

LWV of Howard County Area hosted speakers on timely issues including wind energy, Affordable Care Act, and vote centers. We are offering a workshop on Parliamentary Procedure on May 4 which is open to all. Participation in the Third House meetings has been very successful. Reviewing the state positions gave us a better understanding of what the league is all about. The LAN reports and action alerts are eagerly awaited.

Indianapolis

LWV of Indianapolis worked this spring to get our name out in the community. We co-sponsored a series of programs with a local online magazine, Provocate.org, at the Tomlinson Tap Room in the City Market entitled "Foreign Policy & a Pint." Also planned is a film showing and discussion of "The United States of ALEC" with Common Cause of Indiana. We hosted a Third House meeting where members raised questions about legislative issues of high priority for our LWV, especially mass transit funding and city-county council seats.

Knox County

LWV of Knox County, partnering with Knox County Public Library, hosted "Parliamentary Procedure, a Civility Tool for Productive Meetings" with Sandra Grant, an experienced parliamentarian. City and county government officials, reps from the county housing authority, county park board, friends of the park group, the public library and League members were in attendance. Sandra led a hands-on activity to demonstrate Robert's Rules of Order. She also shared her vintage collection of books on parliamentary procedure, including an out-of-print brochure published by the LWVUS in 1979!

Montgomery County

We kicked off 2013 with a January State Program Planning meeting and a workshop on Indiana OCRA grants available to local communities. In February, we hosted a reception following the city & county's "State of the Community" address and held our annual Observer Corps reporting meeting. In March, our very active Economic Health committee updated our membership on their activities over the last year. Our Lunch with the League series heard addresses from the Crawfordsville Mayor and speakers from our County Clerk's office to talk about Vote Centers.

✓ Check the calendar at www.lwvin.org
for more local League activities



Local League Activities Around the State

Muncie - Delaware County

We sponsored a Legislative Update in February, continued to plan our program priorities for 2013-2014, scheduled a new member (16) orientation for March, and organized our program on Drugs and Delaware County for April. Nominating Committee has a proposed slate for our Annual Meeting, May 7th. The Observer Corp. has attended several meetings and written reports for our local newsletter. We raised \$310 as a result of our member-only finance drive. Letters were sent to legislators encouraging their support for Indiana Medicaid Expansion and sensible gun safety legislation.

South Bend Area

The LWVSBA was honored to have been invited to be the third-party observing organization for the South Bend Housing Authority UNITY Resident Council Election. Members of the Board attended meetings of the Steering Committee and acted as consultants in the election process. After counting the ballots, announcing the election results, and certifying the election for HUD, the LWVSBA looks forward to working with the new Council as it works to enrich the lives of residents of the Housing Authority.

Our Voter Registration Work is Headed to the Supreme Court

By Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS President

The fate of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) now lies with the Supreme Court. For the second time in as many months, the justices are hearing arguments on vital legislation that has encouraged active participation in our democracy for nearly two decades. LWV of Arizona is a plaintiff in the case and the LWVUS has submitted an amicus brief to the Court. If the Supreme Court rules against the NVRA, states would be free to pass laws that could restrict voter registration activities and thereby prevent eligible citizens from registering to vote.

The National Voter Registration Act, commonly known as "Motor Voter," became law in 1993 and streamlines the voter registration process. It requires states to provide voter registration opportunities when citizens get a driver's license or seek government services at other agencies and provides for voter registration by mail, which is particularly important for citizen-led voter registration drives. In so doing, it protects voters against state restrictions on voter registration for federal elections. The League was a key player in the passage of the NVRA – we worked on the initial bill and later co-chaired a national coalition that brought together over 60 organizations dedicated to improving the voter registration process.

If the opponents of the NVRA have their way, the mission of our organization is in jeopardy. The case endangers the League's work of running independent voter registration drives. The NVRA streamlined the numerous state laws that hindered citizen-led registration drives, and a decision against the NVRA would leave the voter registration process vulnerable to new forms of political manipulation. The League and our community partners are often the only effective way for many new voters to get registered to participate in our great democracy.

The LWVIN *Voter* is Going Digital

In an effort to cut costs and provide more frequent updates to members, the LWVIN Board of Directors has decided to distribute future *Voters* via e-mail transmission. We understand that not all members have email addresses or wish to receive the *Voter* via e-mail. If you would like to continue to receive the *Voter* through first-class mail, please fill out the form below and return it to the LWVIN's office. If you believe we do not have a current email address for you, you can also fill out the form below. The first electronic *Voter* should be distributed in July, 2013.



Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Email Address: _____ (not necessary for first-class mail)

Please return to:
 League of Women Voters of Indiana, 5610 Crawfordsville Rd, Ste. 1500, Indianapolis, IN 46224



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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>.

Submissions to *The Voter* can be sent to
Barb Wellnitz <bwellnitz@lwvin.org>

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