



The Bulletin

Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

January 2012

Dates to Remember

- * January 28
Annual "Soup Lunch" & Position Review
- * January—April
Privatization Study (Pgs. 2 & 6)
- * March 15
Annual Coalition Lunch with AAUW & CWU

Inside this Issue:

Civic Health, Pg. 1

Calendar of Events, Pg. 2

Summary of Activities & Member News, Pg. 3

Voter Service & Volunteer Thanks, Pg.4

School Finance & Education Study, Pg. 5

Privatization Study, Pg. 6

Guest Articles, Pgs. 6 & 7

News You Can Use & Memorial, Pg. 7

INSERTS: LWVUS Positions & Bike Info

LWV Work Continues in the New Year

Congratulations on another busy year! Once again the LWV of Indianapolis has played its part in encouraging and fostering the civic health of the city. A summary of 2011 activities, as well as a voter service recap, are included in this edition of the *Bulletin*. We have a lot to be proud of, but there is a lot more to do — especially given the results of 2011 Indiana Civic Health Index.

Sadly, this report found that Indiana ranks 48th in the nation when it comes to voter turnout on Elec-

tion Day with a rate of only 39.4%. This is six points lower than the national average.

This means our friends, relatives, coworkers, and neighbors—people we encounter on a daily basis — are not engaged in the democratic process. This is where YOU and the LWV can make a difference!

As one of the nation's oldest and most respected non-partisan organizations, we hold a unique position in the community to make a difference.

Civic Health Facts & Stats

You can read the entire 2011 Indiana Civic Health Index by going to the Indiana Bar Foundation's web site (www.inbf.org) and downloading a copy. Key findings include:

- Indiana is 48th in the nation for voter turnout with a rate of

39.4% - six points lower than the national average of 45.5%

- Indiana is 43rd among states in voter registration at 61.2%. The national average is 65.1%
- Hoosiers are more

It's more crucial than ever for the LWV to be visible and active. Democracy does not work unless voters are engaged. Each of us can make a difference by volunteering our time to LWV work and by encouraging those around us to exercise their right to vote.

The board challenges all LWV members to volunteer their time and talents this year as we work together to make Indy a more civically engaged city!

likely to be involved in a civic or service group and Indiana ranks 21st in the nation in this category.

- Indiana is 32nd in the nation for volunteering at 26.1%.

Calendar of Events

JANUARY

- Wednesday, Jan. 4
7 to 8:30p.m.
Board Meeting
North United Methodist
Church (3808 N. Meridian
Street), Rm. 004. All are
welcome to attend!

- Saturday, Jan. 14
10a.m. to 12p.m.
Privatization Study #1
IMCPL Central Library,
Rm. 407.
Review scope of study, its
structure, & discuss "The
Legal Framework of
Transparency and Ac-
countability within the
Context of Privatization:
Executive Sum-
mary." (See Pg. 6 for de-
tails.)

- Friday, Jan. 20
12 to 1p.m.
Lunch with LWV
Scottish Rite Cathedral,
Truman Room. Guest
Speaker: Betty Cockrum,
President & CEO of
Planned Parenthood of
Indiana.

- Saturday, Jan. 28
10a.m. to 12p.m.
Annual Soup Lunch &
Position Review
North United Methodist
Church, Parlor.
The LWV board provides
the food & you provide
the conversation! We will
review LWVUS policy po-
sitions and discuss up-
coming plans for the year.

FEBRUARY

- Wednesday, Feb. 1
7 to 8:30p.m.

Board Meeting
North United Methodist
Church, Rm. 004. All are
welcome to attend!

- Friday, Feb. 10
12 to 2p.m.
Privatization Study #2.
Location TBA.
Discussion of
"Privatization of Publicly
Owned Waste Water
Treatment Plant." Guest
speaker details TBA. (See
Pg. 6 for details.)

- Friday, Feb. 17
12 to 1p.m.
Lunch with LWV
Scottish Rite Cathedral,
Truman Room. Guest
Speaker: Judge Barbara
Crawford, Protective Or-
der Court.

- Saturday, Feb. 18
9:30a.m. to 3p.m.
LWVIN President's Day
LWVIN Office (5610
Crawfordsville Rd. Ste.
1500). *Please contact
Karen Kay Leonard,
LWVIN president, if you
are interested to volun-
teering for the host com-
mittee!*

MARCH

- Wednesday, Mar. 7
7 to 8:30p.m.
Board Meeting
North United Methodist
Church, Rm. 004. All are
welcome to attend!

- Wednesday, March 14
6 to 8p.m.
Privatization Study #3.
Indiana History Center,
4th Floor Board Rm. (450

W. Ohio Street).
Discussion of
"Subcontracting of Public
Education," "Privatization
of Prisons," and
"Deregulation of Rail-
roads." (See Pg. 6 for de-
tails.)

- Thursday, Mar. 15
10:30a.m. to 2p.m.
Annual Coalition Lunch-
eon with American Asso-
ciation of University
Women and Church
Women United.
North United Methodist
Church, Fellowship Hall.
Guest Speaker: Matt Tully
***Bring a salad or bread
to share as well as uten-
sils, plates, and cups.
We keep this one com-
munal & green!**

APRIL

- Wednesday, Apr. 4
7 to 8:30p.m.
Board Meeting
North United Methodist
Church, Rm. 004.
All are welcome to at-
tend!

- Wednesday, Apr. 11
Time & Location TBA.
Privatization Study Con-
sensus Meeting. (See Pg.
6 for details.)

- Friday, Apr. 20
12 to 1p.m.
Lunch with LWV
Scottish Rite Cathedral,
Truman Room.
Guest Speaker: TBD.



DEMOCRACY IS NOT
A SPECTATOR SPORT.



2011 Summary of Activities

Thanks to everyone who helped make the following efforts possible!

Edited and printed *2011 Directory of Government Officials & Voting in Marion County* brochures

Co-Sponsored Indiana Women’s Commission “Listening Session” at the College Ave. branch library

Joined Indiana Citizens Alliance for Transit (ICAT)

Hosted a public transit awareness booth at Indiana State Fair (ICAT collaboration)

Passed resolution in support of dedicated funding for public transit at the annual meeting

Assisted with a near

Westside primary election candidate forum

Voter Registration drive at 10 IMCPL branches

Updated & published the Unigov Handbook

Hosted 10 “Lunch with LWVs” & one joint lunch with AAUW & CWU

Provided testimony in support of satellite voting

Co-authored an Op-Ed with Common Cause of Indiana on local redistricting

Co-signed a Letter to the Editor with the Hoosier Environmental Council and others regarding sustainability & Indy’s future

SunKing member outing

Hosted one City-County Council District and One At-Large candidate forum

Participated in the LWWUS Study on the “Role of the Federal Government in Education”

Election Day Wrap-Up Program

“Iron Jawed Angels” movie & dinner to celebrate Women’s Equality Day

Sent LWW representatives to four International Center of Indianapolis visitor meetings

Supported “Step Up for Kids” initiative

Co-Sponsored Hoosier Environmental Council’s “Greening of the Statehouse” forum

Soup Lunch

January 28 is more than just our annual review of LWW policy positions. It’s an opportunity to acquaint yourself with LWW friends and to help the LWW board think about its efforts for the coming year. Please plan to attend!

Member News—Soup Lunch & Position Review Time

Every year the LWW reviews its various policy positions. On odd-numbered years we review state and local LWW positions and in even-numbered years we review national policy positions.

These position review meetings are wonderful opportunities to congre-

gate with fellow LWW members while learning about core LWW values and beliefs. Please join us on **Saturday, January 28 from 10a.m. to 12p.m.** A soup lunch will be provided by the LWW board.

A summary of LWWUS positions has been inserted in the *Bulletin* for your review. Please bring

these pages with you to the meeting. If possible, you might also want to review or download the full LWWUS position packet, “Impact on Issues,” at www.lww.org. (Home » Members » League Essentials » Essential Publications.)

Voter Service News

In preparation for the municipal elections this fall, volunteers from the League participated in several voter registration events and candidate forums. We partnered with the Indianapolis Marion County Public Library to hold 10 voter registration sessions throughout the city. Most of these were productive and we registered many new voters, updated voter registration information and provided voting information.

The League participated in three candidate forums. We held an At-Large Candidate forum, again in partnership with the public library. It was held at the Central Library and was taped by Channel 16. We facilitated two other forums this year. One was a primary forum on the Near Westside at the Hawthorne Community Center that was coordinated by a coalition of citizen groups. The other was a Northside city county

council candidate forum at Marquette Manor.

We are looking forward to a busy 2012 election season!

- Carol Fowler
Voter Service Chair

LWVUS has a new Web site!

Check out the new site at www.lwv.org and acquaint yourself with its blogs and multimedia features!

Volunteer THANKS!

League members have registered voters and hosted candidate forums, reprinted and distributed the Unigov Handbook, provided testimony and letters to the editor on critical issues, engaged in a LWVUS study and much more!

Candidate Forums

Carol Fowler, Beth Hayes, Tracy Heaton deMartinez, Erin Kelley, Lenora Maze, Jessica Moore, Anne Nation, Amy Olson Clifford, & Susan Scott.

Voter Registration

Rhea Cain, Carol Fowler, Vada Kim, KarenKay Leonard, Becca Loofbourrow,

Lenora Maze, Jessica Moore, Anne Nation, Trina Nelson Thomas, Michelle Rollings, Ada Shaum, Nancy Smith, Pat Taylor, Susan Vinicor, & Harriet Wilkins

Education Study

Kendra Clauser & Karen Kay Leonard (co-chairs).

International Center of Indianapolis Visitor Meetings

Kendra Clauser, Tracy Heaton deMartinez, Erin Kelley, Anne Nation, & Amy Olson

Unigov Handbook Distribution

Erin Kelley, Karen Kay Leonard, Ada Shaum,

Madelyn Sundquist, and Pat Taylor, (MANY of you have grabbed extra copies at various meetings to distribute. Your efforts are *greatly* appreciated too!)

Satellite Voting

Testimony
Amy Olson

Op-Ed & Letter to the Editor

Karen Kay Leonard & Erin Kelley

Lunch with LWV

Gin Harrison & Phyllis Nieske

LWVIN School Finance & LWVUS Education Study

At the November 2 board meeting, the LWV-Indianapolis concurred with the following change to the LWVIN “school finance” position:

The League opposed the diversion of public funds to nonprofit schools through vouchers, tuition tax credits, tax deductions, or choice scholarships.

To learn more about the LWVIN’s position on school financing, visit their Web site at www.lwvin.org or contact an LWV-Indianapolis board member to request a copy. Someone will gladly make a paper copy available for those without Internet access.

This fall LWV also embarked upon a short national study on the Federal Role in Education. LWV-Indy participants discussed the topic after reading materials provided by LWVUS.

On Sept. 14, attendees discussed Common Core Standards and the Federal Government’s past role in education. Histori-

cally the Federal Government supported school equity by funding schools/students in need. This funding has not mandated curriculum.

Recently, however, interested groups such as the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers have developed Common Core Standards, which standardize content for all US schools. These standards are not mandated by the Federal Government as of yet, but national implementation is encouraged by many politicians interested in education reform.

On Oct. 14, the group investigated the Federal role in early childhood education, special needs education, and funding equitability. To some degree, the Federal Government currently funds such opportunities. After each discussion, we talked about the corresponding consensus questions. During our final session, we discussed all 15 consensus questions, which were

divided into three categories, “General Questions,” “Common Core Standards,” and “Funding and Equity.” As a group, we came to consensus on most answers, although we often provided commentary since the questions were very general.

Overall, we believe that the Federal Government should play some role in K-12 education. That role should not include mandating Common Core Standards or national assessment, but could provide well-tested curriculum structures as examples. We also believe that schools meeting Federal guidelines for need (Title I, Head Start, etc.) should receive appropriate funding in order to support equity. We agreed that some discretionary funding for school improvement could be beneficial as long as the Federal Government cannot mandate Common Core Standards or national assessments for schools awarded these funds.

- Kendra Clauser
Education Study Co-Chair

Being active with the LWV can be a challenging at times—we’re all busy, right? Not everyone can volunteer to work events, but you can serve the LWV by always carrying membership brochures and other League materials with you. Recruiting new members and making LWV resources available to the public is something we can all do.

Privatization Study

LWVUS papers are at www.lwv.org. Just follow these buttons: Members » Advocacy, Projects, & Studies » Privatization. You can also contact the study chairs, Becca Loofbourrow (becca.loofbourrow@gmail.com or 694-7963) and Jessica Moore (jessielynnj@hotmail.com or 337-0021) to request hard copies. If you would like to be included in privatization-specific emails, please let Jessica know!

Privatization Study

2012 begins with a new LWVUS study!

The official scope of the study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and iden-

tify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good.

Our local study will include three public meetings where League members are invited to read and discuss papers provided by LWVUS. We will also attempt to incorporate local guest speakers and local examples into the study group agendas

for each meeting. We'll convene for a fourth and final meeting on April 4 to address the consensus questions.

ALL members and prospective members (bring a friend!) are welcome to participate in any part of this study.

- Becca Loofbourrow &
Jessica Moore,
Study Co-Chairs

“Personhood” — Betty Cockrum, President & CEO, PPIN

On Nov. 8, the people of Mississippi resoundingly defeated a proposed amendment to their state constitution declaring that life begins when a human egg is fertilized.

This “personhood” initiative would have been the first of its kind to pass and it would have certainly had harmful and unintended consequences for women and families in Mississippi. It is certain that we have not heard the last of this movement and it is clear to me that personhood is the single most important issue in the ongoing reproductive justice battle. A battle that is playing out in state legislatures, in Congress, in courtrooms, and in presidential pursuits right now and for the foreseeable future.

The initiative, backed by Personhood USA, seeks to put similar life-at-fertilization measures on ballots throughout the country, with the ultimate goal of adding such an amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

There is no doubt that Indiana, as the first state in the country to defund Planned Parenthood, will be on the radar screen of the anti-choice organizations who wish for personhood to be the law of the land. We will continue to monitor the personhood movement closely.

While its first, most obvious implication is a threat to abortion (with no exceptions), its consequences could be far-reaching and unfathomable. It could criminalize many of the

most common forms of contraception because they prevent implantation of a fertilized egg. It could leave women vulnerable to criminal prosecution following a miscarriage. It could cause women to be denied urgent medical care (such as chemotherapy) if treatment poses a threat to the fetus. It could outlaw many common fertility treatments. It would certainly slow the already slowed stem cell research that has the potential to save lives.

Personhood policies do nothing to prevent unintended pregnancies or reduce the incidence of abortion, nor are they based in sound science or even common sense.

Personhood — cont'd.

As we look to the 39th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade ruling on Jan. 22, we find ourselves ever more challenged to keep politicians out of our bedrooms and our doctors' offices. We learned last session that legislators need to hear from you early and often. Without your voice, initiatives like

this will find their way into law.

Now is the perfect time to join in the fight against these dangerous measures. In the meantime, be wary of those who are focused on making abortion illegal and taking away preventive health care from the Hoosiers who need it most.

They are without relent. They are not, however, the majority. Organizations like the League of Women Voters and Planned Parenthood have powerful partnerships and a vast network. We must stand strong and tall and be sturdy of spine and mind. I believe in us. Happy 2012.

Environment Policy — Jesse Kharbanda, HEC

The 2012 Indiana General Assembly will be short (three months), packed (Governor's final year), and dramatic (Super Bowl, labor rallies). We count on our friends at LWV to join in the effort to make environmental progress in this fast-paced session. The Hoosier Environmental Council (HEC) has chosen to focus on three core issues: public transit funding [which Ehren Bingaman of CIRTA wrote about in the last *Bulletin*], affordable options for clean energy, and strategies to reduce phosphorus pollution.

Expanding clean energy financing options is critical if we want to step up the pace of diversifying away from coal and save on energy bills. A particular program that HEC is advancing in the legislature is called PACE. PACE helps small business owners solve two

problems: where do I get the dollars to invest in clean efficiency when lending is so tight? And, why would I invest in clean energy if I'm going to sell my property before I achieve my payback? Legislative authorization of PACE programs gives local governments the power to raise dedicated funds to give the upfront money to small business owners, and the loan is tied with the property -- not the property owner -- so payback length becomes essentially irrelevant. PACE programs have been authorized throughout the Midwest, and with bipartisan co-sponsors in the Indiana House, there's a chance that we can make advances this session.

Phosphorous from residential lawn fertilizers is a major, unaddressed source of water pollution

in Indiana, and a cause of the blue-green algae blooms that harm aquatic life and make water unhealthy to touch. HEC is working with legislators to devise a solution to cut residential fertilizer runoff, weighing either a ban on phosphorous-containing lawn fertilizers, or a strong educational program. States facing similar challenges have adopted either approach.

We encourage LWV members to get our free topic-specific postcards that members can readily fill out and send to their local legislators about these issues. In the meantime, stay up to date at www.facebook.com/hecweb, or by signing up for our e-newsletter at comments@hecweb.org.

Post-Holiday Recycling Event

Take your old Christmas trees, electronics, cardboard, and Styrofoam to one of these locations for recycling on **Sat., Jan. 14 from 10AM to 2PM.**

- Broad Ripple Park, Main Entrance
- Ellenberger Park, pool parking lot
- Krannert Park, 605 S. High School Rd.
- Garfield Park, Family Center parking lot

Services provided by SustainIndy & Keep Indpls. Beautiful.

In Memorial

On October 22, 2011 longtime LWV member Jan Becker passed away at the age of 86.

Jan was second vice president from 1980-82, represented the LWV on the IPS School Facilities Task Force, and provided leadership on studies

ranging from Natural Resources and Transportation to International Relations. Jan was *Bulletin* editor from 1982-84 and even served on the Budget Committee for a while.

Our condolences go to the Becker family

News You Can Use—Step Up for Kids, Indianapolis Council of Women, & Bike Lane Info

On October 15, LWV Indy joined 22 other organizations sponsoring the statewide **Step-Up-For Kids** rally on the steps of the IN Statehouse.

Speakers included Sen. Jean Breaux and Rep. Greg Porter with performances by various High School groups interspersed. Then the festivities moved to the Child Care Center in the State Office Building for more activities and food.

The League of Women Voters is pleased to participate in this annual affirmation of support for good government policies and legislation in the interest of children.

-Ada Shaum

The LWV-Indianapolis is a member of **The Indianapolis Council of Women**. LWV members are invited to monthly meetings of the ICW. Meetings include a morning and afternoon program as well as lunch for approximately \$20. The next meeting is February 7 at the Propylaeum and will feature a 10:30a.m. presentation by Nancy Gunning, President-Elect of The American Legion Auxiliary. The 1p.m. afternoon program features ICW member Barbara Stauch who will present on the "Personal Lives of George and Martha Washington." To learn more, call 244-8357.

Do you know what the

symbol on the left side of this page is?

Bike lanes are a new reality in Indy and it is important we all understand the new rules of the road.

The included **bike lane safety** handout is from SustainIndy. Please review it so we can all be safe out there!

Oh, and the marking on the left is a "Sharrow" for "Shared Roadway." And those green lanes you sometimes see ... they identify potential area of conflict between bikes and cars. Cars should only cross bike lanes where the pavement markings are dashed and everyone should look out in a green zone!



Sustain Indy Insert

League of Women Voters of
Indianapolis
3808 N. Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Visit us online at www.lwvindy.org or on Facebook!

Join the LWV TODAY!

Dues are \$50 a year for individuals, \$75 for households, and \$25 for students. Make checks payable to the LWV of Indianapolis and send to 3808 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46208.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Kind of Member: NEW RENEWING