

THE VOTER



League of Women Voters of Indiana



APRIL 2010

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Lobbying for Sisters of the Planet in Washington D.C.

by Pam Locker, Southwestern Indiana

Eighteen League members from throughout the country joined about 80 women representing a variety of organizations from 30 different states at the 2-day Oxfam Sisters on the Planet Climate Leaders Summit in Washington, D.C.

March 8th (International Women's Day) was spent in a whirlwind of educational sessions. It culminated in a reception where National League President Mary Wilson was awarded one of two Climate Leaders Awards.

The next day we paired up with other women from our state to practice our arguments; we headed to the Capitol. My Indiana buddy was Carmen Marten, a Purdue student who

is president of the Boiler Green Initiative, a campus environmental group. We met with representatives of Senators Bayh and Lugar,

as well as staff, in the offices of the Congressmen from our respective districts – Brad Ellsworth (8th) and Stephen Buyer (4th).

Our goal was to urge our representatives to not only vote for comprehensive climate change legislation, but also for provisions to help developing nations adapt to climate change. The developing countries are the least equipped to deal with drought, sea level rise, and other negative consequences. The women in those countries are the hardest hit, dealing with poverty and the responsibility of caring for their families.

This was an extremely well-organized event. The other delegates, the speakers, and the Oxfam staff were all impressive ad-

vocates for climate change legislation. Thank you LWVIN for making it possible for me to attend.



LWVUS President Mary Wilson accepting her award from Oxfam

Go-See Seneca Falls

By Gail Pebworth, Montgomery County

As part of our celebration of the 90th Anniversary of League of Women Voters and women's suffrage, the LWV of Indiana is sponsoring a "Go See Seneca Falls" trip August 26-29. Itinerary will include a visit to the Susan B. Anthony House in Rochester, New York, and attractions in the Seneca Falls Heritage Area--the Women's Rights National Historical Park including the Wesleyan Chapel, site of the first women's rights convention in 1848, National Women's Hall of Fame, Finger Lakes Wineries, and the Elizabeth Cady Stanton House and more.

Cost will be approximately \$300 plus meals. Trip will be limited to first 24 registrations. If interested, contact me at gpebworth@lwvin.org.





Please Invite Us, and Please Accept our Invitations! From the President's Pen

Dear League of Women Voters of Indiana,

On 15 March, Judy Buchholz (LWVIN Director and Local League Liaison) and I visited in Vincennes at the Annual Meeting of the Knox County League of Women Voters. That group schedules its meeting earlier than most, a hold-over from days when the LWV fiscal year was not July-to-June. There was opportunity to chat with local members about their interests and activities; the requisite business meeting with elections, by-laws, and budget; and a program presented by Lindsay Rump, president of Butler University's senior class, on her senior thesis research highlighting woman suffrage in Indiana. Bonnie Orvick, a "pillar" of local and state LWV activity, was retiring because she has moved to Wisconsin. In her honor, the local League provided a partial "Leadership course" scholarship; the city council gave her its highest award, "Sycamore of the Wabash"; and LWVIN thanked her with a League Leader Award. All in all, the evening was delightful.

Reflecting on the experience, I concluded that Annual Meeting visits should happen as often as we can manage them. First, that is a time when each local League is apt to look its best. Accomplishments of the previous year can be celebrated, and the entire group can anticipate together what members hope to do in the following year. Second, Annual Meeting usually furnishes time for some informal visiting. The agenda and program are set. Someone else is preparing and serving the food. Participants can talk with one another about community and LWV concerns. Finally, the event reminds us that, just as LWVIN and LWVUS handle both business and "visioning" at Council and Convention (their equivalents of Annual Meeting), each League does the same. Besides doing the yearly business, the pattern offers us a variety of worthwhile opportunities – to recognize our leadership, to hear a message of instruction or inspiration, to celebrate our accomplishments, and to admit our problems and gather ideas for solving them.

Please consider inviting your LWVIN Local League Liaison and the LWVIN President to attend your group's Annual Meeting!

Of course, we also want you to come to ours! State Council happens 30 April through 1 May 2010 in Terre Haute, hosted by League of Women Voters of Vigo County. The LWVIN Board hopes you'll "arrive at five" on Friday afternoon and stay until the rap of the closing gavel at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoon. If you want to better understand the tax cap issue (coming this fall on a ballot in front of you), be there! If you enjoy learning more about the unique aspects of communities like Terre Haute, be there! More details are available at our web site, www.lwvin.org, where you can print the registration form, attach your check, and mail both to the state office. Each local League is entitled to three voting delegates, and non-voting MALs (Members at Large) and other observers are always welcome. The registration fee is the same for all.

Two other invitations should be mentioned here, as well: LWVUS Convention will be in Atlanta, Georgia, 11-15 June 2010. Unless a League had more than 100 members on "count day" at the start of February, each is entitled to one voting delegate. If the League (or the individual) can afford it, observers are also welcome to register. (For this, access the LWVUS web site, www.lwv.org.) *Please* send your delegate to Council, if possible! We want the Indiana delegation to learn and plan together from now until (we hope) the state caravan drives south-eastward, heading for Convention. Then, later in the summer, August 26-29, we plan a LWVIN road trip to visit suffrage history sites in and near Seneca Falls, New York. This go-see tour is open to the first 24 interested members. I'm one! Are you, too? Please respond by accepting our invitations, as well as by extending yours.

Karen Kay

INTERESTED IN HISTORY??? The LWVIN 90th Anniversary Committee is actively searching for a few Leaguers to assist in the updating of the History of the LWV of Indiana. We have a wonderful history, 1920-1952, *PAST is PRELUDE* as written by Katherine Croan Greenough and prepared by Donna Langfitt as well an amazing collection of documents (going back to 1908) catalogued and stored in the Manuscript and Visual Collections Department at the Indiana Historical Society. If LWV history interests you, contact Gail Pebworth at gpebworth@lwvin.org.



Local Government Study Update

Kathy Dale, Greater Lafayette

The Local Government Study is moving forward! Thanks to the efforts of many, we have either Leagues' compiled information on the findings of township governance. Please join us at the State Council, where we will have an opportunity to explore the findings and begin discussion that will help us define a LWVIN position. JOIN US Friday evening, April 30th at 5:30 pm at LWVIN State Council. All study participants and any one interested is encouraged to attend. If you can join us, use the Council registration form to reserve your place. Thanks to all.

Contributing Leagues: Calumet (Lake County), Greater Lafayette (Tippecanoe), Indianapolis (Marion), Knox County, LaPorte County, Montgomery County, Muncie - Delaware County and Southwestern IN (Vanderburgh)



Silent Auction at State Council

What convention could be complete without a little time to shop for a bargain!?!?

Help make this year's silent auction a great success by donating items that will be the perfect purchase for a gift or keepsake. Donate items that will "fetch a pretty penny" at the auction. Suggested items to be auctioned might be: a spa basket filled with items to pamper the stressed soul after a hard day; a bottle of wine & glasses for 2 to start off a romantic evening; tea mugs and specialty tea to share with a friend; baked goods or craft items that are unique to your part of the state; jewelry is always good; cookbooks; historical books about women in our state or nation. You get the idea!

Presidents Day Reprise by Karen Kay Leonard

On 20 February 2010, at the Environmental Management Institute in Indianapolis, Leaguers attending Presidents Day experienced a number of good opportunities. It was a treat to have six past LWVIN presidents with us: Edith Dallinger, Joanne Evers, Nancy Smith, Paulette Vandegriff, Ginny Webb, and Harriet Wilkins. The day began with an address by Sheila Suess Kennedy. As she discussed the census and subsequent redistricting, we laughed (often ruefully) and remembered again the importance of finding some means to defeat the gerrymandering which is so common in Indiana. We also heard from Paulette Vandegriff about the status of the issues the League was still tracking. Every president – and, I hope, her guest(s) – had opportunity to speak about local accomplishments, as well as to ask questions that might lead to further attainments. Members of LWV-Indianapolis worked to insure that the group was fed and hydrated. It was a day filled with information and interaction. My thanks to all who participated!

Legislative Action Network Update

Paulette Vandegriff, LAN Coordinator

Friday, March 12th was a great day in the State House. Representative John Barnes, Indianapolis, sponsor of Resolution 29, presented the resolution honoring the League of Women Voters of Indiana on the occasion of our 90th Birthday. The ceremony was held in the House of Representatives. I had the privilege of accepting the certificate on behalf of all local league members across Indiana. The 2nd session of the 116th General Assembly has adjourned. Lawmakers completed work early in the morning of Saturday, March 13th.

How did the LWVIN priorities fare?

Ethics reform: Passed. The LWVIN testified in support of portions of the HB1001

Redistricting: Failed.

Other bills of interest:

HB1106-Election matters: Failed.

This bill would have established the use of vote centers as an option for all counties.

HB1109-Voters with disabilities: Passed.

HB1181-Township government: Failed.

Anyone can view the governor's action on 2010 bills at www.in.gov/gov/billwatch.htm. Once again it has been my honor to represent the LWVIN in the State House. Remember, **democracy is not a spectator sport.**

For the Common Good

Compilation by Pat Harris, Bloomington-Monroe County

An important part of birthdays is to pause and look back – to remember significant events, successes and failures and, maybe most important, old friends. I visited some of the Leagues in the southern part of Indiana this fall and winter, driving to Terre Haute, Nashville-Brown County, Evansville and of course, working in my home League, Bloomington-Monroe County. I recorded memories from thirteen League members who have been giving their time and energy for 30, 40 and 50 years. These stories from our past were finally completed, that is, edited, readied for printing and then printed in time for the March board meeting. Every participant and every League will receive a copy of the booklet, For the Common Good.

I truly enjoyed this project, and after the State Council I will be making a drive through the northern part of Indiana to record interviews for a second booklet. I strongly believe that we need to preserve our stories. They are part of the struggle of women and of the development of our country. Thanks to you all for your participation and help.



Local League Activities Around the State

Bloomington-Monroe County

The Bloomington-Monroe County League sponsored a Legislative Update in February, as well as a talk by Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita on "Rethinking Redistricting." Mr. Rokita proposed constructing new legislative districts by removing politics from the process and creating compact districts for both federal and state offices, in an effort to keep all the citizens of a county in the same district. In March, the League presented a discussion of a storm water utility for Monroe County with panelists from the County Plan Department, Drainage Engineering, Council, and Commissioners.

Calumet Area

With the election season upon us, we have been invited to participate in a candidates' forum as time keepers and question screeners. We are also involved in the Gary School Board candidate's forum. Our participation in the voter registration at the local Naturalization Ceremonies continues monthly with great success. Our unit meetings continue to be very educational, including a Constitution Day celebration, discussion on the pros and cons of the Electoral College, celebration of the 90th anniversary with a brief history of LWVUS, discussions on Hazardous Waste, the local library system and local government.

Elkhart County

Elkhart County League had an informative and interesting meeting on health care on March 17th. We are looking forward to a forum with all 7 candidates for sheriff in Elkhart County on April 21st. We continue to encourage participation in the census and we try to keep up with legislation and our legislators on all levels.

Greencastle

We meet monthly to discuss timely issues in our community and those of concern on the state and national levels of LWV. Discussions include the challenges in our public schools, specifically budgets, and centralization of school administration. Our election year work focuses on the candidates' forums and newspaper questionnaires. We're one of the remaining communities that have runners between the tally room and the County Clerk's office, with hundreds of onlookers cheering the results as they arrive. We are pleased to be able to assist by supporting the clerk's office in posting and reading off the votes as they are tallied.

Hamilton County

Hamilton County is hosting three forums in April for candidates who have opposition in the May 2010 primary election: Candidates for Sheridan School Board, Candidates for Carmel School Board, and Candidates for the offices of Hamilton County Council District 4, Hamilton County Sheriff, and Hamilton County Prosecutor.

Indianapolis

We spent the first part of 2010 completing the township portion of the local government study and hosting an educational forum on the pros and cons of township government. Guest speakers were Representative Ed Delaney and Wayne Township Trustee David K. Baird. We're also partnering with the American Association of University Women and Church Women United on our annual coalition luncheon. This year's theme will focus on the environment. We are gearing up for our annual meeting in April and a member tour of the Birch Bayh Federal Courthouse in downtown Indianapolis.

Kokomo-Howard County

Howard County is in the process of starting after about ten years of being inactive. Ten people showed up for the first meeting on February 16th during a heavy snow fall. On March 18th, twenty-one people came to learn about Township Government and how it operates in the eleven townships in Howard County. We were very lucky to have Jean Lushin the Trustee of Center Township present to speak to us. Bob Stephenson, a Township Board member, came with him. They gave us a great overview of the services they provide to Center Township. Linda Gill Grove, a trustee from Jackson Township, was also present.

LaPorte County

We have revived the "Lunch with the League," meetings on April 13th. Our speaker, former County Coroner Dr. Vidya Kora, will be talking about health care. Upcoming plans include the Annual Meeting, 90th anniversary celebration, fundraising, a Voter's Guide and our Government Directory publication. We are also continuing our pollworker survey for the upcoming primary election to improve the process and present results to the election board.

Montgomery County

The League has continued Lunch with the League the first Monday of each month. We also organized displays in each of the county libraries to celebrate the League's 90th anniversary. Our local League received Proclamations from both the Crawfordsville mayor and county commissioners. We also helped facilitate two brainstorming sessions for the Crawfordsville Park and Rec. Dept. to provide input for their new 5-year plan. April will include a candidate forum and meet and greet, pollworker surveys, and election night reporting.

Muncie-Delaware County

February was busy with our monthly Board meeting and a well attended 90th anniversary celebration where many stories of long-time members were shared and a scrap book full of history was presented. We also hosted a Legislative Update. March included Women's History Week at Ball State University with several of our members as speakers. In April, we will have a program on our proposed local government re-organization plan.



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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, 445 N Pennsylvania Street, #910, Indianapolis IN 46204. 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
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Deadline for Next Submission: TBA

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