

VOTER

League of Women
Voters of Indiana
County, Pennsylvania



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

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Legislative Interviews: Meetings Scheduled for February

Every year Local League of Women Voters Chapters hold interviews with their State legislators. The purpose of the Interviews is to learn where legislators stand on specific issues, to get a reading on what legislation might be introduced in the new session, to plant a seed of interest on an issue that the legislator may not have considered or be familiar with and to help Leagues build a relationship with their legislators. Interviews are held at Eat n Park in Indiana and are as follows:

- **Representative Dave Reed, Friday, February 11, 9:00 am**
- **Senator Don White, Friday, February 18, 9:00 am**
- **Representative Jeff Pyle, Thursday February 24, 11:30 am**

Please arrive 1/2 hour earlier if you care to order from the menu. The topics (and background) this year are as follows:

1. Government Transparency (making government at all levels, including the legislature, more transparent and accessible to public scrutiny; making the 2011 redistricting process more open and transparent and less partisan)
2. Natural Gas Extraction from Marcellus Shale (how to protect the environment and public health while capitalizing on the economic potential; protecting the Pennsylvania taxpayers from bearing the burden of the natural gas industry; safeguarding agriculture and tourism; role of the Department of Environmental Protection in terms of inspection and regulation; incentives to develop renewable, alternative and clean energy resources in Pennsylvania)
3. Education Finance (commitment to basic education; special education funding; scholarships to attend private schools; financing cyber charter schools)
4. Judicial Independence (merit appointment vs judicial election; ban on gifts to judges; handling of cases involving donors who contributed to a judge's campaign; requiring organizations involved in political campaigning to disclose the identity of large donors and to reveal their identities in any political ads they fund)

This is a great way to meet your legislators and learn about the issues and how state government works. We hope you can join us for one or more of these interviews!

LWVIC ANNUAL MEETING—

SAVE THE DATE

Our Annual Meeting will be May 16 at the Indiana Fire Association's White Township Station, 1555 Indian Springs Road. Dinner will start at 6 pm, followed by a brief business meeting to elect officers and board members and to adopt a budget and program for next year.

League Potluck features Mary Lou Repsher, District Consultant Librarian

On January 31, the League held its potluck meeting and program. Mary Lou Repsher, Indiana County's District Consultant to the PA State Library, spoke about the issues that public libraries face. Repsher's district also covers Cambria and Somerset Counties. In addition, she holds a director-at-large position on the PA Library Association board.

Repsher's talk included facts about the state of funding for public libraries, how technology is affecting libraries, and how a countywide library system works by allowing libraries to leverage state funding and maximize effectiveness as compared to independent libraries. (Indiana County libraries operate independently.) In contrast, the Cambria County Library System is part of a countywide system that operates as a federated library system, meaning that each library maintains local independence and has its own operating board. The League will study public library issues throughout 2011 and invites all members to be a part of the process.

2011 PENNSYLVANIA ELECTIONS—IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

First day to circulate and file nomination petitions	February 15
Last day to circulate and file nomination petitions	March 8
First day to circulate and file nomination papers	March 9
Last day for withdrawal by candidates who filed nomination petitions	March 23
Last day to REGISTER before the primary	April 18
Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot	May 10
Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots.....	May 13
MUNICIPAL PRIMARY	May 17

FOR YOUR INFORMATION— MARCELLUS SHALE

The following information has been compiled for you by the Environmental Issues Committee.

Natural Gas Pipelines

Once the natural gas well is flowing, the gas may or may not go into a condensate tank at the well site. From the well or tank, the gas follows a series of pipes to get to customers.

Gathering lines run from the wells to compressor stations. In Indiana County we see evidence of gathering lines when we see yellow pipes shaped like candy canes marking where gathering lines go under a road.

At compressor stations the gas is put under pressure (200 to 500 pounds per square inch [psi]) and sent along to a trunkline if it is going to a major market. Or it may enter a grid. Grids are used for regional markets. At city gates the pressure is reduced to about 2 psi and distributed to commercial and residential customers.

Demand for natural gas is uneven, which means that natural gas needs to be stored. In Pennsylvania the gas is stored in depleted oil and gas wells. (In 2007 there were 50 sites in PA; the Oakford Natural Gas Storage facility near Delmont is an example.) A small percentage of gas is stored by "looping." When multiple pipes are put in the ground when the pipe is laid, gas can be stored in the loops. Natural gas is also stored as liquefied natural gas or LNG. In Pennsylvania LNG facilities are located in the east near Philadelphia.

Should transporting natural gas be regulated by the Public Utilities Commission?

Title 66 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes Act excludes regulation of "any producer of

natural gas not engaged in distributing such gas directly to the public for compensation."

The Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS), a department within the US Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, regulates and inspects pipelines classed as Class I and higher. (Classes are determined by the number of buildings for human use within 220 yards of a pipeline.) OPS does not regulate or inspect gathering lines. This past year (2010) there was discussion regarding the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regulating pipelines since it regulates the rates that consumers pay for natural gas. House Bill 1128, introduced at the PUC's request, calls for raising pipeline safety fines to \$100,000 per day with a cap of \$1 million and to define natural gas pipelines as a public utility.

If the PUC regulates pipelines, pipeline companies will be able to use eminent domain to obtain land for laying pipelines. Dominion, a transmission company, prefers to use the right of way along highways and railways to lay pipelines rather than use eminent domain.

Where Class I and higher pipelines are laid is determined by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). To get permission is a multi-year procedure, and many proposed lines are never built, but trunklines to the Northeast are already under Pennsylvania. The two market hubs in Pennsylvania, Dominion in western Pennsylvania and the Ellisburg-Leidy center in the northern tier, provide interconnections and transportation services between the trunklines coming from the southwest and the west to the Northeast.

Sources

www.eia.doe.gov

www.pagasdrilling.com/tag/gas-gathering-pipelines

**Consolidated Statutes of the Pennsylvania
General Assembly**

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: Oh, The Things You Can Do!

The League of Women Voters of Indiana County will have a booth at the **Family Fun Fest** on **March 19**. The theme this year is Oh, The Things You Can Do! We need volunteers to manage our booth for 1 hour shifts from 10 am to 3 pm. If you are interested in issues and policies that affect children, this is a good way to get involved. To volunteer, contact Pepita Jimenez-Jacobs at pepitajimenezjacobs3@gmail.com or by telephone at 724-463-3683. Ideas on activities are welcome, too!



GREAT DECISIONS TOPICS 2011

The following sessions of the Great Decisions Lecture/Discussion Series will be offered next month. (See the January Voter for sessions being offered in February.)

The series continues on Tuesday mornings from 9:30-11:30. For further information contact Steve Anspacher at IUP Continuing Education (724-357-2292).

March 15 Germany Ascendant -- Dr. Werner Lipert, History

Germany has emerged from both the financial crisis and the Eurozone crisis as the dominant economic and political power in Europe, in particular setting the tone for dealings with Russia, Eastern Europe and Iran. How important is it for U.S. interests to enhance relations with Germany, and how should the U.S. react when German and U.S. interests fail to align?

March 22 The Caucasus -- Dr. Sharon Franklin-Rahkonen, History

The countries and regions of the Caucasus all have strong national identities but have long lived in the shadow of their larger neighbors: Russia, Iran and Turkey. How does this influence the Caucasus of today? How do the region's energy resources play into its relations with the outside world?

March 29 Global Governance -- Dr. Sarah Wheeler, Political Science

International cooperation subjects political leaders to an ongoing test: balancing national needs with a commitment to building a durable international order. How has an increasingly interconnected and shrinking world affected the viability of existing agreements and institutions? What economic, social, political and security concerns are currently on the agendas of intergovernmental bodies, and what is the future U.S. role?

EPA Announces "Eyes on Drilling" Tipline

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has announced the creation of the "Eyes on Drilling" tipline for citizens to report non-emergency suspicious activity related to oil and natural gas development.

The agency is asking citizens to call 1-877-919-4EPA (toll free) if they observe what appears to be illegal disposal of wastes or other suspicious activity. Anyone may also send reports by email to eyesondrilling@epa.gov. Citizens may provide tips anonymously if they don't want to identify themselves.

In the event of an emergency, such as a spill or release of hazardous material including oil to the environment, citizens are advised to call the National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802.

A newsletter of the
League of Women Voters
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We're on the
Web!

www.palwv.org/indiana



CALENDAR of UPCOMING EVENTS

February 11, 2011, 9:00 am—Legislative Breakfast with Representative Dave Reed (Eat 'n' Park, Indiana)

February 14, 2011, 7:00 pm—Board Meeting, All Members Welcome, Sandy Whitson's home (402 Elm Street, Indiana)

February 18, 2011, 9:00 am—Legislative Breakfast with Senator Don White (Eat 'n' Park, Indiana)

February 24, 2011, 11:30 am—Legislative Lunch with Representative Jeff Pyle (Eat 'n' Park, Indiana)

March 19, 2011, 10:00 am—3:00 pm—Family Fun Fest, Indiana Mall

May 16, 2011, 6:00 pm—LWVIC Annual Meeting, Indiana Fire Association's White Township Station (1555 Indian Springs Road)

Know someone who may be interested in membership? Let President Sherene Hess know at 724-762-4162 and she will send a brochure & short letter describing LWVIC's activities.

Our Mission Statement

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

