

VOTER

League of Women
Voters of Indiana
County, Pennsylvania



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

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LWVUS to Update National Agriculture Policy Position

Submitted by Beth Marshall

The LWVIC will be taking part in a national study to update the LWVUS position on agriculture policy. The current position was reached in 1990 after a two year nationwide study and consensus process. At that time our nation's farmers were in the midst of a major economic crisis, and issues relating to organic and alternative agriculture and farming's impact on the environment were becoming intensely debated by both the public and within the farming community. Since then, new issues have arisen, and the League needs to take these issues into account in order to enter the policy debate. The scope of the current study will thus be limited to two areas:

1. Technology issues including GMOs, pesticide and herbicide use, water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and,
2. Current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in the agriculture industry, crop subsidies, and the federal agriculture regulatory process.

Our local League is forming a committee to take part in the study process and prepare and present the background to our members at a local consensus meeting in March 2014. The national study committee will be writing the consensus questions, making suggestions for background reading, and tabulating the results of the local consensus meetings which are due April 4, 2014. The National Board will adopt those positions on which the local Leagues reach consensus and announce the results before the next LWVUS Convention in May 2014.

Following are three basic reference documents which the national study committee is recommending. All can be accessed and downloaded online.

"The Economic Report of the President 2013, Chapter 8," <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/ERP-2013/ERP-2013-chapter8/content-detail.html>. A policy brief of the Union of Concerned Scientists, "The Healthy Farm: A Vision for US Agriculture," http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/food_and_agriculture/The-Healthy-Farm-A-Vision-for-US-Agriculture.pdf. An article in Scientific American, "Will Organic Fail to Feed the World?" <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=organic-farming-yields-and-feeding-the-world-under-climate-change&page=2>.

LWVIC is forming its local committee now. The committee will meet in early October to decide how to inform its members about the national study. In the meantime, members should read the basic reference articles and think about what we could do to bring these issues to our members' attention. **Call Beth Marshall at 724-465-8974 or email her at nextlife@comcast.net if you want to be on the committee.** Both League members and non-League members are welcome to be on the committee although only League members can take part in the consensus.

Thank You Nap's

The LWVIC Board met for its annual retreat to plan the League's activities for the next 12 months. We'll have our calendar of events on our website soon at www.palwv.org/indiana. We would like to thank **Nick Karas owner of Nap's Cucina Mia** at 1033 Philadelphia Street in Indiana for allowing us to use his restaurant for our meeting. It was a very nice setting, and the food was terrific! Visit Nap's for dinner sometime soon, and you won't be disappointed!

Environmental Issues Committee Continues to Have Local Impact

In their most recent effort to become involved in the implementation of the new Indiana County Comprehensive Plan, Clarice Reber and Cindy Rogers, two members of the LWVIC Environmental Issues Committee, toured the Westmoreland County Conservation District along with members of the Indiana County Planning Office. The purpose of their visit was to learn about stormwater management. This committee is currently exploring how our League can be involved in the implementation of the Plan including educating the community about it. Below is a corrected reprint (from the June/July Voter) regarding "Smart Growth Principles" and how they might be applied to future planning.

Anyone who is interested in joining the Environmental Issues Committee can contact Clarice at ckreber@verizon.net.

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLE	EXPLANATION
Compact Building Design	Control sprawl. It will reduce the need for more roads, sewers, water supply lines, etc.
Create range of housing opportunities and choices	Build for all citizens, e.g., low, middle, and high income, young and old. It will retain current people and attract new ones.
Create walkable neighborhoods	Reduce car/truck use when possible; Make it easy for adults and children to walk.
Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration	Open conversation reduces conflict and increases understanding of issues involved in land use.
Foster distinctive, attractive communities with strong sense of place	Keep what you like while increasing the tax base. Don't sacrifice the traditions and unique features of your municipality just for the sake of development.
Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective	Don't change the rules in the middle of the game. Consider all of your constituents.
Mix land uses	Place services and shopping places near homes, not miles away.
Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas	Preserve the best parts of your municipality for your grandchildren and great grandchildren.
Provide a variety of transportation choices	Encourage as many types of transport as possible for people and business. Encourage business development near available transportation hubs.
Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities	Increase the value (your tax base) of current communities. Don't write them off. It will concentrate infrastructure needs.

Fall Voter Registration Drives to be Held/Volunteers Needed

Submitted by Karen Ross

September 24 is National Voter Registration Day, and LWVIC has planned several drives for the month of September. One of the most important missions of our organization is voter services, and **you can help support this mission by working at one of the following voter registration events.** You need not be an expert on voting procedure; we simply answer voter questions, distribute registration and absentee ballot forms, and help people fill out the application. Interacting with the public is always a rewarding experience and one way you can help our local League.

Call (724-349-0348) or email (ross.bert1@gmail.com) Karen Ross to participate in one or more of the following drives:

Monday, September 9	12:00-2:00 pm, 2:00-4:00 pm	Wyotech, Blairsville Campus
Saturday, September 14	9:00 am-noon	Indiana Farmer's Market
Tuesday, September 24	11:00 am-1:00 pm	Apollo Memorial Library
Tuesday, September 24	10:00 am-noon, noon-2:00 pm, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, 4:00 pm-6:00 pm	Indiana Free Library

Two other potential September registration drives are in the works (IUP & the Indiana County Assistance Office), so Sherene will be sending an email if volunteers are needed.

Meet Your New Board Members

Tina Zins was recently elected to serve as Secretary for the LWVIC. She's a great addition to our team of volunteers who are dedicated to the mission of encouraging informed and active participation in all levels of our government. Below is some information about Tina.

Originally from Jacksonville Florida, Tina has a BA in Classics and a BS in Anthropology from Florida State University. She moved to Indiana in 2008, and received her Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh in April 2013. Tina has done work in the University of Pittsburgh's Special Collections Library, the Westmoreland Museum of American Art, and the Indiana Genealogical and Historical Society. Tina currently serves as the director of the Apollo Memorial Library in Armstrong County and also serves on the board of the Apollo Area Business Association. Tina's number one priority is to provide quality library services and programs to the residents of Armstrong County. Promoting lifelong learning and fostering well-informed citizens is a paramount goal at the Apollo Memorial Library. Tina and her husband Joey are former collegiate runners who still enjoy running competitively... when work permits (it hasn't since 2010.). Tina and Joey are also serious poker players who enjoy playing in tournaments at Rivers Casino in Pittsburgh, Atlantic City, and Las Vegas.



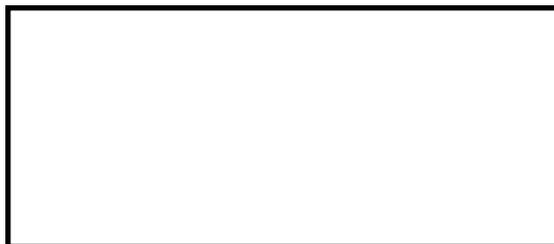
A newsletter of the
League of Women Voters
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We're on the
Web!

www.palww.org/indiana



CALENDAR of UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, September 16, 7:00 pm—Board Meeting, All Members Welcome, PASEC meeting room, (1005 Oak Street, 2nd floor)

Tuesday, September 17, 10:00 am—Environmental Issues Committee Meeting, Clarice Reber's home (1235 Oak Street, Indiana)

Tuesday, September 24—National Voter Registration Day (See page 3 for additional dates when LWWIC is registering voters.)

Monday, October 7—Last day to register for the November election

Monday, October 21, 7:00 pm—Affordable Care Act: Medicare/Medicaid Impact Informational Meeting sponsored by LWWIC (Aging Services, Oak Street, Indiana) (More details to appear in next Voter)

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 LWWIC'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.