

VOTER



A newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Indiana County, Pennsylvania

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LWVIC Board of Directors, 2007-2008

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**Next Board Meeting
of LWVIC:**

**September 12, 2007
noon at**

**Diane Duntley's home
204 Greenview Ct.**

724-349-2718

**All members and guests
are welcome**

IN-LEAGUE— ACTIVITIES YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN

Because the League does not have monthly members' meetings, it is sometimes hard for new members to decide how to get involved with the organization. The League of Women Voters is action oriented. The Board of Directors sets goals for the year, and members chair activities and organize committees to do the work. This year we have several opportunities for those who want to get involved in citizen action.

1. **Observer Corps**—A member goes to the meetings of a local government body on a regular basis to observe its activities. This can include a school board, the county commissioners meetings, boro council meetings, or meetings of local authorities. All are open to the public. The observer writes a brief report on an irregular basis that is included in the Voter. It is an excellent way to get to know more about your local government and to inform others about local actions. Contact Sherene Hess at 724-465-2595 if you are interested.
2. **Committees**—We have several committees that are involved in action on various issues. All welcome new members. They include:

The Education Committee—Studies issues affecting public schools, especially those in Indiana County. This could include school funding, school boards, and the No Child Left Behind Act. Contact Nancy Fricke at frickehaus@verizon.net or Diane Duntley at diane.duntley@gmail.com.

The Air Quality Committee—Is conducting a stop idling campaign and issues involving mercury deposition in the county. Contact Clarice Reber at creber@yourinter.net or Ann Rea at ann.rea@verizon.net.

The Immigration Study Committee—Is working on a national study currently being conducted by the League of Women Voters of the United States. (See article in this issue for more information).

Human Resources—Pepita Jacobs is our liaison with the county human services agencies. She is involved in many child related projects. If this is your interest, contact Pepita at drjacobs@yourinter.net.

Civic Participation—This committee works to find ways to involve more people in local government. It will be planning a workshop for candidates for local elective positions that will take place in January of 2009. Contact Diane Duntley at diane.duntley@gmail.com

What's New: If you know someone who needs information about how to register to vote, ask us for a copy of the LWVIC's of **Guide for Registering Voters in PA** or download it from our website at www.palwv.org/indiana.

3. **Public Relations and Communications**—LWVIC needs a constant presence with our members AND WITH THOSE WHO NEED lww INFORMATION AND RESOURCES. We need members who can help with public relations, update our website (along with our webmaster), and develop our newsletter—the Voter—which is issued about 6 times/year. Contact Sherene Hess at lwwic@yourinter.net.
4. **Voter Service**—This includes arranging Candidates' Nights, working on voters' guides, setting up meetings with legislators, voter registration. It varies from election to election. contact Aida Shotts at ashotts@alltel.net or Nancy Fricke at frickehaus@verison.net.

We hope you find something that intrigues you! Come on in — the water is fine.

IMMIGRATION STUDY HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Immigration to the United States has never been easy, in part due to the people who are already here.

Katherine Fennelly in the February 2007 National Voter points out that Americans use rose colored glasses when viewing previous immigrants but resent the people entering the country today. We use the metaphor “melting pot” to tell ourselves how well immigrants assimilate into American culture, but perhaps “into the frying pan” better describes the way immigrants are received.

Since 1882 the Federal government has used laws to exclude immigrants on the basis of their race (the Chinese in 1882), their political beliefs (anarchists 1902), and nationality (1924). Fennelly points out that the quota system and restrictions to becoming citizens never applied to Mexicans, due in part to their value as laborers and in part to the fact that Mexicans were already living on the land that became the United States after the Mexican-American War in 1848.

In 1965 Congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act which gave primary preference to two groups, those with special skills as defined by American companies and the relatives of U.S. citizens, and secondary preference to immigrants already living in the U.S. In 1990 Congress passed another immigration bill raising the number of immigrants to 700,000 with preference being given to relatives and those with desired, tech-

nical skills. Fennelly notes that in 2002 immigrants sponsored by family members constituted about two-thirds of the immigrants living in the U.S.

Neither the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) nor the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994 (NAFTA) were successful in deterring immigration. IRCA offered permanent resident status to workers who had been in the U.S. for four years and imposed fines on employers who knowingly hired illegal aliens. Employers were seldom if ever fined, and the creation of permanent resident status resulted in a two tier wage structure. NAFTA brought factories to Mexico but the wage disparity between U.S. and Mexican factory workers did not deter illegal immigration.

Now into the mix of separating immigrant families, a labor shortage for agricultural jobs, and employer sanctions, we add national security. Congress and the White House were unable to pass an immigration bill in the Summer of 2007. But the issue of immigration lives.



JOIN THE IMMIGRATION STUDY

The National League adopted Immigration as a study topic. Our local committee will begin with a committee meeting on Monday, September 17, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at Susan McClure's, 527 Shryock Avenue, Indiana. PA.

On January 19, 2008, the Immigration Committee will have its Consensus Meeting as a breakfast meeting for the League at Fire Mountain at 9:00 a.m. Please join us.

SCOPE OF THE IMMIGRATION STUDY

Underlying values and principles regarding immigration

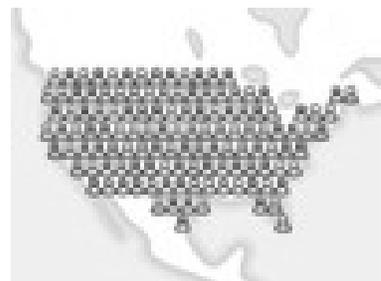


Reasons for migration from other countries, including but not limited to:

- Effects of global interdependence on migration
- Motivation of refugees and asylees
- Motivation of other immigrants

Current federal immigration policy, including but not limited to:

- Overview
- Effectiveness in unity families
- Effectiveness in meeting needs of business
- Effectiveness of enforcement
- Human rights concerns



Impact of immigration, including but not limited to:

- Economic effects of authorized and unauthorized immigration
- Diversity
- Inclusion of immigrants in American society

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UPCOMING CALENDAR



September 12 – Board meeting. **Noon.** Diane Duntley's home.

September 17 – Immigration Study Committee meeting.

Susan McClure's home. 7:00 p.m.

October 8 – Last day to register to vote or to change your address.

October 10 – Board meeting. **Noon.** Diane Duntley's home.

October 19 – Voters Guide on League Website.

October 25 – LWVIC Candidates Night. Oak Place. 7:00 pm

November 6 – Election Day - Please go out and Vote

Know someone who
may be interested in
membership? Let Olga
Platt know at 724-
465-2073 and she
will send a brochure &
short letter describing
LWVIC's activities.

READY. SET. VOTE. 