

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization dedicated to the active and informed participation of citizens in government.

LWVGL Board of Directors 2009-2010

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League of Women Voters
of Greater Lafayette
PO Box 2085
West Lafayette IN 47996
www.leaguelafayette.org

Food, fellowship and facts in the park— Don't miss the annual League picnic on August 29

The annual League picnic will be held on **Saturday, August 29**. Plan to join us at Shelter #2 in Happy Hollow Park from 11:00AM-1:00PM for the excellent food and fellowship we always share at our picnic. The picnic is an excellent opportunity to bring a guest who might be interested in the work of the League. An added bonus this year will be the opportunity to learn more about local government reform.

Our program this year will be a presentation by **Marilyn Schultz**, **Executive Director of mysmartgov.org**. Marilyn has served

in state government as a state representative, where she served on the Ways and Means committee and State Budget committee. She later served as State Budget Director and has been Director of the Indiana Division of Disabilities, Aging and Rehabilitation.

In between this service in the legislative and executive branches of government, Marilyn spent almost four years as Executive Director of the Mental Health Association in Indiana, a statewide advocacy organization. She worked for 11 years at Indiana State University, first reorganizing its government relations office and then for nine years as the vice president for planning and budgets. Marilyn has extensive data concerning local government in Indiana. Her knowledge and expertise in this area will be both informative and helpful to us as we undertake our study of local government reform as it affects our community.

Bring a dish to share. Bottled water and table service will be provided. We look forward to seeing you (and your guest) there.



Annual League Picnic
Saturday August 29, 11AM-1PM
Happy Hollow Park, Shelter #2

Presenter:
Marilyn Schultz,
Executive Director
of mysmartgov.org



Local members participate in the State Convention *Learn what happened!*

Betty Doversberger, Mary Lempke, Donna Giroux and Kathy Dale represented the LWV Greater Lafayette at the LWV Indiana State Convention May 15-17 in Indianapolis. LWVUS President Mary Wilson was with us for the whole weekend and spoke on LWVUS lobbying efforts.

After election of officers and board members, out-going president Joanne Evers of Lafayette passed the gavel to Karen Kay Leonard of Indianapolis. Kathy Dale is returning to the board, and is currently the only director from our League.

During program adoption delegates voted to retain 16 of 23 positions. The concurrence and revision of our hazardous waste position as adopted at
(cont'd on page 2)

State Convention, cont'd from page 1

convention 2007 will continue into the new year. Also continuing is review and restudy of election procedures, general assistance, tax system, and school finance positions. We will also do a restudy of motor vehicle licensing system.

Delegates did not pass a motion to restudy our illegal substances position with a focus on the possible inclusion of substances that are harmful to health but not generally illegal.

A new study of local government reform was adopted. It will use the conclusions of the bipartisan Indiana commission on Local Government Reform as a framework. The LWV Montgomery County has done such a study and will make their materials available to all leagues in Indiana. Jean Andres will chair this study in Lafayette. Get in touch with her if you want to be part of it.

Bloomington-Monroe County sponsored a successful resolution urging LWVUS to actively support the principle of single-payer national health insurance.

Reports were received from the coalitions we are part of: Health Access and Privacy Alliance (HAPA), Indiana Debate Commission, Lake Michigan LWV (formerly the inter-league organization), Lake Erie Basin Committee.

Marilyn Schultz of MySmartGov.org presented "Local Government Reform – Where Are We Now?" Come hear Marilyn at our August 29 picnic meeting at Happy Hollow Park. Also, David Orentlicher, an attorney, physician and former state legislator, presented on "Health Care Reform in Indiana."

Workshop topics included "Small Communities Initiative," "Education Fund: No More Mysteries" and "Working to Improve Election Procedures." Betty Doversberger led a roundtable discussion titled "First time fundraising experience—an old standby."

I have participated as a delegate to LWVIN conventions since the 1980s and they are always energizing and fun. Consider being a delegate yourself next time!
—Donna Giroux

What is Driving the Rapid Rise in U.S. Health Care Costs? *by Rhondda Tewes*

Health care spending in the United States reached \$2.4 trillion in 2007, or \$7,900 per capita. It's projected to reach \$3.1 trillion in 2012 and \$4.3 trillion in 2017 (20% of gross domestic product [GDP]). A variety of factors are contributing to this escalation of cost, including:

- **Health Insurance Premiums:** In 2008, employer health insurance premiums increased by 5% or twice the rate of inflation, with an annual premium averaging nearly \$12,700 for an employer health plan covering a family of four.
- **Administrative Costs:** Administrative overhead can cause health care insurance premiums to balloon: compare Medicare at 3% with an average of commercial carriers at 20%, and investor-owned Blue Cross/Blue Shield at 27%.
- **Percentage of Total Health Care Costs:** The typical American family of four spent \$15,600 on total health care costs in 2008, or 25% of the combined family income of \$60,000. In 2003, a comparison of health care costs in the U.S. and Canada found that administration accounted for 31.0 percent of health care expenditures in the United States and 16.7 percent of health care expenditures in Canada.
- **Highly Fragmented System:** A fragmented system is hard for employers and patients to navigate, and leads to inefficient care delivery. Confusing paperwork and rules for multiple insurance programs allow patients to fall through safety nets. Medically, patients are often subjected to duplicate testing and suffer negative drug interactions due to multiple providers and no central medical records system.
- **Bricks and Mortar:** Capital spending drives operating costs and determines the geographic distribution of resources. When operating and capital payments are combined, as they are currently, prosperous hospitals can expand and modernize while impoverished ones cannot, regardless of need or quality.
- **Emphasis on Treatment:** Advancements in clinical treatments, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices are accompanied by increasing costs, including costs of research and development, and advertising directly to patients as well as to providers. The decision to allow advertising directly to patients has greatly increased the demand for new products and services.
- **The Uninsured:** Health care for individuals who are uninsured raises the costs for all Americans because providers (physicians, clinics, hospitals) make up the losses by shifting the cost to paying consumers.
- **Impact of Other Insurance:** Often overlooked, the medical expense portions of liability, workers compensation and auto insurance for homes, cars, and businesses also contribute to the cost of health care.

Despite high expenditures for multiple private, state and federal health insurance programs, a Families USA 2009 report, *Americans At Risk*, found that 86.7 million people—one out of every three Americans under the age of 65—were uninsured for some period of time during 2007 and 2008. These Americans either pay for medical care out of their own pockets or delay needed care altogether. Another 16 million Americans are considered underinsured. This figure puts the 50 percent of consumer bankruptcies in the United States that stem from medical bills into perspective.

Rhondda Tewes (LWVMA) is a member of the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force. Produced by the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force, 2009. ©2009 by the League of Women Voters of the United States. See the entire article with references at: www.tinyurl.com/tewes.

The League Letter is published bi-monthly. The editor is Kaye McSpadden. Please send your articles to kaye7m@aol.com.

New program year brings new activities

The League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette always has a busy schedule of activities, and 2009-10 promises to be another year of interesting, informative activities. While the planning is still taking place, the calendar is already starting to fill up.

Our first activity of the year will be the annual picnic, to be held on August 29 at Happy Hollow Park, Shelter 2 (see front page).

Our League will be conducting programs this year on topics of intense interest to the League and the public. Jean Andres will head a committee to study local government reform. There will be ample opportunity for participation in the study, with informational/discussion meetings during the year. Also, Jo Brooks and Donna Giroux will present a program on health care reform. Watch for dates, times and locations of the meetings.

In December we will hold our annual Legislative Coffee, a great opportunity for informal interaction between League members and our elected officials to the General Assembly. The Legislative Breakfast for League members and the public will be held on January 30.

In February, League members will have the opportunity to provide input into the national League positions at our Program Planning meeting. April will bring a presentation on Women and the Law, to be given at the YWCA Network Lunch on April 28. And in May it will be time for the League Annual Meeting.

As the dates and details of these events are finalized, we will get the information out to you so you can put the dates on your calendars. We are looking forward to another productive year for LWVGL.

—Betty Doversberger, President

The League will greet new citizens on Sept 4

Once again our League will have members attending the **naturalization ceremony at Morton Community Center at 4pm on Friday, Sept. 4.** Up to 100 people will formally become US citizens, and we will offer them the opportunity to register to vote as well as information about the election process. At last year's ceremony our League registered over 70 voters and provided information on registering to vote, the voter ID law, and election information to more than one hundred people.

The level of excitement and anticipation was high among those new citizens, their family and friends. If you need to be reminded of how special the right to vote is and what a great country we live in, come and be moved by this event. It is open to all.

—Jean Andres

Keeping our League strong—fall fund drive coming

Last year, our League conducted the first fund drive it has had in a number of years. The impetus for reinstituting a fund drive was a combination of declining revenues from calendar sales and increasing costs, including increasing national dues. The support for the fund drive was gratifying. The League members, and non-members who attend League public programs, were generous in their contributions to the fund drive. The proceeds have made it possible to continue our active program of education and advocacy.

This year, we will again conduct a fund drive in the fall. Please put the League on your list of organizations to support, and watch for the materials to come in the mail.

—Betty Doversberger, President



Meet Joyce Bever, the Ivy Tech student who submitted the winning banner design. This photo was taken at last May's Annual Meeting when the banner was unveiled. Joyce received our thanks and praise, and an honorarium.

Read the League newsletter and check out great resources and other information on the League website!





League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette
PO Box 2085
West Lafayette IN 47996



- **Aug 29**—Annual Picnic, Happy Hollow Park, shelter #2, 11AM-1PM
- **Sept 4**—Naturalization Ceremony, Morton Center, 4PM
- **December**—Legislative Coffee
- **Jan 30 2010**—Legislative Breakfast
- **February**—Program Planning meeting
- **April 28**—"Women & the Law" at YWCA Network Lunch
- **May**—Annual Meeting

Join the League

YES, I want to be a member of the League of Women Voters!

- \$50 1-year individual membership
- \$75 1-year household membership
- \$25 student membership
- I'm enclosing an additional contribution of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Please make checks payable and mail to:

LWVGL
PO Box 2085
West Lafayette IN 47996-2085

Membership in the local league includes membership in the state and national League of Women Voters.

Thank you!

A non-partisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government



League of Women Voters ® of Greater Lafayette

PO Box 2085 • West Lafayette IN 47996-2085 • 765-497-4144

August 12, 2009

Dear League Member,

The fiscal year begins for the League in Lafayette on July 1. You are invited and encouraged to continue your membership in our multi-issue grassroots organization. Dues are \$50. A second member in the same household pays \$25. Student memberships are available for \$25. Subsidized memberships can be arranged by contacting a board member. Most of the dues amount goes to the national and state Leagues in the form of per-member-payments. The local organization runs on the remainder and any funds raised by selling calendars.

We anticipate an active year ahead with voter registration, meetings with legislators as well as activity on local government reform, wastewater handling and health care reform. Our League is reactivating the Observer Corps so be sure and complete the interest survey on the other side and let us know where you want to be involved. We are doing much to be where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

- _____ \$50 Member
- _____ \$25 Second member, same household
- _____ \$25 Student
- _____ Contribution to Fern Weber Fund (supports subsidized memberships)
- _____ Additional contribution in general support of operations
- _____ **Total enclosed**

Make your check payable and mail to:
League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette
P.O. Box 2085
West Lafayette. IN 47996
ATTN: Melanie Lacroy, Treasurer

***Be sure and fill out the
volunteer activities form
on the other side→***

If you have questions about membership, contact Donna Giroux at 523-3238 or dlgiroux@frontiernet.net.

Thank You!

League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette

YES, I will help our League!

Join the Observer Corp

___ Select from the list at right

Voter Service

- ___ Register voters
- ___ Draft candidate questions for website
- ___ Conduct exit polling
- ___ Be a poll observer
- ___ Help at a candidate forum
- ___ Coordinate mailings to candidates

Public Relations/Publicity

- ___ Write PR for one event
- ___ Appear on TV to promote an event
- ___ Develop PR for Community Calendar
- ___ Find additional stores that will sell Community Calendars

Join a Study Group

- ___ Local Government Reform

Community Forums

- ___ Help at forum
- ___ Help plan a forum
- ___ Help with Legislative Breakfast

Membership Services

- ___ Welcome new members
- ___ Help with Legislative Coffee
- ___ Telephone members
- ___ Help with League Newsletter
- ___ Join the Board

Observer Corps – Attend meetings of a government board or commission and report on what happened

Tippecanoe County

- Board of Commissioners: 1st & 3rd Mon, 10am
- County Council: 2nd Tues, 2pm
- Area Plan: 3rd Wed, 7pm
- Board of Zoning Appeals: 4th Wed, 7pm
- County Park Board: 1st Wed, 4pm
- Drainage Board: 1st Wed, 10am
- Board of Health: meets quarterly
- Human Relations Commission: call for dates and times
- Wildcat Creek Solid Waste: 4th Tues, alternating Lafayette & Frankfort
- Tippecanoe County Public Library Board: 1st Tues, 7pm
- Board of the Tippecanoe School Corp: 2nd Wed, 7:30pm

Lafayette

- Common Council: 1st Mon, 7pm
- Board of Public Works & Safety: every Tues, 9am
- Board of Zoning Appeals: 3rd Mon, 4pm
- Bd. of Parks and Recreation: 2nd Mon, 4:30pm
- Lafayette School Board: 2nd Mon, 7pm
- Human Relations Commission: as needed

West Lafayette

- Common Council: 1st Mon, 7:30pm
- Board of Works and Public Safety: every Tues, 11am
- Housing Maintenance Board of Appeals: irregularly as needed
- Board of Parks and Recreation: 3rd Mon, 4:30pm
- Human Relations Commission: as needed
- Economic Development Commission: as needed
- West Lafayette Community Schools Board: 1st & 3rd Mon, 6:30pm
- West Lafayette Public Library Board: 3rd Wed, 7pm
- Go Greener Commission

After indicating your volunteer activities, please fill in your name and contact information on the other side and return as indicated. Thank you!