

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

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2008-2009**

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

Important meeting for all members—

State and Local Program Planning, Nov 18

See inserts to learn more and to provide input

On Tuesday November 18, our League will review state and local action positions. Members may recall that in 2007, LWVIN began an intense review of fifteen positions by statewide committees. Three of these positions are now ready for concurrence by local leagues.

At our meeting we will examine the eight positions not under review and have concurrence on two of the reviewed positions: *Local Government* and *Local Government Finance*. Because of its length and complexity, the third reviewed position, *Juvenile Justice*, will be examined for concurrence in early 2009. Copies of this position will be handed out at our meeting in preparation for the concurrence.

We will review our local positions including the proposed revised wording for *Land Use and Parks, Recreation and Open Space*. We have full-text

Cont'd on page 2 →

State & Local Program Planning

Tuesday, November 18

West Lafayette Public Library
(Walnut Rm)

6 PM Supper

6:30 – 8 PM Meeting

2008 Legislative Coffee offers opportunity to talk with legislators

League members and their guests are warmly invited to attend the League of Women Voters Legislative Coffee at the home of Patsy and Scott Hoyer, 3008 Wilshire Ave., West Lafayette, on **Thursday Dec. 4 at 7 pm**. This is a chance to interact informally with local legislators in advance of the upcoming session. Light refreshments will be served. **Please RSVP to Pat Corey** at 269-5239 or pcorey@ivytech.edu.

Directions: From the intersection of 52 and Salisbury in WL, turn right (north) onto Salisbury. At the next light, turn right (east) on Cumberland. Wilshire is the 2nd left, but to turn you must go past it and swing around the median. The Hoyers' home is the 3rd house on the left—lights will be on! The Hoyers' phone is 497-0103.



2008 Making Democracy Award announced!

See pg. 3 →

State & Program Planning, cont'd from p. 1

copies of positions to be examined on our member website, http://leaguelfayette.org/members_only.html.

See this newsletter's inserts for a summary of the eight state positions plus complete wording of *Local Government* and *Local Government Finance*. There is also an insert with a summary of our local positions plus the complete wording for the revised sections.

For those who will not be at the meeting, you may have input by marking the inserts and mailing them to LWVGL, PO Box 2085, West Lafayette, IN 47996. The inserts with the lines to mark for retention, dropping or reviewing are also available on the member website. You can copy the insert pages to your documents, fill out and email as attachments to winniadler@comcast.net. Please add your comments on any position.

The program planning meeting also offers an opportunity for members to recommend new state or local studies. Member participation is very important. For your enjoyment and convenience, the Board is hosting a chili supper with dessert. Please come! —*Winnie Adler*

League welcomes new citizens

On August 29 the League was present as 97 new citizens took their oaths at the naturalization ceremony at Morton Community Center. The League was there to provide the new Americans with information on the election process and to give them the opportunity to register to vote. Fifteen people from Tippecanoe County registered and another 50-60 took voter registration forms to complete and send to their county's voter registration office. Thanks to Donna Giroux, Mida Grover and her daughter, and Ron Andres for their help at the event and their enthusiastic welcoming of new US citizens. —*Jean Andres*



Mida Grover (left) and Jean Andres offer voter registration to new citizens

Immigration and the US/Mexico border

Tuesday, February 3, 2009, 7 PM

West Lafayette Public Library

Cathy Potter, co-chair with Mida Grover of the local League Immigration Reform Committee, participated in a weeklong trip last May to study immigration issues at the US/Mexico border. She spent four nights in Mexico—two with a family in Nogales, and two at a church sanctuary in Altar.

Sponsored by the Purdue Latino Cultural Center and organized by Borderlinks in Tucson, the experience included a tour of a Border Patrol Post, a visit to the "WALL," a visit to a hospitality house (where "coyotes" meet with those who wish to cross illegally), time at a number of nonprofits in Mexico which serve those repatriated after unsuccessful crossings, and an afternoon in the Tucson courts which deal with illegal immigrants. Especially important were conversations with people on the US side who were trying to help those crossing illegally (by placing water in the desert, etc.) and with a number of those in Mexico who were in the process of trying to cross or who had failed. The economic factors in immigration were also addressed.

Cathy will share her experience with League members and friends on Tuesday, February 3 at 7 PM at the West Lafayette Public Library. We will also review the LWVUS Immigration Reform position arrived at last spring. —*Cathy Potter*

Wabash River Corridor Update—learn more on Dec. 10!

More than 200 people attended the September 4 Wabash River Enhancement Corporation (WREC) meeting about the river corridor. Mayors Tony Roswarski and John Dennis, County Commissioner KD Benson, Purdue representative John Collier, and WREC Executive Director Stan Lambert welcomed the crowd and thanked them for participating.

The consultants, Wallace Roberts Todd (WRT), used this initial meeting to share their assessment of the opportunities presented by the river corridor and the community. Many photos, such as the one at right, stimulated the audience's thinking about the potential for enhancing the river corridor in Tippecanoe County and beyond. Log on to the project's new web site to review the information that was presented and the input at <http://www.wabashriver.net/>



A terraced riverbank creates a beautiful and usable space that accommodates regular flooding

On **Wednesday, December 10, 7-9 PM** at Lafayette Theater, 600 Main Street in Lafayette, WRT will present an array of preliminary alternatives and our community leaders will ask for your reaction to those ideas. Mark your calendars and be part of this important and exciting process.

The Nature Conservancy also held six meetings throughout the state to update the public on efforts to assess biodiversity in the river throughout the entire Wabash River basin. One of those sessions was held in Lafayette on September 16. A detailed report will be available in November. The results of the study will be helpful to the local WREC effort, which is focused first on Tippecanoe County and then will be expanded to a four county area.

—*Liz Solberg*

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

League supporters respond generously to fund drive—have you sent your contribution yet?

Many thanks to those who have already responded to our League's fund drive request. We are delighted to be receiving generous contributions from both our members and from non-members who support the work of the League. These contributions will make it possible for our League to continue to provide programs and educational materials to help our citizens remain involved and informed in protecting our democracy.

The decision to conduct this fund drive was based on the fact that our per member payment to the national and state leagues takes almost all of the money raised through dues, and our calendar sales, our only fund raising activity, have declined in recent years.

If you have not yet sent a contribution to the League, please consider doing so, using the **convenient donation form in this newsletter**. Your non-tax deductible contribution to LWVGL will support the operating expenses of the local League and a tax deductible contribution to LWV/IEF (the Indiana Education Fund) will support the activities and materials of our League which provide educational opportunities for the public. Your gift will be a great service to the work of the League. —Betty Doversberger

Many thanks to the following for their generous contributions

Tom & Winnie Adler	Kaye McSpadden
Jo Brooks	Jan Mills
Lillian Cote	Evelyn Modrey
Betty Doversberger	Mariellen Neudeck
Ruth Dowden	Denise Ottinger
Verna Emery	Mary Lee Parker
Joanne Evers	Barbara Post
Mary Ann Foley	Cathy Potter
Nola Gentry	Cynthia Scruggs
Donna Giroux	Patricia Skifstad
Joan Goldstein	Liz Solberg
Sheila Klinker	Randy Studt
Rosemary Leary	Judy & Leo Weitzman
Joan Lohmann	John Wilms
Sharon McKnight	

Constitution Day program features MDW award and government reform presentation

More than 45 people attended our first Constitution Day program on September 17. **Annette Goben** received our League's *Making Democracy Work Award* for her efforts in establishing Imagination Station (see photo at right).

Following the award presentation **Louis Mahern**, committee member, summarized the Governor's Select Committee's report on reforming local government. Mr. Mahern stressed that the committee was interested in changes to the structure, not the functions of governmental bodies.

With the reduction of property taxes, local governments will not have the funds to operate as they have in the past; the choice will be what services to cut. Following the report's recommendations would lead to a reduction in the number of government employees, thus saving many taxpayer dollars. To view the report online go to: http://indianalocalgovreform.iu.edu/assets/docs/Report_12-10-07.pdf.

Mr. Mahern also encouraged people to sign-on as members of MySmartgov.org to help lobby the state legislature for these reforms. —Jean Andres



Candidate forum held with WALLA a great success!

It was a standing room only crowd at the WALLA/League Candidates' Forum on September 15. All six candidates for the state legislature from Tippecanoe County spoke at the event to a group of over 120 people. Jeff Smith, TV-18 anchor was the moderator.

The discussion was wide-ranging. Topics included property taxes, school funding, the gas tax, modifying the Voter ID law, possible changes proposed by the Kernan Shepard Report on Reforming Local Government, and more. Attendees agreed it was a lively and informative evening. Thanks to all the League members who assisted in making the evening run smoothly. —Jean Andres

League Calendar Now Available!

The 2008-2009 League of Women Voters Community Events Calendar is now ready for you to buy and/or sell! As usual, it contains dates for activities of more than 50 community groups and organizations. It is a terrific planning tool and the main fundraiser for the League, as well as an excellent advertisement for the League. And it is still only \$8!

There is now a supply available on Ruth Dowden's back porch (1820 Sheriden Road, WL) and Cathy Potter's front porch (817 North Chauncey, WL). If you haven't done so already, I urge all of you to either stop by and purchase your personal copy or sign out a supply of calendars to sell to your family and friends. Ruth Dowden suggested that every member should "buy one, sell one." Remember, if you buy directly from a League member, we get to keep the 80 cents per calendar commission we pay to the stores.

Speaking of stores, following are the locations where the calendar is available for sale: all six CVS stores in the area, Von's Book Store, Interior Objects, the gift shops at Home and St. Elizabeth Hospitals, Two Tulips downtown, and Sunspot Natural Market in West Lafayette.

We are always looking for new locations. If you have ideas or connections, please give your suggestions to any of the board members or call Mary Lee Parker at 743-3327. We are especially grateful to Larry Hudson, manager of the West Lafayette CVS store, for his help in getting the League approved as an official vendor for CVS.

Thanks for all your help in making this fundraiser a success! —Mary Lee Parker





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



- **Nov 18**—Program Planning review, W Lafayette Public Library, 6-8pm
- **Dec 4**—Legislative Coffee, Hoyers' house, 7pm
- **Dec 10**—Wabash Rivver Corridor Update, Lafayette Theater, 7-9pm
- **Feb 3, 2009**—Immigration & the US/Mexico Border, W Lafayette Public Library, 7pm

Have you checked out the League website? It's a great source of info!

The website features many helpful items including: a calendar of activities, our positions, information on voting, and the Directory of Local Officials. —Jane Frankenberger



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!

Donate!

The League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette and its sister organization, the League of Women Voters Indiana Education Fund, Inc. (Indiana Education Fund), serve two important yet distinct purposes. You may contribute to either, or both, of these funds.

- The **LWVGL** conducts and funds all actions on issues and membership-related activities at the local level. Donations to this fund are not tax deductible.
- The **Indiana Education Fund** provides balanced, accurate, nonpartisan information on governmental issues and the political process for all citizens. It undertakes educational projects that are aimed at providing information and educational services to citizens. Donations to the Indiana Education Fund are tax deductible.

Thank you for your support.

League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette Donation Form

I would like to contribute:

LWVGL Fund (**not** tax deductible) \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other: _____

Voters/IN Education Fund (tax deductible)... \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other: _____

\$_____ **Total contribution** (check made payable to LWVGL)

Name/names _____ Tel # _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

Names of donors will be acknowledged in our newsletter. If you do not wish to be listed, please check here.

Mail to:
LWVGL, PO Box 2085,
West Lafayette IN 47996-2085

If your gift is in honor or memory of someone the League will send an acknowledgment.

This gift is In honor of in memory of

Please send acknowledgement to (name & address):

Should the public pick the President of the United States?

Learn what the League says

The question of whether the Electoral College should be abolished in favor of electing the President by popular vote is a perennial one, and it is an issue that is pressed most urgently when the two methods have different results, as happened in 2000 (and in 1824, 1876, and 1888).

The League of Women Voters' position, taken originally in 1970 and updated as recently as 2004 to include the integrity of the entire process of electing a president, is as follows:

"The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished.

The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system – from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information." (from the League website, LWL.org).

Since 1970, the League, along with others, has actively lobbied every Congress for the amendment to the Constitution

that would abolish the Electoral College, so far to no avail. It is noteworthy that the League is not content with reforming the College or leaving it up to the states to choose their own participation. Our position has been that the election of the president must have consistent and uniform processes nationwide.

Many agree with the League's position. According to The Christian Science Monitor (September 4, 2008), national and state polls consistently show about 70 percent of Americans favor direct election of the president.

But at least one current effort is a kind of "end run" around the Constitution. A 2006 initiative called National Popular Vote began asking state legislatures to act to give their state's electoral votes to the candidate who wins the popular vote nationwide. Started by computer-scientist John Koza, the effort has had some success, with four states, Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, and Maryland having passed such a law.

Koza's approach would take effect if states representing at least 270 electoral votes, the threshold for election, agree to throw their electoral college votes behind the popular national winner. This kind of "interstate compact" is constitutional. We can certainly expect to hear more about this issue, especially if the 2008 race is, once again, very close—which will be known by the time you read this article! —*John Corey*

The League of Women Voters believes that the Electoral College should be abolished.

To make a donation, please complete the form on the other side, make your check payable to LWVGL, and mail to:

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

Thank you!

Review of LWV of Greater Lafayette Positions

Complete text of positions are on our public website: <http://www.leaguelafayette.org>

1. Solid Waste Management: Support public and private sectors working together to actively promote waste reduction, source reduction, yard-waste composting and recycling in Tippecanoe County and in the solid waste district. Effective solid waste decisions are not primarily engineering decisions but public policy decisions. The selection of a future landfill site should be part of an overall land use plan.

Retain _____ Drop _____ Review or restudy _____

2. Juvenile Services in Tippecanoe County:

Support the establishment of long-term treatment facilities for juveniles and government funding for detention and treatment facilities.

Retain _____ Drop _____ Review or restudy _____

3. Local Government Structure in Tippecanoe County: Support cooperation among the various governmental bodies of Lafayette, West Lafayette, and Tippecanoe County, and the merging of departments with similar functions.

Retain _____ Drop _____ Review or restudy _____

4. Problems of Women, and Women with Children, Who Are Victims of Domestic Violence:

Support programs to prevent family violence and measures that protect victims and survivors of domestic violence through uniform law enforcement, human services intervention, violence prevention education, conflict-management training and safe housing. We support a holistic approach to the problems created by domestic violence.

Retain _____ Drop _____ Review or restudy _____

Note about "Land Use" Position:

As directed by the May, 2008, LWVGL Annual Meeting, this revision in the wording of the LWVGL Land Use position is proposed for member consideration at the November 18 program-making meeting. The goal is updated language and clearer meaning, not significant substantive change. The proposal came from a committee made up of John Corey, Liz Solberg, Lillian Cote, Jane Frankenberger, Diane Damico and also included input from KD Benson and Sallie Fahey. All Leaguers with e-mail were invited to participate. The two topics are proposed as separate positions, rather than lumped together under the title of "Land Use" as they currently are. See other side for the proposed revision in the "Parks, Recreation, and Open Space" position.

Comprehensive Planning, revised 10/1/08

The League supports a **continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative** planning process. We support the Area Plan Commission (APC), the agency established by the six governmental entities in Tippecanoe County (two cities, the county, three town boards), in carrying out this process. We emphasize the need for a qualified professional staff to serve the APC in advising local elected officials.

- **Continuing**—refers to the periodic need to re-evaluate and update a plan to reflect current best use practices, changing technology, and citizen input.
- **Comprehensive**—is defined as including many basic elements, for example:

- Economic factors affecting development;
- Sustainable land use and energy practices (housing, business, industry, agriculture, etc.);
- Population factors;
- Transportation facilities and patterns, including rail and mass transit;
- Financial resources;
- Social and community values such as: parks and recreational facilities, preservation of open space, river

corridor enhancement and sustainable development, preservation of historical sites and buildings, aesthetics, and especially protecting the environment (e.g. water and air quality, wetland preservation, farmland preservation, minimizing sprawl);

Implementation measures such as zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and building codes.

- **Cooperative**—includes cooperation among all levels of government, agencies within governments, educational organizations, and citizens.

Many goals expressed in national, state, and local League positions are an essential part of the planning process and are intertwined with comprehensive planning and land use. The common good of the overall community should have as much influence as the rights of the individual property owner.

_____ Support as presented

_____ Support with changes

_____ Do not support

Comments:

Note: Proposed wording additions are in Italics and deletions are crossed out.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Revised 10/1/08, slight additional revision 10/6/08

Support ~~governmental~~ planning for, development of, and funding for additional parks, recreation, and open space for Tippecanoe County.

A. **Planning Goals:** League Members believe that the planning goals for parks, recreation and open space in Tippecanoe County should include the following considerations:

1. Acquisition and creative development of open space in the cities and the county for ~~present and future use~~ both active and nature-oriented recreational purposes;
2. Use of this land as a release from the pressures of living in an urban area, i.e. a place to observe nature, natural areas for family-oriented activities;
3. Preservation of the natural and historic heritage of our county;
4. Support for public input and involvement in the initial stages of planning as well as formation of on-going citizen advisory groups;
5. Promotion of the philosophy that parks, recreation, and open space are a valid expenditure of local tax monies *because of their contribution to sustainable economic development, a healthy community, and overall quality of life;*
6. Utilization of a combination of funding sources including local, state, and federal governmental funds in combination with foundations and other private sources. Government funding should use the least regressive taxes. Possible tax sources could include tax increment financing, local income tax, user fees for specific facilities, food and beverage tax, innkeepers tax. (~~inheritance tax~~).

B. **Wabash River Corridor:** *League Members recognize that the Wabash River basin is a unique predominant treasured natural feature not only of our community but of our state, and League members strongly support:*

1. The Wabash River Enhancement Corporation and the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission in their efforts to promote environmentally responsible urban and natural river corridor development and to foster cooperation among concerned park boards and other governmental entities *to make our community a place of choice;*

2. Improvement of water quality in the river itself and in the overall river environment;
3. Utilizing the water in its naturally free-flowing state and preserving and stabilizing its banks;
4. Integrated development of recreational opportunities along the Wabash River corridor including access areas and facilities for canoeing, rowing, fishing, shallow-draft powerboats, as well as opportunities for hiking, camping, bicycling, and picnicking (~~horseback riding, cross-country skiing~~) within a natural park environment;
5. Continued development of Prophetstown State Park as an anchor for Wabash River corridor development to help address unmet recreational needs in Tippecanoe County and the contiguous region;
6. Sustainable focal point development to link the communities of Lafayette and West Lafayette. Possibilities could include (~~a convention center~~) restaurants, museums, community gathering places, boardwalks, overlooks, and so forth.
7. Additional financial support for our historical parks, acquisition and preservation of Hadley Lake and other wetlands, and use of the Wildcat Creek area for recreational and conservation purposes in accordance with an overall orderly plan.

___ **Support as presented**

___ **Support with changes**

___ **Do not support**

Comments:

2008 Review of Eight LWVIN Positions

For complete text of positions, see members' website http://leaguelafayette.org/members_only.html

- 1. Mandatory Kindergarten:** Favors mandatory state-supported kindergarten attendance and supports requiring school corporations to establish either a full-day or a combination full-day and half-day program with parental choice. Assumes state government full tuition support
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____
- 2. Dissemination of Voting Information:** Through various public media, election officials should provide adequate and timely information about registration procedures, lists of candidates on the ballot, polling places, and voting procedures.
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____
- 3. Poll Workers:** Support of efforts to recruit, train, and fairly compensate adequate numbers of poll workers.
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____
- 4. Election Recounts:** The state should maintain uniform and equitable recount procedures for state and local offices. Local and state election officials should fully cooperate with federal officials in recounts involving U.S. senators, representatives, or the president.
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____
- 5. Illegal Substances:** Supports comprehensive programs and cooperation among law enforcement agencies and the judicial system to eliminate the manufacture, distribution and use of illegal substances.
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____
- 6. Children at Risk:** Support of LWV national position and of intervention on behalf of children at risk, including specific measures to achieve these goals.
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____
- 7. Domestic Violence:** Support of LWV national position and of various means, especially legal procedures, to combat the problem of domestic violence.
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____
- 8. Motor Vehicle Licensing System:** Support of state operation of the motor vehicle licensing system, with guidelines to establish standards for operation, full disclosure of all collections and disbursements, and periodic auditing.
Retain_____ **Drop**_____ **Review or restudy**_____

Please continue on the other side...

Concurrence on Two Revised LWVIN Positions

Proposed Wording of “Local Government”

(See original wording and changes on members’ website.)

The League of Women Voters of Indiana (LWVIN) supports the following principles of local government.

- Representative and participatory: The LWVIN supports strategies that promote representation of populations served; information that is complete, clearly presented and accessible; services that are accessible; and citizen input and review of all policy making.
- Efficient and effective: The LWVIN supports local government organization and processes that produce the desired result with minimum expenditure of inputs: money, time, manpower, other. Where appropriate, intergovernmental cooperation should be an essential element of governmental processes.
- Accountable, transparent and accessible: The LWVIN supports accountability, transparency and accessibility of elected and appointed officials. Officials who make policy and levy taxes are accountable to the voters. Officials who administer policy are accountable to the elected officials who appoint them.
- Flexible: The LWVIN supports choices for cities, counties and towns in the ways they organize and administer their work within guidelines set by the state.
- Fair and equitable: The LWVIN supports fair and equitable processes and services.
- Continuous improvement: The LWVIN supports provisions for the continuous improvement of governmental processes including, but not limited to: technical assistance, qualifications for and training of personnel, standards, evaluation, reporting, data collection, and research.

___ **Support**
 ___ **Support with changes**
 ___ **Do not support**

Comments:

Proposed Wording of “Local Government

Finance” *(See original and changes on members’ website.)*

Local government units should be allowed to use a mix of taxing options or alternatives, in addition to equitable property taxation, for financing local governmental operations.

There is a need for flexibility in funding services at the local level. Local government units should have the ability to choose the most appropriate remedy, as established by law.

Local government units depend on and need a program of state fiscal support including, but not limited to, distribution of taxes collected statewide as well as state general fund surpluses. State funds should be used to compensate local governments for taxes not paid on tax-exempt state property.

State government should enable a variety of local option income taxes that allow increases in local revenues for purposes other than property tax replacement. These taxes may be levied on both personal and/or corporate income. When a county adopts such a tax, it should apply to all income generated in that county, with no credits given to either residents or nonresidents.

___ **Support**
 ___ **Support with changes**
 ___ **Do not support**

Comments: