

**LWVIC Board of
Directors, 2015-16**

Vicki Stelma
President
Newsletter Editor
724-599-9225

Cindy Rogers
Vice President
Sandy Whitson
Treasurer
Stacie Sawallish-Adkins
Secretary

Ellen Chinn
Laurie LaFontaine
Joyce Magee
Aida Shotts
Anne Simmons
Kay Snyder
Susan Wheatley

Save the Date! **LWVIC Annual Meeting** **Tuesday, May 17, 2016**

For details see the insert in this edition of the Voter.

League Co-sponsors Community Rights Tour

By Vicki Stelma

On March 31, the League of Women Voters of Indiana County co-sponsored (along with the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Sustainability Studies Program, the Center for Northern Appalachian Studies, the Center for Community Growth, the East Run Hellbenders Society, and the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Planning Student Organization) speaker Thomas Linzey and the Pennsylvania Community Rights Tour.

As Linzey noted throughout the evening, it's time for a "Pennsylvania Revolution" as we work at the grassroots level to bring back democracy to our communities. In fact, he asked, what kind of government do we want? (And as a League, we know what that answer is.)

Linzey is the Executive Director of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) and co-founder of Democracy School. He has been featured in a variety of publications including The New York Times, Mother Jones, The Nation, and in 2007 was named one of Forbes Magazine's "Top Ten Revolutionaries". His work revolves around community environmental rights and the people who make up those communities (not corporations) having the power to decide what is good environmentally for their own communities.

One of our strengths as a League is our local interest in environmental issues (think Marcellus Shale), so co-sponsoring this event, along with the East Run Hellbenders Society, just made sense.

Our League first became aware of the East Run Hellbenders Society when an injection well was proposed for Grant Township, a bucolic area of Indiana County with a population of approximately 700 people who simply didn't want the proposed well or the environmental harms that it could bring to their community. Our League provided testimony in support of the East Run Hellbenders Society at a variety of hearings and even awarded them the Peggy Clark Grassroots Environmental

Annual Garage Sale to be Held

The LWVIC Annual Garage Sale will be held on Saturday, May 7 from 7:30 am until 1:30 pm at 527 Shryock Avenue. The bag sale will be held at the same time on the following Saturday, May 14.

The garage will be open the week before the sale beginning Monday, May 2 from 9:00 am until noon for people to drop off items to be sold. We accept just about any item for sale including furniture, clothing, books, housewares, and whatever else you might like to donate.

Volunteers are needed to sort items during the week before the sale and on both sale days and should contact Olga Platt at 724-465-2073 with availability.

This is our League's major fundraiser of the year, so please set aside items to donate and consider volunteering your time.

League Participates in Family Fun Fest

The annual Family Fun Fest was held on Saturday, April 2 at the Indiana Mall. The theme this year was "Game On!" The League provided a "Go Fish" game in which children went "fishing" for great American heroes and heroines while Susan Wheatley played her guitar and sang hero-songs that provided clues for the children.



Thank you to the League's Child Advocacy Committee on Education,



Pepita Jimenez Jacobs, Joyce Magee, Cindy Rogers, Karen Ross, Anne Simmons, Susan

Wheatley, and the Indiana High School Key Club members who volunteered both behind the scenes and at the event.

To the left, Joyce Magee guides children in the "Go Fish" game while, above, Susan Wheatley sings the hero-songs.

League Continues to Work on Fundamental Mission

Submitted by Karen Ross, Voter Services Committee

This spring, the LWVIC held voter registration drives at Wyotech and the Commonplace Coffeehouse. Between the two drives we submitted 20 registrations and five applications for absentee ballots. We also passed out additional applications and requests for absentee ballots and gave citizens the web address for on-line voter services in Pennsylvania (votespa.com) which includes the on-line registration form (Yes! We can now register on-line in Pennsylvania), lists of important dates, and information about voting and elections.

Thanks to Peggy Eyer, Susan McClure, and Aida Shotts for helping to make these successful outreach events.

In addition, the Pennsylvania primary is Tuesday, April 26. Requests for absentee ballots can be submitted until April 19. Don't forget to vote, and please encourage all of your friends and relatives to do so, as well.

In an effort to continue to work on the League's fundamental mission of making democracy work, we will be holding registration drives again in late summer. Requests for volunteers will be in future issues of the Voter and in emails, so please consider volunteering. It is always a rewarding experience!

For over 20 years, LWVPA has been fighting to change the way Pennsylvania voting districts are drawn. Redistricting affects every aspect of our work, from voter education to policy advocacy. Who gets elected (which is too often determined by the demographics of gerrymandered districts) has a direct impact on our ability to successfully advocate for policies that move Pennsylvania in the right direction. It's time to make redistricting a reality in Pennsylvania. For more information visit <http://www.fairdistrictspa.com/>.

(League Co-sponsors Community Rights Tour continued from page 1)

Award which our League created to honor those who are working at the grassroots level to preserve and protect the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the eco-system and to protect public health and the environment.

Unfortunately, because our democracy just wasn't working in favor of the people in this community, the East Run Hellbenders Society began working with CELDF to draft and pass their own community bill of rights, and they are now a Home Rule Municipality and in the vanguard of the community rights movement. (Remember last year when Chad Nicholson spoke about this at our annual meeting?)

As a League, we are so proud to be a part of this democratic movement that asks the hard questions like, "How do we force our laws to make the changes that we want to see in our communities?" and "How do we actually make our democracy democratic?"

For more information on CEDLF, visit celdf.org or visit pacommunityrights.org.

For more information about the East Run Hellbenders Society, visit facebook.com/eastrunhellbenders.

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

1105 Water Street
Indiana, PA 15701

724-599-9225

lwvindianacounty@gmail.com



CALENDAR of UPCOMING EVENTS

Know someone who may be interested in membership? Let President Vicki Stelma know at 724-599-9225, and she will send a brochure & short letter describing LWVIC's activities.

Monday, April 18 —Board Meeting, All Members Welcome, PA-SEC meeting room (1005 Oak Street, 2nd Floor)

Tuesday, April 26—Primary Election Day

Saturday, May 7, 7:30 am—1:30 pm —LWVIC Annual Garage Sale, 527 Shryock Avenue, Indiana (**May 14, Bag Sale**)

Tuesday, May 17—LWVIC Annual Meeting, 6pm dinner, 7:30 pm speaker Ronald Cowell of the Education Policy and Leadership Center, Park Inn, Indiana

Thursday, June 16—Sunday, June 19—LWVUS Convention, Washington, DC

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.