

VOTER

League of Women Voters of
Indiana County, Pennsylvania
www.palwv.org/indiana



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CIVIC PARTICIPATION WORKSHOP

The League of Women Voters will be holding a workshop for citizens interested in running for local office. It is scheduled for January 31, 2009 at the Rustic Lodge.

In 2009, citizens will be electing the majority of their local officials, most for 4 year terms. These will include: borough and township auditors, one magistrate, all borough mayors, half of all borough councils, 4 school directors in each district, 1 township supervisor in each township, tax collectors, the election officials who work at the polls and Republican and Democratic committee persons.

At the county level, we will be voting for a coroner, 1 Judge, 3 jury commissioners, the register & recorder and treasurer.

The League hopes to encourage more citizens to run for office and to become more involved in running their local government. Save the date.

The League is looking for local partners who can financially support the workshop. Contact Diane Duntley if you have suggestions. All local members are welcome to become part of the committee planning this event. Contact Diane at 724 349-2718. More details in November.

NATIONAL STUDY ON THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

At its convention this year the League of Women Voters of the United States approved a new national study as part of its program for 2009-10.

The focus of the study will be to determine if the Electoral College should be modified to more closely reflect the popular vote in Presidential elections. At the present time, the League has a position that the Constitution should be amended to remove the Electoral College provision and allow direct election of the President.

Information about the study is available on the LWVUS website. The LWVIC plans to participate in this study.

HOW DO YOU KNOW.....

How Are Your Members of Congress Voting on Key Good Government Issues? One of the best ways to arm yourself for taking ac-

tion on key issues is to understand how your elected officials have reacted to important legislation. The League has compiled the results of recent congressional votes including nine Senate votes and six House votes on key legislation ranging from ethics reform to civil liberties, from children's health care to global climate change. This includes a list of each member of Congress and his or her votes on the League's priorities issues. Go to

http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Take_Action

[Our Key Votes page](#) provides you with the opportunity to enter your zip code to find out how your Representatives and Senators have voted on key legislation. Additionally, you can click on any of the key votes to understand more about the legislation, as well as to use a map of the country to find out how all the members of Congress from one state voted.Continued on Page 4

MARCELLUS SHALE STUDY COMMITTEE

Several League members attended a public meeting in September to get information about drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus shale formation. As a result of this meeting, the LWVIC has decided to form a study committee on the various issues, both environmental and eco-

nomie, connected with the extraction of the Marcellus shale gas.

Mary Beth Sweeney will be chairing this committee. Anyone interested in taking part in this very important study should contact Mary Beth at 724 349-9400 or Sherene Hess at 724 465-5056.

ELECTION WEBSITES

Online Voters Guide for state and federal level candidates: www.smartvoter.org. SmartVoter is a unique new on line Voter's Guide tool launched by local Leagues in Delaware County and the Greater Pittsburgh Area. For this election, voters in any part of the state can enter their address and zip code and view the offices and candidates that will be on their ballot in November and **the wording of the Act 64 Water and Sever Improvements Bond Referendum**. Most important, Smart Voter provides candidates with almost unlimited space to post biographical and other information about their candidacies including endorsements, and provide links to their campaign web site, email addresses, phone numbers and other contact information. Unlike our printed Voters Guides, the information candidates post on Smart Voter can be adapted to changing circumstances like the current economic crisis. Opposing candidates can also respond to each others positions on issues. Personal attacks are not permitted. For non-partisan review and comment on election advertising: www.factcheck.org and for comments on election reports sent over the internet: www.snopes.com. As the campaign for President gets more intense, we all need someplace to go to find out the facts, or lack of them, behind election sound bites. These sites provide the best information we have found.

LWVPA asks General Assembly to address AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

The LWV of Pennsylvania recently wrote to Pennsylvania General Assembly members and asked them to address three issues before adjourning - redistricting reform, expansion of affordable health care insurance coverage to low income Pennsylvanians and energy savings legislation. Following is a synopsis of the health care coverage reforms that LWV is advocating:

An estimated 767,000 Pennsylvania adults lack health care insurance cover-

age more than the population of five states. A majority of the uninsured have full time jobs. The number of employed uninsured is growing as employers drop coverage because of rising costs that exceed the inflation rate. The League believes that all Pennsylvanians, indeed all U.S. citizens are entitled to a basic level of quality health care. One way to achieve that goal is to create a system of health care insurance that provides universal access.

LWVPA believes the Pa Access to Basic

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CONDOLENCES

Two of our Board members have recently experienced the loss of close family members. The League of Women Voters of Indiana County offers its deepest sympathy to Mary Beth Sweeney on the loss of her husband and Jo Anne Ferraro on the loss of her son-in-law.

The League of Women Voters released helpful tips for media and voters on watching and analyzing the upcoming presidential and vice-presidential debates. "We are at last reaching the home stretch of an election season marked by unprecedented length, intensity, and civic excitement," said national League president Mary G. Wilson. "As we move into these final weeks, it is absolutely critical for the media and community leaders to encourage voters to watch the presidential and vice-presidential debates, and consider these five tips for getting the most out of their experience."

TOP FIVE TIPS FOR DEBATE WATCHERS

Think Ahead-Before the debate, ask yourself which issues are most important to you, and jot down what you'd like to learn from each of the candidates.

Are They Answering the Question? *Pay attention to how the candidates answer the questions. Are they specific? Sincere? Knowl-*

edgeable?

Keep Track of Topics-*Are the candidates being asked about your priority issues? Are the questions fair and pertinent?*

Talk it out! *–Afterwards, talk about the debate with your friends & family. Did the debate sway your decision? Did you learn something new about the candidates' positions?*

VOTE on November 4th. *It is your best opportunity to make your voice heard and help shape the issues that affect all of us! VISIT VOTE411.org to prepare yourself.*

Find much more on the LWV's "Debating 101" page; including fun tips for hosting [debate-watching parties](#), all at www.LWV.org

Upcoming Presidential Debates:

Airing at 9 pm EST

Tues October 7

Wedn. October 15

Health Care Coverage, continued....

Care plan which passed the House with bipartisan support and is now pending in the Senate, is an important step toward providing universal access. PaABC expands coverage available to low income adults under adultBasic, helps small businesses provide health care to low-income workers and expands coverage to include prescriptions, behavioral health prevention and wellness and chronic disease management. Adults who do not qualify for government subsidies can buy into the program at a reasonable cost.

AdultBasic is currently funded by all state dollars. The House passed bill would authorize the Commonwealth to obtain a federal waiver on eligibility requirements for Medicaid funds so the federal government will pay 54 cents of every dollar spent on coverage, joining several other states that have already done so. This will allow us to cover

many more uninsured with our limited state dollars.

An alternative proposal known as HealthNET contains many good ideas which should be implemented to improve health care quality and lower costs for all Pennsylvanians. But the foundation of the proposal, expansion of health care clinics and reliance on volunteer physician services, is not an adequate substitute for providing low income adults equality of access to health care choices most of us enjoy.

Pennsylvania is on the verge of passing serious health care reform that could help grant access to quality health care and affordable health insurance for hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians and their families.

LWVIC and LWVPA urge you to call Senator White NO LATER THAN OCT. 7 and ask him to support SB 1137 and HB 2005.724-357-0151 Harrisburg Office: 717-787-8724 **Or Email him at: dwhite@pasen.gov**

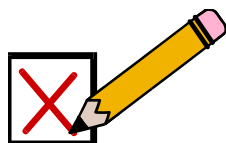
A newsletter of the
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We're on the
Web!

www.palwv.org/indiana



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Our House Votes page provides a comprehensive chart of key legislation that is important to the League's priorities in the House.

Our Senate Votes page provides a comprehensive chart of key legislation that is important to the League's priorities in the Senate.

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.

CALENDAR of UPCOMING EVENTS

October 20 – Board meeting. Diane Duntley's home. Noon. Bring your own lunch at 11:30 am.

No local candidates night this fall. There are no locally contested seats in the state legislature this election, and the LWVIC will not sponsor a Candidates Night.

January 31, 2009 – LWVIC Civic participation workshop. 8:30am to 2:00

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to men and women of voting age.