

LWV

VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF INDIANA COUNTY

SPRING 2022

LWVIC Annual Membership Meeting – Potluck Dinner

Thursday • June 2, 2022 • 5:00 p.m.

Pavilion 1 at Blue Spruce Park

1128 Blue Spruce Road,

Indiana PA



Original image by Shannon Fiedler, updated for 2022

Celebrate Earth Day with a Walk TO White's Woods

APRIL 22, 2022, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

START: Wherever you are! (or drive a little closer, if need be)*

WALK: To the North 12th Street Entrance of the White's Woods Nature Center

WHEN: Plan to arrive between 4:00-6:00 p.m.

WHY: To celebrate Earth Day and the contribution White's Woods makes to our community to help mitigate the impact of climate change!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET THERE?
Celebrate!

The first 100 people who arrive can claim up to two oak seedlings (distributed courtesy of ONE MILLION TREES). Walkers can also claim an Earth Day sticker or bookmark and meet

members from Indiana Conservation Groups, including Friends of White's Woods, the Evergreen Conservancy, IUP Sustainability Studies, Federation of Democratic Women of Indiana County (Pollinator Garden), the Community Garden, Keystone Progressive, and the Sierra Club. Other valuable community groups, including the Indiana County Humane Society, Indiana WalkWorks, and IUP Coalition for Christian Outreach are planning to greet walkers as well. More details about the 12th Street Walk TO White's Woods will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

Important Earth Day 2022 Facts: The quickest, most cost-efficient, and most effective natural solution to climate change is to protect the

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LWVIC Fundraiser – Don't Miss Our Annual Yard Sale



1125 Wayne Ave
across from Kovalchick Convention Center

May 14 & 15

Regular Sale
Saturday May 14
8:00 am-4:00 pm

\$5 Bag Sale
Sunday May 15
12:00 - 4:00 pm

Donation Drop-Off Dates

May 6-13 9am – Noon
May 10 & 11 5-7 pm



Please contact us at
lwvindianacounty@gmail.com
with any questions or for pick up
∞ Thank you! ∞

Fair Districts PA and LWVPA Partner to “Fix Harrisburg”

by Joyce Rizzo

Every two years in early January at the start of a new Pennsylvania legislative session, the initial duty of all of our elected representatives (after being sworn in) is to vote on rules governing the legislative process for the next two years. The majority party leaders write the rules.



Why is this significant? Because which bills get debated and voted on will be determined by a handful of legislative leaders and committee chairs. A single, powerful committee chair can block important bills that have bipartisan support from being introduced in committee; and a majority leader can keep them from debate and a vote in each of the PA General Assembly chambers. Many newly-elected legislators go to Harrisburg determined to make a difference to their constituents only to vote on the same old rules, thereby lessening their own voices but also diminishing the voices of the people they represent.

With new congressional and legislative districts in place for the next ten years, Fair Districts PA, a non-partisan good-government group, who for six years has been advocating for more transparency and public input in redistricting reform, has turned its attention to educating PA citizens about why issues and problems they care about oftentimes die when they reach PA’s legislative body. On March 30, the organization, in partnership with the League of Women Voters of PA, introduced its new campaign called “Fix Harrisburg” at the state Capitol Rotunda.

At an introductory press conference, other participating organizations described their common experience of having bipartisan legislation they support blocked by procedural rules year after year—in some cases for decades. The issues ranged from the inequities in school funding to pre-canvassing of mail-in voting ballots to a gift ban for PA legislators to telehealth legislation.

Right: The Capitol Rotunda (top) and the Senate Chamber in the Capitol Building, Harrisburg.

Images, Wikimedia Commons

In some cases, important bills addressing these issues could not get out of committee, were voted out of committee but not introduced on the floors of the chambers, or were passed in one chamber but stalled in the other. All because a small number of legislators determine which bills advance.

Pennsylvania has pressing problems that demand bipartisan collaboration and real solutions. It’s time for new rules that ensure good bills with broad support are given a vote. Some best practices from other states suggest the following:

- Guarantee a vote in committee for bills with strong bipartisan support
- Guarantee a vote on the chamber Floor for strong bipartisan bills that get voted out of committee
- Bills with strong bipartisan support passed by one chamber should get a vote in the other chamber.

This is what “Fix Harrisburg” addresses. Follow this campaign and stay vigilant for actions to tell your state legislators to support rules reform.



Regional Climate Stories

Tick-Borne Diseases and the Environment

by Vera Bonnet



With spring right around the corner, many of us will be taking advantage of the good weather by going outdoors and enjoying some time in the woods. That's the good news! However, by distancing ourselves from our urban environments during the warmer seasons, we may be taking certain risks that can have lifetime consequences.

According to a 2021 estimate based on insurance records, each year more Americans are diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease carried by ticks. As yet, there is no scientific proof or direct link between climate change and the increase in the number of Lyme disease cases. However, the two phenomena appear to be associated. As stated in the Carnegie Museum's *Climate Conversations Starter Guide*, a case can be made for the "strong influence of temperature" on the life cycle and prevalence of ticks.

Having been set on the correct scientific path, it is worth reviewing the seasonal changes we are experiencing in this part of the country. As described in the Carnegie Museum's *Starter Guide*:

In the northeastern US, winters have warmed three times faster than summers. Studies provide evidence that warmer winters brought about by climate change have expanded the geographic range of ticks ... enabled their earlier emergence, and, thus, fostered larger population sizes. (p. 14)

The prevalence of black-legged ticks (the ticks that carry Lyme disease) is also driven by acorns, an important food source for mice who are carriers of Lyme disease. Some years oak trees produce a small crop of acorns, other years they synchronously produce a large crop. Longer growing seasons seem to support more frequent bumper crops from oak trees.

Other reasons for the increase in cases of Lyme disease include practices that tend to bring

people into closer contact with animals (primarily deer and rodents). Among these are changes in land use patterns, such as reforestation and suburban development, which may result in increased exposure to ticks.

According to a CDC brochure, transmission of bacteria associated with Lyme disease requires ticks to be attached for 36 to 48 hours. But while adult ticks are easily recognizable, most people become infected through the bites of immature ticks called nymphs. Nymphs are tiny (less than two millimeters) and difficult to see. And while



Blacklegged ticks, left to right: Adult female, adult male, nymph, larva. *Image courtesy of Dr. Tom Simmons*

adult ticks most commonly bite during the fall, nymphs most commonly bite during spring and summer seasons.

The symptoms of early, untreated Lyme disease include a distinctive circular rash at the site of the bite. This "bulls-eye rash" appears in about 70% of the cases of Lyme disease.

<https://asm.org/Articles/2018/April/going-skin-deep-investigating-the-cutaneous-host-p>

<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/tickbornediseases/lyme.html>

Untreated, a tick-borne infection can lead to severe consequences, including chronic joint inflammation (at the knee in particular), as well as neuropathy and facial paralysis. Symptoms may also include impaired memory, fatigue, chills and fever, headaches, joint pain and/or swollen lymph nodes. These symptoms may appear without the rash and can be mistaken for the flu.

To avoid late Lyme disease, do not ignore the signs and symptoms. If you suspect that you've been exposed to an infected tick, it is easy to get tested for Lyme, and it's important to get treatment as soon as possible if you test positive.

The CDC recommends the following practices to avoid contracting Lyme disease:

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Tick-Borne Diseases...

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- Avoid areas with high grass and leaf litter and walk in the center of trails when hiking.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone. EPA's search tool external icon can help you find the product that best suits your needs. Always follow product instructions.
- Use products that contain permethrin to treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks and tents or look for clothing pre-treated with permethrin.
- Treat dogs for ticks. Dogs are very susceptible to tick bites and to some tickborne diseases. They may also bring ticks into your home. Talk to your veterinarian about the best tick prevention products for your dog.
- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors to wash off and more easily find crawling ticks before they bite you.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a handheld or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon returning from tick-infested areas. Parents should help children check thoroughly for ticks. Remove any ticks right away.
- Put dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for ten minutes to kill ticks after you come indoors. If clothes are damp, dry thoroughly and then tumble dry on high for 10 more minutes.
- If you remove a tick from your body, you can send it to the tick research lab in East Stroudsburg. They will test it, free of charge, for Lyme and other diseases and send you the results.

<https://www.ticklab.org/>

For more information you may contact:
CDC Media Relations, (404) 639-3286,
media@cdc.gov.

Earth Day Walk...

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forests that we have! WHITE'S WOODS...

- Absorbs 200,000 gallons of stormwater runoff annually.
- Removes 17,010 lbs. of pollutants (sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, etc) annually.
- Helps mediate regional temperatures.
- Now stores 27,688 tons of carbon (which would be released if timbered), and absorbs 1,102 tons of carbon annually.

Our community forest helps to protect us!



Driving less (or driving “clean”) helps to reduce carbon emissions. It is time for us to act together. According to Earth Day 2022 organizers:

“This is the moment to change it all — the business climate, the political climate, and how we take action on climate. Now is the time for the unstoppable courage to preserve and protect our health, our families, our livelihoods... together, we must Invest In Our Planet. Because a green future is a prosperous future.

We need to act (boldly), innovate (broadly), and implement (equitably). It's going to take all of us. All in. Businesses, governments, and citizens — everyone accounted for, and everyone accountable. A partnership for the planet.

And while there is still time to solve the climate crisis, time to choose BOTH a prosperous and sustainable future, and time to restore nature and build a healthy planet for our children and their children, time is short.”

For more information about the global celebration of Earth Day 2022, visit:

<https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2022/>

For more information about the Earth Day 2022 Walk TO White's Woods, visit:

www.friendsofwhiteswoods.org

Upcoming Events

APRIL

LWVIC Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, April 18, 7:00-8:30 p.m. via Zoom
All LWVIC members welcome. For link,
email: lwvianacounty@gmail.com.

LWVIC Government Policy Committee

Thursday, April 21, 4:00-5:00 p.m. via Zoom
All LWVIC members welcome. For link,
email: lwvianacounty@gmail.com.

Earth Day Walk to White's Woods

Sponsored by the Friends of White's Woods
Friday, April 22, 4:00-6:00 p.m.
Meet at North 12th Street entrance to
White's Woods Nature Center, Indiana
LWVIC will host a table; to volunteer,
email: ellenchinn371@hotmail.com.

MAY

Annual Yard Sale – LWVIC Fundraiser

Saturday, May 14, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
and Sunday, May 15, 12:00 noon-4:00 p.m.
1125 Wayne Ave., Indiana, across from the
Kovalchick Convention & Athletic Complex
See page 2 for donation drop-off schedule.

LWVIC Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, May 16, 7:00-8:30 p.m. via Zoom
All LWVIC members welcome. For link,
email: lwvianacounty@gmail.com.

Primary Election Day

Tuesday, May 17

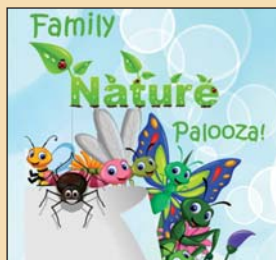
JUNE

LWVIC Annual Membership Meeting

Thursday, June 2, 5:00-7:00 p.m.
Pavilion 1, Blue Spruce Park

Nature Palooza

Sponsored by the
Children's Advisory
Commission of
Indiana County
Saturday, June 4
9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Blue Spruce Park



LWVIC Annual Yard Sale



Our League will once again coordinate with the Indiana County Humane Society for our Annual Yard Sale. It is our sole fund raiser for the year and lots of volunteer hours are needed to make it a success. Help is needed the week before, during and after the event and any amount of time you can volunteer is appreciated. We will be housed in the large, indoor space located on Wayne Avenue across the street from the Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex and the Hilton Garden Inn.

Please email Ellen Chinn at ellenchinn371@hotmail.com to indicate your interest in helping with the yard sale. We are requesting an initial polling of our membership to help our committee with the planning of the event and will be setting up a Sign-Up Genius page for volunteers to indicate when they plan to work.

The 'set-up' will begin on Saturday, May 7 and will continue all week through Friday, May 13. We need volunteers to accept donations, organize items, and price items for sale. In addition, we need volunteers on the days of the sale, as well as the day after.

In your email, please indicate how you plan to volunteer:

- Donate items to sell
- Loan tables for display of yard sale items
- Volunteer the week prior to the sale to accept donations, organize items, and price items
- Volunteer on the weekend to work at the yard sale
- Volunteer the day after the yard sale

If you are in need of a place to store donated items before May 7, please contact Ellen or Kay Smith at kaybsmith06@gmail.com.

CACE Hosts Three Community Outreach Events

by Susan Welsh

The Child Advocacy Committee on Education hosted three outreach events in March. On March 1 the IUP Community Involvement Fair introduced IUP students to volunteer and internship opportunities in the region. At our table we shared the specific work of our LWVIC committees on education, the environment, and voter services.

The March 9 Student Leadership Conference held at IUP brought together high school students and their teachers from the three-county region served by the Armstrong, Indiana and Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission (AICDAC). The goal was to share with the many students who attended the community resources that support their health, wellness, and civic mindedness. We spoke with many students about the importance

of fully funding their schools, contributing to environmental sustainability and registering to vote when the time comes.

On March 26 at the Indiana Mall, LWVIC was among the 40 exhibitors at the Children’s Advisory Commission’s annual Family Fun Fest. The Fest attracted 317 families and offered resources and fun activities for children aged two to ten. CACE offered many coloring materials about Pennsylvania and its government and conducted a “Best Pet” election, complete with ballots and a ballot box. 179 children voted: 79 for “Dog,” 52 for “Cat,” 23 for “Fish,” and 20 for “Bird,” with one write-in ballot for the “Bearded Dragon.” Thanks to all the families who stopped at our table, to the League members who volunteered at the table, and to all of those thoughtful electors! See more images on page 10.



Left: Anne Simmons (top) and Susan Welsh with students at the IUP Community Involvement Fair. Top right: Lillian Clemons, Peggy Eyer, and Susan Welsh at the Student leadership Conference. Above: Family Fun Fest volunteers Susan Welsh, Karen Ross, Misty Nocco and her daughter Maya, Lillian Clemons, and Lizanne Porter.

LWVIC Annual Membership Meeting Agenda

by Anne Simmons

Thursday, June 2, 2022, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

I. Picnic Dinner

II. Presentation - Peggy Clark Grassroots Environmental Leadership Awards

The LWVIC presents two awards each year in honor of Peggy Clark, a longtime Indiana County grassroots environmental activist and League member. These awards recognize citizens, groups, or businesses who show exemplary leadership and active participation in issues that involve protecting or preserving our environment. There are two award categories: individual and group.

III. Business Meeting

a. Secretary's Report

b. Treasurer's Report

c. Program for 2022-2023

- Child Advocacy Committee on Education
- Environmental Issues Committee
- Voter Services and Fair Districts PA
- Additional program items for 2022-2023 recommended by members

d. Proposed amendments to bylaws

Sec. 3 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy. The League of Women Voters of Indiana County is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

e. Nominations and Elections

Terms: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024

- Administrative Vice President:
- Program Vice President: [Cindy Rogers]
- Treasurer: [Ellen Chinn]
- Board Director: [Peggy Eyer]
- Board Director: [Joyce Rizzo]
- Board Director: [Kay Smith]
- Board Director:
- Board Director:
- Board Director:
- Board Director:



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF INDIANA COUNTY • BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anne Simmons, President
Cindy Rogers, Vice President
Ellen Chinn, Treasurer • Susan Welsh, Secretary
Donna Cashdollar • Peggy Eyer • Lizanne Porter
Joyce Rizzo • Aida Shotts • Kay Smith
Deanne Snavelly • Kay Snyder • Sandy Whitson

MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

The LWVIC hosts board meetings on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. using the Zoom platform. LWVIC members are welcome to participate. To request the Zoom invitation and meeting agenda, please send an email to: lwvianacounty@gmail.com.

LWVIC in Action – Events and Committees

by Anne Simmons

Events in March 2022

Legislative Interviews – The summary of the interview is posted in the left column of the Voter Services & Fair Districts PA page of the LWVIC website: lwvindianacounty.org.

- March 7 – PA Representative Jim Struzzi
- March 21 – PA Senator Joe Pittman

Community Partners

• March 16 – Indiana County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Presenter: Susan Welsh, Topic: “Voting Rights and Participation – The Critical Role of African Americans, Women and Youth”

• March 21 – Rotary Club of Indiana, PA; Presenter: Anne Simmons, Topic: “The League of Women Voters: History and Community Contributions”

LWVIC Committees

Child Advocacy Committee on Education – Susan Welsh

Pinwheels for Prevention: Garden of Hope Honors the children of our community; The CARE Center of Indiana County; Public ceremony – April 1, 2022, 12:00 noon, Indiana Courthouse Lawn

Public School Funding

Community-Sponsored events

- March 1 – IUP Community Involvement Fair for university students
- March 9 – Student Leadership Conference for high school students, Armstrong, Indiana & Clarion Counties – Drug and Alcohol Commission
- March 26 – Family Fun Fest, Hosted by Indiana County Children’s Advisory Commission



Environmental Issues – Cindy Rogers

Regional Climate Stories – Vera Bonnet

Voter Services

Fair Districts PA – Vicki Stelma, Joyce Rizzo

Safe & Secure Elections – Donna Cashdollar, Lizanne Porter, Joyce Rizzo, Kay Smith

- “Good Reasons to Trust Local Elections” article in Aging Services newsletter
- “Good Reasons…” public service announcements recorded for airing on WDAD, May 2, 3, 4 and May 9, 10, 11
- “Good Reasons…” display ads to appear in the *Shopper’s Guide*, May 4 and May 11

Membership – Sandra Whitson

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The League of Women Voters of Indiana County (LWVIC) is striving to create a welcoming environment where everyone is treated with respect, ideas are listened to and contributions valued, and active and open participation in all League activities is encouraged.

Therefore, the LWVIC is proposing the addition of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy to the LWVIC Bylaws. The members of the LWVIC will have the opportunity to vote to adopt a DEI Policy at the LWVIC Annual Membership meeting.

Statewide Committees of LWV Pennsylvania

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) – Sherene Hess, Anne Simmons

Environmental Issues – Cindy Rogers

Government Policy – Susan Boser

Social Policy – Susan Boser

Voter Services – Kay Smith, Aida Shotts

LWVIC volunteers connected with college students at IUP’s Community Involvement Fair. Far left: Susan Welsh, Peggy Eyer, and Kay Snyder. Left: Ellen Ruddock and Bonni Dunlap

LWVIC Identifies Project Priorities for ARPA Funds

by Anne Simmons

The Indiana County Commissioners solicited LWVIC comment on project priorities for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in our county:

Critical Need 1 – Enhance the process of voting and elections.

American Rescue Plan Act funds should be used to enhance the process of voting and elections in Indiana County. First, there is a need to hire additional personnel in the Elections and Voter Registration Office. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania does not allow for the pre-canvassing of ballots. With the passage of ACT 77 and the convenience of voting by mail, an increased number of Indiana County citizens are voting by mail. Therefore, there is a need to hire additional personnel to assist with elections and voter registration. Second, with the increased number of citizens using the option of voting by mail, there is a need to provide more than one drop box in our large rural county. Please consider the

purchase of two additional drop boxes, one to be located in the northern part of the county (i.e., Marion Center or Clymer) and one to be located in the southern part of the county (i.e., Blairsville).

Critical Need 2 – Help children catch up on unfinished learning.

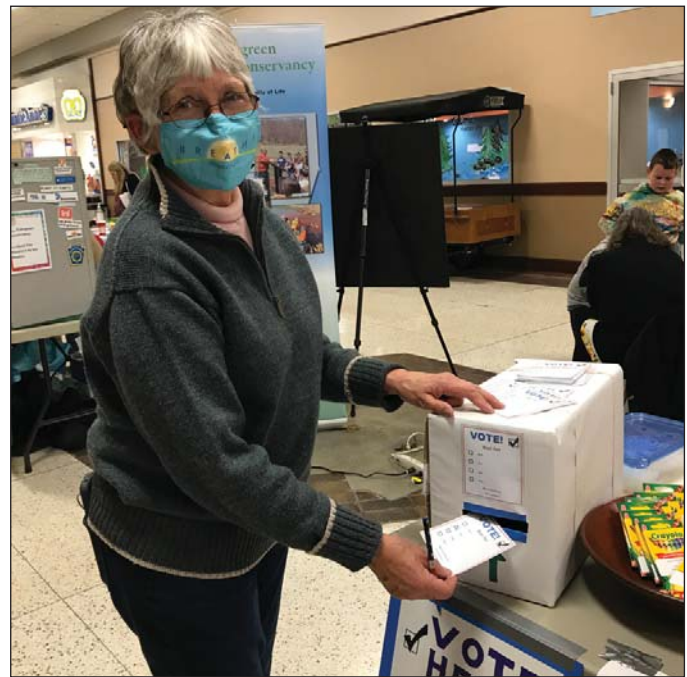
An additional critical need in our community is helping children catch up on unfinished learning. This is one of the areas noted in the American Rescue Plan Act. Funds should be spent in response to the pandemic and its economic impacts. The quality of education our students receive will impact the economy of Indiana County. Therefore, academic programs to offer enrichment and remediation should be offered to Indiana County students during the summer of 2022.

Project Location: Please work with the administrative teams of public and private schools in Indiana County.

LWVIC in Action – Kids Practice Voting at Family Fun Fest



Susan Welsh coordinated the LWVIC presence at Family Fun Fest in March. Materials and activities introduced youth to how government works and how citizens participate.



Above, Cindy Rogers demonstrated the ballot box in which kids could vote for the animal they thought made the best pet. See page 7 for who won the election.