

# League of Women Voters Bloomington - Monroe County

## League Letter – November 2016

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### Calendar

- Nov 2 Member meeting: LWVIN Education Study  
MCPL Room 2A, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Nov 14 Board meeting, Bell Trace Community Room, 7:00 p.m.
- Nov 15 Organization Day, Statehouse, Indianapolis,
- Dec 7 Member meeting: LWVIN Education Study  
MCPL Room 2A, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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### 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 advocacy and education.



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## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER - Kate Cruikshank**

First, my thanks to all of you who took the time to send your support with regard to the IDS article that appeared October 24. It meant a great deal to know that you all “had my back,” so to speak. Despite my alarm, new member Ann Birch pointed out that Phyllis Finley was perhaps more badly misrepresented than I, being referred to as “pro-choice,” just after she had expressed her opposition to abortion. No correction beyond the small one on October 25 appeared to my knowledge, but your reassurance that the world was not going to end over the whole thing gave me the closure I needed. It will be interesting to see if there is any further interest in the League by the IDS.

Second, please consider whether you would be willing to be part of an advocacy network for the upcoming legislative session. The LWVIN is trying to build a strong advocacy presence, and we need people who are willing to follow bills in a particular area. I would be happy to provide a crash course in how to do that and identify the points in the fast-paced legislative process where we can hope to have an effect. The article below will catch you up on where the Advocacy Committee is so far, but we have a long way to go to become a real force for change in the legislature.

This newsletter will be reaching you shortly before an election that I'm sure we will all be happy to have over. At the same time, regardless of the outcome, we will be facing a divided nation in which the challenge laid out by the LWVUS of Making Democracy Work becomes more important than we could have imagined a year ago. Our complacent assumption that things can go on more or less as they have with a bit of tinkering around the edges is being shaken pretty badly.

But that opens up the need and the opportunity to ask ourselves what Making Democracy Work really means. What in our democracy is working? What is not working? What is the role of the League in grappling with these questions? Do we have a special role as a nonpartisan organization? Can we articulate that and find the will to fulfill that role?

And finally, if the answer to those last two questions is yes, where do we start? I would very much like to hear from any of you who have ideas.

--- Kate

## **Reports on Program**

### **MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK - LWVIN ISSUES ADVOCACY**

Again this year the LWVIN Advocacy Committee will be monitoring the Indiana General Assembly and sending out action alerts to members on bills that are related to League priority issues. Top tier priority issues are redistricting reform and voting rights (strategies and registration); tier two issues are reproductive justice, gun safety, human services, and the environment. So far we do not have anyone who has indicated an interest in monitoring legislation on K-12 schooling.

The plan is for there to be someone monitoring legislation in each of these areas, who will also build a network of interested League members around the state who would be willing to respond quickly to action alerts. There are certain points in the legislative process where we can hope to have an effect, and the advocates will be responsible for letting us know when those are and how best to take advantage of them. The Indiana Coalition for Independent Redistricting under the leadership of Julia Vaughn of Common Cause has provided an excellent model for that and will no doubt be actively involved in this issue.

Rachel Guglielmo ([rachel\\_guglielmo@yahoo.com](mailto:rachel_guglielmo@yahoo.com)) and Kate Cruikshank ([cruiksha@indiana.edu](mailto:cruiksha@indiana.edu)) are serving as advocates for gun safety and redistricting reform/voting rights respectively. If you are interested in receiving action alerts in either of these areas, please let them know. If you are interested in being part of a monitoring team, for instance on K-12 schooling, please let Kate know.

## **REDISTRICTING REFORM - DRAFT LEGISLATION**

The Interim Study Committee on Redistricting held its final meeting on October 17 and almost surprisingly voted to approve the final report, which included draft legislation to be introduced during the upcoming legislative session. The draft has some problems, but it is a great improvement over the current situation. It can be viewed online in its entirety at [https://iga.in.gov/legislative/2016/committees/redistricting\\_special\\_interim\\_study\\_committee\\_on](https://iga.in.gov/legislative/2016/committees/redistricting_special_interim_study_committee_on) by clicking on the agenda for October 17, 2016, then on the second document (“Preliminary Draft 3350”). A summary of its contents follows.

The draft sets up a nine-person commission. Each of the leaders of house and senate appoints one person, then four more are appointed by those four appointees, drawing from a pool of twelve generated by three nominations each by the chief justice of the Indiana Supreme Court and the presidents of IU, Purdue, and Ball State. The chair is appointed either from this second group of four or may be someone else.

Members of the commission may not within the last six years have been a member of, candidate for, or employee of the Congress or the Indiana General Assembly; an appointed public official; a chairman, treasurer, member, employee, or paid consultant of a political or candidate’s committee; a precinct committeeman or vice-committeeman; or a lobbyist. Communications of commission members with people in these roles must be reported.

The actual work of drawing maps will be done by the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency under the direction of the commission and with provision for submissions of maps from the public. An online portal for public access to proposed maps will be established. At least one public hearing will be held in each congressional district plus an additional one in Marion County, with notice given at least 10 days in advance, at which public comment will be received. Deadline for the commission’s report is August 1.

Standards for districts are that they must have essentially equal population; comply with the Voting Rights Act; be contiguous, as compact as possible, not breach precinct lines, and comply

insofar as possible with Indiana political subdivisions. The agency and commission may not receive or consider past election results in drawing district lines, although a special provision is included in the draft to the effect that no senate district may be drawn with the residences of two sitting senators in it.

Julia Vaughn of Common Cause presented the following recommendations for changes in the draft from the Indiana Coalition on Independent Redistricting:

(1) That the panel nominating candidates to a pool from which four commission members are



selected consist of three retired judges selected by the chief justice of the supreme court rather than the presidents of Purdue, Indiana, and Ball State Universities;

(2) That the period that disqualifies an individual from being appointed as a commission member following service as an elected official or in certain other positions be increased from six to eight years;

(3) That a family member of an elected official be disqualified from being appointed as a commission member;

(4) That the provision seeking to optimize the geographic, minority, and gender

diversity in the selection of commission members delete the word "minority" and replace it with "ethnic and racial";

(5) That senate districts be drawn without considering the residential addresses of the incumbent senators;

(6) That the redistricting standards include a prohibition on the splitting of communities of interest, that is, areas where residents share common traits and concerns;

(7) That language be added providing that no district be drawn to favor or disfavor incumbents, political parties, or other persons or groups;

(8) That ex parte communications with commission members by public officers, candidates for public office, and certain other individuals be prohibited;

(9) That the public portal established by the legislative services agency be the public's one-stop shop to fully participate in the redistricting process, including live and archived webcasts of commission meetings and hearings, redistricting documents, and software available to the public at no cost to draw districts;

(10) That the Legislative Services Agency receive dedicated funding for redistricting activities.

Monitoring this legislation is going to be a top League priority in the coming legislative session, and we may well be called upon to testify yet again. Projections are that it may pass the house but that getting it through the senate will be extremely difficult, so public pressure is going to be crucial. As Sheila Seuss Kennedy, a citizen member of the committee, remarked to Kate Cruikshank after the last meeting, "The only reason we were able to do this is because you all were there." Packing the House chamber for three meetings obviously had an effect. We need to carry that power forward.

## Reports on Voter Service

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATES - SAVE THE DATES!

Our legislative updates for January 7, February 4, and March 4 have been successfully scheduled for the City Council chambers in the Showers Building at the usual time of 9:30-11:00 a.m. We have a request in for April 1 and May 6 as well, but the room reservation has to go through the Farmers' Market director when the market is open in order to ensure that there are no scheduling conflicts, so we are still waiting for approval for those two dates.

### VOTING AND THE GIRL SCOUTS

The Girl Scouts have developed a new badge involving helping to get out the vote. Kathy Byers worked with a local troop to assist at our Farmers' Market and Kroger tables, distributing buttons that said "I promised a Girl Scout that I would vote."



### NEW VOTERS WORKSHOP

Josephine McCormick, a senior at Bloomington High School South and a member of the Youth Council working with Allison Zimpfer-Hoerr of the Youth Services Bureau, organized and facilitated a workshop for new voters on October 19 at the McCloskey Room in City Hall. Josephine led the group through reviewing the ballot and a game matching county offices with their responsibilities as well as sharing her experience as a first-time voter in the primary. Allison and Kate Cruikshank served as resources and back-up to a very successful session.



Josephine McCormick of the High School Youth Council (back left) facilitating the workshop for first-time voters on October 19.

The October 19 workshop for first-time voters tackles matching up county and state offices with their duties and responsibilities.



## VOTER EDUCATION - THE INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Kate Cruikshank was guest presenter in two sections of the IU Department of Political Science’s Leadership and Public Policy class in October, one for instructor Lisa-Marie Napoli on redistricting reform and one for Professor Sandra Shapsay on monitoring and influencing legislation in the Indiana General Assembly. Shapsay and Napoli are the director and associate director respectively of the Political and Civil Engagement Program.



Ann Heath, Laura Trout, and Judy Schroeder at our table at the College Mall Kroger store.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Peter Boerner, 89**

**March 10, 1926—June 12, 2015**

Peter Boerner may have been the "silent partner" type of LWV member," as his wife, Nancy Boerner, describes him, but he was definitely a longtime League supporter. Born in 1926 in Estonia, he grew up in Germany, where he did much of his education and professional work. After 24 years at Indiana University in Bloomington, he retired as Professor of

Comparative Literature, Germanic Studies and West European Studies.

He was the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship, followed by research fellowships in Germany. His publications include studies of the Faust legend, the diary as a literary form, and the concept of national identity, as well as a 45-volume paperback edition of Goethe's works. His biography of Goethe, originally written in German, has been translated into English and nine other European and East Asian languages. Nancy was the translator for his biography of the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.



**Grafton D. Trout, 87**

**February 19, 1929—July 30, 2016**

Grafton D. Trout was the husband of Laura Trout. A celebration of life will be held at 3 p.m. Nov. 6 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Bloomington. Grafton was a former sociology professor and later director of the IU Bloomington honors program in foreign languages. He

earned master's degrees in sociology then economics at IU in the 1960s before earning his sociology Ph.D. in 1971. In recent years, Grafton was an art museum docent and a staunch supporter of fine film. At many cultural events this fall, one seat looks particularly empty. Grafton was not an active League member but another longtime member/supporter.



**Bettyclaire Day, 101**  
**June 24, 1915—August 30, 2016**

Bettyclaire's many contributions included coordinating nutritional services at the Bloomington Older Americans Center, helping found Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and being active in Community Kitchen, Monroe County United Ministries, Church Women United (CWU), *League of Women Voters*, Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Bettyclaire worked throughout her life, holding numerous positions from book editor and real estate agent to owner and manager of Leader Personnel Service in Des Plaines, IL. Every year from age 21 to 91, she worked as an election judge. Bettyclaire was a very active League member for many years until her age slowed her down, and she moved out of state to live with her granddaughter.



**Ronna Marie Jenkinson, 81**  
**February 10, 1935—September 8, 2016**

Ronna was a preschool teacher at St. Mark's Nursery School, a longtime member of the League of Women Voters, and a Cub Scout Den Mother for Park Ridge neighborhood. She loved spending time with and cooking for her family, caring for others, and wholly cherished her grandchildren. She always made time to listen to others and kept everyone in her prayers. Ronna loved everyone she met like family and made anyone who met her feel at ease with her warmth and generosity. She always served others before she served herself and was truly a living example of a passionate servant leader of our era. Until she began having health issues, Ronna was very active in League study groups and League activities.

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