



Fall High School Voter Registration Project Nets One Thousand New Voters

By Nancy Johnson



Election Year 2012 will see more than a thousand new voters, thanks to a voter registration effort by volunteers in the LWVSBA High School Voter Registration Program. The team collected registrations from 357 students in the fall, bringing the total to 1,077 from December 2011.

From August to early October, team members visited high schools to register students who would be 18 by Election Day, using a custom presentation that helps students see that legislators affect their lives right now. Visiting classrooms at Adams, Clay, Penn, Riley and Washington high schools as well as Rise Up Academy, presentation teams handed out registration forms, voting-day tips, "No Vote No Voice" buttons, and Hershey's Kisses. A new addition was handing out an opt-in form, which gave LWVSBA permission to send students text and e-mail messages with information about early voting, and later, reminders to vote on Election Day. The volunteers collected more than 200 completed opt-in forms, which HSVRP Co-Chair Geri Pawelski added to her existing database of student

voters.

Not all the activity took place at the schools. A group of LWVSBA members worked behind the scenes, photocopying forms, packing bags of materials for presentations, and gathering at co-chair Nancy Johnson's house to make buttons and highlight registration forms.

Pawelski is pleased with the results. "Our high school voter registration program serves a core League mission: to build citizen participation in the democratic process. It has also engaged our League, with participation and support from over half our members. Whether visiting classrooms, organizing supplies or making buttons while sharing good company, there is a job for everyone – and the success of the program is the result of the remarkable support of our members," she said.

A New Look!

If you visit www.lwvsouthbend.org you'll see we have a brand new contemporary online look. Thanks to webmaster Geri Pawelski, our League's website is much more user friendly with current information and photos of recent events and activities.

Be sure to check it out and our thanks to Geri for all her hard work!

LWVSBA Fall Forums Help Inform Voters

Once again this election season the LWV of the South Bend Area fulfilled its mission of educating and informing voters with a series of Candidates' Forums and debates. A majority of these forums were co-sponsored with the American Democracy Project of IU South Bend and the Political Science Project of South Bend. All were organized by our First Vice President and Elections Chair, Dr. Elizabeth Bennion. The forums provided citizens with the opportunity to hear from candidates running for a variety of positions including Probate Judge and St. Joseph County Commissioner. Also, for the third consecutive election season, the League and its co-sponsors hosted the 2nd Congressional Candidates' Debate, televised on WNIT – our local public television station.

Although Republican candidate, Jackie Walorski declined the invitation to participate, the debate was well received by the public who appreciated the opportunity to hear from the candidates vying to be their next Congressional representative.



LWVSBA Co-President Lisa Plencner & First Vice President Dr. Elizabeth Bennion at the 2nd District Congressional Candidates' debate.

Making New Friends

By Marti Heline

The League's second Wine and Chocolate Friend Raiser took place in downtown South Bend on October 11th. The event, held at the Downtown South Bend Inc. offices on Michigan Street, was designed to both raise awareness about the League and raise money to help support League activities including the High School Registration Project.

The friend raiser was coordinated under the leadership of chair Jill Tulchinsky and



Gladys Muhammad as Sojourner Truth at the League's October Friend Raiser.

her committee, the former fund-raising committee, renamed the event committee, with a few outside recruits for the occasion. The League membership as a whole was generous in their donations of food, wine, silent auction items and money toward the event. Thank you to all who donated. The total funds raised by the event is still outstanding but it is in the range of 30 percent more than last year. The League also welcomed at least two new members!

Want to Get More Involved?

Help plan and host candidate and issue forums

Contact Political Education: Chair, Elizabeth Bennion, ebennion@iusb.edu, 520-4128

Help raise money for the League

Contact Event Chair Jill Tulchinsky at tulchinsky@att.net, 299-0090

Submit story ideas for the newsletter

Contact Newsletter Chair Amanda Ceravolo at aceravolo@ywcancin.org, 233-9491 ext 324

Meetings & Events

Lunch with the League-Second Friday of each month at South Bend Chocolate Factory. 11:30 am (speaker begins at noon). This month's speaker: Milt Lee, Executive Director, Northern Indiana Food Bank

LWVSBA Board Meetings

Fourth Wednesday of each month in the Pokagon Room of the South Bend Library. 5:30 pm Everyone is welcome to attend.