



League Members Head Back to the Classroom

By Nancy Johnson

Volunteers in the League's High School Voter Registration Program swung into gear in February and March, hosting a refresher event, making presentations at two schools, and registering 276 students to vote. HSVRP co-chair Nancy Johnson, along with Marti Heline and John Hagen, spoke to students at Washington High School on Feb. 11, collecting 22 completed registrations.

Teams spent two full days at Mishawaka High School on March 26-27. Several League volunteers made presentations to a total of 505 students, collecting 254 completed voter registration forms.

The committee plans to make visits to more schools through the end of May and could use your help!



League members gather at the home of Nancy Johnson to make "No Vote, No Voice" buttons for the High School Voter Registration Project.

Wear Red and Rally for Equal Pay

By Amanda Ceravolo

This Tuesday, April 9, 2013, is the national observance of Equal Pay Day; the day that symbolizes how many days into 2013 women must work to earn what men earned in 2012. It's also a day when many in the country gather to recognize and raise awareness about the wage gap between working women and men, and to offer remedies for pay inequity. The League of Women Voters will rally on the steps of the St. Joseph County Courthouse on Tuesday at noon with the YWCA, the AAUW and



Equal Pay Day 2012

others concerned about wage fairness. League Co-President Lisa Plencner will be among the speakers and South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg will issue a proclamation declaring April 9th Equal Pay Day in South Bend. Everyone is asked to wear red as a symbol of how far women and minorities are in the red with their pay.

According to the 2010 US Census Bureau women are paid, on average, 77 cents for every dollar their male counterparts are paid -- a gap of 23 cents. As if that isn't bad enough it's even worse for women working in Indiana. The wage gap in Indiana is one of the largest gaps in the nation with women making only 73 cents for every dollar a man makes (*Center for American Progress*).

HSVPR Seeks Classroom Volunteers

By Nancy Johnson

The High School Voter Registration Program is looking for a few good folks! Many of you lent your time, brains and elbow grease last fall to make the program to make a success, and we would like to thank you. Now, as we go into the schools this spring, we ask for your help again. We would love to have more volunteers for classroom visits, either as presenters or assistants. We conduct training sessions to help you know exactly what to do in the classroom. You'll find that the interaction with students is very rewarding, and of course going into the schools as a team is great fun. We also need volunteers at this time to highlight voter registration forms. Please keep an eye out for our next announced training or button-making event. If you are interested, please contact co-chairs Geri Pawelski at gpawelski@comcast.net or (574) 271-0682, or Nancy Johnson at npjohnson123@yahoo.com or (574) 273-5071.

League Co-President Selected as a Ruth S. Shur Fellow

The League of Women Voters of the South Bend Area's co-president, Lisa Plencner has been selected for the prestigious Ruth S. Shur Fellowship! Only 22 outstanding League members are selected annually for this program. As a part of the Ruth S. Shur Fellows team Lisa will be participating in mentoring local Leagues in recruiting and engaging members and the community to make our democracy strong and vibrant.

The Ruth S. Shur Fellows are part of the support network provided to participating state coaching teams through the

Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) Program. Through the MLD program, the League is becoming more effective and more powerful in communities throughout the nation.

Lisa begins her two-year commitment the second week in April when she attends training sessions in Baltimore. Please join us in congratulating her on this accomplishment! Lisa continues to provide awesome leadership and inspiration to us all locally and state wide!

President's Ponderings

By Lisa Plencner

If you've been following the Legislative Updates sent by our State advocate Paulette Vandegriff, you may have seen the report that during this legislative session Representative Timothy Wesco attached an amendment to SB 518 which would switch to direct election of judges in St. Joseph County. The LWVIN supports the current merit selection and retention system and the LWVSBA asked Paulette to testify on behalf of our members with the following statement:

"The League of Women Voters has been active in promoting a fair and independent judiciary since 2001. An impartial court system is a vital component of our democracy. In order to preserve the balance of power among the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, our courts must be free from political interference. A merit selection and retention system is the best system for this and has served the residents of St. Joseph County well.

League of Women Voters of the South Bend Area believes that all judges should be free from the influence of pressure groups and requests that you continue to support the merit selection system in St. Joseph County. Judicial independence does not just happen all by itself. When judges achieve office through a fair system of merit selection, the best candidates can place themselves in contention without concerns about raising money for a political campaign. The qualities essential for judicial excellence are rarely the same as those needed to successfully campaign for political office.

As retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor affirmed, "Selection of judges according to the candidates' merit is, naturally, key to ensuring that a judge will act impartially. Considerations other than merit motivating a political actor to appoint a judge (or voters to elect a judge) are likely to be the very considerations that will prevent a judge from deciding cases fairly and without bias." On behalf of the LWV of the South Bend Area, I ask you to vote against the amendment to SB 518 proposing direct election of judges in St. Joseph County."

Paulette reported that opponents to the bill also included the Bar Associations of St. Joseph County and the State of Indiana, the Indiana Judges Association and the St. Joseph County Chamber of Commerce. Representative Wesco withdrew his amendment.

Please remember the strongest component of the League is its MEMBERS. If you have an issue about which you are passionate, consider working with your fellow League members for the greatest impact. Contact any of our board members or me directly to find out how to go about making your voice heard through the work of the League!

Meetings & Events

On April 27 and 28, 2013, the LWVIN will host the bi-annual convention at Turkey Run State Park Inn. LWVIN Convention allows us to set organizational expectations for the coming two years by attending to elections, budget, bylaws, and program adoption. In addition, other programming includes: **Julia Vaughn, Common Cause, Impressions of the 2013 Legislative Session; Dr. Robert Steele, DePauw University, Values of Civility and Importance of Civil Dialogue in our Society Including the Political Arena and in the Media; Dr. Raymond Scheele, Ball State University, 2012 Hoosier Survey; and Saturday Movie - Patriocracy** - a nonpartisan look at political dysfunction. Four members of the LWVSBA will be in attendance.

Lunch with the League-Second Friday of each month at South Bend Chocolate Factory. 11:30 am (speaker begins at noon).

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.