



LWV
LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®
OF BLOOMINGTON-MONROE COUNTY

PO Box 5592
Bloomington, IN 47407
www.lwv-bmc.org

The League Letter

November 2018

From the President



We have only a few days before Election Day, November 6, after a huge effort by League members towards voter registration, voter information, the Keys to the Candidates, and five candidate forums. I know that a number of members will be poll workers or watchers on November 6. Others have volunteered to distribute and pick up "Vote Now" signs. League members have stepped up time and again with every opportunity to increase public education and participation in the midterm election.

So, now what? There's still much that we can do on an individual basis: help a neighbor get to the polls, show a friend how to get a sample ballot from [Election Central](#), give the link to [Keys to the Candidates](#) to a colleague. Much of which leads me to a phone call I received a few weeks ago.

Martha called to say she needed to vote absentee but couldn't remember how to get a ballot. So, her first inclination was to call the League. After I gave her the number for Election Central, she said, "But I don't know who to vote for!" She said that she couldn't keep up with the news like she used to, so she was confused about who is running for office and what their viewpoints are. She said, "I want to vote for the right people." Well, I had all the answers ready: Keys to the Candidates in the newspaper and online, links to various nonpartisan sources on candidates and issues, and so on. Very prepared. But Martha does not take the paper and does not have a computer. And I found myself at a loss.

We are so attuned to digital sources in particular that we forget that access is not universal, and even if a person has access, that does not mean they know how to find what they want. After a pleasant conversation, I mailed the Keys to the Candidates to Martha, and I hope that she turns in her absentee ballot with confidence. But I learned a lesson about making assumptions, one that we need to carry into future plans for voter service.

Ann J. Birch

November Calendar

See [League calendar](#) for details and other events.

Saturdays in November

League at the Farmers Market

November 6

Election day

November 12

LWV-BMC board meeting

November 15

Gerrymander discussion at library

November 20

Redistricting reform rally in Indy

League Updates

At a Glance...

Twenty-one members attended the member meeting on October 15. President Ann Birch reviewed current activities, particularly those concerning election issues. But the focus of the meeting was on the Observer Corps, with discussion led by Diedre Todd. Her report can be found in the Observer Corps section of the news-letter.

League Speaks to International Visitors

On October 15, I made a presentation on behalf of the League to a group of 15 Europeans from 14 countries traveling to Washington, DC; Bloomington, IN; and Austin, TX as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program, under the auspices of the U.S Department of State. Among them were several government officials, including election officials, EU officials working in Brussels, a disinformation analyst, several communications officers, etc.

I began the presentation with a history of the League, its mission, and its activities. I went into some detail regarding our actions during election season: the voter registration drives, the candidate forums, and the Keys to the Candidates. The visitors were unfamiliar with the League but intrigued. One participant said we were the first American organization they encountered that was nonpartisan. They had questions about how we were financed; our type of grassroots organization supported by individual donations rather than government money is rare in Europe. They expected us to be supporting women politicians and issues like #MeToo and were a bit surprised to learn that our mission is much broader than electoral politics, and that we do not endorse candidates. We also discussed some of the problems with our elections—the disparity and inconsistency of laws from state to state, and the efforts of some state and local election officials to throw up obstacles to voting. —*Christine Kyprianides*

Snapshot of Board Actions

- After a review of current activities and committee reports, most of the board meeting time on October 8 was spent in the final board training session. Former LWV-BMC vice-president Albrecht Holschuh led a discussion of League policies and procedures.
- On October 27, by electronic meeting, the board approved a proposal prepared by the Natural Resources Committee to be presented to the Herald-Times for the collaborative development of a civic awareness program for Lake Monroe.

Membership

Members Renewing, Joining

There was a nice surge of renewals in October. Thanks to all who recently renewed their membership. In addition, 13 new members have joined the League for 2018–2019. There are three new member orientations being offered in mid-November. A sign-up link will be sent to each new member with the option of signing up for one on November 14, 10:00 am or November 15, 2:00 pm or 7:00 pm. Each meeting will last about an hour. Bring your questions and your enthusiasm! —*Kaye Hill*

Member Profile: Albrecht Holschuh



Albrecht Holschuh was born in Germany in 1937. In 1959, he came to the United States to begin graduate study at Princeton University; three years later he joined the faculty. In 1964, he moved to the Department of Germanic Languages at Indiana University, where he later served as chair and institute director. He conducted overseas study programs and served as president of teacher organizations.

Retirement in 2001 brought a focus on the life of our community. After shorter engagements, such as with the Community Kitchen and the teaching of English to adult immigrants, he and his wife Deborah Meader, then still working for Big Brothers Big Sisters, focused on Bloomington Worldwide Friendship (including presidency), escorting patients at Planned Parenthood and, starting in 2002, the League of Women Voters. For all but one year since then he was either director or vice-president at LWV-BMC or LWVIN. In March of 2018, he assumed the presidency of LWV-BMC when the president resigned. He has also worked at polling stations, including as inspector and, for one cycle, as supervisor of all early election sites. —*Kaye Hill*

Program and Events

Bicentennial on the B-Line a Rollicking Success



October 6 was a warm fall day made perfect by the League's participation in the City of Bloomington's bicentennial celebration along the B-Line Trail. Located behind the Convention Center, members spread out on a lovely paved spot in the shade, where photo opportunities with the popular League photo board suffragette were offered to table visitors. Vicki Polansky registered five new voters, and Patty Callison earned the title of "bubble girl" while sharing her enthusiasm for bubble blowing on the B-Line with scores of children.

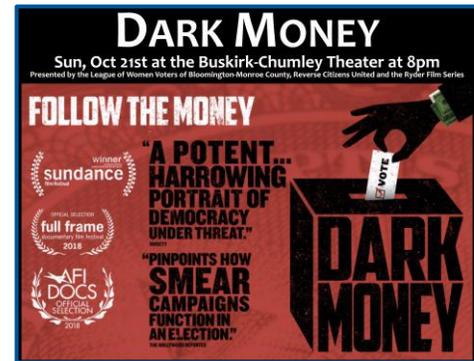
And, while children were being entertained, Gini Emigh and Tomi Allison talked with visitors about early voting and how to check voter registration status, and passed out flyers about upcoming League events. Jim Allison drew visitors to the table with a question: "Is the gerrymander eating your vote?" while wearing his classic madras slacks. One visitor's comments drew chuckles when she asked Jim if he was a golfer. Jim responded that he had never golfed in his life, whereby the visitor noted she was surprised, given that his slacks suggested he was "a swinger." Susan Wensel stopped by to lend moral support, and George Hegeman delivered his winter squash to League volunteers. —*Vickie Dacey*

Film "Dark Money" Shown at Buskirk-Chumley

On October 21, LWV-BMC partnered with Reverse Citizens United (RCU) and the Ryder Film Series to show the documentary "Dark Money" at the Buskirk Chumley Theater. The film was introduced by RCU member Jim Allison, who invited the audience to stay after for a Q&A session. The 98-minute documentary presented a

compelling narrative on the influence of untraceable corporate money on U.S. elections and elected officials by following an investigative journalist's work to expose the impact in Montana of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision on Citizens United. The award-winning film included interviews with experts, political candidates, election officials, party members, and others as it examined how elections can be bought and sold. It noted efforts of those fighting to preserve fair elections nationwide and emphasized a need to take dark money out of political campaigns, which is exactly what Jim and RCU members are working locally to do. Many thanks to Susan and Doug Davis from RCU and Judy Granbois and Elaine Gaul from LWV-BMC for greeting audience members and sharing literature before and after the film.

—Vickie Dacey



Voter Service

Good Turnout at Candidate Forums



About 30 people attended the candidate forum on October 28 at the Monroe County Public Library. The forum hosted Monroe County Council candidates from District 1 (T. Ann Boehm and Shelli Yoder), District 2 (Ann Collins and Kate Wiltz), and District 3 (Martha “Marty” Hawk and Ashley Pirani). Districts 1 and 2 answered questions from the panelists. Because one candidate from District 3 could not attend, Ms. Pirani read a statement and Ms. Hawk submitted a statement, which was read by League president Ann Birch. CATS (Community Access Television Services) recorded the forum, which can be accessed on their [website](#).



About 60 people attended the forum held on October 29, again at MCPL. The forum hosted candidates for Monroe County Board of Commissioners District 1 (Larry D. Barker and Elizabeth “Lee” Jones); Circuit Court Judge Division 9, Seat 8 (Darcie L. Fawcett and Kevin Weldon); County Clerk (Nicole Browne and Jacob Franklin); and County Recorder (Eric Schmitz and Hal Turner). All candidates were present to take questions from the panelists. CATS recorded the forum, which can be accessed on their [website](#).

Preparing and producing candidate forums is a large undertaking. It would not have been possible without a team of people to help manage various aspects of this task. Our team included Christine Kyprianides, Susan Glowacz, Iris Kiesling, Judy Granbois, Nancy Boerner, and Chaz Mottinger. Our moderator for both days was Keith Klein. Our panelists were George Hegeman, Suzann Owen, Diedre Todd, and Pat Harris. And, finally, our additional staff included Jim and Tomi Allison, Ralf Shaw, Susan Wensel, Annamaria Mecca, Patty Callison, and Anne Fraker, with Liz Feitl providing suggestions from her experience. My thanks to all of them for excellent work! —Ann Birch

Thank You from Mother Hubbard's Cupboard

Voter Service worked with several nonprofit organizations during the pre-election season, helping them set up voter registration programs. We, among others, received a kind letter from Sung Chung, an intern at Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. It reads, in part:

I want to thank each and every person for their contributions to voter registration here at the Hub. Because of your efforts, we were able to engage a total of 109 people in accessing their right to vote in this upcoming election...

I also would like to thank Christine (Kyprianides) Potter from the League of Women Voters for her partnership with us during VR, especially for providing resources that we were able to use and distribute to help patrons vote. The Keys to the Candidates has been especially helpful.... We also have a copy available in the pantry that you can also copy in the office.

Even though voter registration is over, our efforts don't just stop here. Moving forward, we have plenty of opportunities to stay engaged in advocacy work and I invite you to join us! One project we are working on is collecting personal narratives from TANF recipients for the upcoming legislative session. If you would like to learn more about TANF, the Indiana Institute for Working Families is a great resource for that.

We will also be having an advocacy dinner in November. The date is Monday, November 26th, from 6-730PM at the Hub, and the agenda includes dinner, a learning about the Indiana General Assembly, previewing upcoming bills, and getting trained on advocacy tools.

We applaud the efforts of these organizations and look forward to working with them in the future. They know their clientele and can help them in ways that we never could, so forming these types of collaborations only makes sense. —Ann Birch

Civics Education

League Members at the Mike for Civics Education



George Hegeman gets set to record a session.

After many years of radio silence, our local League marked 2018 as the year we went back on the air. We're now the proud producers of "A Minute of Civics," a public service announcement-style program that offers listeners information on an array of topics from redistricting reform to voter issues to working the polls and the 19th amendment.

Growing out of an idea presented at one of last winter's focus groups, our "Minutes" are based on "A Moment of Science" in both name and format. We were somewhat slow in getting off the ground, but we used our own (considerable!) League talent to keep our project moving forward. Susan Glowacz, Ann Birch, and Elaine Gaul organized and wrote initial scripts, which Susan, who volunteers with WFHB, then presented to station news director, Wes Martin. Wes agreed to a series of eight episodes and we were off and running as of

September. Jim Allison and Christine Kyprianides joined us as writers, and Susan, Ann, Jim, and Elaine along with Betty Greenwell and George Hegeman gave voice to the scripts. Recording sessions on Friday mornings were fun and easy, and hearing our programs air on Monday mornings and afternoons was the icing on the cake.

If we take a minute to consider how many new and different projects we've taken on this year—in addition all the things we normally do—we should be rightfully proud of our League and all that it accomplishes. Our return to the airwaves marks one more way we're able to reach new and different audiences and perhaps gives us the impetus to try our hand at other ventures. Stay tuned for podcasts! —*Elaine Gaul*

Redistricting Reform

Reverse Citizens United Hosts Gerrymander Discussion

Reverse Citizens United (Bloomington) is inviting several organizations to co-sponsor a call-out on November 15 to examine why our government, supposedly a representative democracy, seems so out of sync with the majority of Americans. During this gathering, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the auditorium of the Monroe County Public Library, we hope to address many of these questions and explore how vote suppression, the gerrymander, and dark money have contributed to the subversion of representative government in America.

This November 15 event will include a call to action on November 20, Organization Day for the 2019 General Assembly. On that day the Indiana Coalition for Redistricting Reform (All IN for Democracy) will host a large rally (see below) to show legislators and Governor Holcomb that we want redistricting reform in Indiana.

—*Susan Davis*

Head to the Statehouse for Redistricting Reform



The clock is ticking loudly! This year is critical in the effort to establish independent, nonpartisan redistricting for Indiana. The Indiana Coalition for Redistricting Reform (All IN for Democracy), a statewide coalition of organizations working for this cause, is calling for a major rally in Indianapolis on November 20, Organization Day for the 2019 General Assembly. It's vital to show our legislators that we want fair redistricting.

The rally will meet at the State Library (tentative location) at 11 am for lunch and a briefing. From there, the group will march to the State House. An “Elbridge Gerry” will say a few words, and the group will then deliver petitions to the legislative leaders. Groups all over the state have been gathering signatures on those petitions for the past year or more. Monroe County residents have had opportunities to sign up at the Gerrymeander, the Monroe County fair, the Farmers Market, and other venues.

It's imperative that we have a large turnout, showing the legislature how many people care about redistricting reform. Join us! If you're interested in car pooling, call or email Tomi Allison, 812-336-6671, redistrict1@lwv-bmc.org. Don't let the gerrymander eat your vote! —*Judy Granbois*

League Speaks to Redistricting Reform at Unitarian Universalist Gathering



On October 4, Vicki Polansky gave a presentation to a group of about 30 people on redistricting reform, titled “Taming the Gerrymander.” This is a continuation of the house parties produced by the Redistricting Reform Committee last year. Each attendee received a packet of information and had the opportunity to ask questions. If you have a group of friends, neighbors, or colleagues who would be interested in learning more about redistricting reform, contact Judy Granbois, houseparty@lwv-bmc.org. —Ann Birch

Natural Resources

Committee Has Room for More

If you have not had a chance to sign up with our team and are interested in environmental matters, please contact Dave Simcox at natres1@lwv-bmc.org. Our next meeting will be during the first week of December. We will be discussing and planning an exciting project for next year on Lake Monroe. —Dave Simcox

Two items of interest for members following natural resources issues:

- In an October 16 blog post on the Indiana Forest Alliance [website](#), a plan to harvest timber in the Hoosier National Forest (HNF) in 2019 is described. Nearby Lake Monroe, which provides many benefits to the area, is the sole source of drinking water for 120,000+ local residents.
- The Department of the Interior (DOI) is asking for permission to destroy records about oil and gas leases, mining, dams, wells, timber sales, marine conservation, fishing, endangered species, non-endangered species, critical habitats, land acquisition, and lots more. The deadline for public comment was October 29; several groups are working to get this deadline extended. —Dave Simcox and Vickie Dacey

Observer Corps

October Member Meeting Focused on Observer Corps



The Observer Corps is a group of League members who attend local government meetings and report on any unusual findings. In this way, the Corps and the League can help ensure that citizens are aware of the decisions that impact their lives, while promoting government transparency and accountability. To prepare for this discussion, I asked the current observers to respond to three questions:

- Why did you choose to be an observer?
- Why do you think it is important to observe?
- What impact do you think observing has had?

Their responses included:

- Learning more about the Bloomington community and government
- Making friends
- Segueing into board and commission positions
- Making local government more open and transparent

Two recent impacts on local government noted were the Monroe County Board of Commissioners work sessions becoming more public and recorded on CATS (Community Access Television Services) and the Storm Water Management Board reporting budget expenditures in greater detail.

If you would like to join the Observer Corps or find out more about what we do, contact me at observers1@lwv-bmc.org. If you would like to observe but can't make a full-time commitment, you can become a substitute observer and would be able to observe a variety of boards and commissions without adhering to a regular schedule. —*Diedre Todd*

League Leadership

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.

2018–2019 Leadership

League members are welcome to attend any board meeting or suggest agenda topics. Board meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the Bell Trace private dining room (800 N. Bell Trace Circle; lower level), 6:30 pm–8:00 pm. A preliminary board agenda will be available on the [member portal](#) the first Monday of the month.

OFFICERS:

President (2019): [Ann Birch](#); 989-430-4075

Vice President (2020): position open¹

Secretary (2019): [Anne Fraker](#)

Treasurer (2020): [Carol McGregor](#)

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Membership: [Kaye Hill](#)

Program: [Vickie Dacey](#) and [Elaine Gaul](#)

Voter Service: [Christine Kyprianides](#) and [Susan Glowacz](#)

Communications: [Ann Birch](#)

Civics Education: [Elaine Gaul](#) and [Chaz Mottinger](#)

DIRECTORS:

Director (2019): [Nancy Boerner](#)

Director (2019): [Linda Shanks](#)

Director (2019): [Doris Wittenburg](#)

Director (2020): [Susan Glowacz](#)

Director (2020): [George Hegeman](#)

Director (2020): [Chaz Mottinger](#)

SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Plan: [Jim Faber](#)

Redistricting Reform: [Tomi Allison](#)

Natural Resources: [Dave Simcox](#)

Nominating: [Carol Walter](#)

Budget: [Linda Shanks](#) and [Doris Wittenburg](#)

OTHER POSITIONS:

Observer Corps Coordinator: [Diedre Todd](#)

Newsletter Editor: [Ann Birch](#)

Facebook Admins: [Peter Kaczmarczyk](#) and [Chaz Mottinger](#)

Website Manager: [Ann Birch](#)

Parenthetical dates indicate the end of a term.

Want to know more about League leadership at both the board and committee levels? Go to <https://www.lwv-bmc.org/leadership>. There's basic information about organization as well as information on board members, committee chairs, and committees.

¹ Because of several transitions this year in League officers, the vice-president position is open. Doris Wittenburg was elected vice-president pro tem by the board to step up to the VP position if needed until elections are held in 2019.