On the Road from Tennessee

On August 4, 1920, Warren G. Harding, Republican candidate for U.S. President, sent a telegram to suffrage leader Carrie Chapman Catt:

With the looming potential of doubling the electorate, Harding had become a convert. He went on that November to win the election by a landslide.

It’s hard to tell how much of an impact newly enfranchised women had on this election. It is estimated that 36% of eligible women voted in the election, compared to 68% of men. I think 36% is pretty impressive at a little over two months after the 19th Amendment became law. It wasn’t until 1980 that women’s voting was on a par with men’s. Since then the percent of women voting has often exceeded that of men.

What did these women think about as they went to the polls in 1920? What were their expectations, their fears? The same questions can be asked today of both women and men. With an upcoming election that is contentious and an electorate that is increasingly polarized, voter calls placed to our League phone number reflect their worries.

- I voted last year but now I’m not on the registered list. What do I do?
- Can I trust the post office to deliver my ballot in time?
- Should I vote early or wait to vote on November 3? Which is safer?

Of all the calls received, one stands out. An 85-year-old woman who was obviously fearful said, “I heard that there will be people who think the election is rigged and will be “watching” me at the poll. What do I do if someone challenges me?” Here’s the good news: before hanging up, that same woman said, “Nothing is going to keep me from voting!” Brava.

To view the calendar, go to the LWV-BMC home page: https://www.lwv-bmc.org
For Your Information

Check Out Last-Minute Voting Information

Do you have a friend or family member who is still seeking voting information? Direct them to our website at www.lwv-bmc.org. The home page carries early voting and other information, links to candidate Q&A and interviews, and fact-checking resources.

You Can Make a Difference

Voting experts, including League CEO Virginia Kase, share ways that people can make a difference before Election Day. Check out the 5 ways voters can make an impact before the election.

How Far Would You Go to Vote?

A 94-year-old woman traveled over 300 miles to vote after not receiving her absentee ballot. Read about the former local League president’s journey to ensure that her vote is counted.

What Do You Know about the Voting Rights Act?

On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law. This law, which was said to “enforce the 15th Amendment,” outlawed discriminatory voting practices, such as state voter ID laws and literacy tests. It was introduced to Congress on March 17, 1965, ten days after “Bloody Sunday” when civil rights demonstrators were brutally attacked by law enforcement.

The law was amended five times through the years, each time extending its coverage. These years saw increases in Black voter participation and Black candidates running for office. However, in 2013 the Supreme Court struck down federal oversight of districts based on their histories of voter discrimination (Shelby v. Holder), and the Voting Rights Act was seriously weakened. In 2014, a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced the Voting Rights Amendment Act, intended to repair the damage done by the Shelby decision. No action was taken. Although there have been some gains in voting rights since then, that have also been flagrant examples of voter suppression, such as those that took place during the 2018 Georgia governor race. Again, in an attempt to address voter suppression, the Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 4) was introduced in 2019 and passed by the U.S. House. No further action has been taken. Learn more about the history of voting rights legislation and be prepared to support legislation that combats voter suppression. Below are a few resources:

- Voting Rights Act (1965) (Our Documents)
- A History of the Voting Rights Act (ACLU; view timeline)
- How the U.S. Voting Rights Act was won—and why it’s under fire today (National Geographic)
- The Voting Rights Act in Action: A conversation with Leonard Gorman, Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission (LWVUS)
19th Amendment Centennial

100 Years of Women Voting in Indiana

Indiana women voted for the first time on Nov. 2, 1920, choosing a president, a governor, a senator and a host of state and local officials. Women showed up in large numbers, often bringing their children whom they took with them into the booth or handed off momentarily to other voters in line. The Indianapolis News noted that men voted early, on their way to work, while “by 8 o’clock, with breakfast over, the dishes washed, and the house straightened up a bit, Mrs. Voter was on the way to vote.” (Factory workers, men and women, voted around noon, when they were let out of work to go vote, according to reports.) In Indianapolis, high turnout was reported in Black and German-American precincts. One woman voter was too short to reach the levers; another got in a car crash on her way to the polls but undeterred, patched up at the hospital, took a short rest, and still made it to the voting booth that afternoon.

New Albany women showed up wearing “I will vote by 10” pins, having pledged to show up to the polls in the morning. South Bend reported that nearly all of the 38,477 women registered actually showed up to vote. In Lafayette, nuns from Saint Elizabeth Hospital “marched in solemn procession to the polls.” In Greenfield, the first voters to show up at eleven precincts were women. 103-year-old Sarah Cannon of Washington arrived in a wheelchair and got help with her ballot due to poor eyesight.

In the words of Terre Haute journalist Ida Husted Harper, “For the first time in all history, the members of the United States Congress in their deliberations on all questions will have to take into account the opinions of women, and when their minds revert to their cherished constituents they will have a vision of women sharing the seats of the mighty.”

These and so many other indelible stories were captured in newspaper reports at the time, providing a poignant window into the meaning of this first vote for thousands of Hoosier women. We hope you carry these stories with you into the voting booth this fall.

Note: The Indiana Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission prepared this article based on research conducted by historian Dr. Anita Morgan. Dr. Morgan is the author of a book published by the Indiana Historical Society Press in 2020, We Must Be Fearless: The Woman Suffrage Movement in Indiana.

Program and Events

Amity Trio “United We Vote” Virtual Concert - November 1

The Amity Trio is a chamber ensemble for soprano, horn, and piano that advocates for new music, especially music from underrepresented voices. The Trio offers a free live stream virtual concert featuring special guests Trevor Ross, Tenor, and Christina Dioguardi, Musicologist. The program, which includes works by Stacy Garrop, Benjamin Britten, Stephen Sondheim, and Ethel Smyth, will be streamed Sunday, November 1, at 7:30 pm. Our League is providing voter information for the program. Click here to view the concert. — Ralf Shaw
Civics Education

LWV-BMC Civics Education Committee Presents Civic Conversations Podcast

Please be sure to follow our monthly podcast episodes done in collaboration with WFHB. Every month Jim Allison, our host, talks to a local or state leader on current issues of civics. Since August, we have aired podcasts on the Big Ten Voting Challenge, gerrymandering, and the 2020 election. Coming up in November, we will talk with Julia Vaughn of Common Cause with post-election analysis. Future topics include disinformation and misinformation, the Supreme Court, and civics in education. You can find our podcasts at www.lwv-bmc.org/ce-podcasts or www.wfhb.org/category/civic-conversations/. — Becky Hill

LWV-BMC’s Two-Night Virtual Film Series Makes the News!

The LWV-BMC was in the news in September after successfully hosting two documentaries about voter suppression. Each film was followed by a question and answer (Q&A) session with Nicole Brown, Monroe County Clerk; Hal Turner, Monroe County Election Board Chair; and was facilitated by Mary Ann Williams, co-chair of the Voter Service Committee. Julia Vaughn, Common Cause Indiana, joined the Q&A panel to answer questions about gerrymandering during the second event. Ann Birch welcomed participants and introduced each film.

Voter suppression is a topic of great concern to many, especially as we approach the last few days before the 2020 election. Although barriers to the ballot box are not new, we are facing unprecedented methods and disinformation about voting. The LWV-BMC believes one of the best ways to combat these issues is to arm ourselves with knowledge and factual information. The Q&A sessions that followed each film in our two-part series provided opportunity for participants to ask their questions and have them answered by panelists with expertise about voting in our community. Also, registrants received an email reminder that listed key voting information such as the LWV-BMC Voter Quick Start, a concise guide to registration, voting, and videos (www.lwv-bmc.org); a link for those wishing to apply to be a poll worker (www.monroecountyvoters.us); general registration information (www.indianavoters.in.gov); and information about candidates (www.vote411.org).

The two films selected for the series elicited comments as well as questions from viewers. “Suppressed: The Fight to Vote” shared personal accounts from Georgia voters who faced deliberate voter suppression in the 2018 midterm election, including voter purges, polling site closures, extreme wait times, and a host of voter ID issues. Some of these tactics and others are on display across our country today. “UnCivil War: U.S. Elections under Siege,” exposed threats to free and fair elections and included a segment on Indiana’s fight for redistricting reform, featuring Julia Vaughn. Reaction to the film was captured in the words of one viewer who commented “sobering and motivating; so important to understand what is behind the undermining of votes so that we can work to change the system.” During the Q&A portion, Julia Vaughn briefly shared information about what Hoosiers can expect from Indiana’s redistricting process in 2021. She invited participants to join state-
wide efforts for a transparent process that includes citizen input by joining the Indiana Coalition for Redistricting Reform, ALL IN for Democracy.

A great deal of effort went into preparing for these “first of a kind” virtual League events and involved more than 12 volunteers working on various aspects. Our work was rewarded by attendance that exceeded committee expectations: 90 people attended the September 15 screening of “Suppressed: The Fight to Vote” and 68 people attended the September 22 screening of “UnCivil War: U.S. Elections Under Siege.” Both films were well-received, according to results obtained on the follow-up questionnaire emailed to event registrants.

This project was supported by a grant from the Indiana LWV, and cosponsors included the Monroe County branch of the NAACP, the Unitarian Universalists Racial Justice Task Force, Monroe County Women’s Commission, and Trinity Episcopal Church. Community Access Television Services (CATS) recorded the programs and links to the recordings are available on the LWV-BMC [website]. — Vickie Dacey

2020-2021 LWV-BMC Officials List Now Available Online

The 2020-2021 Monroe County Government Officials List has been updated and is now available online at [www.lwv-bmc.org/officials-list](http://www.lwv-bmc.org/officials-list). This publication is provided as a service to county residents by the LWV-BMC and is issued annually, except in years in which there are no elections. The publication includes names and contact information for elected and appointed officials as well as citizen members of boards and commissions. Meeting places, phone numbers, and websites are also included. Although this information can be found on city and county websites, the Official’s List compiles all this information into one easy-to-consult resource.

LWV-BMC has made every attempt to provide current and exact information although some information was not available. Please note that changes in personnel and information occur throughout the year and so this list will be updated online periodically as changes are apparent. Please send any changes or corrections to Becky Hill, officialslist@lwv-bmc.org. The 2020-2021 version was researched and prepared by LWV-BMC members Becky Hill, Kristina Lindborg, and Madeleine Shaw.

A printed version of the list will be available in mid-November and will be distributed to city and county organizations. In addition, copies will be available to the public at both branches of the Monroe County Public Library. We are currently in discussion about stocking copies at IU Libraries for students. — Becky Hill

Voter Service

Public Presentations on Voting

Bryan Hane, President of Bloomington Rotary North, invited Mary Ann Williams to speak to members at their October 1 meeting. Mary Ann, co-chair of the League’s Voter Service Committee, focused on registration and absentee ballot applications. On October 8, she participated in the United Way’s “Wake Up” series final discussion moderated by Mark Fraley, Political and Civic Engagement Associate Director and Big Ten Voting Challenge Co-Chair. On October 29, she and co-chair Ralf Shaw presented slides and spoke to the South Central Community Action Program on voting procedures.
In late September, Voter Service Committee members delivered 490 copies of “Keys to the Candidates” to 25 senior citizen residences and nonprofit agencies in Monroe County. — Mary Ann Williams

**LWV-BMC Thanks Election Board for Cooperation**

At the Monroe County Election Board meeting on October 6, Ralf Shaw presented the following statement thanking the Board and Election Central staff for their collaboration and advice:

“The League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County thanks the Election Board members and staff for your outstanding support during this complex year.

Hal Turner and Nicole Browne provided thoughtful and informative answers to questions about voter registration and voting, following the League’s Zoomed presentation of two films on voter suppression in September.

Karen Wheeler and her staff fielded many questions and provided clarifications, as we developed and revised our Voter Quick Start and Guidance for Evicted/Homeless People. Both of these documents have been distributed into the community, providing accurate and timely information on how to register and vote in Monroe County.

The League appreciates the generous cooperation from the Board and staff in our effort to encourage informed and active participation in civic life.” — Ralf Shaw

**Big Ten Voting Challenge (BTVC) at Indiana University**

The Big Ten Voting Challenge continues to receive support from across the Bloomington campus, with steering committee members from the Office of First Year Experience Programs, Office of the Provost, Division of Student Affairs, Black Student Union, Political and Civic Engagement (PACE) program, and Athletics Department.

Initiatives to encourage voter registration include tabling at First Thursday events, email to all faculty on campus to encourage student registration in classes, and the Black Student Union’s mobilization of dorm-based canvassing. Ten athletics teams have 100% voter registration, including football and men’s and women’s basketball.

BTVC’s support for the start of early voting kicked off with a press event at Monroe County Election Central. Students modeled their early voting and shared their efforts through social media. The Herald-Times had front page coverage. The IU Libraries continue to offer drop-in voter literacy hours.

Several BTVC activities focus on Get Out the Vote (GOTV). On October 23, they coordinated a socially distanced “Walk to the Polls” from Dunn Meadow. PACE support includes individually wrapped snacks and time to stop at Hopscotch Coffee to have a drink while standing in line to vote. BTVC produced a video for first-time voters, as well as a university-wide video on the importance of voting for all campuses. They are considering producing a brief Instagram video on “Why I Vote” from peers. They continue to push buttons, pins, lawn signs with...
QR codes, IDS ads, digital ads, and stickers encouraging voting placed on dining bags. They offer Zoom backgrounds (I voted, IU Votes). And they are approaching the Big 10 Commissioner to place a public service announcement on the Big 10 Network saying, “Why I Vote.”

BTVC aims to create an excellent campus dynamic after the election. Post-election activity plans include:

- “No Deadline for Democracy” at the Wells Library on November 11.
- Planning/preparation in the event of hostile acts on campus. Possible responses include experts on call to interpret what is happening and respond quickly with internal town halls and panels.
- Talking about election season rather than election day, so there is not the expectation of results on November 3. With early voting, the election extends well beyond a single day.
- Information from the Media School about recent changes in how the election is reported.
- Sharing information with other IU campuses that do not have the marketing or media resources of IUB and IUPUI.

The Students Learn Students Vote Coalition has posted an excellent [Post-Election Campus Resource and Response Guide](#) addressing the question “How might we prepare to support campus stakeholders in processing and responding to a tumultuous post-election season?” – Annamaria Mecca

**Climate Change**

**Inspiring Action: The Climate Solutions Forum and Beyond**

“What’s your action plan?” Marcia Veldman, a panelist at the October 8 Climate Solutions Forum, asked this as she encouraged us to talk about climate change with others. Such conversations are an essential part of advocacy for effective national policy, such as [carbon fee and dividend legislation](#).

Many thanks to our panelists, Dr. Kim Novick, Dr. Ken Richards, and Ms. Veldman, and to the many volunteers from the LWV-BMC, the South Central Indiana Citizens’ Climate Lobby, and the Bloomington community for their contributions toward making this forum a success. We hope that participants left with a sense of optimism that we can implement large-scale solutions. If you weren’t able to attend, you can see the recording here: [CATS - Climate Solutions Forum](#)

Let’s keep the momentum going by engaging in conversations about climate change. Here are two quick videos to inspire us and to share with others.

- In [Climate Change’s Best Hope](#) (about 1 min) climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe notes amazing solutions exist, and that one of the most important things we can do is to talk with others about our concerns and our action plan.
- [Facing the Surge](#) (25 min) portrays the costs of sea level rise in Norfolk, Virginia, as residents struggle to adapt to repeated flooding and become involved in advocating for solutions. — Kristina Lindborg
League Updates

Member Meeting Scheduled for Monday, November 16, 6:30-8:00 pm

You’ve seen from the newsletters, the newspaper, and other media that the League has been front and center and in the public eye this first half of the League year. But there’s also been a lot going on behind the scenes, and it’s time to say more about that.

The agenda for the November member meeting includes:

- Jenn Harmless, our web manager, will give a demo of ClubExpress, a platform that will host not only our website and communications but also our member functions. All Leagues will eventually move to this system. It’s a major move, so there will be a lot of work upfront. But by mid-year 2021, we should see some exciting changes.
- Josephine McCormick, co-chair of the Nominating Committee, will talk about the committee’s plans for obtaining nominees for the May 2021 annual meeting and election, as well as some ongoing committee development.
- Elaine Gaul, co-chair of the Program Committee, will cover progress in our efforts toward diversity, equity, and inclusion in our membership and our outreach.
- Ann Birch will cover progress in developing handbooks, guidelines, and procedures that will support new leaders and encourage members to take leadership positions. She will also cover current League structure and committees.

You’ll need to register to attend. You should have received a registration link in the October mid-month email. If, however, you need the link or are having difficulties, contact Ann Birch (president1@lwv-bmc.org). After you register you will receive a confirmation email with the link to the meeting. Be sure to save this email.

For new members, this is an excellent chance to meet some folks from the League and get a better handle on what the League does and how you can participate. Please come!

Snapshot of Board Actions

Activity at the October 12, 2020 meeting of the LWV-BMC Board of Directors included, among other items:

- Appointment of Randy Paul to Nominating Committee
- Appointment of Carolyn Waldron to Nominating Committee
- Appointment of George Hegeman as chair of Budget Committee
- Appointment of Annamaria Mecca and Josephine McCormick as co-chairs of Nominating Committee
- Discussion of League advertising
- Approval of providing gift memberships to students until vote on student dues permanent waiver can take place at the annual meeting
- Completion of board training
Communications

Contribute to the League’s Social Media Presence
If you have an event, program, or information that you would like to share with members and social media followers, please feel free to send me your information. I post to Facebook and Twitter (depending on the materials, etc.) almost every day. We have over 800 followers—members and others—so if you would like to share your information with an audience, please feel free to contact me. —Becky Hill

Access Updated League Documents
We’ve updated several documents included in the member and board handbooks. You can access these revised documents on the member portal (www.lwv-bmc.org/member-portal). Please contact Ann Birch if you need the password. Contact Kaye Hill if you do not have a member handbook and would like one. —Ann Birch

Member Handbook
- League Basics and Terminology
- Leadership
- Committees

Board Handbook
- Overview

Membership

New Member Meetings Offered
Virtual new member meetings are scheduled for Wednesday, December 2; Thursday, December 3; and Friday, December 4 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. These meetings are designed primarily for new members but are open to all members. If you would like a refresher, please join us. The interaction is highly informative and there is always something new to learn. Please contact Kaye Hill by December 1 if you plan to participate.

Please note that membership renewal for 2020-2021 will end on December 31, and we are in the process of moving the membership database to ClubExpress. If your contact information has changed or needs corrections, please contact Kaye Hill with your updates.

We welcome new members Monica Clemons, Rega and Allen Wood, and Shannon Herbert! —Kaye Hill

Observer Corps – City of Bloomington

Bloomington Farmers’ Market Advisory Council Meeting (FMAC)
Chair Cortland Carrington called the October meeting to order at 5:35 pm. Discussion of the 2021 Farmers’ Market vendor pricing schedule revolved around the amount and type of increase. In response to the suggested $2 across-the-board fee hike, Carrington proposed a proportional increase based on the rate of inflation. With the exception of Becky Vedas, most council members seemed to support the proportional increase.

Leslie Brinson, currently standing in as Market Manager, has decided to ask the Park Board for a $3 across-the-board increase instead of $2, as the new numbers will bring next year’s projected income close to 67% cost.
recovery. After hearing Carrington’s proposal, she said she’d recalculate 2021 income based on proportional fees to see if that made a significant difference.

Janice Lilly commented that the city might consider raising prices in small increments every three-to-five years rather than waiting so long (the last fee increase was in 2012) and then having to increase fees in a time of economic hardship.

Lilly also questioned why the city is considering putting $70,000 into a farm store at the same time they’re increasing fees at the Farmers’ Market. Brinson responded that the city is looking at multiple ways to support local food producers; she pointed out that the farm store is part of the city’s sustainability program and the market is through Parks and Rec. She will, however, let others in those departments know of the perceived conflict. Suzanne Mann asked if the vendors have been surveyed to see how many are returning next year and if surveys are sent out to all vendors, including those from past years. Brinson said a general survey is being prepared and the issue of returning could be one of the questions; she said all vendors receive surveys unless they’ve asked to be dropped from the mailing list.

In new business, Brinson said the November market will have 14 vendors and the Holiday Market (November 28) will have 19 farm vendors and 14 to 18 artists. Due to COVID restrictions everything will be outside. There will be no indoor stalls, no carriage rides, and no entertainment, but they’re looking for other ways to bring in holiday spirit—a mailbox for letters to Santa, a backdrop for photos, etc.

In discussing the Market’s harassment/complaint procedure, Brinson said the Market staff reached out to the Bloomington Human Rights Commission (BHRC) for advice. Melanie McQuinn feels the BHRC document doesn’t address her concerns about uncivil or unkind behavior and that, for the protection of her mixed family, she would like to see a statement added that the City will investigate any harassment claims that are made. Carrington stepped in to say a description of the process flow for complaints would be helpful and that this should be written into the handbook. McQuinn mentioned that another market in Bloomington has spelled out everything for its vendors; she will ask if they’d be willing to share their wording.

In the review of the FMAC guidelines, Whitney Schlegel asked for clarification of the criteria used to select FMAC members. Brinson responded that interest is the main concern—sometimes it’s hard to get applicants. Schlegel said she’d like to see vendor representation of different types of products as well as including both newer and seasoned vendors. Updating the council application to get more information might result in a better council balance; Brinson will send the current application form out to the council so they can look into revamping it.

There were no public comments. The next FMAC meeting will be Monday, November 16. — Elaine Gaul

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LWW-BMC 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.

2020–2021 Leadership

League members are welcome to attend any board meeting or suggest agenda topics. Board meetings will be held by videoconference on the second Monday of each month through the end of 2020 from 6:30 pm–8:00 pm. Contact Ann Birch if you wish to attend. An agenda will be available on the member portal several days before each meeting.

OFFICERS
President (2021): Ann Birch; 989-430-4075
Vice President pro tem (2021): Doris Wittenburg
Secretary (2021): Nancy Boerner
Treasurer (2022): Carol McGregor

DIRECTORS
Director (2022): Richard Durisen
Director (2022): George Hegeman
Director (2021): Annamaria Mecca
Director (2021): Diedre Todd

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS
Membership: Kaye Hill
Program: Vickie Dacey; Elaine Gaul
Voter Service: Ralf Shaw; Mary Ann Williams
Communications: Ann Birch
Civics Education (interim): Elaine Gaul

OTHER LEADERS
Budget: George Hegeman
City-County Land Use: Jim Faber
Climate Change: Albrecht Holschuh
Facebook: Becky Hill; Elaine Amerson
Historian: Patty Callison
2020 Commemoration: Ann Birch

Newsletter: Ralf Shaw; Kristina Lindborg
Nominating: Josephine McCormick; Annamaria Mecca
Observer Corps: Diedre Todd
Publicity: Nancy Boerner
Website: Jenn Harmless

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