



# The League Letter

November 2021

## From League Leadership



The Indiana League and local Leagues throughout the state, along with All IN for Democracy, the Indiana Citizens Redistricting Commission, and other Fair Maps advocates, have worked hard over the years for fair maps in Indiana. Our League's efforts, led by Vickie Dacey and Jim and Tomi Allison, incorporated the time and talents of many League members as well as community partners Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the Indiana Coalition for Public Education (ICPE), Monroe County NOW, the Monroe County Branch of the NAACP, and Reverse Citizens United.

However, on October 1, 2021, the Indiana Senate passed, and the House concurred on technical amendments, electoral district maps for the next decade, effective for the 2022 primaries. Governor Holcomb signed the legislation on Monday, October 4, 2021. The maps will maintain the legislative supermajority and produce little competition. Adoption of these maps proceeded exactly on schedule as announced by the supermajority leadership. Little time was provided for the public to review and respond.

Are we disappointed? Of course. Are we discouraged? No way! This seed has been firmly planted, and it's going to be nourished until it bears fruit. We already see some results in the citizens redistricting groups being formed by our city and county governments in preparation for local redistricting. And most encouraging is the public engagement. Before, when asked what they knew about redistricting, the person on the street would reply with either "Nothing" or a blank look. Now, we're much more likely to be treated to not only a description of redistricting but solid ideas on how reform should take place. That's a major accomplishment. This topic is not closed.

*Ann F. Birch*

LWV-BMC Co-president and Spokesperson

To view the calendar, go to the LWV-BMC home page: <https://lww-bmc.org>

## For Your Information

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### **LWV-BMC Newsletter Takes December and January Hiatus**

As we continue to seek a new editor for the newsletter, it is necessary to cut back on the time currently spent. We will not be issuing the newsletter in December and January. Hopefully, by mid-January, we'll have a new editor in place and can resume publication. For members, the mid-month email will continue to keep you up to date. For nonmember subscribers, please [check our home page](#) for calendar and news. — Ann Birch

### **Sign Petition on Climate Change**



From the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR): For people already displaced by conflict and violence, climate change is an emergency on top of an emergency. In 2019, a staggering 1,900 weather-related disasters caused unimaginable suffering for 25 million people in 140 countries and territories. Now is the time to come together and be part of the solution ... and to make sure the voices of displaced people are heard. Global leaders will soon be gathering for COP26, the 26th United Nations Climate Change

Conference. Click [here](#) to add your name to help protect vulnerable refugee families from the dangerous effects of climate change.

### **LWVUS Attending COP26 in Glasgow**

LWVUS will attend the United Nations Climate Conference (COP26) in Glasgow Scotland, from Oct. 31 – Nov. 12, 2021. Eleven local League members are excited to be representing the League. On Nov. 5, the League is co-sponsoring an event with McGill University and Human Rights Watch, entitled “Disability-Inclusive Climate Action: Challenges, Opportunities & Pathways.” The event will review the challenges, opportunities, and pathways for promoting disability-inclusive climate action at the international, national, and local levels and the role of disability rights in making climate mitigation and adaptation policies more effective, accessible, and equitable. This event is the first in the 30-year history of COP to focus on disability issues considering climate change. Look for daily updates via Twitter @LWV\_UN\_Climate and on the League’s google groups: LWV Climate Change and LWVUS-UN.

### **Statehood in DC’s Future?**

From LWVUS: The LWV of the District of Columbia, in partnership with ACLU DC and DC Vote, delivered nearly 37,000 signatures from Americans across the country who believe and understand that DC deserves statehood now. Watch the [live stream here](#). The League has supported DC statehood for over 80 years, and we continue to support it with total commitment today. Please [urge your senators](#) to support the Washington DC Admission Act.

### **County Redistricting Committee Begins Work**

On October 13, the Monroe County Board of Commissioners appointed Joyce Poling, Ed Robertson, Regina Moore, and Hal Turner to the county’s Precinct and District Boundary Advisory Committee. The Committee will make recommendations to the commissioners regarding county precinct boundaries, as well as the district boundaries for County Council and Commissioners. Redistricting is completed the year following the gathering of census data by the federal government. Click [here](#) for more information on tasks and meetings.

## ***City Still Seeking Members for Redistricting Advisory Commission***

The city of Bloomington has responsibility for redrawing council districts, as required by Indiana Code, two years after the US Census. The Citizens Redistricting Advisory Commission (CRAC) is an independent, politically balanced body whose purpose is to recommend the new boundaries that divide the city into six council districts. Registered voters who live in the City of Bloomington will make up the 9-member commission. Members should have voted as a resident in at least one of the last two general elections. The Commission will be evenly divided by political affiliation; three democrats, three republicans and three independents, with one member of each political designation being a full-time student at Indiana University-Bloomington. Click [here](#) for more information and to apply.

## ***Critical Freedom to Vote Act Needs Support***



There needs to be increased pressure on the U.S. Senate to break through gridlock and pass meaningful voting rights legislation to protect the American people. Click [here](#) to read the LWVUS statement following the October 20 vote on the Freedom to Vote Act. We are in the heart of the fight to protect our democracy, and we will continue to push until every person in this country has equal access to the vote, fair representation, and true equity in our democracy. [Urge the](#)

[White House](#) to lead this fight to protect the freedom to vote.

## ***Program and Events***

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### ***Take the DEI October Monthly Challenge***

In recent challenges, we've covered topics from racism to homelessness. This month's challenge covers it all. *Time* magazine's article from May 2021, "[40 Ways to Build a More Equitable America](#)," lists actions we can take and explains how each one can bring us closer to a better, more just, country and community. From a straightforward step like voting to the more involved and nuanced "empowering homegrown peacemakers," the list contains some things we can do right now and others we can start working on for the long term. Take the challenge and take action!

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) unit discusses issues of social justice every other Thursday at 11:00 via Zoom. We welcome you to join us! Email [Elaine Gaul](#) for meeting dates and links.

### ***Explore More DEI Resources on Our New DEI Webpage!***

Don't just wait for our monthly challenge—now you can explore all the many, many resources our DEI group has compiled over the last 18 months.

Just go to the LWV-BMC website and right there, front and center on the home page you'll find a link to the DEI materials we think are relevant and compelling. From the blue block containing our DEI statement (it's right under the purple block that says "Join the League!") just "Click here to learn more." That will take you to the DEI page; at the bottom of the page are the "Additional Resources for LWV-BMC," with links to our [basic](#) and [in-depth](#) lists of articles, podcasts, books, and videos we recommend. These lists will be updated to include new information as we come across it. So, dive in right now and come back often! — *Elaine Gaul*

## Civics Education

### Civic Conversation Podcast Features Winner of Brown County Student Essay Contest



Simone Smith

Our [October podcast](#) featured Simone Smith, a winner in the essay contest on redistricting sponsored by the League of Women Voters Brown County. The essay prompt was developed in conjunction with the teacher of “We the People” for grades 7-8 and a high school AP History teacher (who just won History Teacher of the Year in Indiana and is going on to national competition). Members of the Brown County Retired Teachers Association judged the essay submissions anonymously. Simone’s winning essay for the grades 9-12 competition declares, “America is still a nation of liberty. But in an age of ever-changing ideals, it’s up to us, the citizens, to preserve democracy. The current system of apportioning electoral and congressional districts doesn’t reflect democratic principles because it allows legislators to skew districts to their advantage. As Indiana voters, we must urge elected officials to pursue change.”

In our November Civic Conversation, we will talk to former Congressman Lee Hamilton about the status of our democracy. December’s discussion of election security will feature Professor Scott Shackelford, Cybersecurity Program Chair and Director of the Ostrom Workshop Program on Cybersecurity and Internet Governance at Indiana University. — *Becky Hill*

## Voter Service

### League Statement on Nonpartisanship

When registering voters or otherwise representing the League to the public, we sometimes hear that the League is really a Democrat organization. Recently Virginia Kase Solomón, CEO of the national League, addressed this question in her blog post, “[Remaining Nonpartisan in Hyper-partisan Times.](#)”



- Supporting the democratic processes of registering eligible voters and casting and counting ballots are sacred tools of our democracy.
- Empowering voters who previously have been left out of the process and supporting the anti-racism movement does not mean we are in alliance with one ideological segment of American government; rather, it means we are doing what we were founded to do: stand up for what is right.
- Wanting every eligible voter to have equal access to the ballot box is not partisan.
- Wanting a robust democracy in which everyone has an equal voice and equal representation is not partisan. Wanting to see more elected officials that reflect the diverse makeup of our country is not partisan – it is American. — *Ralf Shaw*

## Climate Change

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### Carbon Pricing

As reported in last month's newsletter, the turmoil in Washington apparently has not dimmed hopes that significant carbon pricing will be part of the Build Back Better (reconciliation) bill or be passed some other way.

For over a decade, Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) has lobbied Congress for a [carbon pricing policy](#). The Senate Finance Committee is considering such a policy for inclusion in the reconciliation bill's climate package. The local CCL chapter, a nonpartisan group of constituent volunteers, is a partner with LWV-BMC. Find more Information about CCL [on the website](#).

Since July, Citizens' Climate Lobby has generated more than 65,000 messages asking the president, senators, and house members to support a price on carbon. A show of constituent support significantly increases the chances carbon pricing will be implemented. If you have not already done so, you can use simple online tools provided by CCL. To access these tools, you do not have to join CCL or be a CCL member. If you support carbon pricing, it is imperative that you let the [Biden administration](#), your [senators](#), and your [representative](#) know.  
— Richard Durisen

### Citizens' Climate Lobby November Virtual Conference



There's a convenient and painless way to learn more about CCL, about current prospects for carbon pricing legislation, and about how you can help. CCL's Virtual November Conference will be held November 13 and 14. [Registration](#) is free and open to anyone. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, co-founder of the climate initiative "The All We Can Save Project" and

co-creator of the podcast "How to Save a Planet." — Richard Durisen



## LWV-BMC Member News

### League Updates

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#### **Save the Dates: LWVUS Announces 55th Annual Convention**

Plan to join fellow passionate and engaged League leaders for our biennial national gathering to be held in Denver, CO, and online June 23 – June 26, 2022. We are going hybrid this year, with opportunities to participate both in person in Denver, CO, or online from anywhere. More information and guidance on what attendees can expect and how to prepare will be available over the coming weeks.

#### **Members Invited to Attend IU Inauguration**

Bloomington is making history, or more accurately, herstory in a few weeks. Our first female president is stepping up to lead Indiana University with strong creative visions, clear ambitious actions, and student-centered approaches. It's an especially exciting time to see a woman step forth in this way! As a way to honor this thread in the fabric woven between campus and community, please join me and others at the inauguration of IU President Pamela Whitten at the IU Auditorium on Thursday, November 4, at 2:45 pm. You can find more information and RSVP [here](#). — *Lisa-Marie Napoli*

#### **IU Professor Discusses U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program**

The LWV of Brown County invites LWV-BMC members to join them for a presentation and discussion on Monday, November 1, 7:00 pm. Topics include:

- How does the US refugee resettlement program work?
- How can community members give help that is actually helpful to refugees?

In this talk, Professor Elizabeth Cullen Dunn will discuss how and why people come to the U.S. via the refugee resettlement program, including:

- What people have been through in their home countries
- What they experience in resettlement
- The Afghan evacuee situation
- What can citizens do to help? What is the best way to work with agencies that coordinate help for displaced people and especially Afghan evacuees?

Dr. Elizabeth Cullen Dunn is Professor of Geography at IU-Bloomington. She is also the Executive Director of the Bloomington Refugee Support Network, and a board member at Exodus Refugee Immigration, a federally authorized resettlement agency with offices in Indianapolis and Bloomington. She has done research with displaced people in the Republic of Georgia, Greece, Germany, and the US. She recently spent two weeks volunteering with the Red Cross to help Afghan evacuees in Camp Atterbury, IN.

Her research focuses on forced migration including extensive work with refugees and internally displaced people. Her latest book examines refugee camps and their impact: *No Path Home: Humanitarian Camps and the Grief of Displacement*. Click [here](#) to register in advance for this meeting. — *Shari Frank, LWV-BC*

## Membership

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### Welcome New Members

We welcome new members Ana Almanza, Anna Lagodzki, Martha Nally, and Karen Swanson.

There will be a new member welcome over Zoom on Tuesday, November 2 at 7 p.m. All new members are invited to attend. If you would like to join the meeting, please contact [Kaye Hill](#).

The Membership and Nominating committees continue working together to be in touch with each League member to assist those who would like help in filling out their information profiles on Club Express. — *Kaye Hill*

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### Photo credits:

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- Pg 2 UNHCR/Dave Azia
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## LWV-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 or through advocacy and education.*

### 2021-2022 Leadership

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League members are welcome to attend any board meeting or suggest agenda topics. Board meetings are held on the second Monday of each month from 6:30 pm–8:00 pm. Contact Ann Birch for meeting information if you wish to attend. If you are member and need contact information for another member or leader, log in to <https://lwv-bmc.org>, click Membership, and search for their name.

#### OFFICERS

**Co-president and Spokesperson (2023):** [Ann Birch](#)

**Co-president (2023):** Lois Sabo-Skelton

**Vice-president (2022):** Ralf Shaw

**Secretary (2021):** Ted Emigh

**Treasurer (2022):** Carol McGregor

#### DIRECTORS

**Director (2022):** Richard Durisen

**Director (2022):** George Hegeman

**Director (2022):** Becky Hill

**Director (2022):** Annamaria Mecca

**Director (2022):** Kyra Mahoney

**Director (2023):** Nancy Boerner

**Director (2023):** Marion Krefeldt

**Director (2023):** Diedre Todd

#### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Membership:** [Kaye Hill](#); co-chair position open

**Program:** Ralf Shaw

**Voter Service:** [Ralf Shaw](#); co-chair position open

**Communications:** Ann Birch

**Civics Education:** [Becky Hill](#); Monica Clemons

#### OTHER LEADERS

**Budget Committee:** George Hegeman

**City-County Land Use Unit:** Jim Faber

**Climate Change Unit:** Richard Durisen

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Unit:** [Elaine Gaul](#)

**Historian:** Patty Callison

**Newsletter:** Ralf Shaw

**Nominating Committee:** Annamaria Mecca; Diane Legomsky

**Observer Corps:** Diedre Todd

**Publicity:** Nancy Boerner

**Social Media:** Becky Hill

**Website:** [Jenn Harmless](#)

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