

# The League of Women Voters of the Huntington Area

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LWVWV website: [www.LWVWV.ORG](http://www.LWVWV.ORG)

LWVUS website: [www.LWV.ORG](http://www.LWV.ORG)

*The LWV is a nonpartisan organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to women and men of voting age. Annual dues, not tax deductible, are \$45 individual, \$60 for two in one household and \$24 for students. To join, send your check to: Ann Speer, Treasurer, 706 Ridgewood Road, Huntington, WV 25701. Check is to be made out to the League of Women Voters of the Huntington Area.*

## LEAGUE MEETING

Gather with League members on January 19 noon at Tascalis Restaurant, River Place Shopping Center, U.S. 60 East, Barboursville. Carey Jo Grace will talk about Our Children Our Future's legislative priorities. OCOF is a group of more than 160 organizations dedicated to a campaign to end child poverty in West Virginia. The coalition is organized across race, religious, geographic, and ideological lines.

"Thirty percent of West Virginia boys and girls under age 6 live in poverty. Our state also has the highest rate of 16-24 year-olds who are neither in school, nor in the labor force. Research in brain development shows that social, emotional and cognitive development is shaped in early childhood and has a lifelong effect. Poor kids are 5 times more likely to have children outside marriage, twice as likely to be arrested, and nearly three times as likely to have severe health problems. Poor kids also end up earning incomes less than half those of their counterparts. Our prison population has tripled in the last 20 years, and we spend \$23,000+ on each inmate – roughly the cost of providing full-time quality child care to five young kids. Taking care of our most vulnerable children is not only the right thing to do; it is the best way to help our state's health, welfare, and economy in the long run." (From Our Children, Our Future)

Following is the list of the 2015 OCOF's priorities selected by a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations. Come to the League's meeting to learn more about these priorities.

1. Protect and Provide a Secure Funding Stream for Family Support Programs.
2. Expanding Quality Early Childhood Education.
3. Juvenile Justice Reform.
4. Drinking Water Protections.
5. Defend Medicaid and CHIP, while Expanding Medicaid Access to Mental Health Therapy.
6. WV's kids or Big Tobacco? - Increase the tax on tobacco

7. Retiring Old Laws so Nurses (APRN's) can meet health needs for WV Families.
8. Stopping Meth Labs in WV.
9. Erin's Law: Preventing Childhood Sexual Assault.
10. Providing Earned, Paid Sick Days for Workers & Schedules that Work.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WV'S 2015 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. The LWVWV strongly opposes voter ID laws and other measures that unduly restrict eligible voters' ability to exercise their right to vote.
2. The LWVWV supports strong rules that will protect all West Virginians from chemical spills and other hazards to our drinking water sources.
3. The LWVWV supports measures that would assure adequate, predictable and sustainable funding for West Virginia libraries.
4. The LWVWV supports increasing taxes on tobacco products in order to improve the health of West Virginians.

## COMMUNICATIONS

If you are not already receiving email from the League and would like to receive information on opportunities for action on issues, please send your email address to Wendy Thomas, [wxthomas@frontier.com](mailto:wxthomas@frontier.com), or Helen Gibbins, [gibbins@frontier.com](mailto:gibbins@frontier.com).

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Governmental policies around the world are necessary to reduce civilizations' effects on our planet's climate. But we can also look at our own practices, especially energy usage. We can consider lowering our speed on the highways; buying energy efficient appliances and light bulbs; recycling; buying products made from recycled materials; and installing energy sources from solar, wind, hydro, or geothermal power. Let us know your ideas for modifying our energy use from fossil fuels in order to decrease our carbon imprint.

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#### CALENDAR

January 14. WV Legislature begins its 2015 session.

January 19. League meeting, noon at Tascalis

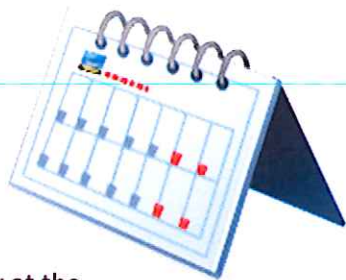
Martin Luther King Day

February 4. Kids and Families Day at the Legislature

February 18. Environmental Day at the Legislature

February 19. Amicus Curiae Lecture on Constitutional Democracy. 7 pm. MU's Foundation Hall."Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address"

February 21. 10 am. League meeting at the West Huntington Library. Irv Johnson, Assessor, will be the speaker.



#### DIRECTORY OF W.VA. PUBLIC OFFICIALS, WORKERS

Thanks to the Herald-Dispatch the League maintains a list of public officials on the H-D's website. To access the list google the Herald-Dispatch Directory of WV Public Officials. Please feel free to make suggestions for improvements. Some of the information on the members of Congress and the WV Legislature will be added when it becomes available. Meanwhile you can find information about our WV legislators on the WV Legislature's website. This website provides invaluable information including the lists of legislators, calendars, bills, and even access to streaming meetings.

#### TAKE ACTION

2014 was the most expensive midterm election EVER. Fueled by the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United, secret contributions and unlimited spending by special interest groups seeking to buy our elections were unleashed. The American voter has a right to know who is funding political campaigns. And the American public has a right to have the law against unlimited coordinated expenditures strictly enforced.

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) has authority under existing law to require disclosure of election spending and to rigorously define "coordination" to prevent millions of dollars of special interest spending by outside groups that is not really "independent." Go to the League of Women Voters website, [lwv.org/tags/citizens-united](http://lwv.org/tags/citizens-united), and link to the article that gives you access to sending your comments on campaign funding. Send comments to the FEC telling them to stop the secret money that is polluting our elections and stop the coordinated spending that is poisoning our elections.

#### MEMBERSHIP IN THE LEAGUE

Dues for the 2015-16 fiscal year may be paid to our treasurer, Ann Speer. Mail the check to the League of Women Voters of the Huntington Area, 706 Ridgewood Rd., Huntington, WV 25701.

The Huntington League continues to welcome new members at half-price membership dues – one member, \$23; two members in a household, \$30; full time student, \$13.

Invite your friends to a meeting or sign them up to receive our bulletin by email.