

# The Brown County Voter

February 1, 2013

## Calendar

- Monday, Feb. 11      League board meeting  
10 am Library  
Everyone welcome
- Saturday, Feb. 23      Meet the Legislators, 10 am to noon  
Large Commissioners' Meeting Room  
Come and hear Reps. Eric Koch and Brent Steele,  
ask your questions or share your concerns.  
Cospponsored by the Farm Bureau

## Partnership Report

*by Janet Kramer*

The speaker for the January 23 meeting of the Partnership was Julia Pearson, Director of the Brown County Historical Society. The Historical Society is close to breaking ground for the new History Center and is asking for help in matching a \$100,000 gift from Howard Hughes' estate by March 31. We can all help build this wonderful facility for preserving our history for future generations.

We also met our new CEO of the Commu-

nity Foundation, Larry Pejeau.

Betsy Lease proposed a Fabulous Fifty group of women who care about the community to donate \$50 four times a year, with the total being awarded to Brown County charity on an annual basis. Interested? I was, and am now one of those Fabulous Fifty. To join, you can contact Kim Robinson at [KimRobinson@browncountyyymca.org](mailto:KimRobinson@browncountyyymca.org) or call 988-9622; or Betsy Lease at [bvlease@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bvlease@sbcglobal.net) or 988-8798; or Judy Bowling at [jbowling](mailto:jbowling) or 988-4882.

## Dorothy Stewart Scholarship

Please think about a donation to the "Dorothy Stewart Scholarship" with the Brown County Community Foundation.

Dorothy was one of our League founding members and its first president. She was killed by a pack of dogs while working on the 2000 Census. The scholarship will go to a Brown County graduating senior who is interested in a political or environmental field of study. Your tax-exempt

donation provides scholarships to Brown County students interested in civics.

The Foundation is located at 91 W. Mound St. Unit 4 and the address is P.O. Box 191, Nashville 47448. This is the building at the corner of Mound and Jefferson Sts.

You can support your local league with non tax deductible contribution to and our ed fund with tax deductible made out to lwvin ed to POI Box 74, Nashville, IN 47448.

# The IDEM CLEAN Community Challenge UPDATE

*by Susanne Gaudin*

The Town of Nashville has completed its application for recognition as an IDEM (Indiana Department of Environmental Management) "CLEAN Community." The recognition by IDEM dignitaries and local celebration marking the event is scheduled for this spring.

The League of Women Voters of Brown County served as the facilitator for the project and has been recognized as instrumental in bringing shareholders and partners to the table and keeping the project moving forward and on time.

The Indiana CLEAN Community Challenge program challenges Hoosier cities, towns, and counties to make Indiana a cleaner, healthier place to live by taking part in a program that offers public recognition and financial incentives in exchange for implementing environmentally beneficial actions and improving the quality of life. The Challenge is designed to be flexible – local governments implement an environmental management system, called a Quality of Life Plan, and choose the activities that fit their community goals.

Nashville's five measurable and attainable goals are:

- Educating and promoting the planting of indigenous (non-invasive) plant species;
- Educating, promoting and providing increased enforcement against littering;
- Removing debris from Salt Creek;
- Removing storage salt from open environment;
- Stringent water loss policies (system wide.)

With the completion of Nashville's CLEAN Challenge, IDEM is now encouraging the CLEAN Committee to move forward on Brown County's application. When completed and accepted, Brown County will be the first entire County to be accepted in the program.

On February 20, members of the CLEAN Committee (Cathy Paradise – BC Soil and Water Conservation District, Bonnie Closey, retired Director, BC Solid Waste District, and Susanne Gaudin – facilitator, BC LWV) will appear before the BC Commissioners to determine Brown County's interest in obtaining the CLEAN designation.

If you have some free time, please plan to attend this Commissioners meeting to show your support for this worthwhile program. The meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the large, upper meeting room at the County Office Building.

## Brown Countians for Quality Health Care identifies action steps

### A569 Students win first prize

*by Judith East*

Following the December report on Brown County Health by four graduate students from IU's Kelley School of Business, Brown Countians for Quality Health Care convened a planning session for the interested public on January 17. Over fifty people participated, many from the local medical community. They broke into five discussion groups and made recommendations toward improving local health care for all. Those groups and their recommendations follow.

The young people who did the research and recommendations for Brown County, graduate students in A569 at the IU Kelley School of Business,

won first prize among 29 other student teams. At an awards banquet on Jan. 28, they received a cash prize of \$2,500 to split four ways. Each of these outstanding students has already been offered a job as a CPA after graduation this spring. Brown Countians for Quality Health Care is extremely proud!

The League of Women Voters of Brown County supports this effort, with three of our board members on the planning team. BCQHC's goals mesh with those of the State and National policies on health care.

If you might be interested in working on some of these goals, please contact Judith East at [judithaeast@yahoo.com](mailto:judithaeast@yahoo.com).

## **Expanding Health Services & Hours in Brown County**

### **Participants:**

Jennifer Steinbachs, Naturopath; Lisa Pantzer, DVM; Jane Beers, St. Thomas Clinic (free clinic in Johnson County); Mike Day, MD (also a volunteer at St. Thomas); Patti Fleetwood; Linda Todd; Taylor Cates, A569; Cathy Rountree, NP.

### **Affordable Care Act**

There were questions of how the implementation of the ACA might affect the numbers of people seeking care in the county.

### **Need**

There was a brief discussion of what was known of the current numbers of people needing care. There are 17% uninsured in the county, but an unmeasured number whose insurance is so restrictive or has such a high deductible that they still get limited health care. We discussed the current “free” clinic; it was felt that the limited services offered there restricted access for most people, and that the low usage of this clinic didn’t represent a lack of need in the community. Expanding care would involve both finding out how to improve people’s access to services currently available and how to provide care to those who cannot afford these services. It seemed clear from Jane Beer’s input that volunteers are a huge part of providing services to those in need. We should be able to enlist a few folks who can be trained to assist in getting people signed up for the benefits for which they qualify.

### **Alternative Care**

Jennifer Steinbachs and Lisa Panzer expressed concern that there be acceptance of and encouragement for all philosophies of care -- their focus is wellness and perhaps alternative care modalities. They are part of a group that is already working on a program for some wellness services at a Women’s Resource Center. They plan to include education related to childbirth and lactation, nutrition, and sign language. The site for the Women’s Resource Ctr. might be in the building in which Lisa Pantzer has her veterinary practice; we believe she is volunteering the space.

### **Mental Health**

Dr. Day addressed mental health services: the need to know what resources are available, and the importance of including these services in planning. He is on the Health Board as well. He said that the HB has not made the clinic issue a focus. If I understood him correctly, the HB is more of an administrative entity

that monitors data than a planning group.

### **Free Clinic**

Jane Beers and Mike Day talked about St. Thomas clinic where Jane works and Dr. Day volunteers. Jane said that it was started by a church and is funded by grants, gifts and volunteers. Cannot recall the details of billing (free or sliding scale) or qualifications for care (all or income limited). Jane suggested that, while we may not be in the position of starting such a clinic at this time, perhaps we could find a way to provide ancillary services that would help expand care in other ways. These included having volunteers as advocates working with the existing medical services to help people qualify for services and benefits, such as Medicaid and reduced cost drug programs.

The group felt that it was important to continue exploring the option of a free/low cost community clinic. At least to start, we need to coordinate with the current medical providers. If we can push for the Medicaid expansion, they could also benefit from increased patient numbers.

### **Partnering with Education**

We also discussed partnering with the current educational services in the community, clinics in schools and forming an on-going group to continue the discussion. It was felt that having a committee of the current medical providers would also be helpful. There was a sense that, in the past, the schools had not been interested in having people coming in to provide health-related educational services.

Most people said that they would be willing to participate in further discussion, though many were already heavily committed and had limited time.

## **Marketing & Communication for Health Care Initiative and Advocacy**

### **Participants:**

Marylin Day, Peg Lindenlaub, Karen Greene, Rev. Whitney Rice, Judy Hardwick (School Board member) and one other (apologies!).

### **Education: Where and How?**

Flyers in the Library  
Door hangers  
Magnets  
Mother’s Cupboard  
Newspaper - Regular articles  
PTOs  
4H offices  
County Fair

Local government & social service agencies

### **Advocacy & Communications: How and**

#### **When?**

Health nurse at school (Marie Mooney)

Community Foundation

211 - keep informed

Service clubs (Rotary, Lions)

Centers for church congregations

Flea markets

Health Department

### **Website Development: How to Create and**

#### **Fund?**

School classes (talk to Matt Stark)

Peg Lindenlaub

## **Transportation & Healthcare**

### **Participants:**

Mark Lindenlaub, Bill Todd, Janet Kramer, Chris Henderson, Carol Birkmeier, Larry Pejeau

### **Discussion**

The hills and rural nature of the county add to the issues about transporting people for medical care. Currently we have two Access vans that are at full usage. Medicab does not serve the county very well if at all. The VA does have a transport system, which would help a portion of our population. Winter weather creates special issues when there is snow or ice that limits almost any vehicle from getting to some homes. Another major issue is the availability of the proper vehicle for transporting wheelchair persons.

### **Ideas and suggestions**

To help with the logistics of travel, several ideas were discussed:

Have a depot that people would be brought to and taken from on a regular schedule.

Use a more economical vehicle than a van for much of the transporting.

Study and seek resources for efficient planning of transportation resources.

Build community spirit by encouraging a neighbor to neighbor program. Get to your neighbor and help each other for things like doctor's appointments.

Investigate the possibility of using school buses that are out and about as part of the solution.

The question of how the community could save money in healthcare, beyond organizing transportation more efficiently, was the idea of being more self-sufficient. Being a rural county with the issues previously mentioned, it was felt that possibly more training in

how and when to call for help would be important.

Some of the suggestions were:

Teach first aid and CPR in the schools. Make it a part of the curriculum

Help people understand the right time to call 911 and when not to call 911

These issues would help in the whole process of emergency preparedness.

The discussion was very constructive and many excellent ideas were presented. The participants were knowledgeable and offered great insight into the community and its needs. All participants stated they would be willing to meet again to help promote, evaluate or develop ideas to address the issues presented. This was a very thoughtful group and should be considered a stellar resource for future discussions.

## **Financing Quality Outcomes in Health Care**

### **Participants:**

Mary Francis Koehler, a Public Health Nurse; Susan Cannavo, retired RN; Greg Ranson, Consultant; Bob Ormiston.

Mary Francis appeared to be a likely resource as she works with the health care needy population and seems knowledgeable re: the issues with which we are concerned, including transportation. She pointed out that often it is more practical for people to seek healthcare outside of the county from a distance-traveled standpoint as well as personal preference.

### **Re: Transportation:**

1. Encourage neighbor helping neighbor.
2. Establish a call center utilizing volunteers--might check to see how VA handles this.
3. Utilize church volunteers.
4. Develop a business plan for Medicab service (suggested by MFK).

### **Re: Expansion of Services**

Petition Legislature for Medicaid Extension as discussed by Dr. Rob Stone. "Our state politicians need to be lobbied."

### **Re: Education, Website, Advocacy, etc.**

1. County Health Dept. Noted that they will claim insufficient funding and not their responsibility. (These are political issues and priorities can be modified and funding secured with right political support.)

2. Brown County Community Foundation
3. Various organizations such as Rotary and Lions Club

## **Educating the Public about Current Health Care Opportunities and Services**

### **Participants:**

Mary Ann Soll, Lifecare Medical; Dave Bartlett, Community Resource Center; Sherri Smith, IU Health; Ruth Reichman, League; Mike Jeffries; Judy East; Jennifer Steinbach, Naturopath (near end of discussion)

### **Major Themes**

#### **• Information**

Gather information on all existing Brown County health services. Use this in a website. Distill it into short, readable handouts for wide distribution. Expand the health section of the League of Women Voters' booklet "Who's Where in Brown County."

#### **• Information Distribution**

Use existing nursing staff to make personal connections with those in need:

Home Helpers (perhaps 50 on staff)

Lifecare Medical (at least 60 on staff )

These professionals already travel to outlying areas and gain the trust of their patients.

Ask nurses to train lay people in centers such as churches, markets, Mother's Cupboard, Salvation Army, etc., to distribute health information.

#### **• Health Fairs**

Offer health fairs in well-populated locations, such as the County Fair and/or 4th of July fireworks, or in outlying areas such as schools or community centers. Perhaps the YMCA is an intimidating location for many of those who need the information.

#### **• School Clinics**

Establish satellite clinics in the schools, usable by students and families.

Outlying elementaries are most important (Helmsburg, Sprunica, Van Buren).

Tap bus drivers, after school programs and Head Start to identify needs.

Discuss need with Al Kozinski, Director of Student Service, and Supt. Dave Shaefer.

#### **• Mobile Health Clinic**

This is a long range goal. Model it on the Humane Society's SPOT program, which uses a van to deliver dogfood, straw bedding, etc. to those who cannot afford it.

A small 4-wheel drive vehicle should be adequate for supplies.

Seek grants for the vehicle and supplies.

Seek several volunteers, each to make perhaps

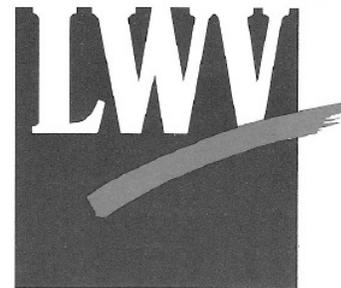
once-a-month visits to a particular site.

Link these visits to existing medical services in Nashville.

Use these home visitation opportunities to identify other family problems which could be addressed or referred to other resources -- food, clothing, etc.

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There is much work to be done to accomplish these goals. To help or share your ideas, please contact Judy East at [judithaeast@yahoo.com](mailto:judithaeast@yahoo.com) or call her at 988-0865.



**Visit the website of the League of Women Voters of Brown County at [lwbrowncounty.org](http://lwbrowncounty.org).**