



# The Brown County Voter

**OCTOBER 29, 2015**

## CALENDAR

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Friday, Oct. 30  | President Julie Winn presents League observations to Brown County Redevelopment Commission, 9 a.m. Salmon Room of Annex   |
| Monday, Nov. 2   | Julie hopes to present same League observations to Nashville Redevelopment Commission, 4:30 at Town Hall (see pages 4-6)  |
| Monday, Nov. 9   | League Board Meeting, 10 a.m. downstairs at the Library<br>Everyone is welcome!   |
| Thursday, Dec. 3 | Reality Store for 8th graders<br>7:45 a.m. to noon at Brown County Junior High<br>Volunteer needed; email Judy East at <a href="mailto:judithaeast@yahoo.com">judithaeast@yahoo.com</a> . |

### **Bill Monroe Music Park to receive Historical Marker**

Congratulations to League board member Ruth Reichmann. The topic she submitted on behalf of Peaceful Valley Heritage for the 2015 Indiana State Historical Marker Program, Brown County Jamboree and Bill Monroe's Memorial Music Park, has been approved by the Indiana Library and Historical Board.

This marker topic exhibits local, statewide, national, and international significance by recognizing Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Festival's influence on an entire genre of music that is still important and celebrated today. The enduring popularity of the Bluegrass Festival highlights its significance here in Indiana. It has brought thousands of visitors to the state, and has inspired similar festivals across the country. The Indiana State Historical Marker Collection includes very few markers commemorating the importance and contributions of music in the state. This topic provides an opportunity to fill that void.

Indiana Historical Bureau staff will continue researching this topic, and will gather additional sources and contextual information over the next couple months as it works to draft the marker text.

Ruth will be notified in early December about next steps, particularly with regard to funding the marker. The IHB staff writes detailed footnotes and annotations to support every point on the marker text. These footnotes and annotations will be made available on its website for the public after the marker is manufactured and installed.

## 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

### Speaker gives dismal statistics on Indiana voting

*by Pam Raider*

On Saturday, September 26, 2015, several local League members attended the Indiana State League's 95th Anniversary celebration held in the Athenaeum in Indianapolis. It was a wonderful opportunity to mix with members of other state Leagues and honor those who had been in the League for over 50 years, including our own Ruth Reichmann.

The highlight of the afternoon was definitely the speaker, Sheila Suess Kennedy from SPEA at IUPUI, where she heads the Center for Civic Literacy. She is very concerned about the lack of general knowledge of how our government works, let alone the lack of participation in civic events, especially voting.

She began her talk by citing statistics from Indiana's voting record.

- While 85% of registered voters went to the polls in Indiana in 1923-24 elections, during the last off-year elections in 2014 only 39.4% voted, meaning that **Indiana ranked 50th** in the nation.
- Even in the main elections only 69.2% voted, **giving us a ranking of 37th** in the nation.
- She went on to say that only 11% of Indiana residents have ever contacted their elected officials – **giving us a rating of 30th** in the nation.
- Only 17.5% of residents are engaged in civic organizations; in this **we rank 44th** in the nation.

- The lack of general knowledge of our governmental processes was dismally appalling – only **36% could name the three branches of government**, only **43% knew the two major political parties**, and **58% could not name one cabinet position**.

While this happens to be a nationwide issue, according to Dr. Kennedy, Indiana has been on the cutting edge of voter suppression, as we were the first state with a voter ID law (There, you see? We were first in something!). Our polls close at 6 p.m. – only four other states close as early. Add to this the general distrust of government and the gerrymandering of districts which has led to uncontested races, and you have a formula for voter apathy. She stated that **49% of Indiana candidates in general elections run unopposed**. This means that the primaries serve as the elections often, and with gerrymandered districts, candidates have become single-issue focused which tends to breed extremist positions and people only interested in re-election. She went on to say we live in a divided world traveling in like-minded circles.

“Fish rots from the head,” she reminded us, meaning distrust in government hollows out the non-profits and destroys the social fabric. She posited a future of 60s-style riots. **The only true remedy is to raise the level of civic understanding and engagement**, which is the peaceful way to turn the tide.

**What are we going to do about this? See pages 3-4 for upcoming elections and openings for offices and board positions. Consider putting your name in the hat!**

**County and Town Offices up for Election or Re-Election in the 2016 Election Cycle:**

- 2 County Commissioners (District 1 & District 3)
- 4 County Council Members (District 4 & 3 At Large)
- Recorder
- Treasurer
- Surveyor

**Additional elected positions:**

School Board: Two positions up for election in 2016

**Important Dates:**

**November 2, 2015:** Town Elections For 2 Town Council Seats and Town Clerk-Treasurer. However, there will be no election because no one knew the deadline and therefore, incumbents or appointees had no opposition.

**January 6, 2016 to February 5, 2016:**

If interested in running for elected office in the May 3, 2016 primary, you must submit the following forms to the County Clerk by noon, February 5, 2016.

1. Candidacy Form
2. Economics Statement

Some positions may also require petitions.

Forms will be available in the clerk’s office in mid-December or on-line from the Secretary of Sstate website.

**May 3, 2016** Democratic & Republican Primary

**November 8, 2016** General Election Day

**Appointed Positions for January 1, 2016 (i.e. this year):**

	<b># Positions</b>	<b>Appointed by:</b>
Area Planning Commission	One	Town Council
Alcoholic Beverage Bd	Three (yearly)	Commissioners, County Council, Town Council each appt one
Board of Health	Three	Commissioners appt all three
(Note: Health Board is supposed to be more balanced – now is 5R, 2D)		
Library Board	One	County Council
CVB Commission	Five	Three Council, 2 Commissioners
Park and Rec Board	One (D)	Council
Bean Blossom Sewer Dist	Two	One Commissioners, one Council
County Redevelopment	Five positions at will, one year terms or until replacement selected	Three Commissioners, 2 Council plus a non-voting School Board appointment
Gnawbone Re. Sewer	One	Commissioners

Helmsburg Re. Sewer	One	Commissioners
Hamblen Fire Dist Bd	One	Commissioners
Brn Cty Fire District Bd	One	Commissioners
PTABOA	Five (yearly)	Three Commissioners, 2 Council
		(may go to three members, all need realtor background)

**Nashville Appointments:**

Nashville Redevelopment Commission	Five (yearly)	Three Town Council President, two Town Council
Nashville Development Review	Nine (yearly)	Complex formula but mostly Town Council
Nashville Tree Board	Six (yearly)	Town Council
Nashville Parking and Pub Fac	Five (yearly)	Town Council
Nashville Arts and Entertnmt	Four	Town Council

**League’s Wellness and Heritage Initiative**

*by Julie Winn*

The League of Women Voters’ Wellness and Heritage Initiative is intended to further the implementation of Vision 2020, sponsored in 2008-10 by the League of Women Voters of Brown County, the Purdue Extension office, the Brown County Partnership and the Brown County Community Foundation.

The League held three community conversations on Wellness and Heritage Tourism in the Fall of 2011. The topics were chosen since they cut across many of the issues raised by the visioning project. During the conversations those participating realized how little we know about our great real estate, about our cultural assets, about our Brown County brand: Peaceful Valley and Arts Community of the Midwest!

This initiative is not a tourism project per se, it is an **economic development strategy with a very specific focus**. It does not preclude other kinds of economic development, but does suggest a framework for exploiting our many assets in a cohesive fashion that opens more opportunities for creative entrepreneurship, attracts a broad range of people to live and play, and ensures protection of those assets for the future. Managing, protecting and promoting the entirety of our heritage, natural, cultural and historic, benefits our citizens and is a selling point for potential new residents and their families.

**What is this initiative?** Heritage tourism is defined as “traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present, drawing on historic, cultural and natural resources.” Wellness tourism is defined as “traveling to pursue maintaining or enhancing one’s personal wellbeing.” These are not only the fastest-growing sectors in the tourism sector today, but are also attractants for millennials and their younger brothers and sisters who are increasingly interested in active, vibrant communities as places to settle. We want to link and use our many and varied assets in nature, the arts, and history so that Brown County is seen

internationally as an iconic heritage and wellness locale, with plenty of physical activities, beauty, history, arts, music, theater, great local food and drink, and a story to tell.

**We don't already have this?** Brown County and Nashville have a long list of assets and attractions, but visitors tend to come for one thing, be it walking and shopping along the quaint Nashville streets, hiking or mountain biking in the Park, or spending a weekend at Bill Monroe. Most of them are not very much aware of the rest of what we have here. We have some impressive recent achievements (the History Center, Phase 1 of the Salt Creek Trail, several Deer Run developments, bringing back the Playhouse, the expansion of the Art Gallery) but each was accomplished on its own, kind of in a vacuum. Working together is key! We need to connect the Park, other State properties, the Town of Nashville, TC Steele and our many arts venues. We need to extend our offerings throughout the county, including Salt Creek and its branches, the many historic sites and, regionally, the SR 46 corridor.

The more we can integrate the entire package, the more we can get people here for longer stays. And the more we can get folks to experience an array of interests and activities, the more they will go home and pass the word about what a great place we have for living, playing and working, and the more our Chamber of Commerce and the School Corporation and big employers nearby can use the Brown County brand to attract and recruit. The CVB does a great job in promoting Brown County as a tourism destination, but we think the County can give the CVB more, much more, to work with!

**Why is the League promoting this initiative?** Several League members were involved in the 2008-2010 Vision 2020 process, especially in the Health and Wellness, Environmental and Community and Economic Development focus groups, and we wanted to aid in implementation. If you have not read this document and its companion of last year Leading Brown County or haven't read them recently, then I urge you to do so – a lot of really smart people from all sectors came up with great ideas about the needs of the county and some possible resolutions. You might not like every idea, but I guarantee you will find much to support. Vision 2020 and Leading Brown County are great planning and economic development tools.

During our 2011 Community Conversations, the need emerged for an inventory of Brown County Assets. In 2013, we sponsored a Kelley Business School team as they prepared a comprehensive Inventory of Brown County Assets, which the Nashville Redevelopment Commission made available as a Free Visitors Guide for Smartphones and Tablets. We held another Community Conversation in June 2014 and three more since July of this year. In all of these, interested stakeholders and experts, including county and town government officials, offered their views on Brown County's heritage of history, the arts and nature, and participants pitched in with their thoughts and ideas on how to better position Brown County as a draw for the widest pools of visitors and permanent residents.

Some of the items that have come out of our discussions in the last three months include:

- Connection is key: we need more and better connection and networking between and among artists, venues, local government, local business, the Park, locales (i.e. Brown County, Bloomington and Columbus). Each facet of our heritage (natural beauty, the Parks and Forests, Bicycling trails, several riding and ziplining locals, over 70 historic buildings in Nashville alone with many more in the county, the History Center, our art galleries, visual arts, music, theater, traditional crafts, story-telling) has something to offer a variety of audiences -- and we can reach more visitors and future residents if the various attractions in and around Brown County achieve some synergy that draws customers into deeper engagement with the area.

- No matter what kind of economic development we contemplate, Brown County infrastructure is a weak spot. High-speed internet, water, sewer services and adequate starter and middle-income housing are all vulnerabilities that must be addressed with creativity and imagination. Bringing more tourist money into the county will bring income and new tax money into county coffers to address these problem areas, and will allow additional; and appropriate development

- The Hoosier Mountain Bike Association is a real example of what can be achieved. Along with local volunteers, they have built trails in the Park that are known world-wide. Because of their efforts, Brown County recently achieved Ride Center status, one of 31 in the world, at the level of Bronze. We will be reevaluated in 4 years – to retain that status or to move up to Silver. To do the latter, we must improve -- not the trails in the Park so much as all the corollary offerings – practice areas, links to other trails in the region, restaurants, fun for the family, bicycle-friendly lodging, etc. These are mostly millennials and passionate fans of what they do, with discretionary income and a hunger for authentic experiences. We need to help them with DNR's plan to charge them an extra fee to use their trails! Community Conversation participants, led by Nashville RDC's Rick Kelley, are arranging a meeting with Eric Koch to work on this.

- The Arts in the Park project, a National Historic designation for BCSP, and the educational possibilities inherent in the two art galleries plus the History Center are also big opportunities to exploit, and the first two offer Bicentennial ideas. As with any economic development strategy, we must ask ourselves, economic development for whom? Artists themselves need to make a living, and using their talents not only for direct sale or entertainment but also in service and engagement (therapy, education, etc) offers a good way to do that. The arts are a huge piece of why Brown County is and will continue to be so attractive – arts across the board are our heritage, and they reflect the richness of the nature around us. ArtsRoad 46 might be a way, if approached with renewed energy, to achieve some regional synergy, but many feel it should be expanded from the arts to a Heritage Trail. Note, the ArtsRoad 46 website is [www.visitbloomington.com/artsroad/](http://www.visitbloomington.com/artsroad/), hosted by the Bloomington tourism website, although there is a link to and from the CVB's website [www.browncounty.com](http://www.browncounty.com)

- Some additional project ideas: a big classical music event (link to Jacobs School of Music), a story-telling event, putting up Hohenberger photos of our many historical sites and buildings in those places, thus continuing the story for a modern audience. In this regard, we have a treasure trove of pictures and stories in the History Center Archives.

- Our heritage of arts, natural beauty, outdoor activities, history and wellness is a real attraction to active folks with families if they know about us. We need to work to ensure the big employers in Columbus, Bloomington, even Indianapolis see us as a draw for potential employees, and thus see that they have a stake in our success. This mix of arts and wellness is also a positive for retirees - embrace our status as a NORC (naturally occurring retirement community).

- We need imagination and creativity on the part of local government, as to how they can participate and support this development direction (not precluding other strategies). We need to develop and properly use our magnificent real property, and our rich cultural and historic assets. Groups who are working on these exist, but elected and appointed officials must become more involved. A rap on Brown County is the lack of strategic planning - for economic development, for best deployment of scarce financial resources, for zoning and property development

**Why are we briefing government agencies?** It is only through a vibrant government-private partnership, with county-town cooperation and perhaps full integration on the economic development front, that Brown County can energize its economic future. We hope and believe that as you read some of the ideas and concerns that have come up on the Community Conversations, you saw places where local government can and should move the ball forward. And we hope that government sees this project as a useful framework for building at least part of its strategy.

# Memory, Creation and Performance: Our Rich Heritage of Artists

Community Conversation, Sept. 24, 2015

*by Julie Winn and Judy East*

**Kathy Anderson** gave a history of the Brown County Playhouse, which opened in 1949 in a barn. I.U.'s Herman B Wells funded the current building in 1978. In 2015, I.U. gave it to the BC Foundation. It now presents community and professional music, theater, films, workshops, a kids' camp and competitions.

**Nancy Crocker** explained the Chamber of Commerce's effort to "upcycle" art and Nashville in particular.

**Bruce Gould**, speaking primarily in his role as an Economic Development Commissioner, explained that the state decreed in 1984 that each county may levy an EDIT tax to use as it sees fit. Roads, utilities, land and industrial parks are typical uses elsewhere; BC has used it for the jail, courthouse renovations, healthcare for its employees, and county buildings. Nothing has been spent on economic development. We accumulate about \$400,000 a year. The Town of Nashville's share of that is committed for the next 20 years to pay for the police station. Sewer hookup for the Little Nashville Opry has been the focus of the Commission recently. The proceeds from the sale of the sock factory (about \$410,000) went into economic development.

**Scott Hutchinson** said the mission of the Art Guild is to preserve Marie Goth's work and that of other Hoosier artists, including jewelers and potters. Education for and about art is also part of its mission. Scott is working on an "Our Town" grant application from the National Endowment for the Arts based on our history; a match will be required. "Placemaking" is a

goal: signage, crosswalks, awareness of art history, etc.

**John Kay** is a local I.U. professor of musicology. After being away from BC for ten years, he sees and increase in local arats. He outlined doodles of the way art works here: retail (selling object and ticket), entertainment (music and theater), and services (teaching art, niche workshops). We should embrace our NORC status: Naturally Occurring Retirement Community.

**Lyn Letsinger Miller** is president of the BC Art Gallery Foundation. Founded 90 years ago, it raised \$1.7 million over the last three years to enlarge the gallery. 1600 sq ft. of it is for art education at all levels. Bill Zimmerman's actual studio will be reproduced at the gallery. Major national conventions of over 250 artists have already approached the gallery. It will be an economic driver. The Bartholomeew County Faoundation donate \$10,000 to the expansion and will be promoting it as a nearby draw. But it needs high speed internet!

**Pam Raider** spoke on behalf of WRAP: Writers, Readers and Poets. Hank Swain was a member and regularly published his work in *Our Brown County* and his own book. WRAP also promotes the Liars' Bench event and its 3 books. WFHB features local storytellers; BC would be a good venue to host storytellers from other cities.

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The Heritage and Wellness initiative is all about continuing to shape Brown County as a wonderful place to live and to visit, for people of all ages. This is an economic development strategy – not the only one, but an important one. The arts are a huge piece of why Brown

County is and will continue to be so attractive – arts across the board are our heritage, and they reflect the richness of the nature around us. I thought that the following themes emerged in the discussion that followed our panelists' remarks:

1) Connection is key: we need more and better connection and networking between and among artists, venues, local government, local business, the Park, locales (ie, Brown County, Bloomington and Columbus). Each facet of our artistic heritage (visual arts, music, theater, traditional crafts, story-telling) has something to offer a variety of audiences -- and we can reach more visitors and future residents if the various attractions in and around Brown County achieve some synergy that draws customers into deeper engagement with the area.

2) That means communication – face to face, in public meetings, through a Master Calendar. And we need high speed internet throughout this county!

3) It also means more intentional coordination, and there was some suggestion that ArtsRoad 46 (by that or another name) was a way to get that coordination, at least on a regional basis. Note, the ArtsRoad 46 website is [www.visitbloomington.com/artsroad/](http://www.visitbloomington.com/artsroad/) It is obviously hosted by the Bloomington tourism website, although there is a link to and from on the CVB's website [www.browncounty.com](http://www.browncounty.com)

4) We need imagination and creativity on the part not just of artists (who are known for these already J) but also of local government, as to how they can participate and support this development direction (not precluding other strategies).

5) As with any economic development strategy, we must ask ourselves, economic development for whom? Artists themselves need to make a living, and using their talents not only for direct sale or entertainment but also in

service and engagement (therapy, education, etc) offers a good way to do that.

6) Some additional project ideas: a big classical music event (link to Jacobs School of Music), a story-telling event, the potential of Arts in the Park, putting up Hohenberger photos of our many historical sites and buildings in those places, thus continuing the story for a modern audience. In this regard, we have a treasure trove of pictures and stories in the History Center Archives, eg, the Cracker Jacks tale.

7) Our heritage of arts, natural beauty, outdoor activities, history and wellness is a real attraction to active folks with families if they know about us. We need to work to ensure the big employers in Columbus, Bloomington, even Indianapolis see us as a draw for potential employees, and thus see that they have a stake in our success. This mix of arts and wellness is also a positive for retirees - embrace our status as a NORC (naturally occurring retirement community).

Next steps: more a question, ie, should we have some kind of Community Conversation or Round Table that pulls together the natural stakeholders on ArtsRoad 46 to look at how to energize that further? Who should be part of this?

**Julie's notes from group discussion:**

High speed internet!

Coordination and Connecting

Connect with nearby centers

We have the bricks and mortar, now plan to use, especially downtown

Economic development for whom)-- how to support our artists (music therapy, arts service and education)

Link arts communities, at least Bloomington and Columbus – big employers there, affluent audience

Need to be seen as friendly to new business

We have lots of artists

**Ideas/Projects:**

Think Aspen, i.e. big musical event, hook up with Jacobs School of Music (but Paul Navarro notes IU keeps all to self and controls)

Story-telling event

Arts Road 46 (has website) – can it be the coordinative body?

Have a round table or conversation specifically on this topic?

Should we refocus it a bit and be more attractive by calling it a Cultural Trail or Heritage Trail?

Arts and Service/Education/Wellness – embrace NORC status (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community)

Give the customers what they want

Role of Arts in the Park

Continuing education classes in venues

Could Park attach Nashville/BC calendar to theirs as folks arrive?

There are Hohenberger photos of so many of our sites and current businesses – post copies and stories at each

Cracker Jack weekend.

History Center archives is a treasure trove

**Brown County receives bronze Mountain Bike Ride Center designation**

*by Ruth Reichmann*

From approximately 70 miles of trails winding through state and federal land to 100 miles and designation as a Ride Center by the International Mountain Bike Association, if Brown County is to hang on to this Ride Center Designation (it has to be renewed every four years), there is a need for continued trail improvements and development of local amenities.

One thing to keep in mind is that the Ride Center designation has levels (Bronze, Silver, and Gold). Brown County is Bronze level, which is a great start, but I want to work towards the Silver rating. While having the rating is a good tool for advertising, the real benefit of the process is that the criteria help the mountain bikers and the local community work together to build a destination trail system that supports the local community.

I will work on a document to lay out how we can achieve Silver Status. I feel that this should be integrated into an even larger Nashville Trails Plan (hike, bike, horse, water).

—Paul Arlinghaus, President, Hoosier Mountain Bike Association

The designation will have to be renewed every four years and is not only based on the quality of the trails, but the closeness to and quality of amenities offered in the Park and by the community, especially Nashville, but also the county.

Mountain bikers and their families are looking for easy access to everything from overnight stays in bed and breakfasts, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, etc. Easy access would mean that the Salt Creek Trail has to be finished asap. To have access to canoeing from Salt Creek Trail for the mountain bikers, bikers and hikers would require access from the CVS point of entry via a trail to Deer Run Park. Deer Run Park should offer a place to sit comfortably and some food and drink for locals as well as guests. Information on amenities needs to be easily available to mountain bikers, bikers and hikers. Our local citizens can use the trails; the bikers are willing to instruct and work with our kids.<sup>9</sup>

It will bring much younger visitors — the Millennials — which will benefit the local tourism industry. To make this a success Brown County needs all on board:

- Local governmental units

- Redevelopment commissions
- CVB and Chamber of Commerce
- Indiana Main Street organization
- Brown County schools
- Community Foundation
- Additional partners are encouraged.

Paul Arlinghaus would like to see, for starters, the town of Nashville, the Brown County tourism board, and HMBA as partners. Other groups may sign on as needed. He states that:

- HMBA should have funding available for trail construction in 2016 at Brown County State Park.

- OCRA grants and most other grants require a partnership between local government, and organizations.

- It also requires a 1.5 match. HMBA should be in the position to support this match through cash and volunteers, but there is a need for cash from two separate groups. The key is that one other group, in addition HMBA would need to provide cash for matching. HMBA will use the project to drive a fund raising event and we could encourage people to donate to both organizations. We need one local organization whose mission statement allows it to raise funds for and then contribute to the project. We can also generate volunteer hours for matching.

- HMBA has managed an RTP grant (\$150k), State Trail Grant (\$250k), and is currently finishing up two 2 more RTP grants (\$127k and \$150k), so we know how to execute these grants and we can manage the projects.

I think we have a great project that fits the mission of the grant (several trails that provide connectivity for beginner and intermediate riders).

Applications are due by Dec 5, 2015.

### **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. 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