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LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF GREATER CLEVELAND

VOTER

Spring 2017 Newsletter

LWV of Greater Cleveland Third Annual Meeting 2017 Making Democracy Work by Fighting for Fair Districts Saturday, June 3

Canalway Center, 4524 E. 49th Street in Cuyahoga Heights

Sign-in - 9:15 a.m.; Business meeting - 9:30 a.m.

Catered lunch - Noon; Speaker - 12:30 p.m.

Lunch tickets: \$10 per person.

See inside back page for registration form and agenda information.

Speaker: **Rep. Stephanie Howse** (D), Ohio House District 11

“Ohio Voting Rights, Women’s Health, and Education issues”

About our speaker: A Cleveland native and graduate of the Cleveland School of the Arts, Rep. Howse studied civil environmental engineering at Florida A&M University and earned a masters degree in environmental studies from Cleveland State University. Her career includes being a fellow with the Cleveland Executive Fellowship program of the Cleveland Foundation, a substitute teacher in the Cleveland public schools, and admissions and community outreach coordinator for Breakthrough Schools. Her community affiliations include Friends of the Thurgood Marshall Recreation Center, Cleveland NAACP, US Green Building Coalition, Urban League of Greater Cleveland, and Rotary District 6630. In 2002, she founded Footprints, a leadership development organization for girls ages 9 to 17.

Prior to serving in the Ohio House of Representatives, Howse represented Ward 7 on Cleveland City Council from 2008 to 2014. Rep. Howse’s public service was inspired by her mother, Annie L. Key, a former State Representative

To learn more about Rep. Howse, visit her bio page on the Ohio Statehouse website: www.ohiohouse.gov/stephanie-d-howse.

We Have Moved

Our new office at 2800 Euclid Avenue, room 518, has plenty of parking behind the building. It is easily accessible by I 90 and the Healthline bus. We will use P.O. Box 5310, Cleveland, 44101, as a mailing address for security reasons but packages can be delivered to the street address using Cleveland, 44115. Our new phone is (216) 694-8101. We are happy with our new location.

We hope to start collecting historical records from chapters. Western Reserve Historical Society has LWV records from 1912-1974 and wants to add more. We ask you to search your homes for old LWV records and contact **Susan Murnane** at susanmurnane@sbcglobal.net.

Co-Presidents' Letter

Dear Friends in League;

In this issue you will find the Call to our Annual Meeting on June 3 and information on the LWV Ohio Convention, which will be held in Cuyahoga Falls on May 5-7. We strongly encourage you to attend both meetings, especially if you are a new member. The meetings provide a crash course on the scope of League's program, connect old war horses to young activists, and lay the foundation for hard work over the summer and fall. We anticipate contested elections throughout Cuyahoga County in this 2017 local election year, including 14 of 17 Cleveland City Council elections. Often, our local voter guides and candidate forums are the only unbiased source of information on local campaigns. Access to the ballot is always an issue in Ohio, and we need to be ready to ensure all citizens can register and vote. And we stand committed to fair, commonsense, nonpartisan Congressional redistricting reform in Ohio.

Our efforts are sorely needed. The prestigious news magazine, *The Economist*, created a research unit after WW II called the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) that sells data analysis and research services to private businesses and governmental entities. Nine years ago, the EIU began publishing a "democracy index" that scored the degree of democratic governance of approximately 165 countries based on five variables: electoral processes and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. In 2016, the index scored only 19 countries as "full democracies." The United States' score has hovered at the lower end of the full democracies since the EIU began publishing its democracy index, but this year the US was downgraded to a "flawed democracy." The immediate cause was the continued decline in scores for the functioning of government and political participation, which pre-dated the 2016 election. The EIU opines that the root cause is popular distrust of politicians and political institutions.

A contributing cause is partisan Congressional gerrymandering, and Ohio has one of the most gerrymandered delegations in the US Congress. The districts are drawn without regard to political or geographical boundaries with the result that Greater Cleveland is cut up among four of Ohio's sixteen members of Congress. These seats are guaranteed by manipulation of the partisan composition of their districts, and the only obstacle to re-election is a primary challenge from the most extreme elements of the majority party in their district, often backed by ideologically driven out-of-state dark money. Constituent sentiment is irrelevant. Bi-partisan cooperation and compromise is anathema. Despite overwhelming support in 2015 of state legislative redistricting reform, the Ohio legislature has not acted to extend the benefits of redistricting by bi-partisan commission to Congressional districts. Voters are losing faith in the democratic process.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio is doing something about this as part of the Fair Districts = Fair Elections coalition. We expect signature collection for ballot petitions to be ready soon. We will need many hands to collect signatures. **To volunteer**, go to the LWVGC website: lwvgreatercleveland.org. While we wait for the petitions to be approved for circulation, we can train ourselves to be effective advocates for the ballot initiative by attending one of two speaker training sessions on May 13, to be led by Catherine Turcer of Common Cause, Details are on page 5 of this Voter and on the LWVGC website. Fair Districts also offers online leadership training. Go to: <http://bit.do/regionaltraining>

You can also help by raising money. Successful ballot initiatives cost millions of dollars. **You can donate** by mail or online at <http://lwvohio.org/site.cfm/Donate.cfm>. Be sure to indicate in the note section that the donation is for Fair Districts. Consider multiplying your impact with a fundraiser. Bay Village Chapter member **Heather Macalla** organized a West Shore Fair Districts social event including raffles that raised \$635 for LWV Ohio's Fair Districts fund. Everyone had lots of fun, and the event also recruited 12 new volunteers to circulate petitions.

— *Susan Murnane and Marcia Goldberg*

LWVO's New Primary Election System Positions

The LWV of Ohio (LWVO) board has announced the new positions on Primary Election Systems (PES), which were reached by study and consensus. The results, comprising a compilation of consensus meetings throughout the state, are very close to what came out of the LWVGC consensus meeting, which took place this past December. The Greater Cleveland League initially proposed this study at the LWVO convention in 2015, where it was approved. LWVGC member **Lynda Mayer**, along with **Diane Herman** of the Greater Dayton League, spearheaded the study.

New LWV Ohio Primary Election System Position:

LWVO supports open primary election systems that narrow the field of candidates for the general election and permit all registered voters, regardless of political party membership, to participate. In general, League members believe that nonpartisan primaries are more appropriate at the more administrative county and local government levels, while partisan primaries are more appropriate for state and national policy-making offices.

Any proposal to restructure primary elections in Ohio should have as its goals, in order of importance: to increase voter participation, to lead to more competitive general elections, to enfranchise the largest number of registered voters and to lessen partisan polarization.

League members overwhelmingly support replacing Ohio's current primary election system with a more open alternative, in which any registered voter may choose to vote any party's ballot without having to be a member of that party. To meet this goal, statutes permitting or requiring challenges and declarations of party allegiance should be eliminated. Local and county governments that employ nonpartisan, "top-two" primaries already meet this goal.

The LWVO co-presidents, **Alison Ricker** and **Mary Kirtz Van Nortwick**, further report:

"This new position automatically becomes part of LWV Ohio's adopted issue positions. Delegates to the upcoming state convention do not need to vote on the new PES position. However, delegates will get the opportunity to vote on retaining all of our current positions, including this new one.

"We also wanted to share with you that one of the committees of the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission is reviewing the section of the state constitution on primary elections and has invited LWVO to share our views, so we will have the opportunity to put our new PES position to use right away!"

— **Maryann Barnes**

LWV Ohio State Convention

Every single member of our League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland is encouraged to attend all or part of the state League's convention May 5-7 in Cuyahoga Falls. It's close to Cleveland and always SO interesting—and it should be especially interesting as we undertake our push to get Congressional redistricting on the state ballot. Our League will be sending nine voting delegates.

The deadline for convention registration is Friday, April 28. Visit LWVOhio.org to register and to see the convention schedule. (If the deadline date has passed by the time you see this, check the website to see if the deadline has been extended or if walk-ins are possible.)

— **Marcia Goldberg**

VOTE411 Is Up and Running for May 2 Primary Election



Not everyone in the county will be voting in May, but voters who live in one of the 19 communities with candidates or issues on the ballot will be able to learn more about the candidates and issues at VOTE411.org, the on-line voter guide of the League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland.

Just enter your street address on the VOTE411 homepage, and you'll pull up information about the candidates and issues that will be on your own ballot. You can also view exactly what your ballot will look like if you click on the "What's on My Ballot" link on the left side of the homepage of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, boe.cuyahogacounty.us.

Who will be voting on May 2? There's only one contested primary in the whole county, and it's in Westlake's Ward 1. Three candidates, including the incumbent, are on the ballot. The race is nonpartisan, and the ward's voters can vote for only one candidate. The top two vote-getters will face off in November.

Eight school districts have tax issues on the ballot:

- Broadview Heights City School District (Brecksville, Broadview Heights, and North Royalton's Precinct D of Ward 2)
- Brooklyn City School District
- Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District (Bentleyville, Chagrin Falls Township, Chagrin Falls Village, and Moreland Hills' Precinct C)
- Maple Heights City School District
- North Royalton City School District
- Parma City School District (Parma, Parma Heights, and Seven Hills)
- Rocky River City School District (Fairview Park and Rocky River)
- Shaker Heights City School District (Shaker Heights and four Cleveland precincts)

Six municipal issues are on the ballot:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bedford—tax issue | Seven Hills—two charter amendments |
| Brecksville—zoning amendment | Walton Hills—tax issue |
| Brooklyn—zoning amendment | |

— *Marcia Goldberg*

Can You Think of More?

Reasons to attend our Annual Meeting: Hear a speaker address relevant topics, visit with League friends, get to know new members, and, if you are a new member, learn more about the League and find out what it has been doing and hopes to do in the new year. Congressional redistricting reform, decreasing influence of money in politics and protecting voting rights are part of LWVUS's Campaign for Making Democracy Work. Local issues also are a concern.

Multiple Events

Northeast Ohio Public Policy Forums:

All forums are free and open to the public.

The Foster Care System in Northeast Ohio - April 18

Phillip Morris, columnist, *Plain Dealer*, moderator.

Tuesday, April 18, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Lakewood Public Library, 15425 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44107

Cleveland East Side Development: Prospects for Reinvention - May 9

Terry Schwartz, director, Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative, Kent State University, moderator.

Tuesday, May 9, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Heights Library Main Branch, 2345 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Fracking and the Impact of the Utica Shale on Ohio - May 16

Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, moderator.

Tuesday, May 16, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Solon Community Center, 35000 Portz Parkway, Solon, OH, 44139

“Transportation in Northeast Ohio. Where's the Equity?” - June 14

Ginger Christ, Reporter, *Plain Dealer*, moderator.

Wednesday, June 14, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Urban Community School, 4909 Lorain Avenue, Cleveland OH 44102

Videos of past forums are available on the LWVGC YouTube channel and linked from the public policy forum page on the LWVGC website.

IMPACT: A Practical Guide to Political Action - May 10

Wednesday, May 10, 7 - 9 p.m.

Shaker Heights High School Auditorium, 15911 Aldersyde Drive, Shaker Heights, OH 44120

Stay tuned for more information. The Shaker Heights Chapter invites all to attend with the hope that the program may present a model for similar events throughout the county. Organized by the Shaker Heights Chapter and co-sponsored by IMPACT (a group of Shaker Heights families).

Ohio Redistricting Reform – Train to be a Speaker - May 13

Fair Districts Ohio and the LWV-Greater Cleveland will be hosting two speakers' bureau training sessions for the Ohio Congressional redistricting reform effort: one on the east side in the morning and one on the west side in the afternoon. Anyone interested in the issue can attend either session. Come if you wish to be a speaker for the redistricting effort or if you simply want to learn more. This training will also be valuable for anyone collecting petition signatures, as they will no doubt have to answer many questions. Catherine Turcer of Common Cause Ohio will lead the sessions.

Saturday, May 13, 9:30 a.m.

First Unitarian Church of Cleveland, 21600 Shaker Blvd, Shaker Heights, OH 44122

Saturday, May 13, 1:30 p.m.

Rocky River Public Library, 1600 Hampton Road, Rocky River, OH 44116

To register for either session, go to: <http://www.fairdistrictsohio.org/events> scroll down to the May 13th events and click either east side or west side

– *Michael Baron*

Thank You To Our Donors

Generous donors continued to make our League strong by providing funding for expanding our voter education and public policy efforts. The fall Education Fund Appeal received \$6,265 from both members and non-members and the Investment Fund at The Cleveland Foundation received \$1,725.

These donations received as of 3/1/2017 came from:

Anonymous	Susan Klarreich	Susan Stechschulte
Abby & Tom Abelson	Diane Karpinski	Carolyn Sugiuchi
Susan Alcorn	Janet Kershaw	Cassandra Talerico Kaplin
Teresa Andreani	Linda Lalley	Grennetta Taylor
Giselle Bardwell	Siobhan Leftwich	Becky Thomas
Maryann Barnes	Marcia Levine	Linda Tobin
Michael Baron	Linda & Jack Lissauer	Susan Troia
Janet Blackie	Carol Lowenthal	Blanche & Jack Valancy
Pamela Bobst	Carole Koscielny	Cheryl Weinstein
Bonita Caplan	Lynda Mayer	Holly & Doug Wang
Patricia Carter	Holley Martens in honor of Jan Deveraux	Mary Warren in Memory of Lois Van Auken
Vernillis Chambers	Anne McFarland	Barbara Williams
Dorothy Cibula	Claire Moore	Anne Williams
Adele Cohn	Pat Moyer	Diana Woodbridge
Lana & Ensign Cowell	Susan Murnane	Westlake/N. Olmsted chapter in honor of Lois Van Auken
Jackie Duhamel	Sandra O'Dell	Eileen Beal
Barbara Ebright	Sue Pardee	Ken & Polly Burns
Elva Edger	Janice Patterson	Susan Kaeser
Carol Gibson	Beryl Peck in honor of Lois Van Auken	Nancy Martt
Dorothy Greenslade	Mary Powell	Barbara Robinson
Carol Gobel	Jean Robesek	Ivanka Smith in honor of Lois Van Auken
Marcia Goldberg	Laurel Schauer Rowen	Mayor Mikael Summers
Laura Gooch	Roz & Graham Peters	Helen Waldorf in memory of Robert Waldorf
Lois Gross	Nikki Salupo	Margaret Wong, Esq.
Anthony Hanustak	Gail Schoenbeck	Kenny Yuko
Karl Hess	Patricia Schinabeck	Mary Frances & Kal Zucker
Kathleen Hickman	Jean Seasholtz	
Margie Hirsh in memory of Claudette Kuisel	Meryl Simon	
Kate Howley	Pamela Smith	
Marguerite Humphrey	Terry Stoller	
Gale & Jim Jacobsohn	Katherine Solender	
Mary Lou Jones in memory of Claudette Kuisel	Belinda St. Leger	

We also want to thank the many donors to the Operating Fund who contributed \$3,610 with their membership renewals. We cannot list those names – that list would be too long! The Board wishes to thank everyone. These funds will be well spent. Thank you!

— *Pat Moyer*

2017 Annual Meeting Agenda Items:

The proposed 2017-2018 LWVGC Program

The board recommends re-adoption of the 2016-2017 LWVGC Program Summary with the revisions recommended by the Program Review Committee and by the membership at this year’s program planning meetings. The full Program Summary can be found on the LWVGC Annual Meeting page on the LWVGC website at: lwvgreatercleveland.org/lwvgc-annual-meeting-2017

The proposed LWVGC 2017-2018 budget

The LWVGC membership will vote on the proposed LWVGC budget at Annual Meeting. At its first meeting, the LWVGC Education Fund board will vote on the proposed LWVGC Education Fund budget. Full details of both budgets can be found on the LWVGC Annual Meeting website page (see above).

The budgets were prepared by the 2017 Budget Committee: **Audrey Morris**, chair, and committee members **Mike Baron, Maryann Barnes, Adele Cohn, Janet Kershaw, Jean Seasholtz, and Joanne Siegla**. Treasurer **Meryl Simon** assisted.

Anyone needing hard copies of the proposed program or budget can contact **Michael Baron**: teachingcleveland@earthlink.net, (216) 375-2079.

The 2017-2018 slate of officers

A slate of officers, directors, and the 2018 Nominating Committee to be elected at the Annual Meeting is shown below. The officers and directors will serve two-year terms from June 2017 to May 2019.

Officers:

Audrey Morris – vice president
Nancy Dietrich - secretary

Directors:

Roz Peters - area of responsibility, chapter liaison
Jane Blackie - area of responsibility, outreach
Becky Thomas - area of responsibility, advocacy
Michael Baron - area of responsibility, program

2018 Nominating Committee to be elected:

Conda Boyd - chair
Holly Wang, Nikki Salupo, and Carol Gibson - members

This slate was recruited by the 2017 Nominating Committee: **Conda Boyd**, chair, and committee members **Paulanita Barker, Patricia Carter, Linda Lissauer, Joanne Siegla, Blanche Valancy, and Kathy Woodbridge**.

LWV of Greater Cleveland Annual Meeting 2017 Registration Form

Fill out and mail this form by Monday, May 26, to:

LWV of Greater Cleveland, c/o **Michael Baron**, 25477 Bryden Road, Beachwood, OH 44122

If having lunch, include a check for \$10 per person payable to **LWV of Greater Cleveland**. To register and pay online, visit the Annual Meeting website page (see first paragraph above).

Name _____ No. of Guests _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Questions? Contact **Michael Baron**: teachingcleveland@earthlink.net, (216) 375-2079

LWV of Greater Cleveland Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 3, 2017
(see pages 1 and 7 for details)

LWV Ohio State Convention

May 5 - 7, 2017
(see page 3)

Northeast Ohio Public Policy Forums

Free and Open to the Public
(see page 5)

See the LWVGC website (www.lwvgreatercleveland.org) under **News and Events/Calendar** for more information about Upcoming Events.

VOTER Co-Editors

Wendy Deuring
Anne Engel



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