



League Settles Election Reform Lawsuit

By Linda D. Lalley

On June 15, 2009, the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO), the League of Women Voters of Toledo-Lucas County and a dozen Ohio citizens reached a historic agreement with the State of Ohio to fix defects in the way Ohio conducts its elections.

“Ohio voters won a great victory with the settlement of this case which was about giving all eligible Ohio voters the chance to vote in a fair election and have their votes counted,” said Meg G. Flack, LWVO president. “Careful planning and uniform execution of elections was our goal, and we believe this agreement achieved that.”

The agreement, calling for new institutional procedures in the electoral process, settled a lawsuit filed in 2005 alleging that then Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, Governor Bob Taft and their predecessors had failed to protect the constitutional rights of eligible Ohio voters to cast a meaningful ballot.

The settlement mandated common-sense practices widely implemented in 2008, but sporadically employed previously, plus some new reforms:

- pre-election resource, security, communication and contingency planning and post-election assessment at the county level;
- post-election effectiveness assessment at the precinct level in counties with large urban populations;
- accurate processing of provisional and absentee ballots;
- enhanced poll-worker recruitment and training;
- better access for disabled voters; and
- improved voting technology and security.

See ELECTION REFORM LAWSUIT on page 3

Ohio Redistricting Contest

By Ann Henkener

Earlier this summer, winners of the Ohio Redistricting Competition were announced. The goal of the Competition was to demonstrate that an open process based on objective criteria can produce fair legislative districts. The Competition took more than nine months of planning by the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO), Ohio Citizen Action, Common Cause, former State Rep. Joan Lawrence, OSU Professor Richard Gunther, Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner, and State Rep. Dan Stewart.

In drafting redistricting criteria, special attention was given to balancing a number of principles that can help achieve fairer districts in Ohio. The following criteria were used in the contest to draw Congressional districts, based on the 2000 census data:

- Compactness. Sometimes referred to as the “look” of a district, compactness assures that bizarrely-shaped legislative districts are minimized.
- Communities of Interest. Counties, municipalities, and other government boundaries give Ohioans a sense of place and shared interests. This measure seeks to minimize counties divided between districts.
- Competitiveness. This measure seeks to maximize the number of legislative districts that could be won by either party.
- Representational Fairness. The counterbalance for competitiveness is assuring that a final redistricting plan does not unfairly bias one party over another.

In addition, all plans needed to meet some basic criteria:

- Population Equality. Districts must be as equal in population as possible.
- Contiguity. Every part of a district must be reachable from every other part without crossing the district’s borders.
- National Voting Rights Act. All plans must provide for at least one majority-minority congressional district.

The Competition resulted in eleven plans submitted that met all of the criteria. Three plans were declared winning plans based on the scoring criteria used in the competition. Even the worst-scoring plan submitted in the competition was quantitatively fairer than the actual 2000 redistricting plan. One of the winning plans was submitted by Stuart Wright, a member of the Metropolitan Columbus League.

Stuart’s plan included nine districts leaning Republican and nine leaning Democratic; 11 of 18 Congressional Districts rated as competitive for either political party; 20 county fragments, providing a high level of community preservation; and compact districts, providing districts that “look” fair. By contrast, the current plan drawn in 2001 includes 13 districts leaning Republican and five leaning Democratic; only seven of 18 Congressional Districts rated as competitive for either political party; 44 county fragments, providing a low level of community preservation; and uncompact districts, creating districts that do not “look” fair.

The Competition proved that Ohioans can draw fair districts, and the League needs to continue getting the message out.



Legislative Update

Ann Henkener, Legislative Director



The state budget was finally passed in July and the legislature went on break until after Labor Day. We expect to be attending hearings this fall on the newest election reform legislation. On August 4, 2009, Reps. Dan Stewart and Tracy Heard, both from Columbus, introduced HB 260, the Elections Enhancement Bill.

The Elections Enhancement Bill was developed in coordination with Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner, who earlier this year held two statewide election summits on a range of topics from early voting to provisional balloting. The legislation includes many of the recommendations from the Elections Enhancements for Ohio report, which was issued following the two summits. Some key components are:

- Streamlining Ohio's ID laws. The proposal would allow voters to continue to show a current valid photo ID or two items from an expanded list that show the name of the voter.
- Reforming provisional balloting. The proposal limits the situations in which a voter must vote a provisional ballot. For example, voters who have had a change of name or change of address won't be required to vote provisionally.
- Enhancements for the Statewide Voter Registration Database. The proposal would ensure that a non-match with the BMV database or the Social Security Administration database would not, on its own, be the basis for disenfranchising a voter.
- Improvements to the absentee voting process. The proposal would expand the number of in-person early voting locations and would decrease the period for in-person voting to 18 days before a general election.
- Standards for allocating voting machines. The proposal would require boards of elections to develop voting machine allocation plans and post them for public comment up to two weeks prior to Election Day.

League elections lobbyists will follow this proposal and let the grassroots know how to get the reforms we need.

imPACT's Teachable Moments

Mary Helen Hart, LWVOEF imPACT Program Manager

Because of population losses in Ohio, we are experiencing a "teachable moment" with the imminent threat of losing at least one, possibly two, representatives in Congress based on the 2010 Census numbers. Increasing awareness of the importance of the 2010 census is paramount to ensuring our rightful U.S. Congressional representation and, just as importantly, in determining how many federal dollars come back to our communities to fund many important federal programs. It is an ideal time to hold an **imPACT Town Hall Meeting** on redistricting and the complete Census count. The imPACT coordinators will provide the speakers on both topics and provide support necessary to make the efforts a success. Eight local Leagues currently have dates set for a town hall meeting on this topic. Please contact Anne Nelson, anelson6@columbus.rr.com, for more information and to set up a date on the calendar.

The issues in the imPACT program are Accountability/Sunshine/Open Government, Judicial Reform/Judicial Independence, Redistricting Reform, Election Law Reform, and Campaign Finance Reform. Each day, <http://www.ohioimpact.org/> keeps readers up to date on the latest developments and media coverage on these critical topics.

Do you know what is happening with Campaign Finance Reform? What are the ramifications of *Citizens United v.*



Federal Election Commission and why should we care? Where can we go to find the evidence of the largest campaign contributors to politicians and political parties? What are the problems in Ohio with our election systems, and what changes have been made and which changes are expected from the recent lawsuit settlement? How involved is the LWVO Education Fund with the redistricting process and education about the Census? Which Ohio Supreme Court member is retiring and wants to see changes in the way we select judges? If you would like to get the most up to date information on these topics in one place, sign up at <http://www.ohioimpact.org/stories/latest-news/feed> to easily glance at the latest news headlines with imPACT. Go exploring; it is one click away.



From the

President's Desk...

*Meg G. Flack, President***How LWVO/EF Spent Its Summer Vacation**

By Meg G. Flack

Ah, those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer...or so the song says. But not if you're a League member working at the local or state level! To illustrate the breadth and depth of LWVO/EF's summer activity, here's a condensed version of what your state Lobby Corps, board and staff have accomplished since Convention:

- Settled the lawsuit, held a press conference about it, had letters-to-the editor published in several papers around the state, designed and implemented a monitoring process for the lawsuit issues.
- Discussed concerns about proposed election reforms with the Secretary of State's (SOS) staff.
- Participated in the SOS's Election Enhancements Workgroup refining proposed election-administration legislation.
- Concluded the redistricting competition, held a related legislative briefing and visited 7 newspapers' editorial boards resulting in several editorials around the state lauding the contest.
- Drafted a constitutional amendment on redistricting in conjunction with Ohio Citizen Action and the SOS.
- Sent 900-plus letters based on Action Resolutions passed at Convention to legislators and other officials.
- Had a series of meetings with Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Moyer and key statewide decision-makers about judicial reform.

- Issued 2 Action Alerts regarding Ohio's biennial budget urging legislators to stop cutting vital services and increase state revenues.
- Achieved significant and long-sought victories in health-care and education reform in the state budget.
- Distributed letter-to-the-editor templates on judicial reform for local Leagues to submit to their newspapers.
- Provided local Leagues with support for the Membership Recruitment Initiative.
- Offered webinar leadership trainings for League members.
- Surveyed Leagues to develop best-practices guidelines for voter services.
- Published the summer VOTER.
- Inaugurated a new website.
- Developed state ballot-issue overviews and recommendations for the general election.
- Worked in two coalitions to build participation in the census and developed a template for local Town Hall Meetings on redistricting and the Census.
- And then there were all the "regular" activities: responding to hundreds of local League and general-public calls, Town Hall Meetings, testimony, weekly e-newsletters, liaison calls – and much, much more!!

So when I'm asked what the League did this summer, I have a long—and impressive—answer. What a difference the League makes—and how proud I am to be a member!

Continued from ELECTION REFORM LAWSUIT on page 1

Excluded from the settlement were plaintiffs' claims relating to the implementation of Ohio's statewide voter registration database. Current Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner is examining and refining the processes by which voter information is compared with information in the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and Social Security Administration databases. The settlement mandates that she file status reports in federal court on the progress of improving the registration database.

A key component of the agreement was its binding terms for the next six years – a timeframe long enough to stabilize and solidify good election administration, but short enough to recognize the probable introduction of new election technology requiring different procedures from those now in place.

Oversight of county election administration by previous Secretaries of State had been varied, resulting in costly duplicate efforts among Ohio's 88 counties. This was most

notable during implementation of the 2002 Help America Vote Act. The settlement is expected to pave the way for cost savings to the state as a whole, such as in the development of training materials for poll workers.

Plaintiffs were represented at no cost by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Demos, and the law firms of Proskauer Rose LLP, Arnold & Porter LLP, and Connelly, Jackson & Collier LLP.

The Federal District Court in Toledo will have continuing jurisdiction to enforce the settlement order through January 11, 2015. LWVO is developing a plan to monitor compliance with the many provisions of the settlement agreement. The plan is expected to involve interested local Leagues, League members and coalition partners.

More information on the facts of the lawsuit settlement and an analysis of its impact can be found on the LWVO website at www.lwvohio.org.



ISSUES 1, 2 & 3...

ISSUE 1: Proposed constitutional amendment to authorize the state to issue bonds to provide compensation to veterans of the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq conflicts (Proposed by Joint Resolution of the General Assembly of Ohio)

To adopt Section 2r of Article VIII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio

A YES vote means approval of the amendment.

A NO vote means disapproval of the amendment.

A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted.

If approved, this proposed amendment shall take effect immediately.

League Explanation of Issue 1: This ballot issue proposes a constitutional amendment that would provide compensation to veterans serving during the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq conflicts. The amendment is similar to the bond issues passed by the voters to compensate veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam conflict. It will provide the state with the authority to issue up to \$200 million of bonds. The Ohio treasurer has estimated that only \$106 million of the bond proceeds might actually be needed. All bonds must be issued by December 31, 2013. Repayment of these bonds would be a general obligation of the state backed by the taxing power of the state. Revenue from these bonds would be used to provide additional compensation as follows:

- Payment may be made to Ohio residents who have served on active duty in the United States armed forces between August 2, 1990 and March 3, 1991, which was the duration of the Persian Gulf conflict; between October 7, 2001 and the end of the United States' involvement in Afghanistan; and between March 19, 2003 and the end of the United States' involvement in Iraq.
- Veterans who served domestically or in foreign service in locations other than the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, or Iraq may receive \$50 for each month served up to a maximum of \$500.
- Veterans who served in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, or Iraq may receive \$100 for each month served up to a maximum of \$1000, or may receive \$1000 if medically discharged due to combat-related disabilities.
- If a person died as a result of injuries sustained in Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, or Iraq service, that person's family may receive \$5000.
- If a person is missing in action or held in enemy captivity, that person's family may receive \$5000.

The Legislative Services Commission estimates that issuing \$200 million of obligations could increase the state's annual debt service expense by up to \$18 million. The voters must approve this bonding authority because the Ohio Constitution does not permit an appropriation being made for a period longer than two years.

Proponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. Passing the amendment by vote of the people shows that Ohioans appreciate Ohio veterans.

2. The payments will ease veterans' transition back into civilian life.

Opponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. Tax monies will be diverted to paying principle and interest, and this may limit the availability of state revenue for other state programs during a period of financial crisis.
2. Future taxpayers will be responsible for the debt incurred for these bonuses. The payments should be paid for by revenues available in the current biennium.

ISSUE 2: Proposed constitutional amendment to create the Ohio livestock care standards board. (Proposed by Joint Resolution of the General Assembly of Ohio)

To enact Section 1 of Article XIV of the Ohio Constitution

A YES vote means approval of the amendment.

A NO vote means disapproval of the amendment.

A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted.

If approved, this proposed amendment will be effective immediately.

League Explanation of Issue 2:

This proposed constitutional amendment would create the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board for the purpose of establishing standards governing the care and well-being of livestock and poultry in Ohio.

The bipartisan board would consist of thirteen members:

- The director of the state department that regulates agriculture
- Ten members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, including:
 - * One member representing family farms
 - * One member knowledgeable about food safety
 - * Two members representing statewide organizations that represent farmers
 - * One member who is a veterinarian
 - * The State Veterinarian in the state department that regulates agriculture
 - * The dean of the agriculture department of a college or university in Ohio
 - * Two members of the public representing Ohio consumers
 - * One member representing a county humane society
- One member appointed by the Speaker of the House who shall be a family farmer
- One member appointed by the President of the Senate who shall be a family farmer

The Board would have authority to establish standards governing the care and well-being of livestock and poultry in Ohio, subject only to the authority of the General Assembly.

Proponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. The board represents a balance of interests.
2. The board would establish standards governing the care and well being of livestock and poultry in Ohio.
3. Ohioans can have greater confidence in the safety of locally produced food.

Opponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. The board should be created by statute rather than by amendment to the Ohio Constitution.
2. Creating another regulatory board utilizes revenues best spent on basic services to Ohioans.
3. The amendment could prevent certain animal care reform proposed by national animal rights organizations.

ISSUE 3: Proposed constitutional amendment to authorize a casino in Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Toledo, Ohio. (Proposed by Initiative Petition)

To add a new Section 6a to Article XV of the Ohio Constitution

A YES vote means approval of the amendment.

A NO vote means disapproval of the amendment.

A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted.

If approved, the proposed amendment will take effect 30 days after the election.

League Explanation of Issue 3: This amendment would authorize four casinos, one each in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, and Toledo, located on particular parcels of land owned by private individuals.

1. The operator would be required to pay a tax of 33% annually on gross casino receipts. "Gross casino receipts" excludes payments to winners. The tax revenue would be allocated in the following ways:
 - 51% to the 88 counties on a pro rata basis, with 50% of the county's distribution going to the county's most populated city if it had a population of greater than 80,000 as of the 2000 United States Census.
 - 34% to public school districts in proportion to their public school district populations.
 - 5% to the host city where the casino that generated the revenue is located.
 - 3% to fund the Ohio Casino Control Commission.
 - 3% to a fund supporting purses, breeding programs and operations at existing horse racetracks.
 - 2% to fund a state law enforcement training program.
 - 2% to fund treatment of problem gambling and substance abuse.
2. The Ohio Casino Control Commission would license and regulate casino operators, management companies, key employees and all gaming. The commission would have 7 members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.
3. Each casino operator must make a minimum initial investment of \$250 million.
4. The initial license fee of \$50 million for each casino will fund state economic development programs.
5. Each casino could operate 24 hours a day. Each casino may have a maximum of 5,000 slot machines. Each casino may conduct any type of card or table games, slot machines or electronic gaming devices permitted by states adjacent to Ohio, except bingo, and horse racing where the pari-mutuel system of wagering is conducted.

Proponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. Thirty-eight states—including Indiana, Michigan, and Pennsylvania—have casino gambling.

2. By authorizing casinos in Ohio, the profits could benefit our state rather than other states.
3. Counties, public school districts, and many cities will receive tax revenue generated by the casinos, and each can decide how to best spend its money.
4. The casinos will create 34,000 new jobs in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, and Toledo.
5. The casinos will stimulate the economy by adding restaurants, hotels and ancillary businesses.

Opponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. The Ohio general revenue fund, which supports basic services for Ohioans, will get \$0 from the gross casino receipts tax.
2. Ohio lottery profits, currently dedicated to education, may decrease because people will gamble at the casinos instead of playing the lottery.
3. Ohioans may spend money at the casinos they would have spent at other existing Ohio businesses such as restaurants, movies, or sports events, adversely impacting those businesses.
4. The number of gambling addicts in Ohio would increase, and the tax receipts dedicated to providing treatment for addicts could be insufficient.
5. The proposed amendment could be construed to mean that all games allowed at the casinos can be played only at the casinos, eliminating church-festival poker games and casino nights sponsored by charitable groups.

Websites:

In support of the proposed amendment: Cops for Casinos <http://copsforcasinos.com/>

In opposition to the proposed amendment: Vote NO Casinos Committee, TruthPAC www.truthpac.org/

LWVO Statewide Positions on the 2009 General Election Ballot Issues

Passage of Issue 1 would amend the Ohio Constitution to provide additional compensation to veterans of the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq conflicts. The League has no position under which to take action on this issue and the Board voted to take a NEUTRAL stance. The League opposes amendments that are too specific to be a general set of principles appropriate for inclusion in the Ohio Constitution. However, bonding authority which lasts longer than 2 years must be set forth in the Constitution. Therefore the League did not use this principle on which to make its decision.

Passage of Issue 2 would amend the Ohio Constitution to create the Ohio Livestock Standards Board and set forth its composition and duties. The Board voted to OPPOSE passage of this issue because the amendment contains too much specificity to be in the Ohio Constitution. The opposition is based on the state position that the Ohio Constitution should be a clearly stated body of fundamental principles.

Passage of Issue 3 would authorize a casino in Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland, and Toledo. The LWVO Board voted to OPPOSE passage of this issue for the same reason it opposed Issue 2 – it contains too much specificity to be included in the Ohio Constitution. In addition, it violates the state League's position that the legislature should have flexibility in financing state programs, because the amendment directs how the tax revenues will be spent.



Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI)

By Charisse Armstead

The Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI) is a partnership among the local, state, and national Leagues to build and strengthen local Leagues. This partnership focuses special attention on enhancing visibility and incorporating membership growth activities into League plans and events. Currently the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) has provided mentors to eight local Leagues to assist them in carrying out the MRI program objectives.

Under the MRI program, the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) has developed techniques to concisely and consistently inform individuals about the benefits of League membership and to demonstrate the important roles that League members play in civic improvement – in keeping their communities healthy,

vibrant, and strong. Experience tells us that if we effectively communicate the unique benefits of membership to potential members, we can successfully recruit them. LWVO and LWVUS are using a systematic approach to training and coaching the Leagues, so they develop practices that lead to their growth. A diverse but specific demographic of new members, women ages 50-65 (i.e. entering a retirement phase of life) are targeted under the current initiative.

Current local Leagues participating in the MRI are: Akron Area, Cuyahoga Area, Greater Youngstown, Greater Dayton Area, Toledo-Lucas County, Canton Area, Tiffin Area, and Portsmouth/Scioto County. These local Leagues participated in a full-day training with state League leaders and LWVUS staff, developed specific work plans, (including short and long-term action steps), and participate in monthly conference calls with their

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Mark Your Calendars: April 1, 2010 is Census Day!

By Karen Rainey & Meg Flack

It's important! It's a count of everyone—citizens and non-citizens—living in the U.S. It...

- Is mandated by the U.S. Constitution and participation is required by law;
- Determines the number of U.S. Representatives Ohio will have for 2011-2021; and
- **Determines Ohio's share** of approximately \$385 billion in federal money distributed over the next 10 years **for such programs as Medicaid, vocational education, and all of the services funded through the community services block grant—your community's safety net.** For each Ohioan not counted, approximately \$1,250 per year will be lost.

It's easy! Each head of household will be asked to fill out a short form of 10 questions about each person living at that residence on April 1, 2010 (e.g., name, relationship, gender, date of birth, race, etc.). Preview it at www.census.gov.

It's safe and secure! By law, the Census Bureau cannot share answers with anyone, including welfare or immigration agencies, the FBI or the CIA.

What can local Leagues do?

- Post links on your website to www.census.ohio.gov and www.nonprofitscount.org.
- Promote the Census at League meetings, in VOTER articles, e-newsletters, letters-to-the-editor, etc.
- Host a Town Hall Meeting on the census and redistricting. A wealth of material is available to assist you, including

LWVOEF's template.

- Work with your local Complete Count Committee to educate people—especially those in hard-to-count census tracts—about the importance, ease and safety of participating.

What is LWVOEF doing?

In addition to the above, LWVOEF is participating in two related coalitions. Karen Rainey (LWV-Delaware County) represents us on You Can Count on Me, a committee of nonprofits working to increase participation in 300 of Ohio's most difficult Census tracts. Meg Flack represents us on the statewide Ohio Complete Count Committee established to increase awareness and motivate Ohioans to participate. Look for census links on the League's website, www.lwvohio.org.



...Starting Her League Career Early!

Zoe, Cousin
of State Board member
Ardith Keck

Please remember: You can receive up-to-date information, including Action Alerts, from your state and national Leagues by providing us with your email address. We protect the privacy of our members' email addresses and do NOT sell or share these email lists. Just send an email to Charisse Armstead at lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org or call us toll-free at 1-877-LWV-OHIO.



Ohio Hosts Summer Meeting of Midwest Democracy Network

By Karen Rainey and Deidra Reese

Columbus, Ohio was the host site for the five-state Midwest Democracy Network (MDN) summer meeting. Gathering in late June, the alliance—which includes the state Leagues in five states (Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota)—reaffirmed its commitment to political reform and discussed strategic possibilities.

LWVO, represented by Meg Flack, Deidra Reese, Karen Rainey, Nancy Brown and Ann Henkener, was lauded for the settling of the *LWVO et al. v Brunner* lawsuit as well as the success of the redistricting contest.

The overall theme was Shifting Society: What do the changing economic, political and journalistic landscapes mean for democratic reform in the Midwest? Issues stressed were:

- Redistricting: The importance of public pressure and the need to engage the public now.
- Journalism: The diminishing work of investigative reporting by newspapers and the rise of (unfiltered) Web-based news sources and their impact on our work.
- MDN: Its potential for influencing national public policy.
- The 2010 Census: An Ohio example of work in progress to reach the hard-to-count.

Representatives of Ohio groups also discussed redistricting and the Census, and began to lay out the next steps to educate and engage the public in efforts to have a complete Census count, including maximizing the impact of the League contest and the possibility of a shadow redistricting commission.

MDN participants discussed the role of the MDN in regional public policy debates and ways to establish the network as a credible and powerful voice in the region and the nation. Deidra Reese, LWVO Executive Director, has contributed to an internal committee defining philosophies and goals.

MDN recently hired a part-time Executive Director and has spent considerable time developing services and products for MDN member organizations. The MDN website, www.midwestdemocracynetwork.org, and listserv contain regular information on key programs and projects of MDN member groups. If you are interested in receiving regular postings from MDN you may sign up for their listserv at http://midwestdemocracynetwork.org/index.php/register_for_updates/

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state League coaches; who provide support, guidance, and resources. Communication is a cornerstone to this initiative and is vital to ensuring that participating local Leagues reach their membership goals.

Thus far, the MRI plan has been a positive experience for local Leagues as the MRI initiative complements and enhances existing League program plans or ideas. If your local League is interested in joining the MRI to increase visibility and membership, please contact Membership Manager Charisse Armstead at 614-469-1505.

Liaisons between Local Leagues and LWVO

By Melissa Currence

As a grassroots organization, engagement between the local Leagues and the State Board is critical to the success of all Leagues in Ohio. Creating a two-way dialogue between a state board member and specific local Leagues encourages the local Leagues to discuss their achievements, ask questions and talk about any concerns they have. The conversations will give the LWVO board member the opportunity to let the local Leagues know what resources the State and even the National Leagues may have to offer to that would lessen their workload. By highlighting what activities the LWVO lobbyists and board are working on, there will be greater exchange of ideas and information making these activities even more relevant.

Here are some ideas for conversation topics with your state league liaison:

About your Local League:

- What activities did your League plan that really engaged your members or community?
- What are your priorities for the upcoming year?
- What are your upcoming events?
- What activities did you try that may not have worked so well?
- Your feedback on State League activities and publications about the State League:
- What membership resources are available for my Local League?
- What leadership training opportunities are available for my Local League?
- How to I set up a planned gift (such as gifts of stock or bequests) for the League?
- What is the status of advocacy activities at the state level?
- Who do I contact about having a LWVO speaker come to my board retreat/forum/membership meeting?

Help us know what is important to you. Contact Melissa Currence at 515-535-3242 or currencem@yahoo.com if you do not know who your state board member liaison is.

LEAGUE DONATION FORM

YES! I WANT TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE!
Here is my contribution.

\$250 \$100 \$ 89 \$ _____

By Check: _____ Payable to LWV Ohio* or
_____ Payable to LWV-Ohio Education Fund ** or
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Please enclose this form with your donation and mail to:
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By Credit Card: Make a secure credit-card donation online at
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*Contributions to LWVO are NOT tax-deductible
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The League of Women Voters of Ohio, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

For membership information, call (614) 469-1505, toll free 877-LVW-OHIO, email lwvoinfo@lvvohio.org, or visit us on the Web at www.lvvohio.org.

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MEMBERSHIP FORM



Yes, Sign me up as a member of The League of Women Voters of Ohio!

\$60 Individual \$75 Household

Name(s) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
State _____
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Mail this form with Check to
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The Newsletter of THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO

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www.lvvohio.org
(877) LWV-OHIO (598-6446)

Nancy G. Brown, LWV Metro Columbus
Melissa Currence, LWV Cincinnati Area
Gwendolyn Fish, LWV Youngstown
Ann Henkener, LWV Metro Columbus
Sally Mier, LWV Greater Dayton Area
Kurt Miller, LWV Shaker Heights
Tiana Nicol, LWV Greater Dayton Area
Terrie Nielsen, LWV Kent
Jean Robejsek, LWV Cleveland Area
Mary Van Nortwick, LWV Oberlin

Contract Accountant
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Charisse Armstead
Membership/Office Manager

Anne Nelson
Town Hall Meeting Coordinator

Mary Helen Hart
IMPACT Project Coordinator

Linda D. Lalley
Contract Accountant

The League of Women Voters of Ohio
17 South High Street, Suite 650
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3474



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