



THE LEAGUE

OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

THE VOTER

103 Wm. H. Taft Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45219
513-281-8683 Fax: 513-281-8714
info@lwvcincinnati.org www.lwvcincinnati.org

January 2008

Inside this issue ...

- Happenings - page 1
- President's Letter & Board Briefs - page 2
- League News - pages 3 - 4
- Ohio News - pages 5 - 6
- Other News - pages 7 - 9
- Volunteers - page 10
- Activities - page 11
- January Meetings - page 12

MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership is open to all men and women over 18. For information and call 513-281-8683, or write to the LWVCA office at 103 Wm Howard Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45219, or email at info@lwvcincinnati.org.

LWV DIVERSITY POLICY

The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making.

The LWVCA affirms its commitment to actively seek diversity in its membership, leadership and programs.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY LUNCHEON

The 20th annual Susan B. Anthony Luncheon for the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area will take place on Saturday, February 9, 2008, at the Kenwood Country Club, 6501 Kenwood Rd., Madeira.

The Keynote Speaker will be David Pepper, Hamilton County Commissioner. The topic will be the Hamilton County comprehensive justice system reform.

The event will begin at 11:30 a.m. with a Silent Auction and social hour including entertainment from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music (CCM) String Duo.

Luncheon will be at 12:30 p.m. An opening presentation will be from Cincinnati History Museum's youth program. The Martha Taft Service Award will be presented to a very special League member (see page 2 for information).

This fund raising event for the LWVCA cost \$35.00. Send your check payable to LWVCA to the office, 103 Wm. H. Taft Rd. Cinti, OH 45219, by February 1. For more information call 281-8683.



SILENT AUCTION BASKETS

Filled baskets are a very popular item at our Susan B. Anthony Luncheon. We are looking forward to the creative baskets the units put together. And of course individuals can join in with their own donated basket. Popular items in the past have included baskets of wine, party supplies, food, personal care, baby items and computer items. Donations of books, art, small antiques and unique crafts are also welcome. Baskets and other auction donations are due no later than January 11, 2008. You may bring your contributions to the League office, and remember to attach your name in case we have a question. Contact **Lora Jollis** for more information.

JANUARY UNIT MEETINGS LWVUS PROGRAM PLANNING

New Process for Program Planning!

Every two years, Program Planning is how League members identify issues of focus for the coming two years for our National organization. You determine what the League should study to make a difference in our country. This is how we remain a grassroots organization.

This year the process is different! Leagues are no longer asked to adopt the existing program, so no more "add, drop, update" votes. (This process will be done at National Convention in June 2008) Instead, we will propose changes by suggesting new studies, reviews, or concurrence with studies from state or local leagues. League members from all parts of the nation will identify issues for study, look at the pros and cons, and assess support. If we determine that an issue is in need of study, we must then organize support from other Leagues across the country.

(continued page 3)



By Rina Saperstein, President

Program: A new "Know Hamilton County" guide will be completed and in distribution in January thanks to a great team of **Elizabeth Jamison, Chris Moran, Nancy Forbriger, and Corinne Gutjahr**, along with County Government Committee members. This document is much in demand! League members completed a thought-provoking national consensus process on Immigration policy, facilitated by our Diversity Committee. The Education Committee had an informative conversation with Cincinnati Public Schools' Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer regarding school finances and future levy requests. The Natural Resources Committee is actively participating in

the City of Cincinnati's Climate Change Task Forces; and Housing Committee is studying housing opportunities for senior citizens. We'll work with CCR, Urban League, Cincinnati and Woman's City Club in advocating to maintain funding for Regional Planning within the tight County budget.

Membership: As of early December, we had 435 members, but about 100 of them need to pay up before Dec 31 or they will be dropped from the membership roster. (You know who you are!) Units were involved in holiday parties and working on Susan B. Anthony silent auction baskets.

Organization: Board discussed office issues- we need new training for office volunteers and may also look at hiring a part time staffer to work with Sue in the office during the busiest times of summer and fall. We're also excited about progress being made by an ad hoc committee (**Marj Davies, Sue Gorman, Sherrie Heyse and Rina Saperstein**) to update technology in our office- including hi-speed internet access!

Fund Development continues preparation for Susan B. Anthony Luncheon and Visions luncheon, along with the Ransohoff and Martha Taft awards. We will be submitting grant applications to PNC Foundation, and renewal applications for Community Shares.

Voter Service updated our records and web information to reflect the Hamilton County ballot recount, and evaluated our work for the November election. Now we are beginning work on our "They Represent Us" legislator guide, edited by **Susan Banoun**. And as soon as that is underway, we'll begin work on the primary, only 3 months away!

Strategic Planning: The Board is looking at a new organization chart which will focus more attention on Community Relations and Membership in addition to leadership in Voter Service, Program, Fund Development and Administration.

We also are gathering information on needs, volunteers and partners to determine when it will be feasible to offer voter services and program advocacy in Warren or Butler County (or parts of the county). We want to do this in a way that serves needs as partners and residents, not in a way that makes us as outsiders who barge in without invitation. Our Warren County and Butler-Fairfield Unit members have already produced "They Represent Us" public official guides for those areas that just need updating, so we have a great start. Increased collaboration with Clermont County is also a wonderful way to work regionally.

To enhance our proactive impact through outreach to other groups and organizations, we are working on a joint project with the Mayor's Kitchen Cabinet, and we continue our successful collaboration with 4 other civic groups working together on criminal justice and budget issues.

In this new year, I hope for peace in our community, nation and in the world; I wish health and happiness to you and those you love; and may we work together joyously and effectively in 2008.

League Nominating Committee:

Who will lead our League? Each year, as we choose board members we look for a mix of skills, styles, outlooks, demographics, and a mix of experience with the League. Our nominating committee will be choosing two directors, a treasurer, two vice presidents, and a President-Elect who will become President in 08-09. Who do you know who can contribute to the leadership of the league? Your nominee need not be a current or long-term league member (though, of course they must join). Send your nomination info to **Elizabeth Jamison**, Nominating committee chair.

Martha B. Taft Service Award:

The committee looks for recommendations from members. Nominees must be long-time member of the local League; must be an all around contributor to the League; and, must be a leader in the general community. Nominations should describe the member's accomplishments and, if necessary, include names of those who can give further information. Deadline is January 8, 2008. Honoree will be acknowledged at the Susan B. Anthony Luncheon on February 9.

IN SEARCH OF THE ELUSIVE NEW MEMBER

By Joan Honeck

In response to an idea developed at a summer membership committee meeting, the Anderson Unit of LWVCA embarked upon a pilot project. We hoped to gain new members for the unit, publicize the League among new homeowners in the area, and remind the new residents to register to vote with the Board of Elections.

We decided to send a packet of League materials to each home buyer in the Anderson area as published on the County Auditor's website from July 1, 2007 to Oct. 16, 2007. There were about 250 buyers on the list. Included in the each packet was a *TRU*, a *Tips for Voters*, a League membership brochure, a voter registration form and a welcoming letter. The letter introduced the League and invited the new residents to our unit meetings.

After the packets were assembled, with the assistance of **Dot Christianson**, we addressed the envelopes. A few weeks later, a follow up postcard was sent inviting them to the next unit meeting. These were also hand addressed. We have not had a positive response. No new faces have shown around the discussion table, but we are hopeful that by raising League visibility, we have increased our chances to boost membership.

This was a unit effort with many contributors. **Ellen Campbell**, Unit Chair, **Sherrie Heyse**, **Joan Honeck**, **Pinky Kocoshis**, and **Gail Wick** spent hours addressing envelopes and cards and personalizing the welcome letter. We also had assistance and technical expertise from **Marjorie Davies**.

The cost of these extra mailings was not in the League budget. The Steiner Fund agreed to provide the funds for this effort and for a prior membership promotion involving mailings to the public librarians in Hamilton County.

We continue to reach out for new members. We have provided League materials, such as *TRU*, *Tips for Voters*, and voter registration forms to the Anderson Newcomers meetings and are considering working with realtors to provide new homeowners voter information and *TRU*'s.

(Program Planning - Continued from page 1)

January Program Planning is also our opportunity to look at our role within a national organization- what advocacy does the League of Women Voters of the US pursue? and What priorities do we have for action by our national league?

Do plan on attending a Unit discussion. If you can't make a Unit meeting, join the e-Unit discussion.

TECH DONATIONS NEEDED

The League is in need of a recent model wireless networking enabled desktop computer or laptop to be used in the volunteer office. The computer should include an operating system, office software and monitor. We'd prefer something with a small footprint since we don't have a lot of desk space.

We also need a nice digital camera to take pictures of League events. It should include charger and whatever it needs to transfer photos to a computer. So, if you got new cool technology for a Christmas or Hanukah gift, consider giving us your older model. You get the tax deduction, we get the goods. Call the League office if you can make the donation.

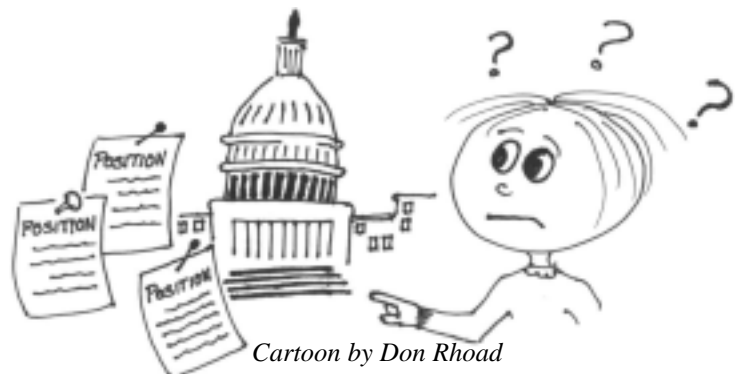
ARE YOU A POLITICAL JUNKIE?

By Melissa Currence

Political junkies now have a new way to have fun at FantasyCongress.com. It is a free Web site where individuals draft teams comprised of 10 Members of the U.S. Congress and compete against each other in this game similar to fantasy sports leagues.

A team earns points based on several factors including sponsoring or co-sponsoring legislation, attendance and news. Each team is comprised of members of Congress with varying degrees of experience from upper Senators to junior Representatives.

As a new Fantasy Congress player, my experience has been positive. It was easy to join a league of 14 others and draft a team. The Web site is a fun way to track national legislation and learn more about Members of Congress. It also is a great way for students to learn more about the legislative process. Check it out at fantasycongress.com.



Cartoon by Don Rhoad

NOTES ON POST-ELECTION BOARD OF ELECTIONS ACTIVITIES

By Nancy Forbriger, LWVCA Board of Elections Liaison

We know that the work of the Board of Elections is far from finished on election day. This year was no exception. By law, the provisional ballots cannot be opened until the 10th day after the election. On Monday, Nov. 26, the Hamilton County Board of Elections opened and examined the provisional ballots which had been validated for counting, that is, the person voting the provisional was a registered voter.

The staff reviewed over 4,500 ballots looking for those which were folded, torn, mutilated or had misaligned bar codes. About 50 of these were set aside for special review by the Board. State law requires that commissioners must, by majority vote in a public meeting, agree to the intent of the voter following guidelines for that determination sent by the Secretary of State. Mutilated or disfigured ballots where voter intent is clear are then remade so that they can be scanned in the same manner as the precinct-voted ballots. The ballots are remade by a staff team of one Republican and one Democrat, scanned and added to the final count.

All this took place before a stack of 100 uncounted absentee ballots were discovered. Then recounts were done for seven close races, 200,000 ballots were re-scanned, and the final certification of the Nov. 6, 2007 election results was made on Dec. 4, 2007.

A representative from a group called Citizen Alliance for Secure Elections also attended the November 26th Board of Elections meeting. She had questions about the security of the provisional ballots and criticized the meeting notification process. In September, several special meetings were held by the Board. Some groups including the League were not notified due to a computer problem. She suggested the Board publicly advertise their meetings, and suggested meetings of the Board be posted on the web site at least a week in advance.

The Board had hoped to be moved into a different location before the 2008 election, but that will not be possible due to the county budget restraints for 2008.

A March 4th Primary/Special election date will keep the wheels turning at the Board. Director John Williams says he fully expects to make the changes needed that will assure the Hamilton County votes are counted early and accurately, knowing the eyes of the Country may well be on Hamilton County next November.

IMMIGRATION STUDY CONSENSUS MEETINGS

By The Diversity Committee

Special thanks to all the members who participated in the thought-provoking, valuable and lively discussions in November.

The Diversity Committee reviewed compiled the results from the Units and presented it to the Program Development Committee, then to the LWVCA Board. Our Board has approved our local response and will forward it to the LWVUS Immigration Study Committee (composed of members from various states). The LWVUS Immigration Study Committee will take responses from Leagues across the country and from them, formulate a proposed position on immigration. We should know in March 2008 if the National Board approves the proposed position.

As you know, after we have a position on this topic we can then take action on legislation that affects immigration laws. You can take pride in knowing that your contributions in the unit discussions will **MAKE A DIFFERENCE**. Again, thank all of you.

ELECTORAL REFORM R US

By Peg Rosenfield, LWVO Election Law Specialist

The League of Women Voters was born out of an electoral reform movement 87 years ago. But getting the right to vote for women did not end the fight for reform. We have continued to work to assure that every eligible citizen can cast an informed ballot and have that ballot counted honestly and without fear of intimidation.

Two years ago, we proposed ten points for election reform in Ohio. Only a few of our ideas were enacted, but one was the change in law to allow 17-year-olds to serve as pollworkers. This has proved a great success, providing more computer expertise at the polls while providing a real-world civics lesson for young people. Pollworkers love having these enthusiastic high school students on hand and they have been a big help in alleviating the chronic pollworker shortage, especially in urban areas.

Another of our proposals was to make absentee voting more accessible by removing the requirement that the voter must provide a reason from a specified list to show why it was impossible to go to the polls in person. The legislature enacted this reform though they then attached a counterproductive requirement that the voter must provide some kind of identification with the absentee ballot.

This year the state board of LWVO has approved a revised 10-point reform proposal that includes many of the original ideas with some additions and modifications. Because of the problems arising from the election law changes enacted in 2006 in House Bill 3, we have tried to address concerns about a wide range of problems that need to be addressed administratively and in the statutes.

The ten proposals can be grouped into three general categories:

- Access to voting - including registration, absentee voting, and overseas voters;
- Administration - impartiality, ID and provisional ballots, and voting systems and recounts;
- Information - Boards of Elections, pollworkers, and voters.

Access is critical to an effective voting system. The best election system is useless if voters do not have ready access to it. The administration of the election system must be fair, competent, and transparent or no one will trust it. Information, including training and education, must be well designed and delivered so that all participants in the electoral process know what they are supposed to do and how to do it.

Want to Know More? The full text of the 10-point election reform proposal is available on the state League Web site at: <http://www.lwvohio.org/2007/Advocacy/ElectReformAg2-1-07.pdf>

UPDATED PUBLICATIONS FROM LWVO

The following publications have been updated this year and are available in the League office.

■ *Township Government in Ohio* gives a brief history of townships, what they can do and some quick facts. It explains the difference between townships and other municipalities. (The original publication included township information gathered by the late Betsy Pierce, LWVCA member, when studying Anderson Twp.)

■ *The Sunshine Law: Ohio's Open Meetings Act* - A guide to Ohio's open meetings and open records law. It explains what types of meetings are covered, rules for those meetings and possible citizen action for violations.

■ *Contacting Your Legislator or Elected Official* helps citizens make formal contact with policy makers, including proper salutations, suggestions for conveying an effective message, and tips for lobbying. It offers simple instructions on what to do and what not to do.

■ *There Oughta be a Law* explains how legislation is enacted in Ohio. It provides an overview of the Ohio General Assembly, how to read a bill and advocate for one, and offers step-by-step suggestions for moving a bill through the legislative process.

Call our office 281 - VOTE to obtain these publication for yourself or others. There is a charge for multiple copies.

NOVEMBER ELECTION RESULTS FOR SCHOOL ISSUES

By Joan Platz, LWVO Education Lobbyist

There were 200 taxing issues for Ohio school districts on the November 6, 2007 ballot. These include new and renewed property tax levies, replacement levies, income tax levies, and capital issues. 108 (54%) were approved, and 92 (46%) failed.

There were fewer taxing issues for school districts on the November ballot this year compared to the past five years, but the approval rate was basically the same at around 50%. In 2006, there were 206 issues, 109 passed; in 2005 there were 222 issues, 124 passed; in 2004 there were 286 issues, 143 passed; and in 2003 there were 216 issues, 103 passed.

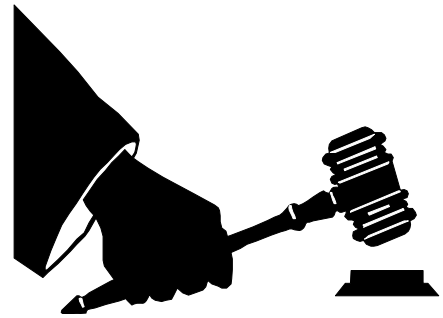
IS JUSTICE FOR SALE?

by Anne Nelson, LWVO imPACT Project Manager Excerpted from the Oct. imPACT Newsletter

Most people are not involved with the courts unless they are confronting a legal matter. And typically, media coverage of the courts does not happen until a high-profile celebrity catches the public's attention. This makes the judiciary the least understood branch of our government. Yet it is the branch charged with protecting access to justice for all.

As the imPACT Town Hall Meetings on judicial reform have shown, people believe special interests, campaign contributions and partisan politics threaten the rule of law. There is a perception that justice is for sale. A 2002 poll commissioned by the League of Women Voters of Ohio Education Fund found:

- Two-thirds of voters believe Ohio's judicial campaign finance system needs reform;
- One in three believes that campaign and fundraising rules for judicial candidates should be stricter than those for other candidates;
- And, four out of five believe that campaign contributions influence judges and candidates more than any other factor.



The LWVOEF poll was conducted two years after Ohio became the poster child for out-of-control judicial campaigns. In 2000, Citizens for a Strong Ohio, funded by a group of Ohio's largest corporations, raised over \$4.2 million and ran ads targeting Justice Alice Robie Resnick, a sitting Ohio Supreme Court Justice. Just one year before, she had angered the business community by authoring a decision declaring Ohio's tort reform law unconstitutional. The ads depicted "lady Justice" peeking out from a blindfold onto piles of money that were tipping the scales of justice. The ad asked: "Is justice for sale?" The Ohio State Bar Association, editorial writers and others called the ads "deceptive" and Justice Resnick won re-election.

In 2004, the \$6.3 million donated to Ohio Supreme Court candidates set a new record for combined judicial candidate fundraising. Ohio was one of only two states in which three high court candidates raised over \$1 million each.

In 2006, just under \$3 million was donated to candidates for two seats on the Ohio Supreme Court. Yet that relatively modest amount (in comparison to prior elections) still made Ohio one of the leaders in the United States for money spent on state Supreme Court races. In addition, this does not include monies spent by other organizations. According to campaign finance records, the Partnership for Ohio's Future (which is associated with the Ohio Chamber of Commerce) raised \$1.3 million to support Justice Terrence O'Donnell and Robert Cupp in their efforts to be elected to the Ohio Supreme Court.

If voters are correct in their belief that campaign contributions influence judges, what can be done? A number of states use a merit selection process in which judges are appointed to the bench, and then stand for election in a retention election. In a retention election, voters do not choose between two candidates, they only decide whether that judge should continue in office. In 1987, Ohio voters rejected a ballot initiative that would have adopted merit selection for appellate judges by a two-to-one margin. Recent polling demonstrates Ohio voters' continuing commitment to electing judges.

How are other states addressing this issue? Some states use partial or total public funding of judicial elections. Others require that attorneys disclose their campaign contributions to judicial candidates and require judges who received contributions above a set amount to recuse themselves from any case involving that attorney.

If you want to read more about judicial elections check the following internet resources: Ohio Citizen Action www.ohiocitizen.org and Justice at Stake www.justiceatstake.org.

The Voter is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area. *The Voter* Editor and Office Staff: Susan Gorman. Proofer: Rina Saperstein. Layout and design: Kit Berger.

LEAGUES FILE AMICUS BRIEF IN INDIANA VOTER ID CASE

The League of Women Voters of Indiana, LWV of Indianapolis, and the LWVUS filed a joint Amicus Brief in the Supreme Court case that will determine the constitutionality of an Indiana law that requires voters to present photo ID at polling places.

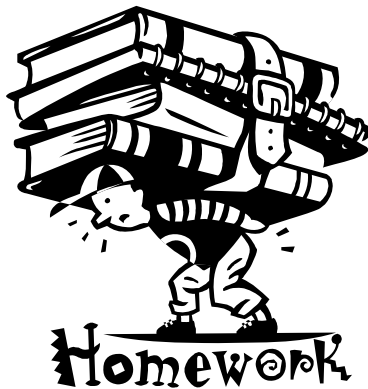
The brief details experiences of a number of Indiana voters where votes were either not counted or the right to vote was denied entirely, including that of 92-year-old Mary Wayne Montgomery Eble. Eble, the disabled daughter of a suffragist, was turned away from the polls because she could not acquire certified proof of her birth in order to obtain a photo ID.

The brief points out that while those burdened by the Voter ID Law may be in the minority that does not change the fact that each individual has a fundamental right to vote. Further, the law in question gives an astounding amount of discretion to polling officials who are political appointees, in that these appointees are able to challenge any voter without constitutionally required limitations or guidelines for the use of this power.

To read the brief visit the LWVUS website: http://www.lwv.org/Content/ContentGroups/Advocacy/AmicusBriefs/2007_11_LWVUS-LWVIndianaAmiciBrief.pdf.

MAIN LIBRARY STARTS HOMEWORK CENTRAL

A new department at the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County Main Library will provide homework help to students 7 days a week. Friendly, enthusiastic volunteers are needed to make this program a success. Volunteers will have the opportunity to mentor and work with children and teens on homework from January through May. Hours are Monday thru Friday, 3-6 pm; Saturdays, 2-6 pm; and Sundays, 1-5 pm. The Library will train all volunteers to assist students of all ages with understanding their homework, finding books and other resources, using online data bases and searching the Internet.



Do you have at least two hours per week to make a difference in the lives of students in our community? If you do, please contact Miriam McKenney, Homework Central Manager, at (513) 369-3121, or send an e-mail to request a volunteer application to miriam.mckenney@cincinnati.org.

WOMAN'S CITY CLUB - JANUARY FORUM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008, 7 - 9 p.m.
MT. AUBURN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GEIER ROOM
TOPIC: AN OVERVIEW OF HAMILTON
COUNTY'S CHILDREN'S SERVICES
DIVISION: Protecting Children From Abuse
and Neglect

Hamilton County Job and Family Services
Panel:

- √ 241-Kids Supervisor, Intake and Investigations
- √ Ongoing Services Supervisor
- √ Adoption/Foster Care Supervisor
- √ Adoption/Foster Care Recruitment Manager

You have questions...these folks have answers!! Come, bring a friend or two, and participate in this worthwhile exchange!

LEAGUE CONNECTS WITH YPS

By Rina Saperstein

Young Professionals: They have time, energy and creativity and skill and they are the activists, philanthropists and decision makers of the future. Trendwatchers pin our future to this demographic group. But YPs are not just a younger version of baby boomers- they have different demands, interests and ways to be involved. According to study data- people under 30 expect- no DEMAND— to be involved beyond just passively receiving information or giving money. The League has the opportunity to work with one influential YP group, the “Mayor’s Kitchen Cabinet” to look at ways to enhance civic engagement and voting in the 22-35 age group. The Kitchen Cabinet asked the League to partner with them, and we’re thrilled. They report that many of their friends and colleagues are not registered to vote and feel disconnected from the political process. Together, our task is to change that. So, we’re sharing our expertise on voting and political involvement, and at the same time, we’ll learn a lot about “viral marketing” and “High touch high tech” communication. We’ll be partnering with this group through spring and summer of 2008.

WHAT OTHER PEOPLE ARE SAYING

“*Social Justice Seeking YPs: Community Shares links passion with critical local causes*” By Margo Pierce *City Beat*, 12/12/2007 (Excerpt) for entire article see: citybeat.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A143236

[Chris Lawson of Community Shares] says many of the member groups are looking for new perspectives and new people to serve on boards to help with the future development of their activities. One such group, also a Community Shares member organization, is the League of Women Voters.

“The League has stated several times they want to get YPs [Young Professionals] engaged,” Lawson says. “They want them to see the value in civic responsibility, voter empowerment, to see that kind of need for understanding the impact of voting. There have been some studies that show there is a generally cynical feeling about voting and if it really matters. Here you have a League that has the institutional knowledge to know that voter participation is invaluable to a democratic society. They understand the historical precedent of voting.”

... existing non-profits are expecting retiring baby-boomers to move away and slow down their volunteer work. This potential “brain drain” doesn’t have to be devastating if a group is willing to embrace a new generation of activists.

12 QUESTIONS FOR THE LEAGUE - CONTINUED

Last month the *Voter* published some of the questions Angela Hursh, WKRC Channel 12 reporter, asked when she interviewed five of the LWVCA board members just before the election. In each succeeding *Voter* more of these questions and answers will be printed as space allows.

Why do you think the majority of registered voters in America don’t turn out to cast their ballots?

A fascinating study by the LWV of Chicago found that voting is only one part of a continuum of civic engagement. We have to look beyond the short-term registration and Election Day turnout to promote a sense of engagement and understanding in our communities. We don’t have a culture that promotes or congratulates taking time to get involved. These days it is considered rude in some circles to discuss politics, and when politics are discussed publicly it is often polarizing, divisive, simplistic, angry and, well, unkind. So folks want no part of it. They don’t see models of discussing the issues in thoughtful ways, of gathering information and making choices and taking responsibility for those choices. They see government as something “other” - not a part of their life and not something they want a part of. They see politics (handicapping the race) rather than policy (decisions about how our governments can best serve the community). They believe big money controls outcomes more than the democratic process. So, no wonder they don’t vote. We have to find a way to change this - and it doesn’t start with voting, though it may end there.

-Rina Saperstein, LWVCA President

PLAYHOUSE DIRECTOR TO BE SPEAKER



Ed Stern, Producing Artistic Director of Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, will speak at the “Dinner with the League” event on Monday, January 28, 2008. The event, sponsored by the League, begins at 6:00 p.m. at the Vernon Manor Hotel. Stern will address the subject, “The Arts in Greater Cincinnati: How Can We Enrich Our Community?” His remarks will focus on his assessment of the state of the arts in our society today, with emphasis on what he sees happening in the Greater Cincinnati area. In addition, he will offer his recommendations for the future.

Ed Stern is in his 15th season as the Producing Artistic Director for the Playhouse. He has taught extensively and directed at commercial and regional theatres nationwide. His directing credits at the Playhouse include *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure*; *Of Mice and Men*; *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*; *Mister Roberts*; *King Lear*; *Inherit the Wind*; *The Little Foxes*; *Sweeney Todd*; and *The Merry Wives of Windsor, Texas*.

This is the fourth in a series of “Dinner with the League” monthly events designed to attract and inform both League members and prospective new members. We encourage members to invite friends to accompany them to this enjoyable and informative event. Reservations for “Dinner with the League” may be made by calling the League office at (513) 281-8683.

WEB 2.0 AND TECHNOLOGY FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

By Rina Saperstein

On Dec 2, Jeniece Jones, Executive Director of Greater Cincinnati Community Shares, provided a workshop for League members on Web 2.0, next generation technology. We soon learned that this information is key to reaching out to a new generation. According to Jeniece, older websites provide information like a newsletter or a brochure. Users were encouraged to visit the static site and to print or copy information provided by the organization. But the new generation sites are constantly changing. They allow users to interact- to log in, customize information, provide feedback and actively donate, volunteer, discuss and participate on line. New generation sites are shared by users who pass along links and information that they like within their social network. And users use cellphones, blackberries and other devices as well as traditional computers to access information. Its easy for the organization to lose some control of content in Web 2.0; and its really hard to keep generating changing information all the time. But at the same time, you gain access to many more people who learn and amplify your message. This becomes an important communication resource. Our “smartvoter” site is a good start, and we are also redesigning our website to include many Web 2.0 features.



Jeniece Jones

Why do we care? This is where the voters, volunteers, committee members and policy thinkers of the future are communicating. Interactive communications allows for civic engagement among people who will never attend traditional daytime or evening meetings. If we want to work with younger voters on public policy, this is where we need to be. Just as we progressed from typewriters and mimeographs to computers and the web, we need to continue to take advantage of changing technology for faster, cheaper and more widespread communication. We thank Jeniece for her help in getting us started.

MEMBER NEWS

Condolences to Sue Stanton and her family on the death of her husband Fran

Congratulations to Sherrie and Fred Heyse on granddaughter, Madeline Grace

Best wishes for a quick recovery to League member Tommie Thompson who has been hospitalized with viral pneumonia and complications.

JANUARY SPOTLIGHT



Bette Evanshine tells of her experience with the LWV.

“One hundred years ago (or circa 1976) I was in the home-maker stage of my life and a friend who was a League member invited me to a unit meeting. I was immediately hooked by the gracious women, the mission of the League and the intelligent and civil discussions. Before I knew what was

happening I found myself the co-editor of the Who & What of Elections. And that summer I was proud to walk with the League in Cincinnati’s bi-centennial parade. Fate took me in another direction later and I became an outside-the-home working, single mother of two children and because there were only so many hours in a day, something had to go. The League had to be taken off the plate.

My professional life has been primarily involved with training and human resources. I am currently working for Talbert House in a human resource capacity. While I am not directly involved in working with clients, I take pride in being associated with a non-profit organization that provides mental health and other services that enhance the lives of so many people, making this community a better place.

Even though my initial involvement with the League was brief, I believe it helped prepare me with some basic and useful skills for the workforce – teamwork; listening, not just hearing, and respecting diverse opinions; dedication to a common cause; and the usefulness of being gracious.

As soon as I was able, I re-joined the League. I like to say that I am a recycled member (a shameless plug for the Natural Resources Committee). And when I returned, I found it difficult to resist becoming a member of the Diversity Committee. The rest is history. Board Director; Vice President of Membership and Organization; Vice President of Program; Unit Chair; Moderator of forums and candidates debates; Who & What of Elections; and various committees across the spectrum. The choices of committees and activities are like a candy shop for political and activist junkies!

Please pardon the schmaltz, but I have yet to find a better group of people to be associated with. The League is replete with members who constantly impress me with their dedication, intelligence, deep understanding of issues and – dare I say it again – graciousness.

I’d like to add that the friend who invited me to my first League meeting also was a League dropout and has now rejoined the League. We have another recycled member.”

KUDOS TO

Congratulations to **Chris Moran**, who has been named Chair of the City of Cincinnati’s Transportation Task Team. The team is one of 5 task teams overseen by the Mayors’ Environmental Steering Committee as part of the Mayor’s Climate Protection Plan to produce initiatives for the City to reduce its energy footprint. League members **Jeff Davis** and **Pinky Kokoshis** are also representing League on this Committee.

In a separate matter, Chris was nominated to serve as a community representative to the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Council of Governments. In our endorsement letter we wrote that Chris “has an extraordinary range of knowledge about regional issues, transportation, environment and collaborative planning. As a liaison and communicator between the League and OKI, Ms. Moran would have the active support of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area, with its wide membership of active, concerned citizens in Butler, Warren and Hamilton Counties. She would be an asset to your organization, to ours, and to our region.”

There are only 2 community representatives, and we haven’t heard yet whether her nomination will be accepted.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Action Chair: Track league advocacy efforts and communicate advocacy requests to League members. Work can be done entirely from home; requires use of email.

Senior Community Outreach: Work with residents of Marjorie P. Lee and Deupree homes to test out unit meetings there. Work includes working with residents to pick a date, time, securing a room, organizing refreshments, publicizing with flyers at the two homes, and lining up a discussion leader each month.

Voter Service: Sign up now to help with voter service during the primary and general elections this fall. We need trained members of our voter service committee, and we need to train early, BEFORE the work gets overwhelming. Voter service is very precise, because it is so important to get our *Who and What of Elections* and Smart Voter Websites absolutely right. We need 4 people who are trained to review candidate materials to make sure they meet our guidelines. We need 3 people trained to call candidates and talk them through providing their materials. We need 3 people trained to work with the Smart Voter website. We need 4 people trained to do final copy editing before print. And we need at least 4 new folks trained as candidate forum moderators. As soon as we have a list of volunteers we’ll schedule trainings. Once you are trained, your workload will be up to you – from lots of hours to just a few. But you can’t help until you are trained, so sign up now.

UNIT MEETINGS**TOPIC: NATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING****ANDERSON**

Wednesday, Jan. 9, 7:15 p.m.
 Anderson Hills United Methodist
 Anderson Twp., Cor. Beechmont & Forest
 Discussion Leader: **Pinky Kokoshis**

CENTRAL EVENING

Wednesday, Jan. 9, 7:15 p.m.
 Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church
 103 Wm. Howard Taft Rd.
 League Conference Room
 Discussion Leader: **Gretchen Langdon**

COLLEGE HILL

Tuesday, Jan. 8, 11:30 a.m.
 Brown Bag
 Location: Sachi Kariya's home
 Discussion Leader: **Lorraine Schultz**

HILLTOP

Monday, Jan. 14, 7 p.m.
 Location: TBA
 Discussion Leader: TBA

METRO DAY

Wednesday, Jan. 16, 12 noon
 Brown Bag
 Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church
 103 Wm. Howard Taft Rd.
 League Conference Room
 Discussion Leader: **Mary Kercherval-Short**

NORTH CENTRAL

Tuesday, Jan. 8, 12 noon
 Brown Bag
 Friendship United Methodist
 Cor. Springfield Pike & Fleming Rd.
 Discussion Leader: **Jan Evans**

NORTHEAST EVENING

Monday, Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m.
 Madeira Municipal Bldg.
 Cor. Euclid & Miami Ave.
 Community Room
 Discussion Leader: **Helen Rhoad**

WARREN COUNTY

Tuesday, Jan 8, 7:30 p.m.
 Mason United Methodist
 773 Mason-Montgomery Rd.
 Discussion Leader: TBA

E-UNIT

Online at: www.groups.yahoo.com/group/lwvca_internet

JUST A REMINDER ...

The LWVCA Speakers Bureau training will be held on January 28, Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon at St. Monica's Meeting Room, 328 W. McMillan St., Clifton. This is a golden opportunity to learn how to talk about the League in public, use technology, and be able to discuss both sides of an issue without showing personal bias. Cost is \$10.00 for members and \$20.00 for non-members. And that includes lunch. Call the office for further details and registration.

LWV CLERMONT COUNTY PLANS MEETING

Protecting our Courts . . . Protecting our Rights is the topic of Clermont's upcoming dinner/meeting.

- January 22, 2008
- Dinner 6:00 p.m. Program 7:00 p.m.
- Receptions Conference Center East, 4450 Eastgate Blvd.
- Dinner: \$15 Reservations required
No charge for those coming only for the program.

The judicial branch of our government is often least understood of the three, though it is charged with protecting access to justice for all. Join in this informative program presented by Clermont County Common Pleas Court Judge Robert Ringland and learn about the importance of preserving fair and impartial courts. Make reservations and pay online with a credit card at www.lwvclermont.com or call Carol Glotfelter at 513-943-9429 or email her at glotfelter@fuse.net or mail reservations to LWVCC, P.O. Box 733, Milford, OH 45150.

Check the online calendar at - www.lwvcincinnati.org or <http://www.calsnet.net/lwvcincinnati> for events and unit meetings.



League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area
 103 Wm. H. Taft Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45219
 513-281-8683 Fax: 513-281-8714
 info@lwvcincinnati.org www.lwvcincinnati.org

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LWVCA Education Fund is a member of Community Shares.

JANUARY CALENDAR

- Wed., Jan. 2, 9:30 a.m. Office reopens
 - Wed., Jan. 2, 5:30 p.m., Program Development Committee*
 - Wed., Jan. 2, 6:30 p.m., Ransohoff Award Committee*
 - Wed., Jan. 2, 7 p.m., Discussion Leaders Briefing*
 - Mon., Jan. 7, 7 p.m. Natural Resources*
 - Mon., Jan. 7, 7 p.m. County Government*
 - Tues., Jan. 8, 6:30 p.m., Board Meeting*
 (Note date change)
 - Tues., Jan. 9, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., *Know Hamilton County*
 mailing*
 - Wed., Jan. 10, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., *Know Hamilton County*
 mailing*
 - Tues., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., Education Fund*
 - Fri., Jan. 18, Speakers Bureau Training Registration Deadline
 - Mon., Jan. 21, 7 p.m., Housing Committee *
 - Wed., Jan. 23, 5:15 p.m., Program Development Committee*
 - Thurs., Jan. 24, 10 a.m. Feb. *VOTER* collating*
 - Sat., Jan. 26, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m., **Speakers Bureau Training**,
 St. Monica's Meeting Room,
 328 W. McMillan, Clifton
 - Mon., Jan. 28, 6 p.m., **Dinner With the League**
 Ed Stern, Speaker, Vernon Manor Hotel
 400 Oak St.
 - Mon., Jan. 28, 6:30 p.m., Diversity, Madison House
 Conference Rm., 2324 Madison Rd.
- *League Conference Room**

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- Student membership - \$25.00

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Phone _____

Day

Evening

Email _____

**These dues include membership to LWVCA, LWV Ohio
 and LWV United States.*

Just clip and mail to: LWVCA
 103 Wm. H. Taft Rd.
 Cincinnati, OH 45219