



THE LEAGUE

OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

# THE VOTER

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Visit LWVCA on

July/August 2011

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

Membership is open to all men and women over 18. For information call 513-281-8683, or write to the LWVCA office at 103 Wm H 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.



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JEAN MASTHAY

Dear Leaguers,

I just completed my 5<sup>th</sup> week with LWVCA, and the old adage "time flies when you're having fun" rings true for me! I've met so many delightful people, and it will be my pleasure to continue meeting more League members, donors and partners in the coming weeks.

The Fundraising, Government and Social Media Committees welcomed me to their meetings this month. The plans and challenges discussed there helped me to better understand our League's work in Cincinnati. Serving as a delegate to the LWV Ohio convention at Maumee Valley State Park was a great experience. I was able to become acquainted with our work at the state level and meet other Executive Directors and Board members serving in Ohio. **Sherrie Heyse, Marj Davies** and I attended a workshop at XU titled "Transform your Board into Superheroes." Personally, I think you are already "superheroes"; nonetheless the presentation was "super"! We walked away with some good new fundraising ideas, and were reminded of some old tried and true practices as well.

(Continued on page 3)



**LWVCA 2011-2012 Board at Annual Meeting (l-r):** Jean Masthay, Executive Director; Marie (Pinky) Kocoshis, VP Organization/Members Services; Kim Thompson, Treasurer; Dee Shaffer, Director Planned Giving; Gavin DeVore Leonard, Director Action; Gail Wick, Director Unit Coordinator; Mary Van Ausdall, Director Membership; Shirley Jason, President- Elect; Glenda Bernstein, VP Voter Service; Melissa Currence, President; Susan Banoun, Director Voter Service; Marjorie Davies, VP Fund Development; Jeane Goings, Nominating Committee. Not Pictured: Lori Bissler, Secretary; Nancy Dawley, VP Program; Mary Kay Gardner, nominating committee.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

May 18, 2011 Annual Meeting

By *Melissa Currence*



The League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area did extraordinary things this year. We continue to be a very vital organization in our community, and we were focused in activities that served our nonpartisan mission of encouraging informed and active participation in government, working to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influencing public policy through education and advocacy.

This past year, the League excelled in several areas such as Voter Service, Program & Action, Fund Development, Community Relations and Strategic Planning. The public looks to the League to provide the much-needed respectful discourse to the political arena, and we did just that during this past general election season. We continued to serve to our community by publishing 100,000 copies of our voter guide—the *Who and What of Elections*—and making that same candidate information available more in-depth on smartvoter.org. We held several debates in conjunction with the Cincinnati USA Debate Alliance and with other community groups. 30,000 copies of *They Represent Us* were distributed this spring, and an electronic version is available online. Our office volunteers handled many calls on our voter hotline, 281-VOTE, and our League also had a chance to celebrate our accomplishments at the Visions for Greater Cincinnati dinner.

This past year has also brought about many new changes as we worked to plan for our future of this League, streamline our operations and hire an executive director. Through our strategic planning work, we surveyed the membership through the October units and by email, and we received great feedback.

As we reported to you in *The Voter*, 77 percent of those who responded to the survey felt that expanding services to Warren and Butler counties was important and the top priority of the Cincinnati Area League should be membership recruitment. With the help of **Linda Wihl**, we developed four strategic plan statements:

- That the LWVCA is visible, valued, and supported by the public.
- League members are welcome, engaged and active.

- The League has the pulse of political action and the process to be proactive in responding to emerging issues.
- The League will capitalize on the 2012 elections with tangible results for the League and our community.

To help consolidate the workload among our volunteers and improve budgetary oversight, the board has assumed management of both the Steiner Fund and Education Fund, meaning the League board of directors will also serve as trustees of Steiner and Ed Funds. Both the missions of Steiner Fund and Ed Fund remain the same.

Another great success over the past year has been hiring of our first executive director. The process for a first for us, and we did so with League thoroughness and gusto. Funding for our new Executive Director position comes in part from the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Please join me in thanking **Linda Wihl**. I want to thank Linda for the excellent work she did as interim Executive Director. Linda's experience, passion and organizational skills were much in play during the winter. Linda was instrumental during our executive director hiring process. She also led the board during our February strategic planning session, out of which we have defined our goals for the future. Thanks for your hard work and dedication to the League, Linda!

Out of Linda's work, we were able to complete the executive director hiring process, and we are now proud to have **Jean Masthay** on board. As you heard earlier, Jean brings many skills to the role of executive director. She started earlier this month. I invite Jean to come forward to say a few words to you.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your president this past year. It has been a humbling, fun and challenging experience to do so. I look forward to working with the board, including President-elect **Shirley Jason**, as we continue our goal of making democracy work.

## BOARD BRIEFS: LWVCA BOARD MEETING- MAY, 2011

By *Glenda Cohen, Board Secretary*

- Executive director, **Jean Masthay**, was introduced to the board.
- **Melissa Currence** announced that May primary election information is up on *SmartVoter*; also *TRU* is now online.
- **Melissa** recently met with representatives of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* to discuss the possibility of partnering to produce election information. The board feels that more details are needed to consider this activity.
- **Nancy Dawley** informed the board that Program Development Committee suggested improvements to the Buff pages; **Corning Benton** and **Dottie Cowan** have volunteered to assist with reviewing and editing. Some unit leaders have expressed concern that the climate at some League meetings is not always welcoming of those expressing more conservative-leaning views. The board restated the League’s commitment to non-partisanship and openness to a wide range of opinions.
- **Pinky Kocoshis** is preparing arrangements and materials for the annual meeting.
- **Mary VanAusdall** reported a current membership of 354.
- **Marj Davies** informed the board that the Fundraising Committee is meeting and generating ideas. The Education Fund board has researched other Leagues around the country and learned that it is common for a single board to oversee all League operations, including Education Fund. Marj presented a motion to change the composition of the Education Fund board to the LWVCA board. The motion passed. This action is in keeping with ongoing efforts to streamline LWVCA functions and is the culmination of much groundwork by our fund boards and Investment Committee.
- **Melissa Currence** reported that the Social Media Committee is exploring redesign of the LWVCA web site.
- **Melissa Currence, Jean Masthay and Burt Roehr** plan to attend the state convention May 13 - 15.

### INTRODUCING THE 2011 - 2012 BOARD

President:	<b>Melissa Currence</b>
President- Elect:	<b>Shirley Jason</b>
VP Fund Development:	<b>Marjorie Davies</b>
VP Organization/ Members Services:	<b>Pinky Kocoshis</b>
VP Program:	<b>Nancy Dawley</b>
VP Voter Service:	<b>Glenda Bernstein</b>
Secretary:	<b>Lori Bissler</b>
Treasurer:	<b>Kim Thompson</b>
Director Membership:	<b>Mary Van Ausdall</b>
Director Planned Giving:	<b>Dee Shaffer</b>
Director Unit Coordinator:	<b>Gail Wick</b>
Director Action:	<b>Gavin DeVore Leonard</b>
Director Voter Service:	<b>Susan Banoun</b>

## LETTER FROM JEAN

Continued from page 1

You can help me to continue learning how I can best serve you and our LWVCA mission in the following ways:



- Please include my email in your distribution list if you lead a unit, committee or work group. It will not be possible to attend all meetings but I will try to visit all groups at least once this year.
- Please be willing to consider new ideas. “He that is overcautious will accomplish little.” - Friedrich von Schiller
- Please engage in honest discussion when reviewing our work. Good and thorough evaluation is crucial to our growth.
- Please be patient with me. I came with useful skills and experiences but I also understand that you have years of devotion and service to LWVCA. It will take time to integrate our abilities.

I am confident as we continue to work hand in hand that we will learn, expand services, increase funding, recruit and retain more members. Thanks and have a wonderful summer!

*The Voter* is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area.

Editors: **Rina Saperstein and Marty Harrington**. Office Staff: **Susan Gorman**. Proofer: **Melissa Currence**. Layout and design: **Kit Berger**.

## SAY NO TO HYPER-PARTISAN GERRYMANDERING

*A Note from Elisabeth MacNamara, President, LWVUS*

Closed door meetings...handpicked constituents... maps designed to keep politicians in office indefinitely while intentionally excluding ethnic and minority communities from electing representatives of their choice. **The League of Women Voters is saying no to hyper-partisan gerrymandering.**

This year, the League is empowering voters to get involved in redistricting, a process that too often has taken place out of the spotlight. We're working closely with legislators and other stakeholders in nine states — California, Florida, Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Missouri, North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia — to make sure the process is transparent and has adequate public input. Several states' redistricting maps will be finalized in the coming weeks, and Leagues are working full time to ensure their views are heard.

Through this strategic public education and advocacy campaign, we are:

- seeking opportunities for community groups and others to get involved in the process.;
- providing League activists with resources to break down barriers that have kept the process hidden from public view; and
- advocating for redistricting maps that meet the broad public interest.

**But we need you to get involved while there is still time.** Contact your local League to find out how you can get involved in this vital, democracy-strengthening work.

Read on page 5 about the statewide redistricting competition in Ohio and how the LWV Ohio will be educating about the implications of Ohio's hyper-partisanship.

## ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE US BUDGET AND DEBT CEILING

*Source: LWVUS (abridged)*

On June 2, the League and 116 coalition partners sent a letter to US Senators urging them to consider a number of important principles as discussions on the debt ceiling and FY 2012 budget continue. Briefly, these principles are:

- **Congress must reject global federal spending caps or entitlement caps and multi-year appropriations caps.** The Corker-McCaskill proposal limits spending to 20.6 percent of GDP, and would require massive cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and other programs that provide vital economic security for millions of Americans.
- **Any deficit reduction agreement, as well as any budget enforcement mechanism, must rely at least as much on revenue increases as on spending cuts.** Budget enforcement mechanisms must include an automatic waiver during economic downturns or periods of unusually slow economic growth.
- **Any budget plan must protect low- and moderate-income people and must not make programs that support them subject to automatic cuts if Congress fails to meet budget targets.** Indiscriminate cuts to the programs will jeopardize the health, economic security, and education of millions of Americans. We will fail to get the economy back on track, and an even heavier burden will fall on states that are already struggling.
- **Congress must reject any effort to impose a Constitutional balanced budget amendment.**
- **Congress must protect investments that are vital to our nation's economic advancement.** If there is one point on which all economists can agree, it is that investment – in infrastructure, research and innovation, and education and job training for worker productivity – is absolutely essential to getting people back to work in the short term and ensuring that our economy grows in the long run.

## REDISTRICTING IN OHIO:

### A competition this summer

Source: *LWV Ohio*

In June, LWV-Ohio will be sending out information on the **statewide redistricting competition** that will take place over the summer. The competition and the accompanying educational outreach will

- 1) educate Ohioans about the serious implications of Ohio's hyper-partisan redistricting process;
- 2) build consensus around specific redistricting reform measures;
- 3) build a base for future reform of redistricting standards for Ohio House and Senate and congressional districts.

Ohioans will be invited to draw district lines using 2010 Census data parallel to the Ohio Apportionment Board's and General Assembly's redistricting processes for a "real-world, real-time" experience. The competition will also draw increased attention to the need for reform because the public will be able to compare the objective results of the competition with the results of the partisan redistricting processes.

Keep checking our website at [www.lwvca.org](http://www.lwvca.org) for links to new resources as they emerge.

## REPORT ON THE STATE CONVENTION – LWV OF OHIO

MAY 13-15, 2011

Notes from *Burton Roehr*

- President Meg Flack called the LWVO 2011 Convention to order at 2:00 pm on Friday, May 13, 2011. The LWVCA sent four delegates this year: President **Melissa Currence**, **Jean Masthay**, **Marlene Muse**, and **Burton Roehr**.
  - The business of Convention is to adopt a budget for the next biennium, adopt a program, and elect a new Board of Directors, including officers. However, there's a lot more going on at League Conventions. Opportunities to attend workshops abound, and the topics can be specific (Budget Q & A) or more general (Streamlining the League). These give Leaguers a chance to discuss some of their challenges and compare notes to see how other Leagues have coped with or solved the same problem. There are program caucuses one can visit to see what's being proposed and supported by local Leagues. One comes away from these sessions with ideas for new operating approaches, as well as a new appreciation for how new program happens (or doesn't) in the LWV.
  - After all of the meetings, workshops, and speakers, the 2011 delegates took the following actions:
  - Passed a budget that retains the \$25 PMP for the next biennium, 2011-13. We were advised that it is crucial that membership be increased, as our operations and activities require adequate funding that the PMP provides. If membership levels continue to decline, we will face serious financial shortfall.
  - Thanks to prework by three Leagues from Northern Ohio and smart preparation and lobbying at the Convention, delegates voted for a new study on Human Trafficking, a not-recommended item. It was understood that those Leagues would take on the leadership in getting material out to the rest of us.
  - The committee engaged in the pilot study to update LWVO's position on funding public education in Ohio concluded that no change in that position is warranted at the present time. The new administration's approach appears to be based on a basic foundation, so our current positions will allow us to speak to proposed legislation as necessary. The rest of the program was recommended and adopted as presented.
  - We passed two Action Resolutions: 1. Retain the Estate Tax; 2. Ensure that state funding for institutions of public higher education is sufficient to allow all eligible Ohio students to enroll.
  - We elected a new Board which will include a woman from our own LWVCA, Marlene Muse. Meg Flack and Nancy Brown will be Co-Presidents for the next two years.
  - There is going to be another Redistricting Map-Drawing competition. LWVO will also have a speakers' bureau and will provide learning on how to use the software to do maps. The entries will be due at the end of July.
- We left for home on Sunday afternoon, a bit tired, but ready to apply our learning to the LWVCA. We do thank you all for allowing us to represent you at this important League gathering.

## CINCINNATI COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE REPORTS

Draft study reports for the Cincinnati Comprehensive Plan are online at [http://plancincinnati.org/pages/project\\_committees.htm](http://plancincinnati.org/pages/project_committees.htm). The planning documents include a **Housing Market Study**, designed to help Cincinnati better understand the strengths and weaknesses of its residential housing market. This study pinpoints what type of housing the city needs more (and less) of. The ultimate goal of the study is to help Cincinnati create a balanced housing community—one that adequately serves its residents with the greatest needs—and offers new and exciting housing opportunities for existing and potential residents.

In addition, the link provides access to **Cincinnati's Economic Development and Business Retention Study**; which reviews the City's Assets and Challenges and target industries, and sets eight goals for a strong, supportive business climate; focused business retention, expansion, and entrepreneurship efforts; education and workforce development; strong and vibrant Central Business District and Neighborhood Business Districts; integrated, multimodal transportation opportunities for both business and personal needs; a national and international image of Cincinnati; and dynamic leadership of economic and workforce development

Visit the website, or call Cincinnati City Planning for information on this important vision for our community's future.

## PUBLIC FORUM

### Housing Challenges for Ex-Offenders: Barriers and Solutions

Tuesday, June 28, 2011, 4:00 to 6:00 PM

Location: United Way Building, 2400 Reading Rd

Moderator:

- Susan Walsh, Director Hamilton County Community Development

Panelists:

- DeAnna Hoskins, Hamilton County Reentry Program
- Kathy Miller, Center for Independent Living Options
- Phillip Nunes, Volunteers of America, Southwest Ohio
- Charles Tassell, Greater Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Apartment Association

Sponsor:

- Affordable Housing Advocates. A short annual business meeting will precede the forum.

## A CORDIAL VISIT WITH STEVE CHABOT

By Alice Schneider

On Wednesday, June 8, 2011, four League members - **Jan Evans, Shirley Jason, Frances Fowler** and I, **Alice Schneider** - met with Representative Steve Chabot at his office in downtown Cincinnati. The national League had urged State and local League presidents to make appointments with new and returning members of Congress, to establish a dialogue on issues of importance. Sometimes, when making these appointments, one only meets with the aides, but this time we had an audience with Steve, himself.

After introductions and looking at Peregrine Falcon that has a nest on the opposite building, we settled into our discussion. We pointed out that Congressman Chabot's profile had been missing from the 2010 *Who and What* publication. We asked him if he had a problem with the League publication. "No", he said, "I like the League's *Who and What*. In fact my wife sends me to the library to bring home extra copies." We then asked him the first of the national League's suggested questions. "Do you support efforts to increase transparency and provide more information to the public through such steps as requiring disclosure and quick reporting of all election-related spending?" He replied that he is in favor of disclosure, but feels that both Republicans and Democrats must list their contributors. He mentioned Karl Rove's PAC, but also felt that George Soros' contributions must also be disclosed.

After discussing some other items for 30 minutes, we wound down the discussion. On the whole it was a very cordial meeting, much to my surprise. We chatted, laughed and found that we had some common ground on a few things like viewing the Peregrine Falcon.



L to R: Jan Evans, Shirley Jason, Rep. Steve Chabot, Frances Fowler, and Alice Schneider

## GUYS, GRIDDLES AND GRUB

By Sherrie Heyse

**DATE:** Saturday, August 6, 2011  
**LOCATION:** The Manuel D. & Rhoda Mayerson JCC, 8485 Ridge Road, (South of the Ronald Reagan Highway)  
**TIME:** 7:00 – 10:00 pm  
**COST:** Individual tickets \$35 in advance/\$45 at the door; Host tickets \$100; Patron tickets \$250; Sponsorships begin at \$500



### Highlights:

- Up to 50 amateur chefs (all male!) present their specialties in one of 7 categories: *appetizers, soups, salads, entrees, chef's choice, side dishes and desserts.*
- Guests sample as many dishes as they wish and vote for their favorite in each category.
- Prizes presented to winning chefs.
- Great musical entertainment and premium wine raffle.
- Silent auction filled with enticing artwork, jewelry, gifts and theme packages.

LWV Education Fund is one of 28 organizations involved with Community Shares. Community Shares is a way for the community to support LWV Cincinnati Education Fund with workplace donations. Each year the League receives around \$7,000 through Community Shares.

As part of our participation in Community Shares, LWV takes part in the annual fundraiser, **Guys, Griddles and Grub**. This is a really fun event with tastings from all the “Guys” who wield a griddle or pot to provide scrumptious food. Guests mingle, taste and vote on the food in different categories such as appetizer, soup, salad, main dish or dessert. Each organization is obliged to contribute a “guy” to cook, and only one is chosen as “Best of Class.” Guests also have the opportunity to bid on a large Silent Auction, listen to great music, or win a premium wine raffle. So plan to come and enjoy a great summer event.

The League is especially honored to have **Ernie Mowell** volunteer to represent us as our 2011 cook for the event ... Thanks Ernie! Ernie and his wife, **Sandra**, are new to LWV Cincinnati but not new to League. Sandra was active in the LWV in Indiana. Ernie and Sandra moved to Cincinnati last year and joined LWV Cincinnati.

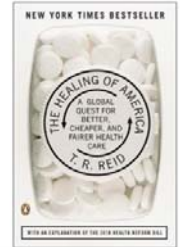
. If anyone has an item for the Silent Auction or a bottle of wine for the raffle, please call **Sherrie Heyse**.

## BOOK REVIEW

*The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper, and Fairer Healthcare*, By

T.R. Reid, 2009

Reviewed by *Corning Benton, MD*



T.R. Reid is a correspondent for The Washington Post and a commentator for NPR. He combines his own health experiences here and abroad with a discussion of healthcare in Canada, Formosa, France, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States in this New York Times bestseller. The book is easy to read and understand.

Reid points out that the multiparty decision to provide universal healthcare in Canada and abroad was a moral one – a “Yes” reply to the question, “Should we guarantee medical treatment to everyone who needs it?” The several approaches to legislation created to provide this care in other developed countries are discussed in detail.

In the United States, much of the healthcare is market-driven by for-profit insurers. People without money to pay for healthcare are excluded and are in what Reid calls the Out-Of-Pocket System: people pay for health care if they are able, but receive no health care if they can't pay. This practice applies both to the 40 million uninsured in the United States and to people who live in underdeveloped parts of Africa, South America, Central America, Southeast Asia, India, and China. People here and abroad in the Out-Of-Pocket System are less healthy and have shorter lives than those with guaranteed medical care.

Reid's final chapters suggest how universal healthcare, with its decreased costs and measurable public health benefits, might be launched in the United States.

The paperback edition fits easily into a small space and would be an interesting read during a trip or summer holiday.

## FACEBOOK DOS AND DON'Ts

By *Juliet A. Zavon, Social Media Committee*



**What organizations does the League “like” on Facebook?** We only “like” non-partisan organizations. League's guidance for social media calls on us to use League's definition of “non-partisan”. Organizations we “like” on Facebook cannot support or oppose any political party or candidate - i.e., no candidate endorsements, no contributions or fund-raisers for any political party or candidate. However, sometimes Facebook pages are created about a specific issue, and League does support or oppose particular ballot measures that are in line with League positions adopted as a result of study or consensus reached on program issues.

**How many organizations do we want to “like”?** Think of our Facebook page as an extension of our website. We want as many people as possible to see it, to understand who we are, and what we do. It would be counter-productive to narrow our audience. Facebook allows us to get our message out into the community in ways that a website cannot. We need to take full advantage of that. If an organization satisfies the criteria outlined in League's guidance on social media, we can “like” them. In using social media, we strive to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

## CINCY STREETCAR: THE REVISED PLAN Come Hear the Latest on Tuesday, June 28

From *Carolyn Miller*, Chair, City Government Committee  
and *Chris Moran*, Chair, Transportation Committee

LWVCA has scheduled a presentation for Tuesday, June 28, 2011, at 7:00 pm at the League office about the revised streetcar plan and its status. We will discuss the ramifications of a probable Charter Amendment proposal on the November 2011 ballot, to "... prevent spending to build and operate a streetcar system through the year 2020." Discussion will follow about possible "next steps" for the LWVCA (though no final decisions will be made at this point). Please RSVP to **Chris Moran** whether or not you can attend.

## FRACKING IN OHIO

### The Natural Resources Committee Investigates

By *Nancy Dawley*, Program Chair

"Fracking" is a process that sends millions of gallons of water and chemicals into the earth to open up cracks in the rock so that natural gas can escape. Ohio has lots of natural gas imbedded in such rock, and is already facing proposals for use of this method of extraction.

On **Wednesday, July 13, at 7:00 pm**, The Natural Resources Committee (NRC) will host University of Cincinnati doctoral candidate Deborah Kittner to discuss her research into fracking. NRC is studying the fracking process as part of its research into various factors affecting Ohio's water supply. All are welcome to attend this presentation in the League Office.

On May 12, nine League members and guests attended a showing of excerpts of the documentary "Gasland." The NRC opened its meeting to anyone interested in learning more about this new method of gas extraction from shale.

## The Education Committee Gets No Summer Break!

By *Burt Roehr*

Have you heard??? The LWVUS has launched a new study this summer! It's all about "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education," and Leagues across the country will be preparing material for their members to examine in preparation for the consensus meetings.

The LWVUS wants all responses back by the end of November. This timing necessitates our tackling the subject in our September units, so our local Education Committee will spend the summer months gathering material and data to use in the buff pages of the September *VOTER*. It'll be a great way to kick off our program year!

We think this is a very timely and exciting topic to undertake at this time. We urge you not only to attend a unit in September, but to bring a friend or two. Education is always high on people's agendas, and this is a great introduction to show how we reach the positions for which we advocate. Better yet, if your friends want to chime in on the discussion, encourage them to become members and provide input on the subject. There's no better way to introduce someone to the League!

## HOUSING OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES

From *Helen Rhoad*

The League of Women Voters hosted a forum on Housing Options for People with Mental Disabilities May 3, 2011, at the Sycamore Senior Center. Among the topics covered were: options that exist today; types of facilities and services; and funding sources. Citizens from other counties were interested in hearing about our Hamilton County levies that support these services.

Some of the forum participants *Robert Shuemak and John Romer*, both from Developmental Disabilities Services); *Kat Lyons*, from Center for Independent Living Options; and *Diana McIntosh*, from Mental Health and Recovery Services Board.

## FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS KITS

By *Marjorie Davies*

Every fall, for as long as anyone can remember, the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area has produced the *Who & What of Elections* nonpartisan voter guide. This highly-anticipated publication is distributed through Public Library branches, the Hamilton County Board of Elections, businesses, schools, retirement centers, churches, nonprofit agencies, corporations, and direct to our members and supporters ... 100,000 copies in all.

LWVCA office volunteers receive hundreds of phone calls during election season from voters inquiring about availability. No doubt you have friends, neighbors, and colleagues who would really appreciate receiving their own personal copy through the mail, with your compliments. And the League would really appreciate your introducing our services to them.

To make this easy, there are Friends & Neighbors Kits available now at the League office and at your next unit meeting. Complete your kit over the summer and return to the League office by mid-September. Then, immediately after publication in late September, volunteers will rush a copy to your recipients, and the League pays the postage! Kits contain all the supplies you need: instructions, introduction letters on which you write a short note of support, mailing labels that you address to your recipients, even sample notes to give you ideas, and a large mailing envelope pre-addressed to the League for return of your completed supplies.

Help the League while you promote "the informed participation of citizens in government." Call the League office 281-VOTE for your kit today!

## WE THANK OUR DONORS

By *Marjorie Davies, VP Fundraising*

Your gifts this fiscal year to the LWVCA and Education Fund totaled over \$42,000 through May 31. Thank you for your generosity! Your support enables the nonpartisan voter services and the advocacy programs you so value.

### Leadership \$1,000+

Anonymous (2)  
Adams, Doris  
Betty Roosa Pooled Income Fund  
Davies, Marjorie  
Gardner, Mary Kay  
Iglauer Fund, Harriet  
KnowledgeWorks Foundation  
Lockspeiser Family Fund  
Pepper, Francie  
PNC Bank

### Benefactor \$500+

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers  
Dawley, Gregory  
Heyse, Sherrie & Fred  
Quinn, Doreen  
Westheimer/Rhodes Family Fund

### Patron \$100+

Anonymous (7)  
Active Learning  
Benton, Corning  
Chandler, Kathleen  
Clark, Debbie  
Coppock, James  
Fellerhoff, Mary Jo  
Fleischmann, Blair  
Foy, Jane  
Gilton, Ann  
Grathwohl, Sue  
Harmony, Judith  
Hilltop Unit  
Horwitz, Elizabeth  
Joiner, Suzanne & William  
Kocoshis, Pinky & Sam  
Laborers International  
Lehman, Susan  
Mahon, James  
McHugh, Jane Tucker  
McMahon, Amy  
Moran, Chris  
Passer, Patricia  
Price, William  
Rhoad, Helen & Don  
Shaffer, Dee  
Valentine, Mary  
VanAusdall, Mary  
Weiper, Jerry  
Weitkamp, Harvey  
Winkler, Henry & Beatrice  
Women's Club of UC

### Friend

Anonymous (13)  
Abuduroufu, Reheemayi  
Adath Israel  
Anderson, Jane  
Asfour, Joyce  
Barone, William  
Benjamin, Lois  
Berger, Kit  
Bernstein, Glenda  
Binstadt, Martha  
Bishop, Thomas  
Black, Helen  
Boss, Jon & Jeanne  
Brown, Rebecca  
Bunis, Ann  
Carp, Hanna  
Clark Schaefer Hackett  
Cowan, Dottie  
Currence, Melissa  
Davis, Mary G  
Demar, Lily Ann  
Dickmann, Richard  
Dunbar, Suzanne  
Fanella, Margaret  
Fleischmann, Noah  
Ford, Mr & Mrs Ashley  
Fradkin, Rochelle  
Geiser, Teresa  
Glueck, Barbara  
Gorman, Susan  
Grossman, Joanne  
Gulley, Stephen  
Gutjahr, Corinne  
Halberstadt, Margaret  
Hanrahan, Peggy  
Hayes, Michael  
Henley, Patricia  
Ho, Ching  
Hodil, Jean  
Honeck, Joan  
Hunter, Helen & John  
Isaacs, Marjorie McKelvey PsyD  
Jacobs, Dan  
Johnston, Laurie  
Kellogg, Susan  
Kinney, Patricia  
Kochheiser, Beth  
Kreider, Janet  
Kurlin, Elizabeth  
Lose, Linnea  
Martin, Peter

### Friend

Mersfelder, Sylvia  
Metro Day Unit  
Meyers-Hughes, Carolyn  
Miller, Carolyn  
Monahan, Jerome  
Moskowitz, Regina  
Motch, Marjorie  
Moulton, Dr. Regine  
Nuckolls, Charles  
Nuckolls, Lori  
O'Connor, Marjorie  
Ott, Marilyn  
Perez, Adrienne S  
Phillips, Marcia  
Pilder, Freda T  
Pillich, Constance  
Pontius, Sue  
Richmond, Suzanne  
Roehr, Burt  
Rosero, Gail  
Rosiello, Beverly  
Royalty, Carolyn  
Ryan, Marjorie  
Samuels, Edith  
Saperstein, Rina & Jeff Davis  
Schmidt, Carl  
Schroer, C Jean  
Schultz, Loraine  
Scott, Susie  
Short, Mary Kercherval  
Simons, Ruth  
Sisters of Mercy  
Sittenfeld, Elizabeth & Paul  
Smith, Genevieve  
Spears, Sue Ann  
Stadler, Alice  
Staples, Grace  
Stegman, Tom & Dee  
Stinchcomb, Louise  
Stoller, Sephanie  
Sullivan, Mary  
Swartley, Jean  
Tanaka, Fumiko  
Tebbutt, Maryan  
Todd, Samuel  
Tolley, Howard  
Turner, Frances  
Vogel, Phyllis  
Weinshenker, Clare  
Woodwiss, Robert & Lauren  
Ziegler, Janet

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: MARTHA TAFT AWARD 2011 RECIPIENT - DEE SHAFFER

2011 Annual Meeting - May 18, 2011

Remarks excerpted from a speech by **Bridgett Pincus**, Chair, Nominating Committee

*The Martha B. Taft Award celebrates a league member who is an all-around contributor to the League and leader in the general community. The award is named after our League's first president, who served from 1920-22 and again in 1932-34.*

We are very privileged to be able to present the 2011 Martha B. Taft Award tonight to **Dee Shaffer**. Dee grew up in Fairmont, West Virginia and married in the late 1950's. From West Virginia, she moved to Normal, Illinois and then in 1966, she moved to Forest Park in Cincinnati. Dee is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati. Soon after she moved to Cincinnati, Dee started working at Channel 48 (WCET TV) as a volunteer. Forty years later, she retired from the station as Senior Vice-President of Finance and Administration.

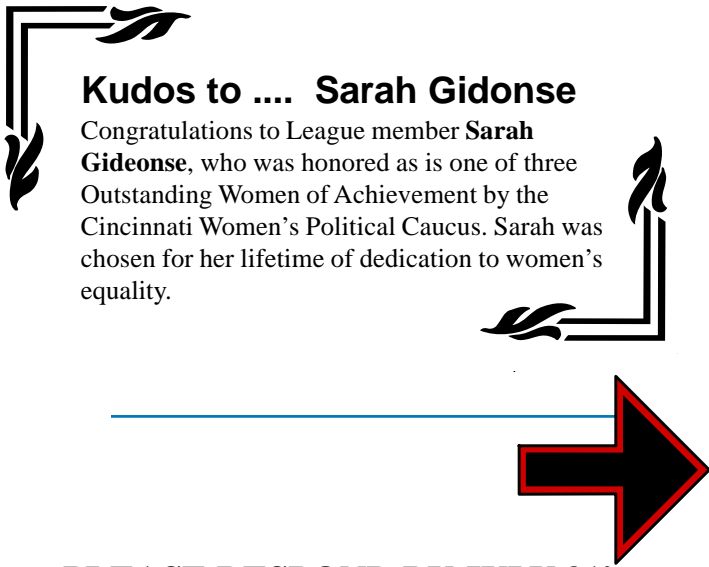
Dee joined the League of Women Voters in 1994. Her League experience includes Vice President of Finance; League Treasurer; Director of Planned Giving; Education Fund Treasurer; Nominating Committee; Nominating Committee Chair; and helping Pinky and me make sure we have money for the *Voter* mailing, which we greatly appreciate.

Dee is like the "Energizer Bunny." In her retirement, she continues to be deeply involved in with community organizations. She currently serves as Senior Director of Finance for Building Healthy Lives for Women Foundation; serves on Boards of Directors for Communication Arts Credit Union; the Ohio Business and Professional Women Retirement Living, Inc; Treasurer of the Cincinnati Business and Professional Women's Club and Treasurer of the Zonta Club of Cincinnati. She also has served as Senior Director of Finance for the National Speaking of Women's Health Foundation; Urban Appalachian Council, and Our Lady of the Rosary Church.

Dee is the very proud mother of four children: Tom, Sharon, Carol and Mike. She is grandmother to six grandchildren; Heather, Tiffany, Kristie, Tyler, Rebekah and Trevor. In her "spare time," she enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and attending musicals and the Ballet.



*Dee Shaffer accompanied by her League progeny, Daughter-in-law Judy Shaffer*




## Kudos to .... Sarah Gidonse

Congratulations to League member **Sarah Gidonse**, who was honored as is one of three Outstanding Women of Achievement by the Cincinnati Women's Political Caucus. Sarah was chosen for her lifetime of dedication to women's equality.

## PLEASE RESPOND BY JULY 31!

The Action Committee needs your input. Please fill out the paper survey here, and mail it in to the League Office. Alternatively, you can fill out the same survey online. There's a link on our website's front page, [www.lwvca.org](http://www.lwvca.org). Thank you! - **Gavin Leonard**, Action Chair



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**  
of the Cincinnati Area

**Action/Advocacy Survey:**  
Please rank your top 5 in order of importance to you, with 1 being most the important.

**Broad Issue Areas**

Civil Rights/Equality

Criminal Justice Reform

Education

Electoral Reform

Environment

Health Care

Housing

Local Government

Tax Reform

Transportation

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Events**

Anti-Choice Legislation

City/State Budget Cuts

Corporate Election Funding

Education Funding Cuts

Federal Budget Issues

Foreign Policy/War

Fracking/Environment

Immigration Reform

Senate Bill 5

Streetcar/3C Rail

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**GET ACTIVE!**

1x/week

1x/month

2x/year

Other \_\_\_\_\_

How often are you interested in/willing to act upon what is important to you? How so?

Phone Calls to Members/Phone Bank

Attend Public Meeting on Behalf of League

Phone Calls or Letters to Public Officials

Research Issues

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Want to get action emails?

\*NO SUMMER UNIT MEETINGS\*

**PROGRAM TOPICS FOR 2011- 2012**

*By Nancy Dawley, Program Chair*

Unit meetings for the fall and early winter will be very stimulating. Let your Unit Leader know if you want to become a discussion leader.

**September – The Role of the Federal Government in Education.** At the 2010 Convention, the National League authorized a committee to study the role of the Federal Government in Education. This study is ready for members’ input and consensus. Leader training dates are 8/24/11 at 7:00 pm; or 8/27/11 at 1:00 pm.

**October – Election Issues.** Many citizens are trying to get their issues listed on state and local ballots. Later this summer we will find out which ones made the cut. This program will prepare you for voting in November. Leader training date to be determined.

**November – Water.** What is happening to Ohio’s water supply? Learn more as the Natural Resources Committee summarizes its studies. Leader training dates are 10/26/11 at 7:00 pm; or 10/29/11 at 1:00 pm

**January, 2012 – National and Local League Program Planning.** The League is continually reviewing its positions to see if they are still relevant to members and communities. You will have an opportunity to identify any National or Local position changes or new studies you believe would serve the League. Leader training dates: 1/4/11 at 7:00 pm; or 1/7/11 at 1:00 pm.

**February or March, 2012 - National League Privatization Consensus.**

**April, 2012– Taking Action** - Lobbying tools, sites, etc.



At the Annual Meeting Unit Chairs were honored. Our Unit Chairs work hard all year to keep the grassroots green. At the Annual meeting, unit chairs and unit membership chairs were honored with flowers.

**Join the League of Women Voters**

**...where hands on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.**

All citizens, male and female, 18 years and older, are welcome. Take the opportunity now to support our work promoting democracy and civic engagement. Dues include Cincinnati, Ohio, and National membership, including newsletters from each.

- Individual - \$60.00
- Household - \$80.00
- Student - \$25.00

Dues pose a hardship. I can pay \_\_\_\_\_

Optional deductible contribution to LWVCA:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to LWVCA, 103 Wm. H. Taft,  
Cincinnati, OH 45219

**A Getting Together**

*By Mary Kay Gardner*

Just a quick note to say that the North Central & College Hill Units are planning to join next year. The membership voted on this and a few of us are getting together next week to discuss plans. We’ll keep you posted.



**League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area**  
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 info@lwvcincinnati www.lwvcincinnati.org

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



**OFFICE IS CLOSED MONTH OF JULY**

Tuesday	June 28	7:00 pm	Street Car Presentation
Wednesday	June 29	4:00 pm	Education Committee
Wednesday	June 29	5:30 pm	Social Media
Wednesday	July 6	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
Wednesday	July 13	4:00 pm	Education Committee
Wednesday	July 13	7:00 pm	Natural Resources Committee "Fracking" presentation
Monday	July 18	6:00 pm	Healthcare Committee
Monday	July 18	7:00 pm	County Government Committee
Wednesday	July 27	4:00 pm	Education Committee
Wednesday	July 27	5:30 pm	Program Development Committee (PDC)
Wednesday	July 27	5:30 pm	Social Media Committee
Sunday	July 31	8:00 pm	Due date for Action Committee Surveys
Saturday	August 6	7:00 pm	Guys Griddles and Grub (at JCC)
Tuesday	August 9		College Hill & North Central Units picnic at Mary Kay Gardner's home
Thursday	August 11	7:00 pm	Natural Resources Committee
Tuesday	August 15	5:30 pm	LWV Clermont County Annual Suffragette Dinner and Ophra Gatch Award (Receptions Eastgate)
Monday	August 15	6:00 pm	Healthcare Committee
Monday	August 15	7:00 pm	County Government Committee
Monday	August 15	6:15 pm	Hilltop Unit summer pot luck dinner & planning meeting (RSVP to Elizabeth Jamison)
Wednesday	August 24	5:30 pm	Program Development Committee (PDC)
Wednesday	August 24	7:00 pm	Discussion Leaders' Briefing for September Units
Friday	August 26	All day	Women's Equality Day - Anniversary of passage of the 19th Amendment
Saturday	August 27	1:00 pm	Discussion Leaders' Briefing for September Units
Monday	Sept 12	2:00 pm	Hilltop Unit meeting at home of Donna Dansker

*Unless otherwise noted Meetings are held at the League Office, Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church, address above  
 As always, see our website ([www.lwvca.org](http://www.lwvca.org)) for more information on upcoming events.*

## LWVCA REPORTS 2010-2011 (as published in Annual Meeting Workbook II)

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT given at Annual Meeting**

As is evidenced by the reports available in your workbooks, The League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area did extraordinary things this year. We continue to be a very vital organization in our community, and we were focused in activities that served our nonpartisan mission of encouraging informed and active participation in government, working to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influencing public policy through education and advocacy.

This past year, the board excelled in several areas such as Voter Service, Program & Action, Fund Development, Community Relations and strategic planning. The public looks to the League to provide the much-needed respectful discourse to the political arena, and we did just that during this past general election season. We continued to serve to our community by publishing 100,000 copies of our voter guide—the *Who and What of Elections*—and making that same candidate information available more in depth on [smartvoter.org](http://smartvoter.org). We held several debates in conjunction with the Cincinnati USA Debate Alliance and with other community groups. 30,000 copies of *They Represent Us* were distributed this spring, and an electronic version is available online. Our office volunteers handled many calls on our voter hotline, 281-VOTE, and our League also had a chance to celebrate our accomplishments at the Visions for Greater Cincinnati dinner.

This past year has also brought about many new changes as we worked to plan for our future of this League, streamline our operations and hire an executive director.

Through our strategic planning work, we surveyed the membership through the October units and by email, and we received great feedback. As we reported to you in *The Voter*, 77% of those who responded to the survey felt that expanding services to Warren and Butler counties was important and the top priority of the Cincinnati Area League should be membership recruitment.

With the help of Linda Wihl, we developed four strategic plan statements:

- That the LWVCA is visible, valued, and supported by the public.
- League members are welcome, engaged and active.
- The League has the pulse of political action and the process to be proactive in responding to emerging issues.
- The League will capitalize on the 2012 elections with tangible results for the League and our community.

To help consolidate the workload among our volunteers and improve budgetary oversight, the board has approved its management of both the Steiner Fund and Education Fund, meaning the League board of directors will also serve as trustees of Steiner and Ed Funds. Both the missions of Steiner Fund and Ed Fund remain the same.

Another great success over the past year has been hiring of our first executive director. The process for a first for us, and we did so with League thoroughness and gusto. Funding for our new Executive Director position comes in part from the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

I want to thank Linda for the excellent work she did as interim Executive Director. Linda's experience, passion and organizational skills were much in play during the winter. Linda was instrumental during our executive director hiring process. She also led the board during our February strategic planning session, out of which we have defined our goals for the future.

With Linda's work, we were able to complete the executive director hiring process, and we are now proud to have Jean Masthay on board. As you heard earlier, Jean brings many skills to the role of executive director. She started earlier this month.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your president this past year. It has been a humbling, fun and challenging experience to do so. I look forward to working with the board, including President-elect Shirley Jason, as we continue our goal of making democracy work.

— Melissa Currence

## PROGRAM REPORTS

### An Overview

The subjects presented for unit discussion during the past year included:

- Cincinnati, City of Immigrants, Guest Alfonso Cornejo, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Cincinnati (September '10)
- Ensuring an Impartial Judiciary, Guest Ann Henkener, LWVO (October '10)
- Ohio Finance & Taxation Consensus (November '10)
- State Program Planning (January '11)
- County Government 101 (February '11)
- Transportation Developments (March '11)
- Public Health Administration (April '11)

The 2010 Summer Bus Tour included a discussion of the Mill Creek cleanup efforts and a visit to several points along the creek where efforts have greatly improved the stream's water quality and support of wildlife, its ability to handle storm runoff, and public recreation.

There were four "Dinner with the League" dinner/discussion meetings designed to give members and guests opportunities to enjoy dinner together and be intellectually stimulated by guest speakers. These programs featured Aldolfo Olivias "An Immigrant's Legal Challenges in SW Ohio," Paul Muller "Preservation, It's Not About the Past: Creating a Vital Future for Cincinnati," Neil Tilow "Alternatives to Jail Facilities: A Better Way," and Mark Godsey "The Innocence Project: Making Justice Personal."

LWVCA was an active part of the Cincinnati Debate Alliance as it televised debates of candidates for US Congressional Districts 1 and 2. Anderson Unit sponsored a Candidate Forum in the Anderson area. Working with a coalition of organizations called the "Rookwood Five," including the League, the Woman's City Club, Citizens for Civic Renewal, The Cincinnati Association, and the Urban League, the League co-sponsored Citizens' Budget community forums to discuss what budget items Cincinnati residents consider critical in the city budget. The League co-sponsored a program with Wise Temple "Rethinking the Juvenile in Juvenile Justice."

We owe the quality of our program to the Program Committee Chairs and Members. They continue to bring to our attention new social issues, and to

prepare well-researched, stimulating, and informative unit discussion materials and *VOTER* articles. Talk with any of them for just a brief time and you will discover how much they know about their committees, and how willing they are to educate others. I recommend that all members consider joining one or more committees to feel the same enthusiasm for learning and action.

— Nancy Dawley, Program VP

### City Government Committee

During the past year, the City Government Committee functioned as an informal group, which was called to meet when an issue needed attention.

The Committee encouraged attendance at the Neighborhood Summit in April which had as its focus interactive discussions about Plan Cincinnati, the City's first comprehensive plan in over 30 years. Carolyn Miller continued serving as LWVCA liaison to the Citizens' Budget Coalition, a coalition of civic groups headed by Citizens for Civic Renewal (CCR), which is sponsoring meetings so that citizens' budget priorities can be reflected early in the process of formulating the upcoming City of Cincinnati budget. This year the Citizens' Budget Coalition focused on the public safety budget with an Expert Panel Discussion (April 19) and a series of Community Dialogs from April 20 to May 7. This citizen feedback will be summarized in a June preliminary report which will serve as background for further discussions about the public safety budget.

The committee prepared background information on the issues for the *Who and What of Elections*, the Smart Voter website, October unit discussions, and speaker bureau background papers.

Committee members also continued to attend meetings of the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA). Of particular interest currently are the efforts of Cincinnati City Council and Hamilton County Commissioners to come together and work cooperatively for the purpose of planning the future of transportation in the region. The committee is also attentively watching the implementation of plans for a downtown/uptown streetcar line.

The Committee will continue to monitor and research any Cincinnati Charter Amendments proposed for the November 2011 ballot.

Committee members: *Carolyn B. Miller, Chair, Jane Anderson, Glenda Bernstein, Malcolm Bernstein, Nancy Forbriger, Corinne Gutjahr, Gretchen Langdon, Chris Moran, Rina Saperstein and Alice Schneider.*

### **County Government Committee**

Throughout this past program year, members of the County Government Committee have closely monitored the proceedings of Hamilton County's Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), Tax Levy Review Committee (TLRC), Governmental Reform Task Force (GRTF), Criminal Justice Commission, and Board of Elections by attending their meetings and speaking with their members. Our relationships with these groups have been good.

Of particular note is the appreciation we received from members of the GRTF for the information our Committee shared with them during their study of our current county government structure. A white paper entitled "Modernization of County Government: League of Women Voters Perspective" was prepared by our Committee to inform the GRTF about Hamilton County's governmental structure and past efforts to restructure it.

We prepared and presented materials for the February unit discussions, dubbing the subject "County Government 101." The 2010 Local Program Planning process had revealed a desire on the parts of our members to better understand LWVCA's positions that related to our county government. The Committee received quite positive feedback from our members, and one even called for a sequel "County Government 102."

Following the recent changes in the membership and leadership of the BOCC, three Committee members met with the BOCC's new President, Greg Hartmann. We discussed several of his publicly-announced priorities in which LWVCA has a particular interest, including shared services among communities, criteria for an effective property tax levy process, and modernization of our county government. The meeting was positive and constructive, and we expect it to lead to further discussions with Hartmann and the other Commissioners.

The County Government Committee continues to inform several other civic organizations about our activities and actions, in the belief that selective collaboration among like-minded organizations

can lead to even greater influence in the community. In particular, we communicate regularly with Cincinnati Association, Citizens for Civic Renewal, and Women's City Club.

Committee members: *Don Rhoad, Chair, Nancy Forbriger, Corinne Gutjahr, Shirley Jason, Cecilia Kloecker, Carolyn Miller, Chris Moran and Melissa Rumpf.*

### **Education Committee**

Our local Education Committee chose to participate in a pilot study for the LWV Ohio. Its purpose was to educate ourselves and our members about the new methods of funding public education in Ohio; this method was based upon establishing certain ways of operating in every individual school and funding would be calculated on what it cost to achieve those operating standards. The system was called the Evidence-Based Model (EBM), and the guidelines for applying it to Ohio districts were many. The pilot study's goal was to determine if our state position needed to be modified to align with this new approach to funding schools and, if we did think change was necessary, to develop consensus questions and material for state-wide member discussion that would lead to new and updated positions.

However, in November, 2010 voters in the state elected an entirely new administration headed by Governor John Kasich. Shortly after his inauguration in January, 2011, Governor Kasich announced that his administration would not use the EBM approach to funding public education in Ohio. Since Ohio faced an \$8 billion deficit, the new governor made cuts to all state programs, including public education. He reverted to the "old" foundation-type formula for funding schools, but has indicated there will be changes in the way funds are distributed, i.e., categorical grants, etc.

As a result, the thrust of our activities shifted a bit. We decided to find out how the proposed changes would affect districts in Hamilton County by using a set of questions developed by the Akron League. Superintendent Mary Ronan (Cincinnati Public Schools) met with our committee in November to respond to the questions and share her thoughts with us. We interviewed the CFOs/Treasurers of St. Bernard-Elmwood Place, Princeton, and Madeira schools. Our findings were compiled into a report that was forwarded to the Chair of the Pilot Study. She has advised

that a workshop will be held at the State Convention to determine what, if any, changes should be made to our positions and what the membership wants the LWVO to address on the funding issue. Meanwhile, our League has been represented in meetings with groups who are trying to get the Legislature to change its method for calculating CPS's state aid. To date, no plan of action has emerged.

We've just been advised that the LWVUS wants Leagues to engage in a new study on "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education." Work is to take place over the summer, with our responses due by the end of November. It looks as though our committee will not want for something to do in the near future!

Committee members: *Burton Roehr, Chair, Ruth Armstead, Donna Dansker, Randi Ditter, Frances Fowler, Sarah Gideonse, Fred Heyse, Sherrie Heyse, Gerry Kraus, Alana Mattar and Helen Rhoad.*

### **Health Care Committee**

The Health Care Committee sought to better understand the role of local government in health care by inviting Tim Ingram, the county health commissioner and Rocky Mertz, the city health department's public information officer to speak at our meetings. During our investigation, former city council member Jeff Berding requested a study of the feasibility of merging certain functions of the two bodies. Although we invited Mr. Berding to several meetings, he was unable to attend. We did, however, study the report that was made to council. All of this information was part of April, 2011 unit discussion materials. We plan to continue investigating the city's role in providing primary medical services.

Committee Members: *Gretchen Langdon, Chair, Glenda Bernstein, Lucia Hudson, Pat O'Conner, Alva Reid and Mary VanAusdall.*

### **Housing Committee**

During the 2010-2011 year the Housing committee studied housing options for people with mental disabilities with the goal of educating our members on what is available in the Cincinnati area. During the year, representatives from various agencies in the area made presentations to the committee. In May the committee sponsored a forum, "Housing Options for People with Mental Disabilities", at the Sycamore Senior Center. Elizabeth Brown, Committee Member and Executive Director of Housing Opportunities Made Equal, moderated a panel of four representatives from local agencies that deal with housing for people with mental disabilities.

The committee continued as members of the Affordable Housing Advocates and the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, sending representatives to the meetings. In addition, the committee sent letters to the groups and individuals who appoint members of the CMHA Board asking them to make careful and responsible decisions as they choose new members of the board.

Committee members: *Helen Rhoad, Chair, Joyce Asfour, Elizabeth Brown, Dot Christenson, Sherrie Heyse, Carol Igoe, Cecilia Kloecker, Don Rhoad, Rina Saperstein, Mary Kersherval-Short and Nancy Walters.*

### **Natural Resources Committee**

The Committee continues to follow local environmental issues such as recycling and the Mill Creek waterway, states issues such as fracking, and international issues such the threat of global climate change. In the past year, the committee sponsored a summer bus tour of several sites along the Mill Creek that are part of the Mill Creek Greenway Project. We wrote a letter to the newspaper objecting to proposed watering down of Cincinnati's Environmental Justice ordinance. Committee members have published several articles in the *VOTER*.

Upcoming, we are planning a bus tour of sustainability initiatives at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden on Saturday, June 25, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. We are also working on a unit meeting and *VOTER* materials on water protection and pollution.

The Committee usually meets the second Thursday of the month, 7 p.m., at the League office, but dates may change. For more information, e-mail [nrc@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:nrc@lwvcincinnati.org)

Committee members: *Jeff Davis, Chair, Debbie Clark, Nancy Dawley, Mary Kay Gardner, Arlene Golembiewski, Helen Hunter, John Hunter, Pinky Kocoshis, Chris Moran and Maggie Mucha.*

### Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee continued a concentration on alternatives to travel by car. The aim of the Committee was to provide balanced information about current transportation and transit issues. Information was gathered about plans for a Cincinnati Streetcar and intercity passenger rail service connecting Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus and Cleveland, the 3C Ohio Hub plan. The Committee did not want to recommend action on any transportation item before providing information to League members as a basis for action.

VOTER articles were published with information about bike ways, complete streets, and a rail conference. The Committee formulated March unit discussions focused on bus and rail transit in the area.

No action on transit issues is anticipated in the near term following withdrawal of funds from the State of Ohio for the streetcar and the 3C proposal.

Helen Hunter participated as a voting member of the OKI, Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Government, Intermodal Coordinating Committee as a League representative.

Committee members: *Chris Moran, Chair, Christen Browne, Mary Kay Gardner, Helen Hunter, John Hunter and Carolyn Miller.*

### ACTION REPORT

- A letter was sent to the County Commissioners endorsing a thorough and timely discussion of the Government Reform Task Force's (GRTF) final report and recommendations.
- Letters were sent to the City Manager and 3 County Commissioners regarding thoughtful

appointment of members to the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority Board.

- The Citizen Budget Coalition of which the League is a member held a forum to allow citizens to further discuss compromise options in the City budget.
- The League co-signed a letter by the Environmental Community Organization urging the City of Cincinnati to continue exploring ways to fund and implement the Environmental Quality ordinance, and protesting re-ordination of the ordinance.
- An open letter was sent to the *Cincinnati Enquirer* and posted on Cincinnati.com dealing with certain actions by Hamilton County Commissioners and calling for them to be more transparent.
- The League co-sponsored a forum with Wise Temple on Juvenile Justice.
- The League sponsored a forum entitled, "Housing Options for People with Mental Disabilities."
- The League co-sponsored a forum entitled, "Redefining Prosperity: Community Resilience on a Finite Planet Running Out of Oil" with Woman's City Club of Greater Cincinnati, Imago for Earth, Hillside Trust, Sierra Club Miami Branch and First Unitarian Church Social Justice Committee.

—Nancy Dawley, VP Program

### VOTERS SERVICE ACTIVITIES

**Who and What of Elections:** 100,000 copies of the *Who & What of Elections* were printed and distributed for the November 2010 General Election. Minor redesigns included changes to the sponsors' logos and adding the LWVCA website at the bottom of each page. For the sixth year, copies were inserted in two separate issues of *Cincinnati City Beat* newspaper during October, providing a wide distribution of the *W&W* to the public. The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and the Hamilton County Board of Elections again received and distributed the most copies.

**Debates and Community Forums:** Volunteers worked on several candidate debates and forums for the 2010 general election. This included part-

nering with WCPO and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* to host US Senate District 1 and District 2 Congressional candidates, US Representative District 28, and Hamilton County Commissioners, to name a few. League volunteers' participation included reading questions to candidates and serving as timekeepers. It was a very exciting fall election and rewarding to help facilitate and participate in the debates and forums.

**Voter Registration:** We were invited to come and register voters at a few Voter Registration drives including one at a company in Mason and a health expo in Northern Kentucky. Any opportunity to register new voters is an exciting experience. With new regulations under HB 159 and 194 and SB 148 probable for the fall elections, voter registration will be a critical part of exercising the right to vote. The right to vote has been called the "vital principle of self-government and individual liberty."

**SmartVoter:** The SmartVoter website was maintained for November 2010 and May 2011 elections. We continue to provide the voters a personalized ballot feature that includes polling place information (in collaboration with the Hamilton County Board of Elections), candidate information and up-to-date links to pertinent news stories and related websites regarding ballot issues. Ann Mitchell continued as Voter Service Coordinator to assist with the site for the November 2010 election, and she did an excellent job with organizing information and proving candidate profiles. Seventy-eight percent of the candidates participated (66 out of 85 total). The site had 440,612 "successful requests" for the November election. Of the 440,612 requests, 291,410 came within the last seven days before the election.

**They Represent Us:** 30,000 TRUs were printed—same as last year. The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and the Hamilton County Board of Elections again received and distributed the most copies.

**Women as Political Leaders:** In February, along with Alice Schneider, I had the honor to meet with a delegation of Iraqi women visiting the United States sponsored by the US State Department and the Greater Cincinnati World Affairs Council.  
—Susan M. Banoun, Voters Service VP

## ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

### Community Relations

It started with a simple question at a League meeting. How could we increase attendance at our forums and events? The suggestions of a panel of college media specialist, a public relations representative, and news reporter were to use social media (Facebook, twitter, flickr, YouTube). So the League board authorized the Community Relations Committee to consider how the League might use social media effectively.

A committee, Mary Van Ausdale, Susan Banoun, Juliet Zavan, Sherrie Heyse and Alice Schneider, met and began a study of how to use social media. We all agreed that whether we like Facebook or not, the League needs to develop its Facebook presence to reach a different audience. We cannot remain static.

With Facebook, ideally, if League has 30 people in the organization who are on Facebook. Let's say each has 100 friends. If each invites all of his or her friends to your event, that's 3,000 invitations. Each comes with a significant amount of credibility because it comes from a "friend," not a stranger at the organization or in the fund raising office. If some of those 3,000 friends "share" the event or "invite people to come" it spreads even further. This is viral marketing at its best – with the benefit of credibility.

Therefore, we

1. Picked a project to promote the League of Women Voters work on Issues. We chose Housing to showcase what the League is doing.
2. Scheduled Facebook training for November 9, 2010 for members of committee and invited others.

Over this year, we have stepped up our efforts to use the League Facebook effectively and it seems to be paying off. One weekly report indicated that we had 75 monthly active users and 88 visits in a week. People are beginning to respond and inquire about our issues and events.

Other news media that we used over the year were E-vite (an online invitation service), Upcoming (an online announcement service) and YouTube (videos). All of the above are online venues to publicize events and forums.

In addition, we continued with regular press releases to the newspaper, radio and TV as well as listings on Cincinnati.com We are building our email list to include politicians and elected officials that are listed in *TRU*.

For the future, we would like to procure a public relations firm to help us plan a marketing strategy. Such a goal is in the job description for the executive director. We will work closely with her to figure to achieve this goal. However, most public relations firms suggest that the organization have a strategic plan to use to implement the marketing strategy.

— Alice B. Schneider, Community Relations Chair

### **Membership**

LWVCA closes the 2010-11 year with 354 members. The 2009-10 closed the year with 357 members. The current 354 members include 248 Individual memberships; 53 Household memberships; 29 National memberships; 6 Life/Honorary memberships and 3 Student memberships.

Dues for 2010-11 were: \$60 for Individual members; \$80 for Household membership and \$25 for Student membership. These prices reflect a small increase in dues fees approved during the 2010 Annual Meeting. Members were reminded that when joining LWVCA, they automatically become members of the LWVOhio and LWVUS. Members who joined as LWVUS members will be notified this fall that they are to join at the local level, since National memberships no longer exist.

Persons who initially join LWVCA while attending a "Dinner with the League" evening are guests of LWVCA that evening and receive their dinner at no cost. Throughout the year active members were encouraged to invite non-members to "Dinner with the League" as a way to interest non-members to the topics important to LWVCA. The no-cost dinner served as an additional incentive for non-members to join LWVCA.

LWVCA continues to offer a variety of ways for members to be involved: as unit members, as committee members, as those receiving information only, as responders to action alerts and more.

Efforts were initiated during 2010-11 to use Facebook.com to inform non-members of news about our committees. Facebook is a free social media mechanism available to all who have internet capacity. By posting announcements of events and articles important to LWVCA, we expect that persons who are active in the community but are not yet LWVCA members will be drawn to learn more about our issues and committees — leading them to join LWVCA. During the latter part of the 2010-11 year announcements about our Housing Committee were posted on LWVCA's Facebook homepage. LWVCA members were encouraged to become LWVCA Facebook "friends" by clicking the Facebook icon on our website's homepage and then the "like" icon on our Facebook page.

— Mary VanAusdall, Membership Chair

### **Office Volunteers**

This faithful group does some of the the most valuable work of the League by being "the voice of the League" on the office phone. Monday thru Friday, except some holidays, they are there with an answer to everything from "Where do I vote? to "Who is my representative and how can I get in touch with him/her?" to "Can you explain Issue X?" Besides keeping the public well-informed on issues, candidates, parties, public policy, the volunteers also keep the office running smoothly and give some extra help to our paid staff. We all thank them.

Regulars: *Mary Ellen Addison, Lori Bissler, Marjorie Davies, Nancy Forbriger, Mary Kay Gardner, Rubye Glenn, Sue Gorman, Corinne Gutjahr, Dorothy Harris, Ursula Hassel, Sherrie Heyse, Lucia Hudson, Rose Kearney, Sylvia Mersfelder, Bridgett Pincus, Grace Sferra and Helen Rhoad.* Substitutes: *Elaine Roth-Beecher, Emily Hodges and Kathy Shahani.*

— Mary Kay Gardner, Volunteer Coordinator

### **Unit Coordinator**

We began the year with a potluck supper and meeting at the Marjorie P. Lee to review the materials in the Leaders packet. Nancy Dawley, VP for Program introduced the discussion topics for the year. We were joined at the meeting by the membership person from each unit and Mary Van Ausdall, Membership Chair.

The Unit Chairs reconvened in April to review the year and make suggestions for next year. There was agreement on the value of good engaged conversation and the importance of well researched buff pages. A suggestion was made that an edit of these for ease of reading might be helpful.

Immediately after each Board meeting I wrote a summary of actions taken and major discussions held and sent those to the Unit Leaders so they could review them with their units.

There were nine active units this year. The plan for next year is that College Hill and North Central, who have met together in the past for a couple of meetings each year, will formally combine.

I have enjoyed working with the following Unit Leaders this year: Ellen Dugan and Sherrie Heyse, Anderson; Christen Browne, Central Evening; Mary Kay Gardner, College Hill; Corning Benton and Susan Steele, Eastern Day; Donna Dansker, Hilltop; Ursula Hassel, Metro Day; Jan Evans, North Central; Nancy Dawley, Northeast Evening; and Judy Shaffer, Warren County. These Unit Leaders have provided invaluable and dedicated service to the work of the League.

— Susan Lehman, Unit Coordinator

## FUND DEVELOPMENT

LWVCA and the Education Fund both exceeded revenue targets for 2010-11. Very generous support by members and friends, favorable investment returns, corporate sponsorships, foundation grants, and a significant bequest offset shortfalls in the Visions and Susan B. Anthony events.

The **Annual Campaign** is the most dependable source of funding for the League. It comprises donations made by members above regular dues levels, and by friends through the Fall Fund Drive solicitation with our nonpartisan *Who & What of Elections* voter guide. This summer, we will expand the successful **Friends & Neighbors** component in which members mail a complimentary *Who & What* with a solicitation letter to introduce League services to a wider community.

We are grateful for the increasing number of grants from family trusts, including those at the Greater Cincinnati Foundation. One such grant received

last fiscal year from the **Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Fund** enabled our recent hiring of an executive director, and we continue to receive income from the Harriet Iglauer Trust. The League was recipient this year of the **Pooled Income Fund** established at Fifth Third Bank by our past president Betty Roosa. Our Director of Planned Giving, Dee Shaffer, and Executive Director Jean Masthay will promote additional opportunities to remember the League through bequests, trusts, and lifetime gifts.

The October **Visions for Greater Cincinnati** event was graced by the generous donation of wildlife prints by John Ruthven, which were successfully auctioned by Jonas Karp of Main Auction Galleries.

Congratulations to Sherrie Heyse and her team for organizing the February **Susan B. Anthony** Luncheon, which event netted over \$5,000 for the Education Fund. Over 40 items were generously donated to the silent auction by local businesses and League members.

In May, the Education Fund was again awarded a grant from the **Seasongood Good Government Foundation** to support our nonpartisan election guides, the *Who & What of Elections* and SmartVoter.org. Congratulations to Sherrie Heyse, who prepared the grant application.

The Education Fund is a member of **Community Shares**, a workplace giving campaign working to build social and economic equity and a healthy environment in Greater Cincinnati. Sherrie Heyse serves as League liaison and Dee Shaffer assists with the grant application.

A particularly "League-y" fund raising project, overseen for many years by LWV member and national parliamentarian Ann Gilton and conducted by local League volunteers, is the supervision of **union elections**. This year the project netted \$550.

We welcome new sponsor **PNC Bank** and appreciate the ongoing support of **Procter & Gamble, Macy's, Cincinnati Bell, KnowledgeWorks Foundation, and Waite Schneider Bayless & Chesley**.

— Marjorie Davies, VP of Fund Development

## LWVCA EDUCATION FUND

### General Report

LWVCA established the Education Fund in 1954. The Fund is organized and operated for educational purposes as stated in the Code of Regulations. The Education Fund is an IRS-designated 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to it are tax deductible. The Directors have full discretionary power in the management of the Fund: to receive and accept donations; to disburse all funds to carry out the educational activities of the League of Women Voters; and to invest funds for income and/or growth. Major sources of income include: Visions for Greater Cincinnati Lunch; an annual contribution from the Harriett Iglauer Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation; workplace donations received through Community Shares; contributions from our members and the community; and grants. Grants for special projects vary in frequency and magnitude depending on the project involved.

The primary purpose of the Education Fund is to provide funding for voter education and services such as the *Who and What of Elections*, the local directory of public officials, *They Represent Us*, the League's website and the Smart Voter, the League's online election guide for voters in Hamilton County. All of these activities are well within IRS guidelines for our non-profit, charitable status as a 501(c)(3).

This year we continued further streamlining the Education Fund and simplifying the linkages with the League Board. In 2008-09 we had shifted responsibilities so that the League Board manages strategic directions for all League activities including what were referred to as "Ed Fund projects" and also directs all fundraising activities. The Education Fund Board has since been focusing primarily on investments for the last two years.

This year we investigated the need for the Education Fund to have a board of completely separate membership, and found that most leagues, including State and National, now have the same make-up on both the League and Education Fund Boards. By our Code of Regulations the League Board appoints the Education Fund Board members and can easily appoint themselves to fill this responsibility for the next year. To make this a more manageable task, the Investment Committee will now manage funds for the League accounts, the Steiner Fund, and the Education Fund and

advise the League Board on appropriate investment actions. So this is my last report to members as the Education Fund President as we move to this new structure next fiscal year.

Our Education Fund continues to be very much alive and contributing to our great League very well! We remain fine in the IRS's eyes, and our investments fared similarly to other well-managed funds.

Directors: *Fred Heyse, President; Sherrie Heyse, Secretary; Dee Shaffer, Education Fund Treasurer; Kim Thompson, League Treasurer, Marjorie Davies, LWVCA Finance VP; Melissa Currence, LWVCA President; Susan Banoun, Voters Service VP; members at large, Joan Honeck, Mary Kercheroal Short and Marcia Togneri.*

— Fred Heyse, Education Fund President

**Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati** is a partnership of 28 local nonprofit organizations building social and economic equity and a healthy environment in Greater Cincinnati. As a 501(c)(3) organization Community Shares raises awareness and support for its member organizations through workplace giving campaigns, professional enrichment, community education, and a variety of innovative initiatives. The League of Women Voters Education Fund is a member of Community Shares and receives over \$6,000 a year in donations. We also benefit from collaboration with other organizations in providing citizens with important civic information.

Since 1996 Community Shares has raised funds for its member organizations through workplace giving campaigns. A workplace giving campaign is a program that offers employees the opportunity to make charitable contributions through payroll deduction.

Community Shares is unique in that each donor has complete flexibility in choosing the organizations he supports. A donor can contribute to one, a few or all of Community Shares member organizations. It connects caring donors with organizations that positively change people's lives, and distributes donations to participating member organizations based entirely on choices indicated by our donors. A Community Shares workplace giving campaign requires few resources on the part of an employer and is an efficient way for employees to connect to organizations that positively impact

Greater Cincinnati.

Individuals may donate to Community Shares at [www.cintishares.org](http://www.cintishares.org).

— Sherrie Heyse, LWVCA Community Shares Representative

### **Kroger Cards**

Many thanks to all of our members who used their Kroger Community Cards this last year. The LWV Education Fund has received \$706.34 from the program this year. League receives 4% of the dollar value spent in the store using the Kroger Community Cards. Cards are easy to use and are available at the League Office.

— Sherrie Heyse

## **THE DOROTHY STEINER FUND**

**Background.** The Dorothy Steiner Fund was founded by friends of the late Dorothy Steiner in 1951. The memorial fund was established to further and broaden the League's efforts to let the people know, make the people care, help the people act. The assets of the Steiner Fund are segregated from those of the LWVCA but are not set up as a trust as defined by law. At present, all monies are invested in mutual funds with Fidelity.

At the March 15, 2011 meeting of the Steiner Fund trustees it was decided that the time had come to dissolve the Steiner Fund board as a separate entity and transfer oversight of its operations to the League Board. Although the Steiner Fund's money has been dutifully and successfully managed separately from other League funds for many years, the trustees now faced a shortage of potential successors. With the creation of an active Investment Committee it was agreed that this would be a good time to make the change.

At the April 4, 2011 Board meeting it was moved that effective immediately, administration of the Steiner Fund be moved to LWVCA board control, with the advisement of the Investment Committee. The motion passed.

The Investment Committee, during its regularly scheduled quarterly meetings, will review the Steiner Fund investment portfolio and provide the LWVCA board an analysis for oversight. The League board will act on recommendations from the Investment Committee and on any grant requests received for Steiner Fund monies.