

LWVCA REPORTS 2007-2008 (as published in Annual Meeting Workbook II)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

State of the League 2007-2008

Eighty years ago, the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area was concerned about education, health care, water and air quality. We still are. Thirty years ago, the League was advocating structural changes county government. We still are. Fifty years ago, ten years ago and five years ago, we were educating voters with election guides and elected official guides. We still are. And fifteen years ago, we were worrying about how to maintain our mission excellence in the face of shrinking membership. We still are.

One year is a trifle in our near- ninety year history. The more we change, the more we stay the same because our community still needs us to do what we do so very well.

In this report I have avoided duplicating reports which are seen elsewhere in your book, so I ask you to include those reports in your understanding of the state of the league 2008.

Advocacy and Action: While we concentrate heavily on program and education, our advocacy and action are relatively limited. Our main techniques are letters to the editor, letters to legislators and publicized endorsements. It would be helpful to determine how effective these actions are in swaying public and governmental opinion. We know our endorsements are sought after. We'd like to have more League members on commissions and boards, but have been unable to find nominees. We follow activities of the Hamilton County Commissioners and Cincinnati City Council to a limited extent, but do not have an active observer corps.

Collaboration and Community Relations: Tomorrow, we'll collaborate with LWVOhio, Common Cause and University of Cincinnati

on a Town Meeting on Judicial Independence. Next month, we'll offer open government sunshine law training in collaboration with the Ohio Auditor's office. Most recently we have embarked on discussions of a potential collaboration with Cincinnati.com and its affiliated newspapers to broaden the reach of our election guides. We continue to work at our collaborations with Community Shares, Cincinnati, Urban League, Woman's City Club and CCR on jail/criminal justice issues; public education issues, civic participation in city and county government, and shared resources. We have a nice new community relations video to use courtesy of Media Bridges. We also work regularly with Affordable Housing Advocates, Hamilton County Planning Partnership, Mayor's Young Professionals Kitchen Cabinet etc. And, of course hundreds of churches, schools, community councils and civic groups rely on us for voter service materials each year.

Fundraising and Finances: Our budget is split between tax-deductible and non-deductible expenses, and we must fundraise separately for each side. The Visions luncheon is our major fundraiser for the tax-deductible side, but we also received several grants this year thanks to the work of Sherrie Heyse. Visions remains an interesting and satisfying event, but its fundraising potential is static, so we need to look at other ways to grow. We also need to raise money for the non-deductible side, which is done primarily through our "Susan B. Anthony" luncheon. We need to build our members' understanding, commitment and support for this fundraising, while we also need to tap resources outside our membership.

LWV State and National: We sent delegates to both conventions and council day. We respond to their action alerts and provide input on what we want from our leadership. It is always refreshing to see how respected our

League is and to learn from what other Leagues do. State and National League also face serious challenges related to resources and personnel.

Membership: Our goal is more members, more diversity in membership and more active members. Membership is at the core of everything we do- without membership there is no league. We try all kinds of campaigns, and recently underwent an excellent brainstorming session for new ideas. But ultimately, we know that the one sure way to grow membership is for current members to invite people to join, and the one sure way to activate members is to ask them, one on one, in person to perform a simple task.

Office and Administration: We continue to be fortunate in our wonderful staffer, Sue Gorman, and this year we began to seek additional staffing as well. We have an excellent volunteer on board and we hope to add her on as a permanent staffer to handle our voter service office issues. We also are beginning to look at what might be involved in moving to a different location. We get an excellent deal for the rent we pay, but nonetheless want to look at our options, responding to our members' concerns.

Organization Structure: I'm proud that we made time within our board and committee structure for strategic initiatives while still pursuing our key program, membership and voter service activities. We are very close to completing a thorough review and streamlining of the relationships between Education Fund, Steiner Fund and League. We've also separated out membership recruitment and administration as separate crucial functions. Unfortunately, several efforts to really structure the positions we need have been hindered by a lack of available volunteers. It is frustrating that we know what we want but we can't get there! We know we need to break things down into smaller, tasks, and we know we need to focus on training and succession planning to broaden our base of capable leaders. This is an ongoing and critical challenge.

Regionalism: As we encourage governments to plan, act and collaborate regionally, we must do the same. We have met with our counterparts in Dayton and have appointed a board member to actively work on regional issues. It is unfortunate that there is no active Northern Kentucky or Eastern Indiana league to work with, but we continue a mutually supportive relationship with the Clermont County league. We still have not determined how we want to handle membership, voter service or program issues outside Hamilton County and this remains an area of both potential and concern.

Technology: We updated our phone systems this year and some of our email communications. We hosted a workshop on Web 2.0-outreach in a new technological age. We survived transitioning from our webmaster/Smart Voter coordinator to a new volunteer. Unfortunately, the plan to update our website including more interactive features and payments online was not completed as planned.

Where are we going? Last years strategic planning produced a vision for the future. That vision is that ten years from now. We are so respected for our contemporary, effective impact on the information and operation of governments in our area that we have no trouble recruiting and keeping 1000+ members fully active.

— Rina Saperstein, President

PROGRAM REPORTS

An Overview

The programs presented for discussion during the past year included:

- Affordable Housing (September 07)
- Police/community relations under the Collaborative Agreement (September 07)
- LWVCA Strategic Plan (September 07)
- Election Issues (October 07)
- Hamilton County Comprehensive Safety Plan (November 07)
- Immigration (November 07)
- LWV National Program Planning (Jan. 08)
- LWVCA Local Program Planning (Feb.08)
- Global Climate Change (March 08)
- Accessible Housing (April 08)

In addition, we initiated the “Dinner with the League” series of monthly dinner / discussion meetings designed to give members and prospective members opportunities to enjoy dinner together and be intellectually stimulated by a guest speaker.

Join me in thanking all the Program Committee Chairs and Members for their dedicated work and creativity in preparing stimulating and well-researched unit discussion materials and VOTER articles. In particular, I have been impressed by the conscientious study and evaluation that went into each committee’s work. We all can be proud of these committee teams. I encourage other Leaguers to join one or more committees to get involved in a whole new way.

— Don Rhoad, Program Vice President

City Government Committee

During the past year, the City Government Committee functioned as an informal group, observing and monitoring City of Cincinnati government activities and proposals. Members attended 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 plans for a new downtown streetcar line.

Committee members: *Carolyn B. Miller, Chair; Chris Moran and Rina Saperstein.*

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, Tax Levy Review Committee, and Criminal Justice Commission by attending their meetings and speaking with their members. Much of this monitoring was done by Nancy Forbriger, Corinne Gutjahr, and Chris Moran. Recently, at the Committee’s initiative, the Board directed that a letter be sent to the Tax Levy Review Committee citing the League’s position regarding criteria for countywide voted property tax levies.

LWVCA collaborated with four other civic organizations – Cincinnati, Citizens for Civic Renewal, Urban League, and Women’s City Club – to present an educational forum dealing with the Hamilton County Comprehensive Safety Plan, for which funding was to be voted upon in November 2007. The nonpartisan forum was telecast on CET and featured proponent and opponent presentations as well as questions from the public.

The Committee studied several tax levy issues and obtained Board approval to publicly support the Mental Health and Senior Services issues in the November election.

In December the Committee obtained Board approval to send a letter to the County Commissioners protesting the proposed cuts in the budget of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. Our letter contributed to a decision by the Commissioners to roll back a major portion of the proposed cuts.

During much of the past year, the Committee sponsored a team of volunteers who updated the 2003 edition of the popular League book, *Know Hamilton County*. Corinne Gutjahr, Elizabeth Jamison, and Chris Moran worked together to obtain current information from County administrators, then revised and updated the publication. The new *KHC* was published in December and distributed to schools and government officials at no cost to them. This 2007 edition of *KHC* has received rave reviews.

Committee members: *Don Rhoad, Chair; Susan Banoun, Bette Evanshine, Nancy Forbriger, Corinne Gutjahr, Lora Jollis, Carolyn Miller, Chris Moran and Rina Saperstein.*

Diversity Committee

The Diversity Committee readied the discussion material that came from LWVUS for the Unit Discussions to contribute to our position on National Immigration. The results from the Unit discussions were collected and reviewed to formulate an LWVCA response for PDC and Board consideration. We continued to follow the Collaborative Agreement and will maintain observation of the Agreement through its transition year. The Committee and

PDC recommended, and the Board approved, signing and co-sponsoring the Cincinnati Association's "The Greater Cincinnati Commitment." The goal of The Commitment is to help make our region more inclusive. The campaign is in its early stages and as a co-sponsor, along with many other area organizations, we will be involved with planning future steps to promote The Commitment. We joined the Ohioans to Stop Executions (OTSE) to co-sponsor the film, "At the Death House Door" to be shown at the University of Cincinnati's Main Street Theater on May 22. The film supports our position against the death penalty. Committee Members: *John Fine, Chair, Bette Evanshine, Rose Kearney, Gretchen Langdon, Sylvia Mersfelder and Chris Moran.*

Education Committee

Committee activities this past year centered primarily around the two operating levies that Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) placed on the ballot, one in November, 2007 and another in March, 2008. We looked at finances for the schools and deliberated over what recommendation we would make to the LWVCA Board about support of each levy.

The committee raised questions about the November levy (9.95 mills) and the lack of clear information about how CPS manages its funds. The District's Treasurer and Chief Operating Officer met with the committee to answer our concerns. Because we still had some questions but realized that the district needed the funding, we recommended that the LWVCA's position on the November levy should be "Support, with reservations." The levy was defeated by voters.

Another levy for a lesser amount (7.89 mills) was placed on the ballot in March. Again, upon the committee's recommendation, the LWVCA Board voted to "Support, with reservations." This levy was approved by the electorate.

We are continuing to look at CPS's finances in order to determine how and on what their monies are being spent. Additionally, committee members want to become more active on the issue of state funding of public education, and

we will investigate ways—both with local organizations and with the Ohio League—to do so.

Committee members: *Burton Roehr, Chair, Ruth Armstead, Donna Dansker, Marjorie Davies, Sherrie Heyse, Helen Rhoad, Carl Schmidt and Gail Wick.*

Health Care

The newly formed Health Care Committee is defining itself by becoming familiar with our League position on Health Care. We looked at a number of presidential primary candidate positions as a prediction of future federal legislation and looked for potential lobbying points within our position. We are now examining the mission statements and activities of single issue health care organizations in Hamilton County and LWVCA contacts to find potential local issues and collaboration opportunities.

Committee Members: *Gretchen Langdon, Chair, Glenda Bernstein, Marjorie Davies, Diane Ostenkamp and Mary VanAusdall.*

Housing Committee

The Housing Committee cooperated with Housing Opportunities Made Equal in presenting the "Seniors and Housing" forum at the Sycamore Senior Center, April 16, 2008. Forum members included Elizabeth Brown, H.O.M.E. Executive Director (and League member), Jim Cunningham, HUD Field Office Director, and Suzanne Burke, Council on Aging CEO. Approximately 40 people attended.

Several committee members represent the League at the Affordable Housing Advocates (A-HA) in which the League joins with other area organizations also concerned about housing issues. By meeting with the other organizations, members may become informed about current housing issues, take the information back to their respective organizations, and act upon those that they feel are appropriate.

In the fall of 2007, the committee (and LWVCA in turn) chose to support the Senior Services Levy to help people stay in their homes. The League also joined the Greater Cincinnati Coalition of the Homeless. It also sent a letter to Judge Cissell urging the ap-

pointment to fill an opening on CMHA Board with a qualified person committed to the mission of the position.

Committee Members: *Helen Rhoad, Chair, Elizabeth Brown, Dot Christenson, Steve Demar, Bette Evanshine, Sherrie Heyse, Chris Moran, Rina Saperstein and Mary Kercherval Short.*

Natural Resources Committee

The Natural Resources Committee addresses issues impacting the natural environment. Members of the committee participated as League members on a number of community initiatives related to global climate change, regional transportation planning, recycling, and restoration, and preservation of streams and rivers. The Committee prepared an insert in the *VOTER* as a guide to March local unit discussions on Global Climate Change and published the material as a White Paper on the LWVCA web page.

The NR Committee chose to focus on Cincinnati's and Hamilton County's local response to the threat of global climate change attributed to the accumulation of man-made greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Committee members met with the Director of Cincinnati's newly created Office of Environmental Quality to learn about the City's initiative to reduce emissions locally. Four committee members served on subcommittees charged with providing specific recommendations for civic action on the issue. Chris Moran chaired the subcommittee for transportation while others served on the energy and recycling subcommittees.

The Committee continued to promote recycling through contacts with other interested groups and individuals. Pinky Kocoshis, Debbie Clark, and Chris Moran have provided Committee leadership on this issue. Helen Hunter continues to serve as the League's representative on the OKI Intermodal Coordinating Committee which recommends priorities for locally proposed but federally funded transportation projects. Chris Moran monitors SORTA meetings and activities. John Hunter represents the League as Board Member of the Mill Creek Restoration Project and the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities.

Debbie Clark, Jeff Davis, Chris Moran, and Pinky Kocoshis serve on the Mayor's Global Climate Change Initiative subcommittees.

Committee Members: *Jeff Davis and John Hunter, Co-Chairs, Debbie Clark, Arlene Golembiewski, Dell Heitkamp, Helen Hunter, Pinky Kocoshis, Chris Moran and Maggie Mucha.*

ACTION REPORT

May 2007

— Meeting with Hamilton County Commissioner Todd Portune regarding public information on comprehensive safety plan and citizen participation in budget. Request through collaboration with 4 other civic groups. Result: Public forums on comprehensive safety plan.

July 2007

- Letter to Congressman Steve Chabot, Congresswoman Jean Schmidt, Senators George Voinovich and Sherrod Brown opposing bill requiring presentation of identification at the polls per request from LWVUS. No response. Result: Bill failed.
- Appointed participation in Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission per request from County Government Committee. Result: LWVCA is an associate member, Chris Moran is the liaison.

August 2007

- Participation in Forum on Human Rights and Unity at request of Cincinnati Human Relations Commission: Result: Ursula Hassell and Sheila Lynch attended.

September 2007

- Letter to Senators Brown and Voinovich re District of Columbia Voting Rights Act (S. 1257). Action based on request from LWVUS. Result: No response, issue failed.
- Letter to Cincinnati Mayor Mark Mallory urging a prompt appointment to fill SORTA Board Vacancy. Request from Natural Resource Committee. No response. Office was filled prior to receipt of letter.
- Letter to County Commissioner commending creation of a committee charged with studying tax burden on county residents.

Request from County Government. No response, but County has continued to consult with League regarding tax issues.

- LWVCA President spoke at a press conference in support of restoration of funding to City Human Services Budget. Request from board. Result: Press conference reported in Herald, Streetvibes and on UTUBE. Result: Council restored half the funding amount.
- League to join Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless. Request from Housing Committee: Result: League is a member of the coalition but does not have a regular liaison to their meetings.

October 2007

- Endorsement of Hamilton County Issues 28 (Mental Health Levy), 29 (Senior Services Levy) and 22 (Cincinnati Public School Levy) (with reservations). Requests from Housing Committee, County Government Committee and Board. Result: Mental Health and Senior Services Levy passed, School Levy failed.
- Letter to Judge Cissell re appointment to board of Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority - find someone committed to the mission. Request from Housing Committee. Response from Judge Cissell. Result: Candidates have been appointed.
- Letter to Congressman Chabot, Congresswoman Schmidt, Senators Voinovich and Brown re Override President's veto of funding for State Children's Health Insurance Program. Request from LWVUS. Response: Legislators responded, but vote failed.
- League cosponsors town meeting and issue forum on comprehensive safety plan and associated tax levy. League a key organizer in collaboration with CCR, Woman's City Club, Cincinnati and Urban League. Approximately 40 attended town meeting including many students. Forum aired on CET TV and WVXU radio and available through download on CETConnect. Result: Tax Levy Failed, County Commissioners continue work on comprehensive safety plan.
- League president spoke at Christ Church Community Issues Forum on issues for city council candidates along with 3 other civic groups. Request from AIR Inc. Result 4 can-

didates for council, including two winning candidates attended.

November 2007

- Nominated Chris Moran to OKI Council of Government Committee. Request from Natural Resources. Result: Nomination was not accepted.

December 2007

- LWVCA was a cosigner on a letter from CCR to County Commissioners objecting to the proposed \$200,000 budget cuts to Regional Planning Commission (RPC) budget. Request from Board. Result: Budget was cut, but not dramatically, and commissioners agreed to bridge the shortfall to keep RPC active. We received a letter from RPC thanking us for support.

January 2008

- Letter to editor and 3 electoral parties/committees lamenting uncontested races in Hamilton County. Request from County Government Committee. Published CityBeat, no response from committees. Contacts regarding this issue from several partisan activists, but no change.
- Letter to editor, secretary of state and board of elections commending the board of elections for its efforts in selecting optical scan voting machines. Request from Voter Service. No response.

February 2008

- LWVCA endorsed, with reservations, the Cincinnati Public School Levy (emergency) - communicated to press, members and levy committee. Request from Board. Thank you from group supporting levy. Result: Levy passed.

March 2008

- League cosponsored a project to involve citizen groups (community councils) in city operating budget issues (Citizen Priority Request Process or CPR+). Request from collaboration with CCR. Letter from City Manager thanking us for our assistance. Result approximately 14 CPR+ meetings held by CCR.
- Letters to media re Sunshine week. Request

from LWVUS. Letters were not published. However, we will hold a forum on sunshine laws in June with Ohio Auditor. Meeting to be held in GreenHills.

April 2008

- Public forum on Senior Housing. Sponsored by Housing Committee. Approximately 40 attended.
- League signs on as cosponsor to “Greater Cincinnati Commitment.” Request from Cincinnati through Diversity Committee. Result: we are a signatory, no other result to date.

May 2008

- League will cosponsor a movie about the Death Penalty. Request from Diversity Committee.
- League will send a letter to County Tax Review Committee regarding criteria for tax levies. Hamilton County Tax Levy Review Committee asked for our input. County Government Committee requested response.
- Impact Town Meeting on Judicial Independence in coalition with Ohio LWV, University of Cincinnati, Common Cause and Ohio Bar Association. Request from LWV Ohio.

Action & News Listserve

There were forty-six postings this year to LWVCA’s online listserv at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LWVCA_NewsAction. Messages included action requests, local, state and national, and information about community events of interest to members. Whenever possible, the e-mails combined brief summaries of multiple items — action alerts and events. They contained links to help members take action and/or provide more detailed information on upcoming events. At present, 51 members are on the listserv.

- Sue Gorman, Action & News Listserv Moderator

VOTERS SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The Voters Service Committee completed the following activities during fiscal year 2007-08:

- 100,000 copies of the Who & What of Elections were printed and distributed for the November 2007 General Election. For the third year, copies were inserted in Cincinnati City Beat. The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and the Hamilton County Board of Elections again received and distributed the most copies.
- SmartVoter website was maintained for November 2007 and March 2008 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. The League hired a SmartVoter technical coordinator to assist with the site for both the November 2007 and March 2008 elections. In the 31 days before the November 2007 election, SmartVoter page Hamilton County received over 100,000 page requests (with over 60 % during the 7-days before the election). In the 31 days for the March 2008 election, the Hamilton County page received 9,500 page requests. Most visitors who come to the site get there by using a Google search. The LWVCA website is the next most popular referral source to SmartVoter.
- They Represent Us was redesigned in 2008 to increase readability and to update its updated look. In total, 60,000 TRUs were printed. 20,000 copies were reprinted to include omitted elected officials and the LWVCA purchased stamps to correct the other 40,000 copies. A new *VOTER* article was launched keep members up-to-date to changes to TRU throughout the year.

Thank you to the many, many volunteers who contributed to another successful year for Voters Services. Special thanks goes to Susan Bannoun (*TRU* editor), Nancy Forbriger (Board of Elections Liaison), Katherine Keough-Jurs (*Who & What* Editor), Doña Neiheisel (Speakers Bureau).

- Melissa Currence, Voters Service VP

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Membership

LWVCA had 391 members as of January 2008 when we submitted our report to State and National. One member, Morton Gusweiler, was made a life member this year.

Each unpaid member received written reminders during November and then again in late December. Currently we are compiling a list of past members to be called by the membership committee to find out why they chose not to rejoin. This past year we tried targeting specific groups: the Hamilton County librarians, and all the new residents of Anderson, unfortunately without any success. However, a few past members rejoined after they received a hand written note asking them to renew their membership. "Dinner With the League," the dinner/lecture series organized by Don and Helen Rhoad, has been the most enjoyable effort to date and provided names of community members who might be interested in joining League in the future.

At present we have 400 members. We would like everyone to reach out and bring in one prospective member. Many thanks to our valuable volunteers who helped with the Members' Directory and the membership renewal mailings.

— Ann Applegate-Katz, Membership Chair

Office Volunteers

One of the League's most essential lifelines is its group of office volunteers. Except for two weeks in December and the month of July these members are on the job communicating to citizens information about elected officials, public policy, voter issues, and whatever a person needs to become more politically astute. In addition, they perform certain clerical tasks necessary for a well-run, efficient office.

A dozen bouquets to each one of these ladies: *Mary Ellen Addison, Elaine Roth-Beecher, Marjorie Davies, Nancy Forbriger, Mary Kay Gardner, Rubye Glenn, Sue Gorman, Corinne Gutjahr, Ursula Hassel, Sherrie Heyse, Emily Hodges, Rose*

Kearney, Sylvia Mersfelder, Bridgett Pincus, Helen Rhoad, and substitutes: Lucia Hudson, Jan Jacobs and Kathy Shahani.

— Rubye Glenn, Office Coordinator

Public Relations

Public relations (PR) for the League of Women Voters includes ongoing activities to ensure League has a strong public image. PR includes activities and press that help the public to understand what the League is and does. PR action includes all the entire League membership. Everyone in the League needs to be aware of the message, visions, and goals of the League, and should reflect that message in everything they do that is related to the League and its members.

To get our message across we use the following: press releases, articles or opinion pieces, member success stories, letters to the editor, press conferences and interviews, radio, television, photos, speeches or appearances at local events, regional or national talk shows. Additional outlets include the website and lobbying activities. For this year, I continued to update the media list and tried get to know some of the reporters, radio and TV contacts.

PR for 2007-2008 included the following:

- Met with Media Bridges to produce a video about the League. It is completed and was shown at the Visions Lunch.
- Continued to update the media list.
- Press releases to 25 media outlets for Susan B. Anthony Luncheon.
- Press releases to media outlets for the Visions luncheon. Picture and story in Howard Allen's column about Kent Friel.
- Picture of the League Board published in the Community Press in August, 2007
- Publicity and press releases for "Dinner with the League".
- Helped plan and conduct a workshop on "Speaking and Representing the League."

The upcoming year is important as the presidential election takes place. It is a prime opportunity for the League to convey its message when members go out to speak to groups in the community.

— Alice B. Schneider, PR Chair

Unit Coordinator

August 16th last year was nice and bright - good day for our first-of-the-year unit leader's picnic. Unfortunately I was in hospital! But thanks to a bunch of wonderful friends the picnic went on - in the office. So first of all, I want to thank Helen Rhoad and Marjorie Davies who pitched in and took over for me. (I was fine - just tests as they say.) After that rocky start the year went well, with nine units meeting monthly with an average attendance of over 100 members attending every month. North Central and College Hill held their annual combined meeting this April.

A meeting/dinner for the Unit Chairs was held on November 15 at Lenhardt's Restaurant in Clifton. Our March dinner had to be canceled this year, but we look forward to starting them up again next year. These meetings are enjoyed by all, and they are very informative with a real exchange of ideas. Already have our first one planned for September at my home.

We are looking into starting one or two new units next year. Maybe one at a university and another at one of the retirement homes.

Unit Chairs and Co-Chairs this year were: Ellen Campbell, Anderson; Carolyn Meyers, Central Evening; Doña Neiheisel and Mary Kay Gardner, College Hill; Sylvia Mersfelder, Hilltop; Ursula Hassel, Metro Day; Barbara Carvey, North Central; Kit Berger, Northeast Evening; Linda Lehman, Warren County; and Rina Saperstein, E-Unit. Thanks all.

— Mary Kay Gardner, Unit Coordinator

FINANCE

Susan B. Anthony Luncheon

Fundraising on the "league side" came through the Susan B. Anthony Luncheon. The annual fundraiser was held Saturday, February 9th at Kenwood Country Club. Luncheon guests enjoyed a keynote address from David Pepper, Hamilton County Commissioner who spoke on the *Local Criminal Justice System*. We also had a delightful re-enactment presentation on Women's Suffrage from the Cincinnati Histori-

cal Museum Youth Program. Sherrie Heyse received the Martha B. Taft Service Award this year. More than 120 people attended the luncheon. Lora Jollis arranged a fabulous Silent Auction raising \$1,620. Four event sponsors donated \$1,000 each: Frost Brown Todd LLC, KnowledgeWorks Foundation, Kohne O'Neill LLC and Thompson Hine LLP. We received a generous donation of flower arrangements from Piepmeier The Florist which were used as centerpieces and then were raffled off raising \$284. The total amount raised from the event was \$5,450.

Committee members: *Sheila Lynch, Chair, Lora Jollis, Silent Auction Chair, Darleen Adkins, Christen Browne, Marjorie Davies, Sue Gorman, Joan Honeck, Kathy Hosking, Jean Rolfes, Dee Shaffer, Rina Saperstein and Gail Wick.*

Martha Taft Award Committee: *Marjorie Davies, Helen Rhoad and Rina Saperstein.*

— Sheila Lynch, Fund Development VP

Power Pledge Replaces Phonathon

LWVO launched Power Pledge in 2008 to nurture civic participation in government and to develop community leaders throughout the state. Both of these require a sustained financial commitment from League members. Along with the traditional one time donation, the Power Pledge system allowed donors to enroll in an automatic payment plan which has been used successfully by non-profit organizations.

LWVO Education Fund sent out the normal solicitation letter with a pledge form that included all the necessary information to set-up a monthly pledge or the one-time donation. LWVCA chose to make calls to members to help explain the new system and to encourage pledging. Members who served on a committee to make these calls were Marjorie Davies, Clare Weinshenker, Fred and Sherrie Heyse, Don and Helen Rhoad, Rose Kearney. Mary Kercherval Short, Mary Kay Gardner, John Hunter, and Dee Hazlebeck. The facility at Merrill Lynch was provided by Marcia Togneri. Members were also informed of the changes at unit meetings and through the *VOTER*.

Two rebates will be given to local Leagues instead of one. The first will be in July for dona-

tions collected by June 30 and the second will be in January, for donations received by December 31. The rebate amount will be 15% of the amount raised by the local League. Donors will receive a thank you letter, detailing all contributions to LWVO and LWVOEF.

— Dee Hazlebeck, Power Pledge Chair

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 organization of the Board of Trustees, their appointment, length of term, duties and responsibilities are found in this document.

The Education Fund is an IRS-designated 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to it are tax deductible. The Trustees 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. This year the Education Fund received the first installment of a \$3,000 grant from the LWVUS for the "Safeguarding US Democracy" project which will be completed in FY 2009. We also received grants from KnowledgeWorks and a member to assist in underwriting *Know Hamilton County* publishing costs.

The primary purpose of the Education Fund is to provide 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 Smart Voter, the

League's online election guide for voters in Hamilton County. Costs for these activities are included in the Education Fund's Treasurer's Report 2007-2008.

Trustees: *Helen Rhoad, President; Marjorie Davies, Secretary; Dee Shaffer, Education Fund and LWVCA Treasurer; Rina Saperstein, LWVCA President; Melissa Currence, Voters Service VP; Sheila Lynch, Finance VP; Sherrie Heyse, Visions Chair; and members at large, Robert Hadden, Fred Heyse, Mary Kercherval Short, and Marcia Togneri.*

— Helen Rhoad, Education Fund President

Community Shares

To date, the LWVCA Education Fund (LWVCAEF) has received \$6,094 from Community Shares for the 2007-08 fiscal year. These funds are a combination of employee pledges designated for the LWVCAEF and a share of undesignated funds that are received by Community Shares and shared equally among the 27 local non-profit member organizations. Campaigns were conducted in 76 workplaces in the fall of 2007.

Visions for Greater Cincinnati Lunch - 2008

Over one hundred guests gathered at the Queen City Club on April 23 to support the annual fund raising effort of the LWVCAEF. Jonathon Hawgood, WLWT news anchor, was the Master of Ceremonies. Guests included community leaders, corporate sponsors, education leaders, League members and their guests.

Dr. Nancy Zimpher and Jeff Edmondson, Executive Director of STRIVE, gave a keynote speech on the challenging work facing the urban school districts in Cincinnati and Covington. STRIVE is an ambitious coalition of schools, education leaders, corporate leaders, parents, civic organizations, churches and youth groups trying to solve the problems facing students today. The goal is to have students graduate on time from high school and enroll in a post secondary school well prepared to learn new skills enabling them to obtain good jobs. Educated citizens form the basis of a viable and successful community.

Kent Friel was awarded the Daniel J. Ransohoff Civic Achievement award for his volunteer work in the community. (See article in Summer *VOTER*). The Ransohoff committee volunteers were Marjorie Davies, Bette Evan shine, Rose Kearney, Sylvia Mersfelder, Carolyn Miller and Burt Roehr.

The LWVCA thanks the Visions Advisory Board and the Visions sponsors: Cincinnati Bell, Duke Energy, KnowledgeWorks Foundation, Macy's, Procter & Gamble, and U.S. Bank.

Many thanks to Piepmeier The Florist for the table decorations, Berman Printing for printing and Waycross Cable for videotaping the event. Special thanks to Media Bridges for producing the "About the League of Women Voters" DVD that was shown prior to the luncheon. The luncheon committee thanks Marjorie Davies for her continued assistance, Fred Heyse for technical support, Alice Schneider for PR coverage, Jan Evans for coordinating the mailings and Sue Gorman for administrative support. We also appreciate the services of the wonderful sign language interpreters provided by Cincinnati State.

The Visions Luncheon is the largest fundraiser for the LWVCAEF. This year's event is expected to net approximately \$10,000.

Many thanks to our volunteer hosts and hostesses: *Becky Algenio, Jane Anderson, Dot Christenson, Melissa Currence, Marjorie Davies, Mary Kay Gardner, P. Jeanne Goings, Rubye Glenn, Fred and Sherrie Heyse, Lucia Hudson, Pinky Kocoshis, Sylvia Mersfelder, Carolyn Miller, Don and Helen Rhoad, Burt Roehr, Rina Saperstein, Dee Shaffer, and Gail Wick.*

— Sherrie Heyse, Visions Chair

Pooled Income Fund

The LWVCAEF Pooled Income Fund is a Pooled Income Fund adhering to the IRS regulations governing such vehicles. Donors who give to the fund (either cash or securities) will receive a tax deduction for the current value of the gift to LWVCAEF and income from the fund for the lifetime of the designated income beneficiary (the donor or another party designated by the donor). A Pooled Income Fund functions much like a mutual fund. The Fund pays a lifetime stream of income to the donor, or income beneficiary, based upon the donor's portion of the Fund. Upon the death of the donor, or the income beneficiary, that share of the Fund's principal is paid to the LWVCAEF. Fifth Third Bank serves as trustee of the Pooled Income both investing and administering the fund.

Current number of participants: 5

— Dee Shaffer, LWVCAEF Treasurer