

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS CUYAHOGA AREA

FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

Mary Worthington, VP Funding & Development

The major activity of Fundraising and Development was the fundraiser on April 16, 2011 honoring the Leaguer of the Year, Lynda B. Mayer. The event honored Lynda's commitment to Cuyahoga County government reform. Donations were solicited for the Mystery Wine Table, Silent Auction, and Chinese raffle that took place at the luncheon. Replica vintage posters advertising "that a woman at this residence has registered to vote" were created for sale at League functions.

MEMBERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

Carol Gibson, VP Membership

The Membership Team changed its name this year to the Membership Development Team (MDT) in order to highlight the fact that we are not just doing clerical work—updating the database, recording dues paid, creating rosters, and passing along information. The Team's most important mission is *increasing* membership, and convincing all other active members that they too are responsible for membership growth.

When seven county leagues merged in 2003, we had approximately 300 members. In 2008, 260; in 2009, 230. This year we reported having 206 at the end of January. Most of our new members came from the Heights' area; however, the Heights Chapter also lost the most members. Numbers aren't everything, of course. The good news is that we are doing a better job contacting and engaging newer and inactive members.

The MDT needs to continue to think of ways to help all of us move out of our comfort zone to personally ask friends and acquaintances to participate in the League.

A new priority for the Team is to suggest and encourage the development of board committees for all Vice Presidents. Two main reasons for focusing on this: Board committees help expand member involvement, and can serve as entrance-level jobs that allow newer members to learn the ropes.

We want to thank the chapter chairs for the prompt way they have helped greet new people and make telephone inquiries when asked.

What goal shall we set for growing during the 2011/12 league year? What are some strategies you could suggest for achieving that goal?

The Membership Development Team: Maryann Barnes, Wendy Deuring, Carol Gibson, Janet Kershaw, Nan Ellen Passant, and Mary Warren.

OUTREACH ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

Janet Kershaw

Even though we did not have a VP for Outreach this past year, members worked together to make sure the League continued communicating with both the public and members.

During the past year, Joan Hirsh sent 13 news releases to area media. An op-ed on ethics in county government was published in The Plain Dealer and Co-Presidents Susan Jankite and Janet Kershaw wrote several articles that were published in the west side weekly, Westlife. Kathy Woodbridge did an online chat about the League with the editor of Westlife.

Janice Patterson and Wendy Deuring edited and produced our Voter newsletter with the final issue to be published in early June 2011.

Our redesigned web site launched in early February. If you have not seen the site lately, take a look at www.lwvcuyahogaarea.org. A generous grant from the Cleveland Foundation paid for the web site redesign.

PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT 2010 – 2011

Adele Cohn, VP Program

LWVO Study: Update of State Tax Positions

The study committee has completed the study of possible changes to our LWVO State Tax positions. LWVO has made changes in their position.

Program by LEEDCo

Program on March 16 about wind turbines in the lake had 21 attendees. The group was small but interested. More than half of those present asked questions.

Program Planning

State Program Planning was done by mail. I received many responses. The final report was sent to LWVO.

VOTER SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2010 – 2011

Kathy Woodbridge, VP Voter Service

As election seasons ago, not many have been as exciting or as busy as this one as Leaguers worked to prepare voters for the first election of 11 County Council members and a County Executive for a new form of county government.

Planning began in June, 2010 with a meeting of the three Cuyahoga County Leagues to establish the Candidate Forum calendar and timeline, assign Districts and develop a format. Here's a snapshot of the CuyArea Candidate Forum highlights.

- LWV CuyArea presented five Candidate Forums in County Council Districts 1, 2, 4, 10, and assisted LWV Shaker Heights in District 11.
- LWV CuyArea presented a Candidate Forum for County Executive candidates in Berea in cooperation with Baldwin Wallace College.
- LWV CuyArea acknowledges the cooperation of the following organizations which provided meeting space, sponsorship, and volunteers: Westlake City Schools, Parma Council of PTAs and Parma Senior High School, Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library and Future Heights.
- LWV CuyArea Candidate Forums served 18 candidates who participated in these forums.
- LWV CuyArea's 33 volunteers provided over 300 hours of service to present these forums.

In addition, LWV Cleveland and LWV Shaker Heights presented Candidate Forums in Districts 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and two County Executive Candidate Forums.

As the League year ends LWV CuyArea is working to complete legislative interviews with the following eight state legislators:

Representatives Nikki Antonio (13th), Timothy J. DeGeeter (15th), Nan A. Baker (16th), Marlene Anielski (17th), Mike Dovilla (18th), and Richard Hollington (98th)
Senators Michael Skindell (23rd) and Tom Patton (24th).

The Voter Service Committee invites you to put the “U” in LeagUe. Volunteer to accompany another Leaguer to a Legislative Interview or observe a Cuyahoga County Council Meeting, you’ll be glad you did. Contact any board member for more information or email lwvcuyareavoterservice@gmail.com.

The Voter Service Committee: Kathy Woodbridge VP Voter Service
 Joan Hirsh
 Mary Lou Jones

COUNTY GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE REPORT 2010-2011

Lynda Mayer, Chair

OBSERVER CORPS: The faithful observers have managed to reorganize and adjust to the new, more demanding County Council meeting schedule. No small task, given 11 active Council committees, bi-monthly Tuesday (6pm) regular meetings interspersed by “special meetings,” and irregularly scheduled Tuesday (4pm) “work sessions” and “Committee-of-the-Whole” sessions. A few Cleveland or Shaker observers collaborate with LWV Cuyahoga Area members Mary Warren, Janice Patterson, Lois Gross, Lesley Hahn, Kathy Woodbridge and Lynda Mayer. We could surely use a few more. The meetings are MUCH more interactive, transparent and interesting! And topics featuring League pet issues come up all the time. It is currently the best serialized drama in town -- come once and get hooked on one or more of the multiple plotlines!

ETHICS CODE ADVOCACY & ACCOMPLISHMENT: The following LWV Cuyahoga Area members joined with a few Shaker and Cleveland members and several non-League participants to study and draft a Code of Ethics for Cuyahoga County's new government: Janice Patterson, Susan Gray, Ellen Carter, Mary Dunbar and Lynda Mayer, chair. That "Transition Workgroup" proposal was submitted in September, after which the boards of the three Leagues voted to support its main provisions in principle.

From January 3 to April 8 of this year Council's Rules Committee and then the entire Council worked hard to craft a permanent, binding ordinance. Council's finished ordinance, while quite different in appearance from the workgroup's proposal, contains almost all LWV-favored provisions and is decidedly stronger than the OH Ethics Law it expands upon. Enforcement will be by the Human Resource Commission and the new Inspector General rather than by an Ethics Board as League preferred. Workgroup leaders and League presidents including Susan Jankite lobbied hard to clean up and correct pieces of successive drafts, making concrete recommendations and counseling that time be taken to "get it right." A prominent guest editorial on the PD's OpEd page in late January, by Co-President Jankite, was part of that intensive effort. All committee and Council sessions were double-teamed, and workgroup guidance by Mayer, Patterson, Gray and others was included and considered at every turn. The final ordinance, readable on the County website, incorporates most League and workgroup recommendations.

-- Lynda Mayer, Chair of Joint CoGovt Committee & Ethics Workgroup; LWV Cuyahoga Area members: Janice Patterson, Susan Gray, Ellen Carter, Mary Dunbar, Mary Warren, Kathy Woodbridge, Lesley Hahn, Lois Gross.

REGIONALISM COMMITTEE REPORT 2010-2011

Lynda Mayer, Chair

The work of the "Regionalistas" in a temporary holding pattern, as individual members got involved in the County Charter Transition action and visible progress on the Northeast Ohio front seemed to dwindle. In April, though, a team of us travelled to Trumbull County (Warren), where that League contemplates an Annual Meeting decision to concur with our Regionalism positions. That will bring to 6 the number of Leagues which share our support for Intergovernmental Collaboration and New Growth Tax-Base Sharing. While the Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI) has run into resistance in the OH General Assembly, which it is hoped may eventually pass enabling legislation, interest in and organizing for inter-municipal service sharing has greatly increased, especially within Cuyahoga County. The County Council has an active Government Collaboration Committee and the Exec's administration now features a cabinet aide and department devoted to encouraging and facilitating such service mergers within the County. In May, the Council plans to feature a public meeting with key RPI leaders, so it may safely be predicted that committee activity will be picking up in the coming year.

-- Lynda Mayer (Co-Chair, with Barbara Guy of LWVSH); LWV Cuyahoga Area members: Becky Thomas, Ellen Carter, Kathy Kosiorek, Carol Gibson

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS CUYAHOGA AREA
EDUCATION FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2010- 2011**

Mary Lou Jones, Executive Director

www.lwvCuyahogaArea.org: The January 2011 launch of a redesigned and expanded internet presence for our popular website was the culmination of six months of LWV committee planning and the professional design work of The Impact Group of Hudson OH. The commitment of the education fund trustees to expanded voter service for the northeast Ohio region and a substantial foundation grant from **The Cleveland Foundation** made this major project possible. This internet presence is LWV's major public connection to residents, students and voters in the region.

Out With The Old, In With The New: Cuyahoga County Government:

Some 5,000 copies of the this important citizen education fact-card giving voters important information about the new Charter form of Cuyahoga County government, the transition timeline and ongoing planning process before the election of a new county executive and 11 member county council. This fact-card was distributed by our Chapters and was used in classroom discussions during the High School Mock Elections. Funding for this important publication was provided by member contributions to the education fund.

Engaging A New Generation of Voters: High School Mock Elections 2010

Continuing this popular Ed Fund project, four high schools in our region participated in three days of election related activities which included: simulated voter registration; a Candidate Forum Assembly in each school; a published LWV Voters Guide for each participating student; and simulated balloting. Over 50 LWV volunteers participated in this exciting project held in high schools in: **Maple Heights, Garfield Heights, Rocky River, and Cleveland Heights**. Over 1300 soon-to-be-voters were part of this learning experience. Major funding for this project was provided by our education fund with \$\$\$ contributed by our membership with additional support from **Reaching Heights** and **The Raymond John Wean Foundation**.

First Thursdays – 8th Season: Women Who Know Their Place: Celebrating

Highly Successful Women in our region: For the 2nd season, First Thursdays programs have presented highly placed women in their chosen profession. Speakers included: Ohio District 25 Senator Nina Turner; (co sponsored by Bay Chapter); Loretta Paganini; Chef and Author; Janice Murphy: President of Lakewood & Fairview Hospitals (co-sponsored by Rocky River Chapter); Jane Eaglen renown Wagnerian Soprano (co-sponsored by Lakewood Chapter); Dr. Evalyn Gates: executive director and CEO: Cleveland Museum of Natural History (co-sponsored by Heights Chapter). The funding for the individual First Thursdays programs is provided by co-sponsoring LWV Cuyahoga Area Chapters.

National Sunshine Law Week: March 2011: A letter promoting LWV Cuyahoga Area support of the Sunshine Laws in Ohio and a copy of *The Sunshine Law: Ohio's Open Meeting Act* was sent to the newly elected Cuyahoga County Executive and 11 County Council members.

LWV CUYAHOGA AREA: CHAPTER ACTIVITES REPORTS

BAY VILLAGE CHAPTER: ANNUAL REPORT -- Joan Hirsh

- \$2000 in scholarships were given to two Bay High School students who were named “Good Citizen Scholars.” These League scholarships are given annually to one male and one female graduating Bay High School senior in memory of Leaguers Maxine M. McQuate and George Serb.
- Bay Days (July 4 holiday week-end) Bay Chapter personnel oversaw and handled ride ticket sales each of the four days. This is our major fundraiser of the year and involves many hours and many volunteers. A number of CA Chapter members earned \$\$\$ for their chapters by working the ticket booth.
- Bay Village Chapter financed the honorarium to the Westlake High School Video Club, which videotaped the District 1 Candidate Forum, and ran it on cable government channels.
- Bay Village Chapter sponsored November “First Thursdays,” featuring State Senator Nina Turner. Senator Turner has joined the LWV.
- Represented the west side Chapters of the LWV Cuyahoga Area at the local swearing in ceremony of District 1 county councilmember Dave Greenspan.
- The Bay Village chapter gave financial support to a number of local civic organizations including Kiwanis Achievement Awards, Bay Community Council for the Citizen and Project of the Year reception, the Caring and Sharing Holiday Program, Bay Girls Softball Club, the Bay Historical Society, and Holiday Trays to the Fire and Police Departments in appreciation for their support during Bay Days. The Bay Chapter made a contribution to the LWV Cuyahoga Area Education Fund, Inc., along with the \$400 from Bay Days to the Cuyahoga Area general fund.
- A Holiday Party and an Annual Meeting Dinner were held.

CLEVELAND HTS--UNIVERSITY HTS CHAPTER: ANNUAL REPORT -- Maryann Barnes and Carol Gibson

Meeting with county reps:

Our feature event of the year was a meeting with our new county council representatives: Julian Rogers, District 10, which includes Cleveland Heights; and Sunny Simon, District 11, which includes University Heights. The event was threatened by a midwinter storm, but members and guests of the Heights Chapter braved the elements to gather for a light supper and an opportunity to chat with Ms. Simon and Mr. Rogers. The evening’s format contained no speeches—only questions and answers. Attendees found the evening to be

most informative and encouraging. The new council seems to be hard working, diligent, and enthusiastic about building a new county government. Since Ms. Simon expressed some interest in the League's history with county reform advocacy, we gave her a copy of the 1998 League pamphlet on county government. You never know when obsolete material can be useful.

Summer League tables:

As usual, we used summer street fairs in the Heights as opportunities to register voters and disseminate information. Since we have discovered that many of these fairs attract people from outside of the Heights, we made sure that we had complete information for all of the League forums for the county candidates.

Heights observer corps:

Our observer program continues to provide high visibility for the League and our chapter. We cover both Cleveland Heights and University Heights city councils and the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school and library boards. The observer corps met in February to review and evaluate our practices. A questionnaire to the listserv generated numerous positive responses. Based on the results of the questionnaire we made a few changes to simplify listserv posting.

We still provide abridged summaries for both the *Heights Observer's* online and print publications. The online summaries receive anywhere from 90 to 200 hits per month. We are moving to disseminate the observer tasks more broadly and to recruit new observers. We have a number of new corps members and are enjoying the return of others who had taken a break. Our observer team, including observers, editors, and *Heights Observer* summary writers, are Katie Solender, Kirsten Karakul, Lisa Peters, Pat Solomon, Carol Gibson, Wendy Duering, Anne McFarland, Nancy Dietrich, Cassie Talerico, Adele Cohn, Charlene Morse, and Maryann Barnes. Lillian Houser is returning after a break and we expect Blanche Valancy to return soon. Marilyn McLaughlin plans to rejoin us in the summer. We are most grateful and extend thanks to this group of dedicated individuals.

FAIRVIEW PARK CHAPTER: ANNUAL REPORT -- Nikki Salupo

This year was one of sadness and triumphs. In the former category, we mourn the loss of two of our members: Mary Jarmusch and Robert Sunkle. They are missed, especially Mary who was the embodiment of wisdom and creative ideas. As to the triumphs, we include our annual Youth in Government Program which is in its tenth year. This four-day event brought speakers, including League member Fairview Park Mayor Eileen Patton; State Rep. and League member Nan Baker; State Sen. Tom Patton; Cuyahoga Council District One Rep Dave Greenspan; Rocky River Muni Court Judges Fitzsimmons and Hagan conducting court; and Fairview Park school board members, appearing before junior and senior Government students from Fairview Park High School. Another triumph was the Health Care Reform meeting with speaker, Gary Benjamin, co-sponsored with the Lakewood Chapter. In addition, our chapter has held monthly lunch meetings with speakers from such organizations as the Fairview Park

Historical Society, the Lake Erie Metroparks Nature Center, the Fairview Park City Schools, the Friends of the Fairview Park Library, and the Fairview Park Chamber of Commerce. It was a year filled with highs and lows.

HILLCREST CHAPTER: ANNUAL REPORT—Roz Peters

Hillcrest Chapter was pleased to be involved in the special projects that covered this year's calendar.

For the General Election, we put in a major effort by helping to run the LWV's County District Council Candidate Forum for District 11 which was held at Brush High School (South Euclid-Lyndhurst School System). To promote this event we contacted all the city halls in the six communities this district covered—South Euclid, Lyndhurst, Beachwood, Richmond Hts., Euclid plus University Hts. and distributed to them Flyers & posters. This included talking with Mayors about sending out the information on their websites, via phone contacts, email etc. We also delivered additional materials to the libraries in these communities and called two community groups who have offered volunteers frequently to help at our forums and publicized our events. The teachers' union sent volunteers; both passed on event info to their members. Our membership provided a site manager, screeners, greeters & candidate sign-in/literature tables' security plus coordinated both the timers and ushers. Hillcrest worked very closely with and developed a good relationship with the Cleveland LWV representatives who were in charge of this forum.

In addition, Hillcrest participated in the High School Mock Election Project which we always find a joy to be doing and inspiring! Some members attended and donated towards our chapter's contribution of a "Breaktime" theme basket plus two wines for the LWV Fundraiser /Luncheon honoring Lynda Mayer. What an excellent idea and fun event! We did again-as in the past- Voter Registration in an Assisted Living facility and a local Presbyterian church. We provided Question Screeners at the County Candidate Forum last summer at John Carroll University. Some of our members attended, learned from and enjoyed First Thursdays events. *A Special Thank You from Hillcrest Chapter to Jean Gianelos, Barbara Williams, Carolyn Suguichi, Hazel Haffner, Maria Heckaman and posthumously to Irene Kay for your devoted involvement, time, talent, knowledge & support.*

LAKWOOD CHAPTER: ANNUAL REPORT – Kathy Kosiorek and Mary Warren

The Lakewood Chapter continues to meet on the second Tuesday of every month from September through June. Our membership remains stable.

The chapter supports the work of the Cuyahoga Area League by providing members to assist in all initiatives. In 2010 we hosted the Cuyahoga Council 2nd District Candidates Night. We provided members as moderators, timers, and screeners for many other candidates' nights throughout the county. We also helped with mock elections in area high schools. Members of our chapter also serve on the countywide board.

In March, in cooperation with the Fairview Chapter we presented a forum entitled "Health Care Reform, What's in it for You" at the Fairview Park Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library.

We continue our presence at the Lakewood Art's Festival in August where we register new voters.

Our May 10th chapter annual meeting, which will be held at Deagan's Restaurant at 6:00 p.m. will feature Lakewood's new mayor Michael Summers who will share his plans for the future of Lakewood.

ROCKY RIVER CHAPTER: ANNUAL REPORT – Sally Ebling

Activities:

- Candidates' Night was held in October for City Council representatives
- An informational forum was held for members of the community to better understand issue 6.
- The LWVRR chapter also sponsored a similar forum at the RR Senior Center
- Co-Chairman Sally Ebling participated in a vote audit at the Board of Elections shortly after the November 2010 election

The annual program planning potluck was held at member Pat McConochy's home. This event is always well attended. Discussion takes place regarding potential programming for the coming year. A decision was made to once again offer a \$500 scholarship to a Rocky River High School senior planning to major in political science, pre-law or similar subjects.

The annual dinner in May 2010 was held at the Cleveland Yacht Club. Speaker was Georgia Swanson, who, in costume, traced the 90 year history of women getting the vote. Mrs. Swanson is a professor at BW College and a very effective presenter. Speaker for the May 12, 2011, dinner is Korey Koran, development director for the city of Rocky River.

The League was represented at the Rocky River Federation of local groups, and also at the "State of the Schools" presentation. LWV co-chair Jean Rounds is currently school board president.

An email newsletter is prepared by Lesley Hahn periodically to remind local Leaguers of upcoming events.

The League is financially supporting and hosting First Thursday speaker Janice Murphy, president of Fairview and Lakewood Hospitals. This event, postponed in February due to weather, will be held the first Thursday in May at the West Shore Unitarian Church.

WESTLAKE--NORTH OLMSTED: ANNUAL REPORT -- Sandi O'Dell and Carole Koscielny

The Westlake/North Olmsted Unit spent most of fall helping with candidates' nights and mock elections.

There were three county executive forums.

There were 11 separate candidate nights for the 11 district candidates.

District 1 Carole Koscielny, Jean Seasholtz, Anne Engel, Janet Kershaw

District 5 Carole Koscielny

There were four mock elections.

Garfield Hts. - Carole Koscielny, Janice Patterson

Rocky River - Nan Baker, Mary Worthington, Anne Engle, Janice Patterson

November 16 - luncheon meeting at Claudette's restaurant

Discussed future of our chapter

School study

Future activities

13 members attended

December 7 - Annual Christmas party at Carole Koscielny's.

February 8 - Program Planning Meeting at Paneras in North Olmsted

Meeting was attended by 9 members

BOOK CLUB ANNUAL REPORT

The third year for the League's Book Club attracted between eight and fourteen women and men to each meeting. We met five times to consider the following books: *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, by Lawrence Wright; *Supreme Courtship*, by Christopher Buckley; *The Defining Moment: FDR's 100 Days and the Triumph of Hope*, by Jonathan Alter; *Eaarth: How to Survive on a New Degraded Earth*, by Bill McKibben; *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything your American History Textbook Got Wrong*, by James W. Loewen.

The last meeting of this season will take place on Sunday, July 10 at 7:00 pm at the home of Maryann and Geoff Barnes. A discussion of *Lies My Teacher Told Me* will be led by Lesley Hahn.

Attendees at the June meeting will choose our reading list for the coming year. So far, the following books have been suggested: *The Anti-Federalist Papers and the Constitutional Convention Debates*, by Ralph Ketcham; *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, by Rebecca Skloot; *The Worst Hard Times: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great Dust Bowl*, by Timothy Eagan; *Freakanomics*, by Steven Levitt; *American Exceptionalism*, by Newt Gingrich; *Econned*, by Yves Smith; *The Warmth of Other Suns*, by Isabel Wilkerson; *The Fear*, by Peter Godwin; *Moral Minority: Our Skeptical Founding Fathers*, by Brooke Allen; *Changing Planet, Changing Health: How the Climate Crisis Threatens Our Health and What We Can Do about It*, by Paul R. Epstein and Dan Ferber.

Carol Gibson, Convener for 2010 - 2011