



**LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®**

Cuyahoga **VOTER**

The Newsletter of The League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area

Fall 2011

**LWV Cuyahoga Area
50 Public Square, #938
Cleveland, OH 44113
216-781-0555**

www.lwvCuyahogaArea.org

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Susan Gray**

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Membership**

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**Kathy Kosiorek and
Madeline Carr,
Lakewood Chapter**

**Jean Rounds and Sally
Ebling, Rocky River Chapter**

**Carole Koscielny and
Sandra O'Dell, Westlake/
North Olmsted Chapter**

LWV Cuyahoga Area Mock Elections 2011 Set for Four Area High Schools.

For the fourth election year, Engaging A New Generation of Voters: Mock Elections For High School Students event will be held for 11th and 12th grade students. The mock elections will be held in four public high schools in Cuyahoga County during October: Brecksville, Fairview, Parma Senior and Brush (South Euclid/Lyndhurst) High Schools.

The three day simulated voting experience in each school will include student voter registration and precinct assignment; a two-page published Voters Guide for each school, an Issue Forum Assembly with advocates for and against Issue 2 appearing in each school to answer students' questions, and culminating in a ballot election overseen and verified by Board of Elections staff. The focus of the 2011 Mock Election will be state Issue 2. The simulated ballot will enable students to vote on all three state ballot issues.

Since 2008, the High School Mock Election project has reached approximately 2,700 soon-to-be-voters. It is expected that the 2011 project will involve an additional 1,400 students. Approximately 40 LWV volunteers, under the direction of Mock Election Coordinator, Julia Arnold-Hess, will be needed to staff the popular project in four high schools. Watch for the 'CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS' mailing (or contact mljones5@sbcglobal.net) ... and VOLUNTEER.



Whose Democracy Is This? It's Ours If We Inform Ourselves.

Cuyahoga Area Consensus Meeting: The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education:

Saturday, November 12, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

West Shore Unitarian/Universalist Church
20401 Hilliard Road, Rocky River

Devote a day to a timely topic. Members will convene to reach consensus on the fifteen questions that make up the LWV national study, questions including:

- Should there be common core standards for all K-12 students?
- Should those standards be mandated?
- How would students be assessed?
- Would federal funding be provided?

We plan to offer you a fun, stimulating, worthwhile day of discussion that results in well-thought-out responses on this important issue. On the morning of November 12 we will discuss Common Core Standards and Assessments. Lunch will be provided, followed by discussion and consensus on Funding and Equity.

You can do your homework online with materials provided by the National League. Go to www.lwv.org and click on Projects and Programs/The Education Study/Background Papers. Reading Historical Perspectives, Core Standards and Assessments, and Funding and Equity to prepare. Study materials are also available at <http://www.lwvcuyahogaarea.org/site.cfm/Action-Advocacy/LWV-Views.cfm>. We hope you will join us as our local League adds its voice to those of League members throughout the nation.

Questions? Contact **Nancy Dietrich** at 216-371-9379 or dietz2350@aol.com.

Presidents' Points . . .

Whose Democracy Is This? It's Ours If We Lead

1960 – the school-yard call: “Kennedy, Kennedy, he’s our man!! Nixon belongs in the garbage can!!” (Then, in my face, where did he come from?) “Nixon, Nixon, he’s our man!! Kennedy belongs in the garbage can!!” My first thought “Oh, he’s got it backwards, I should tell him.” But perception, quicker than speech: the stance, set jaw, clenched fist, and I realize, he means it. This was my jolt of awareness – the power of political loyalties even where, as children, we have no knowledge whatever to back up those powerful allegiances.

As adults, we can do better, and as the League, we do better than better. We are the model for the open mind, for studying before deciding, for providing opportunities for all sides to be heard. We provide quiet, dignified spaces for voters to hear and decide based on knowledge, rather than slogan or chant.

What we have is a process that can be taught. For the sake of our democracy we need to reach out and teach the process to the children for whom we are all responsible. As League, we have deep roots in the past, with ongoing exceptional accomplishments in the present. My question is where is our future league? Where is the platform to support future work of the next generations?

Our organization offers opportunities for so much creative service – we are a tall, strong tree deeply rooted with a glorious crown. I think, though, that the opportunities are focused in the present. I would like to see some of us focused on the future. So, while those with a passion for the fray jump into candidate forums, voter registration, monitoring council and generally educating the public, I would love to see some of us coming together to plan for the outreach to the future.

The overarching goal would be to provide high school students the heady experience of civil, non-partisan, but still very passionate discourse. The vehicles would be support in running their own regular meetings, planning their own mock election programs, building their own voter guides from our models, or conducting voter registration drives. We have so much to teach. And the students could learn through this process that this messy democracy is complicated and has no easy answers, but that it is theirs and that they can manage the tools to make it work. I hope to see a lot of discussion about this in the coming year.

— *Susan Marie Gray, Co-President*

Complicating the Voting Process

League members are helping gather the 231,000+ signatures needed by the end of September in order to give voters a chance to repeal HB 194 at the polls in November 2012. Changes in Ohio voting law found in HB 194 could significantly increase lines on Election Day, force many more voters to vote provisionally, and result in more disqualified voters. For more information on the petition drive, go to www.LWVCuyahogaArea.org.

On August 22 the LWV Ohio board voted to support the effort to repeal HB 194 – passed by the legislature in June, 2011 – through a referendum petition drive. LWV Ohio supports the referendum based on national League positions to protect the right of all citizens to vote, to encourage all citizens to vote, and to facilitate citizens’ participation in government decision-making.

The petition effort was undertaken by Fair Elections Ohio and is backed by a coalition of state legislators, voting rights advocates, progressive groups and others. The petitioners have until September 29 to gather the requisite petitions. If the petition effort is successful, the law will be stayed until after the election in November of 2012. Although the League typically makes a decision about whether to support a statewide referendum only after it gets on the ballot, in this instance the board concluded that because the issue of voters’ rights is so crucial to the League’s mission, the League should support the petition drive.

LWV Cuyahoga Area Book Club

The next meeting will be on October 2, 7:00 p.m., at the home of **Carol Gibson**. **Rosalyn Talerico** will be the discussion leader. We will discuss two books: “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” by Harriet Beecher Stowe and “Mightier Than the Sword: Uncle Tom’s Cabin and the Battle for America” by David Reynolds. The *Plain Dealer* says: “Reynolds convincingly argues that the novel ‘was central to redefining American democracy on a more egalitarian basis. It helped rectify social injustice by affirming fairness and empowerment for marginalized or oppressed groups’ in the United States and abroad.”

Future book club selections and meetings can be found on the web site calendar.

Summer Testimonies

The full text of **Carol Gibson**’s public comments on mailing absentee ballots and creating fair Senate and House districts throughout Ohio can be found at www.LWVCuyahogaArea.org. Click on Advocacy. LWV Cleveland Area’s Penny Jeffries also testified about apportionment.

VOTER Co-Editors
Wendy Deuring
Anne Engel

In Memoriam

Longtime League leader and activist, **Joan R. Hirsh**, passed away suddenly on August 30. Joan's tireless dedication and commitment to the mission of the League and the leadership of the Bay Village Chapter and its voter education activities will be deeply missed by her many friends and colleagues throughout the League. Our deepest condolences to her daughter, **Margie**, an active League member.

League Eyes on County Council, Ethics and ABCDs

Lynda Mayer, Chair, Joint County Government Committee

Back-to-Business Season finds County Government Committee members hitting the ground running – a beefed up observer corps, working on a Cleveland League study of Ethics in Government, and advocacy for proposed ABCD legislation. A word on each:

In the past year we have added new observers **Jean Seasholtz** and **Kathy Woodbridge** to the Tuesday watchdogs, in addition to **Bonnie Daanish** of Cleveland and **Marcia Goldberg** of Shaker. Subscribers to the twice-monthly reports please send a request to LBMayer57@gmail.com.

A joint sub-committee of four is preparing materials for a fact sheet and consensus questions to be presented to Cleveland League members between Nov. 19 and Jan. 27. After that, they hope to have new “Ethics in Government” positions to present to Cuyahoga Area and Shaker Heights League members during Spring for Concurrence. Watch for updates as the Fact Sheets are submitted and information meetings are scheduled. The purpose is to consolidate information already gathered by last year's County Transition Team Ethics Workgroup, made up predominantly of League members, into formal League positions in time for Charter Review beginning this time next year.

Lastly, our 2005-7 ABCD study (Authorities, Boards, Commissions and Special Districts) is finally getting some County attention! Our positions support, among other things, the screening of board appointees for conflicts of interest and also monitoring the use of County funds for many ABCDs. The screening position made it into the County's new Code of Ethics, and the monitoring text is in a proposed ordinance up for decision this September. League voices are being heard.

FINAL WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT: GO OBSERVE YOUR NEW, TRANSPARENT AND EXCITING COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN ACTION, either LIVE AT THE JUSTICE CENTER every 2nd & 4th Tuesday at 6, or STREAMED LIVE onto your home computer (www.council.cuyahogacounty.us).

From the Membership Development Team.

The Membership Development Team is planning three “HOT TOPICS” lunch meetings. Possible topics are:

- 1) Redistricting, many changes coming for the 2012 elections
- 2) Human trafficking. It will be the subject of an LWVO study for 2011-2013. We have a local resource to give us background and history. It will be a consensus program for next year.

If you have other suggestions, call **Mary Warren**, VP for Membership, at 216-221-2975. Also let her know if you work and would prefer a Saturday noon or an evening meeting. More information will be available in the monthly email newsletter and on our website, www.LWVCuyahogaArea.org. Hope to hear from YOU soon, and remember to contact Mary with names and addresses of potential members.

Lakewood Chapter Events

Lakewood League will resume their second Tuesday meetings on Tuesday September 13 at the Melt on Detroit Ave. at 1:00 p.m. Thanks to chapter members **Susan Jankite**, **Madeline Carr**, **Mary Warren**, **Helen Brinich**, **Kate Howley** and **Kathy Kosiorek** for their assistance at the Lakewood Arts Festival Information Booth in August.

Fairview Park Chapter Events

October 3, at Fairview Park Library, 21255 Lorain Rd. in Fairview Park, to hear speaker Edward J. Altmann, retired architect, speaking about Afghanistan. This event begins at 6 p.m. and is co-sponsored by the Rocky River Chapter.

November 19, membership meeting with speaker George Newman, 2011 Fairview Park Citizen of the Year. Public is invited to Cyclones Pitas, 21380 Lorain Rd. in Fairview Park, to meeting which begins at 11:00 a.m.

For more information contact **Nikki Salupo** at 440-333-3842:

Get Ready for “Thursdays with the League”

The 2011-2012 Thursdays season series begins this fall at Cleveland Heights Community Center for the November 3 and December 1 presentations. The series will continue in the spring at the Lakewood Women's Pavilion in Lakewood Park on March 8 and April 12. The Thursdays series features interesting topics and sparkling speakers – right in your own backyard.



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Fall 2011**

**DELIVER PROMPTLY
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Candidate Forums:

Parma Candidate Forum, Candidates for Parma City School Board

September 28, 2011, 6:00 p.m.
Parma Senior High School Auditorium
6285 West 54th Street
Parma, OH 44129

Fairview Park Candidate Forum, Candidates for Mayor and City Council

October 6, 2011, 7:00 p.m.
Fairview Park City Hall
20777 Lorain Road
Fairview Park, OH 44126

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Candidate Forum, Candidates for Cleveland Heights City Council, University Heights City Council and CH-UH School Board

October 6, 2011, 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.
Cleveland Heights Community Center
1 Monticello Blvd.
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Beachwood Candidate Forum, Candidates for School Board and Beachwood City Council

October 13, 2011, 7:00 p.m.
Tentative – go to www.LWVCuyahogaArea.org for most current information

Lakewood Candidate Forum, Candidates for Mayor, City Council and School Board

October 18, 2011, 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.
Women’s Pavilion, Lakewood Park
14532 Lake Avenue
Lakewood, OH 44107

Rocky River Candidate Forum: Candidates for Mayor, Director of Law, City Council, and School Board

October 19, 2011, 7:00 p.m.
Don Umerley Civic Center
20014 Hilliard Blvd.
Rocky River, OH 44116

South Euclid/Lyndhurst Candidate Forum, Candidates for City Council and School Board

October 20, 2011, 7:15 p.m.
Brush High School
4875 Glenlyn Road
Lyndhurst, OH 44124

Debate is the essence of democracy.
— Arthur Schlesinger