



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO

THE VOTER



THE 2010 ELECTION

What happened to the voters? On November 4 the Columbus Dispatch reported a 4.6% decrease in voters in Franklin County. That was 13,755 fewer voters than in the 2006 election. The MC League presence was quite positive, as usual, with voter registrations, the VIB, the candidate forum with the Franklin County Consortium of Good Government and the Channel 10 phone bank. Our Board of Trustees, our committee members and our individual members work tirelessly getting out the message. Why is the message not being heard?



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In the Channel 10 Studio

Top picture: Lucy Buzzee, David McCoy, Anne Nelson, Jane Young, Peg Rosenfield.

Left picture: David McCoy

Right picture: Carol Schoenstein, Eleanor Pearlman, Peg Rosenfield, Danielle Smith.

2010 Election

Election Opinion Articles

The Vote by Peg Rosenfield

THIS IS YOUR MOTHER SPEAKING....

After the nastiest election campaign anyone can remember, your mother wants to have a talk with you.

There are a few rules in life, including:

- * brush your teeth,
- * tell the truth,
- * vote.

Too many of us forgot the last two. Fewer than half of eligible Ohioans voted this fall. And far too many of the candidates forgot about truth. There is plenty of blame to go around. The appalling U.S. Supreme Court decision opened the floodgates for undisclosed campaign spending. Congress was unwilling to require disclosure. So we had tens of millions of secret moneys paying for those nasty, often dishonest, ads.

And we voters listened to them; we did not hang up on the robo calls or turn off the awful TV ads.

Now that it is finally over, we need a big dose of civility. Can we now stop screaming at each other, and have a reasoned discussion about how to address Ohio's real, pressing problems?

Let's talk about how we are going to provide:

- * transparent, responsive government
- * affordable public safety
- * good education for all, for jobs and citizenship
- * safe housing
- * adequate food
- * clean water and air

- * affordable physical and mental health care
- * safe transportation system
- * jobs to pay for all these needs

Do I have your attention yet? Then pay attention to what goes on at the Statehouse, and let them know how you feel about it. Go to www.legislature.state.oh.us to contact your legislators.

Peg Rosenfield is the LWVO Election Specialist and a long-time LWVMC member.

At the Polls by Ann Henkener

I was one of many Ohio citizens who worked the polls this general election. Half of the 10 poll workers at my location in Upper Arlington had worked there before, and we are pretty adept at getting the polls open and the voting machines up and operating. Voters are familiar with the DRE voting machines and didn't have many problems. We had only one voter who left the room without completing his ballot. We ran after him and he came back and finished voting. The notable part of the day was the frustration of voters who didn't have proper identification under Ohio's requirements. One man really wanted to cast a regular ballot and had even checked with the Franklin County Board of Elections to be sure he could do that even though he had moved within his precinct but had not changed his address with the Board of Elections. He had copies of the materials saying he could still vote a regular ballot. However, a notice mailed from the Board had been returned to them unclaimed (because he had moved) so he was required to vote a provisional ballot and was pretty upset.

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2010 Election

Election Opinion Articles, continued

In another instance, a woman came in who was properly in the poll book at her current address. However, she had an out-of-state driver's license, which is not acceptable ID. We reviewed with her other forms of ID and she came up with the registration for her car, which was in her husband's name. Again - unacceptable ID. Fortunately, she was persistent, and came back a third time. I don't know what she showed as ID, but she did have an Authority to Vote slip, so the third time was a charm for her. Another voter was a first-time voter and an OSU student. She was still voting at her permanent address with her parents in Upper Arlington even though she lived on campus. She had her OSU student ID card, but it didn't have an address on it, so it wasn't acceptable ID. She needed to go back to her dorm room and get her driver's license. Fortunately her mother was with her and drove her back to OSU to get her driver's license and I saw her voting later in the day. Not a great experience for a first-time voter.

Certainly a balance needs to be struck between encouraging voters to vote and making sure they are who they claim to be. I think we need to strike the balance more toward the side of encouraging voters to vote. These voters persisted and eventually voted. However, I know there are voters who won't persist after being turned away or don't have time to come back to the polls one more time that day. Democracy is the loser when voting becomes too difficult.

Ann Henkener serves on the board of the LWVO and LWVMC. She is director of the LWVO Lobby Corp. Ann is also a poll worker.

At the Phones by Danielle Smith

The Fourth of July. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Veteran's Day. Election Day. These are all days that I am reminded of my deep pride and appreciation of the rights and privileges that I am afforded by being an American. These days remind me of the battles that my foremothers and forefathers fought for me to be free and to have basic human and civil rights. To honor these women and men I always engage in some sort of activity on these days. This year for Election Day my activity was to volunteer to answer phones with the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus at the Channel 10 television studios for a few hours.

I chose answering phones this year because I thought it was a great non-partisan way to be engaged on Election Day. Like so many other Americans this year I was tired of the election's party politics and found that volunteering with the League was a great way to help all Ohioans - regardless of their party affiliation. Many of the phone calls were from Franklin County residents who needed help finding their polling station or who had moved since 2008 and were not sure what they should do. I was able to easily answer most of their questions with the information sheet provided to volunteers. I thoroughly enjoyed answering callers' questions and meeting other members of the League. I plan on volunteering to participate in the League's phone bank next Election Day because it was an easy but significant way to give back on such an important day. When the opportunity arises again I encourage you to join me as a volunteer.

Danielle Smith is a one year member of the League MC. Danielle is Services Coordinator at the National Association of Social Workers, Ohio Chapter.

From the Board

Barbara Crabill

Vice-President, Voter Service

The 2010 election is finally over. Regardless of whether your candidates won or lost, I suspect you are as grateful as I am that the constant barrage of negative political campaign ads is over as well.

Across the country, voters were overwhelmed by millions of dollars of negative ads, but we don't even know who paid for many of those ads. Two weeks before the election, I was in Boston and New Orleans. Amazingly, I saw some of the same negative campaign ads for candidates in those cities. Only the picture, name and race were changed, the rest of the ad, including the music and scripted voice-over, was exactly the same as those we were seeing in Columbus!

In January, 2010, the Supreme Court of the United States handed down its decision in *Citizen United vs. Federal Elections Commission*, fully legalizing corporate and union donations. Now that the midterm election is over, we can get a clearer picture of the effect of that decision on our election process and what it portends for future elections if something isn't done to restore transparency.

The Supreme Court ruling allowed this election to be the most costly and least transparent midterm election in recent history. Outside groups were able to raise and spend a reported \$126 million on elections without having to disclose the source of these funds giving corporations, unions and others the ability to buy enough airtime to make meaningful

discussion about candidates and policies impossible. According to Public Citizen, a non-profit, non-partisan lobbying organization, in 58 of 74 national election contests that changed hands, winning candidates rode the wave of cash from shadowy groups, giant corporations and the super rich.

As League of Women Voters US President Elisabeth MacNamara said after the election, "The incivility and tone of the 2010 campaign reached a disturbingly new low in American politics." This was true not only in the advertising, but also in candidate forums and in the public discourse.

Prior to the election, Congress attempted to pass the DISCLOSE Act, which would restore transparency to US elections by requiring disclosure of corporate and union spending in candidate elections, and requiring outside groups to disclose the source of their money. It would also force disclosure of the financial backers of a political advertisement within the message, prohibit political spending by companies with 20 percent or more foreign ownership, and restrict ads by some government contractors.

It is time for action. The League calls on Congress to pass the DISCLOSE Act. Congress should also preserve and extend ethics enforcement. We have witnessed all the special-interest money spent in this election; now is not the time to cut back on the enforcement of ethics standards in Washington.

"We have to serve the truth as candidates for public office and not mislead, misguide, misdirect the people merely to provoke emotional responses and win votes that way".

Adlai Stevenson

November Units

Dinner Unit Report by David McCoy

Ah, taxes! Nothing whets the appetite more! And so the Dinner Unit had a good fill at its October meeting, discussing possible changes in the League position re: taxes, after digesting a good meal of Chinese and American food at Wing's Restaurant. About a dozen folks engaged in spirited discussion, led by our own Scott Britton. At times, consensus came as smoothly as fine vanilla ice cream; other parts of the consensus seemed more like peanut brittle. All in all, a good, friendly, spirited discussion among friendly Leaguers sent Scott home with the data to digest. Bon appetit!

Morning Unit Report

As David McCoy was waxing poetic the Morning Unit at Wesley Glen was also discussing the state tax study. Nancy Brown led the unit to a consensus. New state tax positions based on consensus will be published soon.

Committee Reports

Land Use Committee

Reports on Portland, Cleveland and a bit of information from MORPC keeps the Land Use Committee busy. The next meeting will be held on Monday, Nov. 22, 2010, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at the Cornerstone Cafe and Deli, 3296 North High Street. All members are welcome.



Committee Reports

Development Committee

Introducing a New Committee.....
The LWVMC Development Committee was established over this past summer and has been actively exploring ways to increase our League's financial resources. The committee plans to focus on new and innovative fundraising strategies to increase member and non-member support.

Committee priorities for 2010-2011:

1. Increase corporate support for Democracy In Action/League in general;
2. Initiate a planned giving program;
3. Seek grants for the VIB and other Education Fund projects.

Committee members include: Scott Britton, Lucy Buzzee, Esther Connors, Janyce Katz, Anne Nelson, Sue Phillips, Amy Pulles, Caroline Ramsey and Karen Snyder. The committee is chaired by Kitty Burcsu.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 6, 6:30 PM at the Columbus Board of Realtors, 2700 Airport Drive. The committee welcomes additional members!

Education Committee

The Education Committee has chosen the topic of immigration for the January meeting. Dave Patton will moderate a panel discussion to be followed by questions from those participating. The program will be on January 20, 2011 at Wesley Glen. There will be coffee and cookies provided by Wesley Glen. Refreshments will be available at 7 pm and the program will begin at 7:30 pm.

Committee Reports



The League Holiday Party

by Lucy Hadley Buzzee

Come to the League Holiday Party to Have Fun and Renew Friendships!

The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus will host its annual Holiday Brunch, featuring "Raffle Mania" and a "Live" fund-raising auction on Sunday, December 5, from 12:00 to 2:30 p.m. Join your League friends and bring your other friends to support the League, have some fun and enjoy a tasty brunch. This is just one of the nicest events of the year, because it is wonderful to see old friends and make new friends. As always, there is lively conversation, terrific food and treasures to be had.

What is Raffle Mania? Each person will receive \$10 worth of raffle tickets. More raffle tickets can be purchased at the event (and we

encourage you to do just that!). There will be many items to be raffled. You can choose to put your raffle tickets towards one item or mix it up and put tickets towards more than one item. The more tickets you put towards any item, the better your chances of getting that item.

The ever popular "live" auction returns in what has become a much-anticipated event. It features our talented auctioneer extraordinaire, Brent Taggart, who will no doubt have timely and humorous comments regarding the mid-term elections and our elected officials.

The Holiday Brunch will be held at the home of League members: Nancy and Bob Brown at Miranova, One Miranova Place, Columbus 43215. Parking is available at the adjacent garage, other nearby surface lots, and on the street.

Tickets are \$20 per person, which includes \$10 worth of raffle tickets. To purchase a ticket, simply contact the League office at 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org.



Do Not Miss out on the Fun and the Prizes.

Gift Card to Cameron Mitchell

Tickets for the OSU Theatre

Gift Card to the Refectory

Tickets for the Westerville Symphony

Tickets for the Otterbein Theatre

Tickets for Carpe Diem String Quartet

Tickets for the Columbus Symphony Orchestra

Gift Card to Barcelona

Too many prizes to list!



And the Prizes just keep getting bigger.

Basket of gift cards and other goodies from the North Market
(Valued at \$200)



Two nights stay and a round of golf for 2 at Sawmill Creek Resort on Lake Erie
(Valued at \$490)

Four days and nights at the Fahey home in Santa Fe.
(Valued at \$700)

Plus SO much more!

Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee Report

by Scott Britton

Election season was quiet for the Advocacy Committee because we chose not to take a position on any local ballot issues – even as we provided helpful pro and con arguments for the library levy and city charter amendment in the Voter Information Bulletin. *The Other Paper* gave us 15 minutes of fame: A chance to restate our displeasure with the poor wording of the city charter issue – a question of maintaining the current practice of open meetings in all circumstances versus permitting executive session in certain circumstances – with an article in the Oct. 21 edition. (See our Facebook page for a link to the article.)

The committee took the lead at October units, facilitating two fascinating discussions of state tax and finance as part of the state League's update of its position. If concern that your eyes would glaze over with boredom from a debate about state government revenue sources kept you from attending, then you missed out on an educational and lively exploration of such issues as equity and fairness, means testing, personal versus corporate responsibility for taxes, and more. All just in time for the BIG debate in the legislature next year over the state budget and the projected \$8 billion deficit. (Many thanks to Nancy Brown for facilitating the Morning Unit.) How did the consensus of Metro Columbus members stack up against those from other Leagues around the state? Stay tuned!

The Advocacy Committee is looking forward to a busy New Year. A new General Assembly and a new Congress will be inaugurated in January, and LWV-Ohio will be counting on us to interview new and returning legislators. This is our opportunity to build relationships with policy makers at the state and federal level. (See related article about election results.) If you are interested in helping to interview your local state legislator or member of Congress, contact Scott Britton at sbritton@wowway.com.

Metro League members will also have the opportunity to weigh in on state program planning – the biennial process by which we revisit all of the state League positions to decide which should be retained and modified – in the run-up to this spring's State Convention, May 13-15 at Maumee Bay State Park. We will also have the chance to recommend new studies, updates to existing positions, or concurrence (a process by which the state League adopts the position of another League without going through a study). There is already some energy building around a move to ask the state League to concur with Metro League's new position on public transit. Stay tuned for news of a program planning meeting in January or early February.

Speaking of studies, if you are interested in serving on the national study committee examining privatization of government services, submit your resume and application to LWVUS by Dec. 16.

There is a lot of local League activity – even with the election behind us. If you have ideas for local advocacy, join the Advocacy Committee!

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Committee Reports

Election Results

The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus congratulates all the winners in November's general election and gratefully recognizes the service of all outgoing office holders.

Of the three state senators and nine state representatives who represent the metro area, four are new, while one moves from the House to the Senate. In Congress, one new face joins two returning members. Here is the lineup:

Ohio House of Representatives

- Republican Anne Gonzales replaces Democrat Marian Harris in the 19th District;
- Democrat Nancy Garland retains her seat in the 20th District;
- Republican Mike Duffey replaces Kevin Bacon (who won election to the Senate) in the 21st District;
- Democrat John Patrick Carney retains his seat in the 22nd District;
- Republican Cheryl Grossman retains her seat in the 23rd District and has been appointed to serve in the House leadership as assistant majority whip;
- Democrat Ted Celeste retains his seat in the 24th District;
- Democrat Michael Stinziano replaces term-limited Dan Stewart in the 25th District;
- Democrat Tracy Heard retains her seat in the 26th District; and
- Democrat Carleton Weddington retains his seat in the 27th District.

Ohio Senate

- Republican Kevin Bacon replaces term-limited David Goodman in the 3rd District; and
- Democrat Charleta Tavares replaces term-limited Ray Miller in the 15th District.

(The 16th District seat, held by Republican Jim Hughes, was not up for election this year.)

U.S. House of Representatives

- Republican Pat Tiberi retains his seat in the 12th District;
- Republican Steve Stivers replaces Democrat Mary Jo Kilroy in the 15th District; and
- Republican Steve Austria retains his seat in the 7th District.

County Offices

- Democrat Marilyn Brown retains her seat on the Franklin County Commission; and
- Republican Clarence Mingo retains his office as Franklin County Auditor.

Issues

- The Columbus Metropolitan Library tax levy passed; and
- The City of Columbus charter amendment passed (meaning that council will be able to go into executive session to discuss certain matters, in case you, like the League, found the wording of this issue confusing!).

For the results of other local ballot issues and contests for judgeships, check the Franklin County Board of Elections website.

Also, see the League's website for a special post-election commentary on disclosure and civility, entitled "Secret money has no place in elections."

Membership Committee

The League MC announces four new members! Welcome Natalie Wise, Kimberly Hoessly, Eric Davies, and Elaine MaCarthy to the League. All members are encouraged to introduce themselves to our new members.

League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus and Educational Fund Board of Trustees



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Barbara Crabill

Vice-President, Membership

Mim Brierley

Vice-President, Advocacy

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"We the people" -- it is a very eloquent beginning. But when the Constitution of the United States was completed on the seventeenth of September in 1787, I was not included in that "We the people." I felt for many years that somehow George Washington and Alexander Hamilton just left me out by mistake. But through the process of amendment, interpretation, and court decision, I have finally been included in "We the People." Barbara Jordan (1936-1996)

An Early New Year's Resolution

by Jean Byrd, editor

My League resolution for the new year has to do with inclusiveness. I am not really waiting for the New Year. This resolution will go into effect immediately.

I was talking with a new member. She felt a bit left out at League functions. At meetings everyone knew everyone and everyone knew all about the "League" way. This is a far stretch from reality but it is how we are observed. According to Mim Brierley, Vice-President, Membership, "A 2011 goal for the MC League is to have an orientation/get-together for new and 'old' members". I pledge to show up. I could make a few calls to new members inviting them to different League activities. I can do that.

Starting now I will make sure all members feel welcomed at League functions and I will make sure all know what is happening in this unique entity we call "League." If I do not know we will go find out.

My second League resolution is to fill up all the VOTER white space with League news and with Leaguers. Please send me pictures of yourself and others enjoying an informative night out with the League or perhaps a picture of League members at a voter registration event or even pictures of contemplative members at committee meetings. In the next VOTER I will begin to add short profile on board trustees and new and 'well-established' members.

I just noticed I do not know all the MC Board of Trustees. I am going to make myself a name badge.



LWVMC Holiday Brunch Party

(Rafflemania + "Live" Auction)

Sunday, December 5

12:00 noon to 2:30 p.m.

Nancy and Bob Brown's home at One Miranova Place

\$20 per person (\$10 worth of raffle tickets included!)

Monday, November 22	7:00 pm	Land Use Committee, CornerStone Deli
Tuesday, November 23	11:30 am	Lobby Lunch, third floor Columbus Metropolitan Library
Sunday, December 5	12:00 pm	Holiday Brunch and Auction, Miranova
Tuesday, December 14	12:00 am	Lobby Lunch, Annual Holiday Potluck, The Forum
Thursday, December 16	6:30 pm	Board of Trustee Meeting, Jewish Community Center
Thursday, January 20	7:00 pm	Immigration Education Meeting, Wesley Glen

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