

November 2007

Join Us November 13 on the Road to Consensus

Meeting to Focus on League's Immigration Position

by Jean Byrd

There is excitement in the air. It is a consensus. League members from around the US are coming together to form a consensus for a new position on immigration—and MC Leaguers are ready to take on this challenge of a new position.

The October Units whet our appetite for the Tuesday, November 13 meeting, *Coming to Consensus on Immigration*. Our local Leaguers have reacquainted themselves with the topic on consensus and have discussed immigration both locally and nationally. Do not be left behind. Join the local Leaguers that are scrutinizing all the resource papers prepared by the US Immigration Committee and other background information from LWVUS. Get the information online at www.lwvcols.org or contact LWVMC Administrator **Amy Pulles** (lwvcols@iwaynet.net or 614-837-1089), for a packet of information.

The MC League is ready to engage in a serious discussion of immigration and the position questions presented by US. **Do not miss this meeting!** Through this process add your voice to the issue of immigration in our country.

The General Membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 13 at Wesley Glen Retirement Center (Ravine Room). The meeting will start at 7:00 PM. Desserts with coffee and tea will be provided. See the consensus questions inside this issue of the *Voter*.

Go "Beyond the Units"

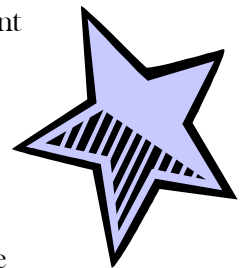
by Jean Byrd

The next Beyond the Units tour will take MC Leaguers to Delaware County for a significant tour of the Freedom Center. Freedom Center is a youth residential drug and alcohol treatment center operated by the Department of Youth Services and certified by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services for female offenders. The Freedom Center mission statement reads: *In accordance with the Ohio Department of Youth Services' mission, Freedom Center shall improve Ohio's juvenile female offenders' quality of life today, so they make a drug-free and crime-free choice tomorrow, with believing the foundation is recovery.*

The LWV of Ohio supports the development and utilization of gender-specific treatment programs. In Ohio, the League was one of the first groups to study unruly children and to consider the rights of children in the juvenile justice system. This will be a tour of importance for our League.

The tour will take place on November 15. The bus will leave at 1:15 PM from the north side of the Kroger parking lot at the corner of North Broadway and North High streets. The bus should return around 4:00 PM. Space is limited, so please contact League Administrator **Amy Pulles** (lwvcols@iwaynet.net; 614-837-1089) to reserve a spot.

For more information about the Freedom Center try www.ciic.state.oh.us/reports/fcj.pdf and for more information about the Ohio League's positions on juvenile delinquency go to www.lwvcols.org and click on League Positions.



FROM THE PRESIDENT...

by Kitty Burcsu

As the election season peaks, I have both good news and bad news to report!



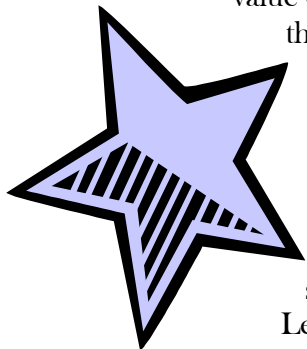
The good news is that LWVMC was visibly engaged in voter registration, candidates' forums, providing speakers, loading our website with voter information, and producing the VIB. And of course none of these activities would have occurred without our dedicated

members ably supported by our League Administrator **Amy Pulles**. Kudos to **Janyce Katz** and her superb Voter Service Committee for their unflagging efforts that began while many of us were still thinking flip flops and summer vacations and doesn't end until that last phone is answered at the WBNS 10-TV Phone Bank on Election Day.

Our partnership with *The Columbus Dispatch* to produce and distribute the VIB is now in it's fourth year...a wonderful relationship for LWVMC and a wonderful service to the entire Central Ohio community. Over 450,000 copies of the VIB were distributed in the Sunday edition in addition to 20,000 copies given to LWVMC for distribution to United Way agencies, libraries, and businesses.

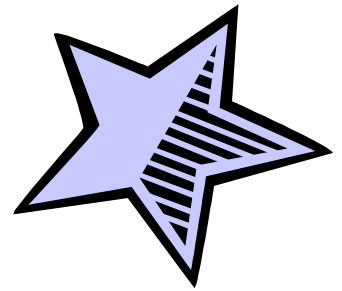
This year for the first time, *The Columbus Dispatch* is also promoting LWVMC with digital ads on its website, www.dispatch.com. More than 250,000 digital ads that began on October 22 remind website visitors to look for the VIB in the October 28 issue, provide easy access to the VIB online, and direct them to the LWVMC website for additional voter information, a calendar of events, and membership benefits. The value of these ads amounts to

thousands of dollars. The value of this promotion and visibility to LWVMC ... priceless! So again LWVMC extends its gratitude to *The Columbus Dispatch* for continuing support of the VIB and the League and for its belief in the



importance of an informed electorate.

I mentioned bad news...with all of the efforts to educate the citizenry on the importance of voting, and all of the efforts to make voter registration and voter information easily accessible and understandable, League volunteers encountered residents who saw no reason to register or to vote; saw no role for themselves in our democratic process, and couldn't imagine that their voice makes a difference. The work of the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus goes on!



Your Help Needed for Annual Holiday Party & Auction

We are gearing up again for LWVMC's most exciting fundraiser. This year, the Holiday Party & Auction will be held on Saturday, December 1, 4:00-6:00 PM, at the Miranova Gathering Room.

Your help is needed to make the event a success. You can help by...

1. Calling on area businesses to request donation items. Either choose your own businesses to contact for possible auction items, donate an item that you already own (such as sporting events tickets or antiques), or contact businesses on a list provided by the League.
2. Volunteering to bring a tasty dish to share at the event.
3. Coming to the party to SHOP! Remember bid high and often.

Please contact League Administrator **Amy Pulles** (lwvcols@iwaynet.net, 614-837-1089) and let her know how you can help.

Be sure to watch for your invitation to the Holiday Party & Auction in the mail.



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Voter Service Committee Report

by Janyce C. Katz

It is the middle of October, almost 80 degrees and the trees are still full of green leaves. Perhaps this is why turnout for the candidates forums to date have been small. Brookwood Presbyterian Church had the largest crowd, with perhaps 150 at its height. The other events to date have had closer to 30 non-candidates in attendance. Certainly, everyone worked hard to get people out. League Member **Joy Rose** sent out press. Organizers of the sites did outreach. But, the interest is low. With more than 60 supporting and sponsoring organizations, where are the people for these events?

As President **Kitty Burcsu** has pointed out in her column, getting people interested in elections and the elective process seems to be a necessity. We have assumed people believe in our democracy and want to support it by being educated voters. With that assumption, our purpose was to help them learn about issues and candidates so that they could be educated voters.

But, we need to take a step back. We need to remind people that we have something folks in the former Burma are literally dying to have - the right to choose our leaders. Until people understand what they might lose, they don't appreciate it enough to fight to keep it.

The value of our society and of its great freedoms and reminding people of this important truth has to be the first focus of the Voter Service Committee. We may disagree on the direction our country should take or has taken but we can never forget what a special, unique country it is.

On that note, we have worked hard to educate voters and to encourage others to

become voters this year. We proactively registered voters from late August until the end of this year's registration. We tried to educate voters, through staffing the Franklin County Consortium for Good Government's eleven candidates forums. Our internet webpage links to that of the Consortium which, in turn, links to WAXX-TV, an internet station which taped several candidates forums. You can watch selected forums from the comfort of your computer chair.

By now you should have your VIB in hand or within computer-mouse-clicking distance. Thanks to all our volunteers who worked on it and, of course, our **Amy Pulles**. We continue with our TV10 Phone Bank (thank you **Mary Helen Hart** and **Peg Rosenfield**) for which I hope you have signed up. Through it, we help educate voters on Election Day.

Consortium Presents Awards

The Franklin County Consortium for Good Government presented its Good Government Award for 2007 to Nora Bertha and Chuck White and the John Schrack Award to Barbara Gorden Crabill.

"The purpose of the awards are to reward those who have contributed significantly to non partisan political activities and, by showcasing these individuals, encourage others to follow in their footsteps," said Alvin Hadley, who chairs the nominating committee for the Consortium.

The awards were presented at a Candidates Forum on October 16.

Bertha is known throughout greater Columbus for her many years of volunteer work, largely through her home church, in helping people understand their civic responsibility to be informed and participate in the election process.

White, the first African American on-air television broadcaster in Ohio, was chosen for his exemplary role in communication and making a positive impact on the central Ohio community. He recently retired from WBNS-10TV after 50 years there.

A long time activist, Crabill started her civic work after the passage of the 26th amendment to the Constitution. She worked for the Youth Citizenship Fund, a non-partisan organization created to register 18-21 year olds to vote. The effort organized and executed by YCF in Ohio resulted in the most successful voter registration drive in the country at that time. Ever since, she has continued her commitment to helping people become aware of the importance of educating themselves about candidates and issues.

LWVUS Immigration Study Consensus Questions

The questions below are to be used by each League as part of the study. Join the Metro Columbus League on November 13 as we review and answer the following:

Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as the following (not listed in any particular order or hierarchy): *High Priority, Lower Priority, Disagree, No Consensus*

- Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- Economic, Business and Service Employment Needs
- Environmental Impact/Sustainability
- Family Reunification of Authorized Immigrants and Citizens with Spouses and Minor Children
- History of Criminal Activity
- Humanitarian Crises/ Political Persecution in Home Countries
- Immigrant Characteristics (health and age)
- Rights of All Workers to Safe Working Conditions and Liveable Wage
- Rights of Families to Remain Together
- Rights of all Individuals in US to Fair Treatment Under the Law (Fair Hearing, Right to Counsel, Right of Appeal, and Humane Treatment)
- Education and Training



Unauthorized immigrants currently in the US should be treated as follows: (rate each one)

High Priority, Lower Priority, Disagree, No Consensus

- Deport Unauthorized Immigrants
- Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Length of Residence in US
- Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Needs of US Employers
- All Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status by Doing Things Such as Paying Taxes, Learning English, Studying Civics, etc.
- If Deported, Assess Fines Before Possible Re-Entry
- Assess Fines Before Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status

Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the US for immigrants who are: (rate each one)

- Immediate Family Members Joining Family Member Already Admitted for Legal Permanent Residence in the US
- Entering the US to Meet Labor Needs
- Entering the US as Students
- Entering the US because of Persecution in Home Country

In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include:

- Social Security Card or Other National Identification Card with Secure Identifiers for *All* Persons Residing in the US

Federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including: (rate each one)

- Physical Barriers (such as Fences) and Surveillance at Borders
- Increased Personnel at Land, Air, and Sea Entry Points
- More Effective Tracking of Persons with Non-Immigrant Visas Until They Leave the Country
- Verification Documents, such as Green Cards and Work Permits with Secure Identifiers
- Improved Technology to Facilitate Employer Verification of Employee Visa Status
- Improved Technology for Sharing Information Among Federal Agencies
- A Program to Allow Immigrant Workers to Go in and Out of the US to Meet Seasonal and Sporadic Labor Needs
- Significant Fines Proportionate to Revenue for Employers Who Fail to Take Adequate Steps to Verify Work Authorization of Employees

Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term federal financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Consensus, No Consensus

Federal immigration law should be coordinated with US foreign policy to pro-actively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.

Consensus, No Consensus

League Holds Successful First Tour

The first Beyond the Units tour was incredibly informational and eye-opening. Barbara Poppe opened the October 2 Tour with an outlay of the work of the Community Shelter Board. Then the ten League members boarded a bus furnished by the Clintonville/Beechwood Community Resource Center and were off for their afternoon adventure to Nancy's Place and the YWCA Family Shelter.

Joining the group were the CSB tour guides John Hardiman, Adult System manager; Angela Stoller-Zervas, assistant director of Programs & Planning; and bus driver Robin Brown, transportation director at CRC. Leaguers joining the tour were: **Rosemary Hamrock; Ellen Haider; Cathy Elkins; Nancy Brown; Paz Sterry; Ann Henkener; Karen Rainey; Joyce Geary; and Jean Byrd.** Read what some of them had to say below.

Coincidentally, the October issue of *Columbus Monthly* includes an article about the YWCA Family Center. You may want to check it out (page 8).

The family shelter made a big impact on me - the parents and children seemed happy and involved. However, families stay at the shelter an average of 17 days. That seems a very short time to address health, mental health, employment or other issues that led to homelessness. I hope the follow-up services are robust enough to make a real change in families' lives.
- Ann Henkener

The Beyond the Units tour provided insight into a world that I don't know. I was most impressed with the enthusiasm and dedication of all the folks we met at Community Shelter Board, Nancy's Place and at the YWCA Family Shelter. The latter was an amazing facility. It is easy to understand why it is a national model.
- Nancy Brown

At its best, being homeless would be a terrible experience to go through. It's good to know the attitudes of the people working in the shelters seem to be both caring and professional.
- Ellen Haider

Last Tuesday I joined Jean Byrd and some other Leaguers for a tour of some homeless shelters supported by the Community Shelter Board. The visits to Nancy's Place and the YWCA Family Center were informative and for me, eye-opening. I didn't know anything about shelters in the Columbus area, and I was impressed by the facilities and all the services being offered to very needy families, women, and children. Despite the very fine work being done, we were told the need is always greater than services are able to provide.
- Rosemary Hamrock



Both Nancy's Place and the YW's family shelter provide for the privacy and security of residents that I'm sure is much appreciated. I was pleased to see the one-stop concept at work at the YW facility. The level of services and the level of community support are commendable, and can't help but benefit homeless families. Both facilities illustrate the need for more affordable housing in our communities, for singles and for families. I hope that League will continue to be a strong advocate for housing.
- Karen Rainey



Here are League Members Joyce Geary, Cathy Elkins, Karen Rainey, and Ellen Haider with the staff at Nancy's Place during the first LWVMC Beyond the Units tour, October 2, 2007. The educational event was deemed a success on many fronts.



Mark Your Calendar...

- November 6 **General Election**, polls are open 6:30 AM-7:30 PM 
- November 6 **LWVMC/WBNS-10TV Phone Bank**
- November 13 **LWVMC General Meeting** *Coming to Consensus on Immigration*
- November 13 **LWVO Lobby Lunch**, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, Trinity Episcopal Church, 125 E. Broad Street, downtown Columbus, all invited, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
- November 14 **LWVMC Voter Service Committee Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Janyce Katz's house, 2725 Floribunda Drive
- November 15 **LWVMC Beyond the Units Tour**
- November 27 **LWVO Lobby Lunch**, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, Trinity Episcopal Church, 125 E. Broad Street, downtown Columbus, all invited 
- December 1 **LWVMC Holiday Party & Auction** *Watch for your invitation in the mail!*
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No Internet? No Problem

If you are not connected to the internet and see a link in the *Voter* to information that you have interest, please contact **Amy Pulles** at the LWVMC office, 614-837-1089, and she will mail you copies of any information you want. All League members deserve access to the same materials.

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