



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE GREATER DAYTON AREA
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VOLUME 85, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY—2008

Things to watch for this coming month

A membership drive mailing is coming soon. We are asking for your help to recruit new members.

Power Pledge

(formally Phonathon)
 Watch for a mailing from LWVO and respond generously.

Dayton Theater Guild fundraiser for League

See enclosed flyer

February General Meeting

Topic

Fair Housing and the Miami Valley

Speakers

Jim Zimmerman

Miami Valley Fair Housing Center

Dean Lovelace

Dayton City Commissioner

Tuesday, February 19

6:30 P.M.

United Way Building

184 Salem Ave.

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Foreclosure crisis and fair housing information also enclosed as study material.

The Kettering-Oakwood Day Unit will be meeting to discuss this topic.

Thursday, February 7

9:30 a.m.

Kettering Moraine Library

3496 Far Hills Avenue



*General Fund***2007- 2008 Leadership
Circle Members****President (\$10,000+)***Dayton Daily News *****Vice President (\$5,000+)***Dayton Daily News***Cabinet (\$2,500+)**

Dickey Fund

Governor (\$1,000+)

Roger B. Himmell, CPA*

Premier Health Partners

Good Samaritan Hospital

Miami Valley Hospital

Time Warner Cable

Senate (\$500)

Beau Townsend

Chuck Fisher*

Greater Dayton Area Hospital Assoc.

Kendall Printing*

Montgomery County Board of Elections

Sebaly Shillito + Dyer **

University of Dayton **

President's Office

Fitz Center for Leadership in the

Community

United Way of Greater Dayton Area **

House (\$250)

AAA Miami Valley

Anonymous (2)

Dayton Metro Library

Dr. and Mrs. Ronald L. Fletcher

Gary J. Leppla

Debbie Lieberman, Montgomery County

Commissioner, and Dennis Lieberman

McGohan Brabender

Rhine McLin, Mayor, City of Dayton

David A. Neuhardt

Patricia Schroeder

Sheet Metal Workers, Local 24

Sinclair Community College **

Fred Strahorn, State Representative, 40th

District

Judy & Tom Thompson

Penny Wolff

*In-kind contributions

**In kind and monetary contribution

*All elected officials, political entities and candidates are invited to contribute to the LWV. Names appearing on this list do not constitute an endorsement by the***Recent
Contributions
Appreciated**

Thank you to the following who have made a contribution to the League's General Fund [a 501 (c) (4) entity] since our last *Voter*.

Paula MacIlwaine *

Jim and Kay Stahler *

Ellen McCloskey *

(in memory of Marian Simmons)

Teana Nicol *

EDUCATION FUND

Thank you to the following who have made a contribution to the League's Education Fund [a 501(c)(3) entity]:

Jeffrey E. Froelich

John T. Gramann

Margaret Karns*

Betsy & Leon Whitney

Nancy G. Yarger

The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making. The LWV affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of America in its membership, leadership and programs.

**Education Fund
Current Major Contributors**

Charles Berry (\$5,000)

The Dayton Bar Association
Foundation (\$2,500)The Dayton Power & Light
Foundation (\$5,000)The Virginia W. Kettering
Foundation (\$5,000)**League Members
honored as
"Women of Influence "**

Congratulations to Debbie Lieberman and Beth Adelman, LWV members who will be among the YWCA "Women of Influence" to be honored on March 13.

Beth, of Englewood, is a Realtor with Coldwell Banker, and supports many organizations, including serving on the Board of Artemis Center. Debbie, who lives in Clayton, is president of the Montgomery County Commission.

The YWCA "Women of Influence" honorees are women in the greater Dayton community who have made a positive influence on the lives of others, as part of their careers, as volunteers, and as role models or mentors.

Ensuring the League's Future

We are grateful to those who have helped establish the local League's two Endowment Funds. We have \$12,477.85 in our General Fund Endowment and \$5,000 in our Education Fund Endowment.

In an effort to ensure the League's long-term future in our local community, a brochure has been developed that we hope will encourage broader support of these Endowment Funds.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a copy of the newly-developed brochure. Please take a moment to read our brochure, remember how important the League's presence is in our community and, if your financial situation allows, consider a schedule of planned giving now or a bequest in your will to our local League.

We also would welcome any suggestions that you may have to improve our brochure. Please call the office, 228-4041, with any questions or suggestions.

Rail Streetcars May Return to Dayton

Richard L Henry, PhD, PE



At a meeting held at the Dayton Convention Center on Thursday, November 29, 2007, the Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority (GDRTA) agreed to take a leadership role in implementing a plan to return rail streetcars to Dayton. The consensus at the meeting was to start with a plan for a short “starter line” of about three miles in length.

The RTA has appointed a working group to prepare a plan for such a streetcar system and to explore ways to fund its construction and operation. While RTA may be the agency through which federal funds could be received, the transit authority doesn’t have the money to fund such a project itself.

Two League members who have been appointed to this working group are:

- *Dr. Richard Henry, former RTA Chief Engineer*
- *Tom Norwalk, former RTA Board Member*

Over the last thirty years, several rail transit lines have been proposed for Dayton.

Dr. Henry is a long-time member of the DRHS and is currently on the Board of Directors of the West Central Ohio Port Authority. In addition, he is also the Vice President/President Elect of the Dayton Society of Professional Engineers.

First Miami Valley Forum on Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities for Immigrants in the Dayton Area

Wednesday, February 27, 2008. 9:00AM – 3:15PM

University of Dayton Law School (Keller Hall), Mathias H. Heck Courtroom

Supported by: United Way of the Greater Dayton Area,

University of Dayton’s Office of the President,

National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ),

University of Dayton’s School of Law

Topics covered during the Forum will include:

Immigration categories and issues

Access to health care and education

Language issues and availability of interpreters for those not yet fluent in English

Psychological and mental health needs

Jobs and employment issues

Statuses and needs of refugees

Advocacy issues

Immigrant human rights

The Forum has been planned to complement the University of Dayton’s School of Law’s James J. Gilvary Symposium on Law, Religion, and Social Justice which will begin at the end of the Forum and continue the next day.

Registration for one or both conferences is through the Gilvary Symposium website:

<http://law.udayton.edu/GilvarySymposium> The cost for the forum is \$12.

Primary Elections and Party Affiliation in Ohio

An area poll worker (and League member) tells the true story of an encounter with a voter during a past primary election. As the voter approached the precinct sign-in table, the worker asked for the voter's name and address, in order to verify it in the polling book. The worker then asked the voter for her party affiliation and was met with the reply, "*None of your d--- business!*"

Obviously the offended individual was not aware of the peculiarities of primary elections and the role they play in our democratic process. Ohio has a direct, closed primary election process, which means that candidate voting is limited to those citizens who have declared their party affiliation. Non-affiliated voters *may choose* to become officially affiliated with a particular party by requesting that party's ballot at a primary election. When voters declare a party preference at a primary election in Ohio, they are then considered members of that political party. This is where the confusion appears to begin in the minds of some voters.

Primary elections are held to narrow the field of candidates for the general election in the fall. In Ohio, the primary is frequently used to select party officials and "nominate" candidates who will run for office in the fall general election. When you register to vote for a specific party in a primary, your vote helps that party choose the strongest candidate to run against candidates from other political parties in the general election. Party affiliation is in no way binding in the general election in the fall when voters may privately choose whichever candidate they consider to be the most qualified.

Voters who have participated in previous primary elections and wish to change their party affiliation may do so at the polling place on primary election day. To change party affiliation a voter has to simply state that he/she wishes to change party affiliation. Voters may be asked to sign a statement saying they wish to be affiliated with, and support the principles of, the party whose primary ballot they are requesting.

Issues are on a separate nonpartisan ballot and voters may vote on issues at a primary election without stating a party affiliation. Voters can also vote on issues regardless of whether they vote on any candidates.

The Ohio Revised Code defines three types of political parties in Ohio. A major political party is the one whose nominee for governor received at least 20 percent of the vote in the last election. An intermediate party is one whose candidate received between 10 and 20 percent of the vote. A minor party is one whose candidate received at least five percent but less than ten percent of the vote or who has filed a petition signed by one percent of the voters at the last election for governor. Parties are no longer officially recognized by the state if that party fails to poll five percent of the total vote cast for governor.

Question: How does Ohio differ from other states, like New Hampshire, regarding the record of a voter's party affiliation?

During New Hampshire's recent primary election it was reported by the media that the large number of undeclared voters could have an impact on the primary election results. This large "list" of undeclared voters is the result of a difference between how New Hampshire and Ohio treat a voter's party affiliation.

In Ohio, your party affiliation of record is a result of the party ballot you cast during a primary election. And, once that ballot is cast, an Ohio voter remains a "member" of that party until another primary election when he/she may choose to change that party affiliation.

However in New Hampshire that state's election law allows an undeclared voter to declare a party at the polls, vote the ballot of that party, and then change his/her party affiliation back to undeclared status by simply completing a form available at the polling place. That form must be completed by the voter before leaving the polling place, or his/her ballot will place them on the "list" of the declared party. This is just one example of the differences in election law that exist across the country.

The above information is a summary of information contained in a League of Women Voters publication entitled: Know Your Ohio Government and also from the New Hampshire Secretary of State's website (www.sos.nh.gov/vote.htm)

THINK NO ONE IS PAYING ATTENTION ????

The League office received a request from a group called the "Ohio Election Justice Campaign" to see a copy of Bea Delph's observer report for the November 26, 2007 Greene County BOE meeting. A representative of that group had also attended the meeting and was expressing concern over something she had observed and wished to see what Bea had reported. A copy of the report was provided to the group and, in addition, the group's concern was shared with Don Hollister, who is the Chair of the Greene County Board of Elections. Mr. Hollister responded to both the League and the group's concern and thanked us for our observations. Part of Mr. Hollister's response was as follows: *"I take her report as a reminder to take more care in being sure that each Board of Elections member is fully aware of what we are voting on, most importantly on numbers in an elections print-out. Public boards need to be kept to a high standard of conduct. Observers help us."*

It might be noted that Mr. Hollister is a long time League of Women Voters member.

Greene County Board of Elections - January 8 - Bea Delph

The Board discussed the "Board of Elections Member Survey" sent out by the Secretary of State. The Chairman said it was a good survey. The State Liaison said that it was a good way to get the opinions of Board members. He added that there was a lot of concern expressed about the Everest Project.

The Director reported that they would be sending out 10,000 paper ballots (10% of total of 2004 vote) for the general election. For the primary election they would have to send out ballots for Independents, Democrats and Republicans. The concern was that poll workers would confuse paper ballots with provisional ballots. They would have to train poll workers. They also would have to buy new ballot boxes. Another concern expressed by the Director was that if the state goes to all paper ballots, whether printers in the state would be able to handle the printing of the paper ballots because by law, they cannot print them out of state.

There was further discussion on the Everest Project. Discussed was the chain of security, recruiting of poll workers, poll worker training, and vote centers. Since voting at vote centers would go for 15 days, security would be a problem. The State Liaison mentioned that there was a video on the State website on poll worker training.

The question also came up whether an independent voter could serve as a poll worker. Board policy is to have equal number of Democrats and Republicans. According to the State, two independents can work at a precinct. They have to agree to work for one or the other party.

The Board went on to discuss the budget and certify the petitions of those running for office. On February 26, 2008 there will be a swearing in of new Board members at the Board of Elections in Montgomery County at 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner will be there.

Montgomery County Board of Elections - December 4, 2007 & January 10, 2008 - Sharon Harmer**December 4 meeting**

The recounts from the November General Election were certified. There were 3 recounts for Huber Heights; there was a one vote change in one of the recounts conducted, 2 votes on another and 10 votes in the 3rd. There was no change in the Northridge recount.

Petitions for local options were certified for Sinclair and multiple locations for Speedway and Kroger. An evaluation of the elections training by Sinclair resulted in a "very good" commendation. There will be candidate seminars in January, required for all judicial candidates. It was noted that the optical scanner may or may not read the marks if only a small line or mark is in the oval.

January 10 meeting

Candidates for the March Primary were certified. Candidates are recommended to turn in 3 times the number of signatures needed. After that amount, the Board of Elections stops counting. Legally, more signatures than that are not acceptable.

An executive session regarding personnel and a potential criminal action on an election issue was held.

The Director brought up the directive from Secretary of State Brunner. She wants board members to tell her their responses; board members were not to discuss the issue with fellow board members or staff. The results will be given at the state BOE association meeting next week.

Continued next page

In Montgomery county, optical scan ballots will be available over the amount of 10% suggested by Brunner. It will take considerable time to count these ballots; in 2006, it took 8 hours to do the 42,000 optical scan ballots. The directives are unfunded requirements requiring expenditures for ballots, staff and equipment. Union County is challenging the directive. Pollworker training will be on the Secretary of State's website in a couple of weeks.

Ellis Jacobs gave a summary from the Election Protection Coalition (The Dayton League is a member of this group) on Brunner's proposal. Her study showed that voting machines flunked all tests for security by people in the business of computer security. There are 3 main concerns with Brunner's proposal:

- 1) the possible elimination of precincts
- 2) using only a centralized count on election night (concern is on transporting them and recording the under/over votes)
- 3) trying to accomplish all this by March.

Kettering Board of Education – 12-4-07 - Lee Mills

Observer noted that approximately there were approximately 75 people in the audience to observe a math demonstration and to hear school choirs who were performing. Board members unanimously approved policies and bylaws presented by NEOLA of Ohio. Board unanimously approved participation in Southeastern Ohio Education Purchasing Council's Natural Gas Program for a 6 year period which will save \$550,000.

Centerville City Council – 12-17-07 - Viola Matyas

Centerville has not joined in the Montgomery County 911 Dispatch Center due to the fact that the city has invested a considerable amount of money in the city's own dispatch center. It was noted that Washington Township has expressed interest in joining the Montgomery County Dispatch Center. The City of Centerville will be making suggestions to the Washington Township Trustees to consider instead joining the City of Centerville's Dispatch Center at the same cost to the township.

The Mayor and Council have formally set up meetings with Sugarcreek Township Trustees to resolve differences concerning the Dille property that has been annexed by the City of Centerville.

It was noted that there have been a number of citizen complaints about the new trash collection system used by the city.

Dayton Board of Education – 12-4-07 – Sherry Green

A large part of the meeting involved updates on the various construction projects noting which projects were nearing completion and anticipated building occupancies. There was discussion of an Apprenticeship Program sponsored by Dayton Urban League. Superintendent Dr. Percy Mack reported on Family Fun Night (excellent community participation) and a report on the Gay and Lesbian Institute. Observer expressed concern on the reasons for two board members being absent as well as the low number of community members in audience.

The observer commented on the efficiency and leadership shown in the conduct of meeting and pleasure at seeing the Pledge of Allegiance used to open the meeting. The observer recommended that follow-up be pursued with the Ohio Facilities Commission and with the Superintendent's office to learn the racial composition of Family Fund Night attendance. Observer also expressed interest in doing a follow up with a student board member.

Yellow Springs Council – 12-17 2007 and January 7, 2008 - Sally Mier

An accessibly report was given to the council with focus on two locations in the village, specifically the Yellow Springs Credit Union and the Chamber of Commerce, which is located in the old train station. Village solicitor reviewed the Ohio Sunshine Law with board (which included 2 new members). The observer commented on the excellent presentation. There was citizen concern expressed about the safety of the KKK demonstration. Village Chief of Police responded that the KKK followed all requirements for conducting a demonstration including the required petition that indicated the anticipated number of demonstrators and details on signs and placards that would be used. The Chief of Police stated that there was no legitimate reason to deny the KKK their request or to interrupt the demonstration.

Continued next page

Yellow Springs Council – January 7, 2008 - Sally Mier

The majority of the meeting was spent on goal setting for the village in the following areas: and community members in the audience expressed concern about topics that included:

- Economics
 - Land use planning
 - Energy conservation
 - Human relations
1. Sustainable community
 2. Growth
 3. Affordability for village citizens

City of Kettering – December 11 & 18, January 8 & 22 – Mickey Gogle

December 11 meeting

Discussion on voter participation in the November election noted that 550 more voters participated over the previous election. Council adopted an alternative method for calculating and levying special assessments that would be based on size of lot and value of property. Council voted to advertise for bids and contract for renovation of former Justice Building (which was the former location of the Kettering Court in the Kettering Shroyer Road location) Following renovation, a number of city departments currently housed in the basement of the city building will be moved. City accepted a grant from the MVRTA to build 6 bus shelters. Kettering's contribution to the project will be \$11,000 which is 20% of the total cost to build the shelters. Council upheld the decision of the Kettering Board of Zoning Appeals to use a private home as a private care home.

December 18 meeting

Council approved purchase of Road Rescue Medic Unit for the fire department. Council approved a \$74 million budget for 2008. Complete details of the budget will be available for public consumption by February 1. Master Plan for Fire Department has been completed.

January 8 meeting

Bruce Duke was elected to serve as Vice Mayor. The City of Kettering has been awarded a large number of community development monetary awards including an additional award to build another skate park. A complete list of all projects awarded will be available when formal minutes are prepared and filed for public consumption.

January 22 meeting

Council voted to support the Sinclair Community College Levy on the March 4 Primary ballot. Authorization was given to the City Manager to apply for state funds for a bike path.

Dayton Women's Rights Alliance

The Dayton Women's Rights Alliance, which includes the Dayton chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), and Planned Parenthood SW Ohio Region will present a series of free public forums addressing issues that affect women and society. The complete list of forums, all held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 includes:

February 2 *Happily Ever After? The Changing Meaning of Marriage*

Kettering-Moraine Library on 3496 Far Hills Avenue from 7:00-8:30 pm.

March 25 *Separate Education for Girls & Boys?*

Kettering-Moraine Library on 3496 Far Hills Avenue from 7:00-8:30 pm.

April 22 *Pornography, Power & Violence*

Main branch of the Dayton Metro Library, 215 East Third Street, downtown from 7:00-9:00 pm.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization, which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The *Voter* is published monthly, except July, August and December by the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area (LWVGDA), Talbott Tower, Suite 1208, 131 N. Ludlow Street, Dayton, OH 45401-1703. Office hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Phone (937) 228-4041 and (937) 372-4148; FAX: (937) 228-4104;

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Advocating Voter
Education and
Action on Issues

President's Message

If you think your community is not affected by foreclosures, think again. Foreclosures affect property values in your neighborhood as well as the larger community. They lead to vacant homes which can be eyesores as well as targets of crime (aluminum siding and copper pipes are being stolen), and they affect governmental incomes.

Foreclosures affect all of us. There is not one community in Montgomery County that has not been listed in the "Sheriff's Sales" on Fridays. Homes from \$20,000 to \$1.1 million are up for auction as well as apartment buildings and small businesses. According to the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, 32 counties had an increase in foreclosure filings above 24%, including Montgomery

(25.3%) and Greene (27%). Subprime lending has moved to the middle/upper income areas (73% in 2005).

The League started working on this issue in 2001, but state legislators were not particularly concerned. One year ago there was some legislation, but the effects from the years without supervision are now emerging. In Montgomery County there are about 10 agencies working on helping people with this problem, but turf issues sometimes come into play.

The Ohio Bar Association has requested attorneys to volunteer time to help people with pending foreclosures, and area agencies are struggling to keep up with the

need for counseling as well as home ownership.

Local governmental efforts have not been successful (Montgomery County Recorder Blackshear identified and contacted at-risk borrowers in 2007 to let them know there was a potential problem and offered counseling options but had only a handful of people respond) in pro-active campaigns.

The League has a number of options in dealing with this situation. Come to our February program and find out what has been done, is being done, possible legislation, and what you can do about the issue!

Sharon