



## Money in Politics: Who Opened the Spigot?

To provide input for updating the League of Women Voter's national position on campaign finance, LWV of the Cincinnati area invited Professor Daniel Tokaji, Professor of Constitutional Law and Senior Fellow in Election Law at Ohio State's Moritz School of Law, to lend them his expertise. Dr. Tokaji's most recent publication "The New Soft Money; Outside Spending in Congressional Elections" can be read online at <http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/thenewsoftmoney/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2014/06/the-new-soft-money-WEB.pdf>.

While most of us have some familiarity with the "Citizens United" Supreme Court ruling, the 1976 case *Buckley v. Valeo* was actually the precedent-setting case with respect to campaign finance law. Two key points from that case were emphasized by Dr. Tokaji: (1) The Court upheld limits on contributions to candidates, ruling that restrictions on individual contributions to political campaigns and candidates did not violate the First Amendment; (2) The Court ruled that limits on expenditures by candidates from their own personal or family resources and limits on total campaign expenditures did violate the First Amendment. (Contributions are defined as giving money to a candidate for use with the campaign. Expenditures cover money not funneled through the campaign.)



Other cases discussed relating to these issues included *Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce* (1990); *McConnell v. FEC* (2003); *Citizen's United v. FEC* (2010). I encourage the reader to Google these cases for a more in-depth understanding of issues in campaign finance reform.

Dr. Tokaji suggested that one way to resolve our current campaign finance debacle would be to loosen contribution rules, encouraging giving money through candidates and parties rather than giving "soft money" to outside spending groups. Negative ads in elections often can be traced to outside spending groups. These groups do not have to respond to the wills of the candidates and they actually can pull the candidate off message and lead to an increase in polarization. Giving to outside spending groups has diminished the influence of party leadership and state party chairs have lost authority.

To learn more, check out this recent talk by Professor Tokaji, recorded on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZFUuPTZ8bk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZFUuPTZ8bk). I would also recommend the NY Times Op-Ed written by Congressman Steve Israel entitled "Confessions of a Congressman." <http://nyti.ms/1TJonfN>.

Valerie Lee, Action Chair



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*We thank these Major Leadership Circle members. We invite everyone to contribute to the LWV, including all elected officials, political entities and candidates. The LWV is nonpartisan; the LWV does not endorse anyone on this Leadership Circle list.*

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**Recent Contributions Appreciated**

Thank you to the following who have made a contribution to the League since our last Voter.

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What an exciting year to be part of the League of Women Voters! Since Ohio is a swing state, we can expect to be bombarded with political ads and candidate visits, and of course all eyes will be on Ohio on November 8, 2016.

Here's why the League is a trusted resource and an advocate for voters:

- In 2015, the League and its partners brought a significant win to Ohio voters with the passage of Issue 1, incorporating a fair process into Ohio's Constitution for drawing state legislative districts. This legislation was part of a 40 year project that will continue in 2016 to include legislation for the drawing of fair congressional districts.
- Also in 2015, our Voter Services team conducted an online survey on voter dissatisfaction – trying to identify why voter turnout is at an all-time low. In the months ahead we will be hosting programs to address those issues and will work to encourage voter registrations and increase voter turnout.
- This year we will expand our reach into the deaf community by partnering with the ACLU to reach and register more of Ohio's deaf population.
- LWVGDA will be working closely with Wright State University as they prepare their students and the community for the first presidential debate on September 26.
- We have plans to work with the Greene County Board of Elections to train college students to work the polls on Election Day.
- We will continue to provide cable television interviews on candidates and election issues and, of course, provide the Voters Guide in English and Spanish throughout Montgomery & Greene Counties.

Our League runs on the power of our volunteers. We need YOU to help us be Presidential-Ready for 2016. Please contact the League office and volunteer to be part of history. Help us continue a 96-year tradition of serving the voters of the Greater Dayton Area.

Susan Hesselgesser, Executive Director

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## Make an Impact: Leave a Legacy

As we begin our 96th year as a League of Women Voters, which started as an institution of learning and education for women and now works for all community members, remember us with a donation so we can continue the important work that we do. YOU can support us financially **and** as a volunteer. Financial support can be given to our General Fund to support the office and staff and/or to our Education Fund for education and program support. Donations to our Education Fund are tax deductible while those to our General Fund are not. Volunteers make possible all of our various programs and committees. We are a volunteer organization that has great potential and heart. Keep us going by volunteering your services, your knowledge and your expertise. We have had 96 years of wonderful service to women and to our community. Let's keep it going! We are ALL needed! Donate or volunteer or do both, it's up to you. YOU are needed to continue the legacy of this great organization.

Sandy Nearing, Endowment Fund Chair



**REMINDER:** *The Ohio Primary Election will be held on Tuesday, March 15th and polls will be open 6:30 AM-7:30 PM. February 16 is the deadline for new voter registrations for the election. You can vote absentee by mail, early in person at your local Board of Elections office, or at your voting precinct on Election Day. Request your ballot by contacting the Secretary of State's office online at [www.sos.state.oh.us](http://www.sos.state.oh.us), click on **Elections & Voting** then click on **VOTERS** to locate and download the form. Have your vote count! Be sure to vote by mail, or vote in person!*

*Mont. Co. BOE: (937) 225.5656; Greene Co. BOE: (937) 562.6170.*

With the 2016 tax season underway, I'd like to take a moment to clarify our two separate fund accounts used to finance our non-profit organization:

Our **General Account** funds our League's advocacy actions. Donations to this account are **not** tax deductible. But funds in our **Education Account** are used exclusively for services to voters, providing impartial information on governmental issues and study guides which focus on education and research projects. As such, our Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Code, and donations to this account may be tax deductible.

As you can see, these accounts are for two different purposes within League, and, due to Internal Revenue Code, they must be kept separate. For example, if you are sending in money for Leadership Circle and a Dine & Dish event, the monies must be deposited into two different accounts and must be two separate checks. Therefore, please write your check to the specific account to which you are donating. To make it simple, please write a separate check for each League donation or event. If you are unsure which account, just jot a note in the memo section of your check, and we'll make sure it is deposited into the correct account. It's a great help to this office and may benefit you when preparing your taxes!

Andrea Cobb, Bookkeeper



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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 by the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area (LWVGDA); Talbott Tower, Suite 1208, 131 N. Ludlow Street, Dayton, OH 45402; Office hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

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Co-Editors: Kathleen Farmer, Sue Shay

On December 1st I sent an email to our members about Giving Tuesday. Here are a few excerpts:

*Our League does not need to have a Giving Tuesday - especially at the time of year when there are children without toys, families without food and diseases that need to be cured because they have taken too many of those we love. The holiday season is for these.*

*I will, however, ask as we approach the 2016 presidential election, for each of you to consider occasional gifts to our League. LWVGDA has been recognized at State and National levels as being one of the fastest growing Leagues in the nation. We are the only League in Ohio that covers **two** counties - Montgomery & Greene, and one of the very few in the country that publishes a Voters Guide in English and Spanish. Our partnerships in the community have increased, our visibility in the press has tripled and the visits to our website reached an all-time high in 2015. We do good work.*

I always feel a little awkward asking for funding from members. Because we are described as a political organization, even though we are nonpartisan, it is difficult for us to qualify for most grants. Like our members when we began decades ago, I am proud of the important work we do. We need the community and our membership for support. Without you, nothing we do would be possible.

But asking for money from members is nothing new. This excerpt from The Dayton Woman Citizen, now known as The Voter, was written to our membership in March, 1927. I hope you enjoy this "blast" from our past.

#### *MONEY-MONEY-MONEY*

*Most peculiar, just as we are struggling with our own financial problems and wondering, wondering, wondering just how we may secure the money we need to carry on the constructive work we are doing, we pick up the Pilgrim, the newsletter for the LWV "wa' dawn in Georgia" and much to our surprise find they have a financial problem!!! But they have a solution - a few of their suggestions we are passing on to you and now we are waiting to see the money roll in.*

- 1. For the prosperous, give the quota outright, then give a little more.*
- 2. Feed the family stew instead of porterhouse, carrots instead of cauliflower, oleo margarine in your cakes instead of butter...but wives and mothers! Keep it Dark! Don't confide in your family. What they do not know will not hurt them and if they do know they will think it does.*
- 3. For a famous cook, sell a few cakes. I would like to buy one right this minute.*
- 4. For a natural born dressmaker, make a dress for a friend who uses a needle like a crowbar.*
- 5. Ask a few friends for money, giving the League a good name as you do it. For a good bridge player, give bridge lessons at 25 cents or 50 cents a lesson. Give a rummage sale, a book sale or a dance.*

*Set the time, use your brains, go to it with pep and gaily, make a few sacrifices and the money is raised.*

Susan Hesselgesser, Executive Director

*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.*

**WATER RESOURCES****Thursday, January 28, 3-5 P****Miami Conservancy District Headquarters****38 E. Monument Ave., Dayton 45402**

Over the holidays we received an invitation from Sarah Hippensteel Hall (Manager, Watershed Partnerships) to participate "in a focus group to provide MCD (Miami Conservancy District) with input that helps create a long range strategic action plan for the protection, preservation, and promotion of the sustainable use of water resources." By the time this newsletter is in your hands, there might be one remaining meeting where you can contribute to this very important discussion that impacts "public health and safety, the economy, and our quality of life." Please RSVP with the date and location to Sarah Hippensteel Hall at [shippensteel@MCDWater.org](mailto:shippensteel@MCDWater.org) or (937) 223-1278, X 3244.

Kathleen Turner, Co-Natural Resources Director

**FREE DINNER AND FILM SCREENING****Friday, Jan 29, 6:30-9:00 P****South Park United Methodist Church****140 Stonemill Rd., Dayton, 45409**

The Film "Merchants of Doubt" (from the director of "Food, Inc." and inspired by the acclaimed book by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway) takes audiences on a satirically comedic, yet illuminating ride into the heart of conjuring American "spin." Filmmaker Robert Kenner lifts the curtain on a secretive group of highly charismatic, silver-tongued pundits-for-hire who present themselves in the media as scientific authorities, but have the contrary aim of spreading maximum confusion about well-studied public threats ranging from toxic chemicals to pharmaceuticals to climate change. In "Merchants of Doubt" we learn how the climate-change-denial movement has borrowed from the playbook used for years by the tobacco industry and how climate denial is a risky game of deception with high stakes – preying on people's fears and creating societal division and inaction on climate. Dinner will be first with a light meal - meat and meatless chili, salad, and dessert. Film and discussion will follow, wrapping up around 9 PM. If you are unable to attend the meal, you may arrive by 7 PM for the movie screening. We invite you to come, learn and help articulate a community response to the challenges of climate change. Meeting rooms are fully accessible and parking is available behind the church, off Stonemill Road.

Valerie Lee, Action Chair

**FEBRUARY BIG READ**

For our February program, our Dayton League is doing a "Big Read" of "Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption" by Bryan Stevenson. "Just Mercy" is a memoir that revolves around Stevenson's time at the Equal Justice Initiative (an organization dedicated to defending people who have been abandoned by the criminal justice system). By focusing on individual clients, the book delineates the current state of the criminal justice system in the United States and depicts what compassion from organizations like his can do to create real justice.

Please join us in reading "Just Mercy" during the month of February, and join in our various dialogues. We will be posting discussion questions on the League website throughout the month and hosting discussions through various social media forums like Facebook. We would love for you to engage with other League members about the book and weigh in with your own thoughts on Stevenson's memoir. Additionally, we will take a bit of time to discuss the memoir at our next Quarterly Dinner on February 9, at the Dublin Pub (see next page). We hope to see you there!

Ana Crawford, Vice President of Programming

**QUARTERLY MEETING****Tuesday, February 9, 6 P****The Dublin Pub, 300 Wayne Ave**

Join us for our next League Quarterly Meeting and get a jump on St. Paddy's Day! There is a parking lot adjacent to the restaurant and, as always, we will be ordering off the menu.

By February, the November election will be in our rear view mirror, marijuana will still be illegal, and we will have started on a sensible process for redistricting. We will be ramping up for the spring primaries and the fall presidential election. We will also have had our Annual Planning meeting, so there will be lots of activities for us to report on and plenty of topics to discuss.

Please contact the office to make a reservation if you are planning to attend.

Susan Byerly, President Elect

**UDLLI SEMINAR - Our Political Democracy: Is It Running on Empty?****Thursdays, 12:30-2:30 P, March 17, 24, 31, April 7****University of Dayton**

For over 20 years the University of Dayton Lifelong Learning Institute (UDLLI) has offered a variety of seminars to senior citizens in pursuit of lifelong learning. The UDLLI curriculum committee asked the League to provide a non-partisan moderator for a seminar to address election issues and the League has made contacts with local, state, and national figures who will provide an engaging and enlightening seminar for UDLLI. The seminar will examine our political system with the upcoming presidential election adding to the discussion of the state of our national democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.



udayton.edu

The following course description was provided for the UDLLI committee to review:

*In a newly released book "Beasts and Gods – How Democracy Changed Its Meaning and Lost Its Purpose," Dr. Roslyn Fuller made the following observation: "National democracies today often present a bleak picture with fractured electorates dominated by minority parties that come to power through a combination of shrewd vote-skewing and sophisticated sponsored messaging. At the same time, traditional methods of inter-electoral participation like protest and petition have increasingly fallen on deaf ears. These issues with national democracies have left many questioning our political processes and looking at possibilities for reform."*

This course will be offered during the spring session starting the week of March 14 and running for four weeks. It is open to all who register for UDLLI at a cost of \$80 for an unlimited number of seminars. Space is limited and interested parties are encouraged to register as soon as registration opens. You can contact the Office of Special Programs and Continuing Education at (937) 229-2605 or (937) 229-2347 if you would like to be added to the mailing list. Course brochures can also be read online at [www.udayton.edu/continuing\\_education/senior\\_programs/udlli/](http://www.udayton.edu/continuing_education/senior_programs/udlli/).

Valerie Lee, Action Chair

**WETLAND MITIGATION TOUR****Saturday morning, April 23**

Save the date and join us for a riding/walking tour of the exciting and unique Five Rivers MetroParks' Wetland Mitigation Bank in Trotwood. Our tour leader will be Mike Enright, acting head of conservation for the MetroParks. Look for more details in next month's Voter.

Kathleen Turner, Co-Natural Resources Director

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF THE GREATER DAYTON AREA  
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## President's Comments

Now that the simultaneously wonderful and exhausting holidays are over we can all get back to normal—whatever normal is to each of us. In my case I have decided to take a sabbatical from my real estate career for the balance of my term as your President. This job and the mission of the League are more important to me right now than my checkbook, and I am happy to report that at age 72 I enjoy the luxury of retiring if I choose to, and, for now at least, I choose to. This is an important year as we will soon be electing a new President of the United States. I am appalled at the lack of information that many voters bring to the voting booth, and even more appalled at the decision of many to simply not vote. LWVGDA recently conducted a detailed survey about voting habits and the answer most often given by non-voters for not voting was that they were disgusted with politics. What?!? How is not participating a solution? Personally I think that was a tip-of-the-tongue answer, an easy one that didn't require any thought or an information-based defense. I believe we can change that — not state-wide or even county-wide, but with your help we can make a difference. LWVGDA is embarking on an ambitious schedule of events leading up to the election and we need volunteers. There are easy jobs requiring little time, and some that need more of a commitment. I can promise you, however, that you will get back more than you give. Call me! Let's find a fit for you. I would love to get to know you.



Patty Skilken