



The VOTER



February

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE GREATER DAYTON AREA
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2017

Embracing the Energy of League 2017

During the last election cycle, our League and Leagues across the nation have seen an uptick in membership. Our Dayton League has grown extensively over the last several months. Why? Because the League of Women Voters is a much respected brand; longtime members and new members alike trust the League to make a difference. This new energy inspires, but also challenges, my spirit. What is the best way to harness and engage the new energy of our membership?

First, we need to dust off the partisanship of the last election and embrace the purpose and policy of the League.

We are the League of Women Voters, founded by suffragists who fought, suffered and died for the rights of women, most especially, for the right to vote. We now work to support and defend voting rights for all citizens.

Founded in 1920, the Greater Dayton League is one of the first Leagues in the nation and one of the largest Leagues in the country.

We are a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy and influence policy through education and advocacy.

The League never supports a political candidate or party.

We believe in respect for individuals, the value of diversity, empowerment of the grassroots within the League and in the community and the power of collective decision making for the common good.

We are committed to working for all voters regardless of their party affiliation. We believe voters are the basis of our strong democracy, and we're committed to making our government work for all citizens.

The Dayton League is regarded by State and National Leagues as innovative and impressive. Our members want and expect us to make a difference; as your Executive Director, I want the same. So let's do this – let's talk about your passion, what keeps you up at night? What kinds of programs/discussions/events interest you?

Our League is made up of the most incredible, quirky, interesting, educated, talented people I have ever met. There is nothing we cannot accomplish. I am confident 2017 is going to be a great year for the community we serve. If you did not attend the Future Focus meeting, this is your invitation to send in your ideas.

I look forward to working with each of you in the year ahead. Please feel free to email me at susan@lwvdayton.org or contact the League office at 228-4041.

Susan Hesselgesser, Executive Director



All donations as of December 31, 2016

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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.

Education Fund

Current Major Contributors

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Recent Contributions Appreciated

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

General Fund [a 501(c)(4) entity]

Carrie & Robert Allen, Barbara Buddendeck, Elizabeth Lutes, Carolyn Rice, Jeanette Schultz, Patsy Thurin

Education Fund [a 501(c)(3) entity]

Don and Susan Harker, Carol Graff, Trudy Krisher, Krogers Rebate Program, Earl McDaniel, Elzie McIntyre, Gary Roberts, Marian Simmons Bequest, Betsy & Lee Whitney

Welcome New Members!

See page 3 for new members.

*In-kind contribution

**In-kind + monetary contribution



Follow us on Facebook!

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.

It's nice when we have so many new members we cannot fit them all on Page 2; welcome all!

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Your Local Tax Dollars: Education Edition

On Tuesday, February 21st from 6-8, the League of Women Voters of Greater Dayton Program Committee will host a panel of speakers to discuss the issue of local tax dollars in education.

The event will be held at the Trotwood-Madison High School Auditorium located at 4440 N. Union Rd., Trotwood, OH 45426. Parking will be available in the high school parking lot.

Local school board and government officials will discuss how taxes are distributed to each district, local levies, and how schools are affected by the current funding system. The event is free and open to the public. If you are able to attend, please contact the League office at 937-228-4041. We hope you can join us.

Ana Crawford, VP of Programming

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 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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Many states have been adopting changes to their primary election systems, most notably California in 2010 and most recently Maine this past November. Due to the changes being implemented in some states and reforms being considered in other states, members of the League have been questioned about the League's position on primary election reform in Ohio. Having no policy position on this issue, we have been unable to respond. It was in order to formulate a policy position on this topic that the state League recommended and approved a state-wide study on primary election systems. At the last state League convention, held in June 2015, the League of Women Voters of Ohio approved a motion to conduct a study on primary election systems in Ohio. Ten members of local Leagues, including those from Athens, Bowling Green, Cincinnati, Columbus and Dayton, volunteered to coordinate this study. Dianne Herman was our local representative to this group. Their work resulted in a study guide and a consensus questionnaire to be used to solicit local League input into the question of whether to reform our primary election system in Ohio, and, if reform were indicated, to recommend what type of system should replace our current one.

On December 5, eleven members of the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area, met to discuss the public policy position for the League of Women Voters of Ohio on reform of our state's primary election system. One of our members, who could not be in attendance, submitted comments by email. Members of the group included Kaye Stealey, Ana Crawford, Barbara Buddendeck, Valerie Lee, Nancy Bain, Paul Lamberger, Lillian Moskeland, Rita Peterson, Andy Cobb, Janet Hess and Lucy Anne McKosky. Dianne Herman facilitated the meeting. Using a provided study guide and study materials, the group reviewed four basic questions and attempted to reach a consensus on the issues raised by these questions.

The first question dealt with the purpose of primary elections as being partisan (a way for political party members to choose their nominees) or nonpartisan (a way for all voters, regardless of political party membership to narrow the field of candidates). Most participants (8) felt that the purpose of primaries should be partisan, "I want to be able to choose my political party's candidates for office." Four members, however, felt that partisan elections discourage voter turnout and nonpartisan elections allow for more voter participation. For those who felt that primaries should be nonpartisan, the response was that this should be true for all levels of government. However, among those who felt that primaries should be partisan, all members agreed that political party affiliation at the local level could be nonpartisan. Reasons cited included local issues, such as road repair, are not as relevant depending on party affiliation; and partisan issues, such as political party platforms, are not as relevant on the local level.

Members were asked what principles should a good primary election system encourage. All agreed that increasing voter participation was the most important. Also seen as important were lessening partisan polarization and increasing more competitive general elections.

The current system in Ohio for local, county and statewide offices is a semi-closed, partisan primary election, in which the voter may request any party ballot at the time of the election, and the voter may be challenged if he/she changed party affiliation. Members were asked if they wanted to keep Ohio's current system. Nine said yes and three said no. For those advocating reform, their preference to change the primary system was an open, nonpartisan "Top-Two" primary in which all candidates appear on the same primary ballot but only the top two vote-getters, regardless of party affiliation, advance to the general election. For those wanting to keep the current system, it was recommended that the "challenge provision" in the law be removed so that voters could select their party affiliation at the time of the primary election.

So while no consensus emerged from the primary election study conducted by our local League, participants felt that the exercise was thought-provoking and worthwhile. Our local responses have been submitted to the League of Women Voters of Ohio. At the state convention of the League this summer, the results from all local Leagues will be shared.

Submitted by Dianne Herman

I have a shirt that is emblazoned with the saying "do something." After our contentious election, those words carry the urgency of a duty and not a choice. So how do we promote democratic principles through a non-partisan approach? While it might be difficult to chart a course of action with Baby Boomers, there's hope if we reach out to our youth.

The Ohio Department of Education is undertaking a review of social studies and science standards that were adopted in 2010. You can acquaint yourself with the social studies standards at this link: <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohios-Learning-Standards-Standards/Social-Studies/SS-Standards.pdf.aspx>

By the time you read *The Voter*, the comment period will have ended; however, you can sign up for updates at this website: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Ohios-Learning-Standards/Standard-Revision-Overview>. A second survey taking into account the proposed changes will seek public comment sometime in May-June 2017.

At the national level, resolutions dealing with civics education (expressing the sense of the Senate about the importance of effective civic education programs in schools in the United States) passed the Senate (S. Res 427 in the 113th Congress; S. Res 150 and 440 in the 114th Congress).

You can read more about these resolutions as well as the status of civics education at the website for the Center for Civics Education:

<http://www.civiced.org/e-news/?p=1871#more-1871>

Where I would like to see League involvement is to establish a mentorship program with a local school district. One of my most enjoyable activities with the League in 2016 was hosting a Q&A between students from Stivers and DECA and our guest author, Jay Newton-Small. We left with a commitment for follow-up activities engaging the young people and utilizing our expertise to align with the Center for Civics Education. As written at the Center's website:

"The We the People curriculum enhances students' understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy and helps them to identify the contemporary relevance of the Constitution and Bill of Rights."

Let's make this a New Year's Resolution for our League. Your thoughts??

Valerie Lee, Action Chair



League of Women Voters Greater Dayton Area

presents

DANGEROUS DAMES OF DAYTON

March 30, 2017

6:00 PM

As we honor 2017 Dangerous Dames

Marsha Bonhart, Lynn Hulsey, and Cheryl McHenry

*Celebrating Pioneering Women in the Media:
30 Years of Challenges and Change*



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Please make checks payable to: **Dayton Area League of Women Voters Education Fund** and mail to the office, 131 N Ludlow St, Ste 1208, Dayton OH 45402-1703.

To pay online visit our website, www.lwvdayton.org, click on calendar and use PayPal to secure your reservation.

Your email address is required for a tax-deductible receipt and an event reminder:

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Number of reservations at \$97 each: _____ Contact phone number: _____

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The 2017 Dangerous Dames of Dayton is sponsored by the Dayton Area League of Women Voters Education Fund. For further information contact the League at 937-228-4041, email us at league@lwvdayton.org or visit our website: www.lwvdayton.org.

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The *2017 Directory of Public Officials* will soon be here. You'll find the latest information on all our elected officials as well as information and assistance numbers for other government agencies, social service agencies, and political parties in Montgomery and Greene Counties. Everything you need to know about how to contact your local, state, and national representatives can be found in this handy, pocket-size booklet. The new edition is indispensable for staying in touch with your elected officials.

Members may order one copy of the directory at the special price of \$3.00, including postage and handling. Additional copies are \$6.00 each up to 10 copies, with a reduced rate of \$5.00 each for orders over 10 copies. Please use the order form below and mail it to the League office or fax it to 937-228-4104. You may also order online at www.lwvdayton.org.

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Advocating Voter Education
and Action on Issues

Current Resident or:

Our President's Corner

It's over...or is it? As I write this the inauguration is a week away at which time America will have a new President. The past few months have been extraordinarily hectic for the League of Women Voters locally, state wide, and nationally. We have published & distributed the *Voters Guide*, conducted candidate interviews and forums, been available for speaking engagements, registered voters and fought against voter suppression and for voters' rights. We have hosted free, and open to the public, events on topics that every American should be informed about, and we have recognized the accomplishments of some extraordinary women who work tirelessly for the greater good. We have brought to Dayton Pulitzer Prize winning journalists and nationally recognized authors and activists. It would be nice to take a breather and coast for a few weeks, BUT THAT'S NOT WHO WE ARE AND NOT WHAT WE DO! It is not enough to encourage our citizens to vote for the candidate of their choice and to protect their right to do so. Our duty as voters does not end on election day. After every election we must demand that our elected officials are answerable to us and we must know their positions on issues of gigantic importance. More importantly we must let them know where we stand and that our vote will go to those who stand with us. A barrage of emails or phone calls to any elected official whose re-election depends on serving their constituency is effective...they listen! We have the power to have the America that we want...but only if we use that power. Take a stand...there is too much at stake to be a bystander.



Patty Skilken, President