

LWV[®]

The VOTER

Advocating voter education
and action since 1920

1920-2016

OctoberLEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE GREATER DAYTON AREA
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LWV Lobbying for Voters Rights in Ohio

As many of you already know, a portion of your dues goes to both LWV State and LWV National leagues to support the lobbying efforts for the rights of voters. Below is an update on recent activities from Carrie Davis, Executive Director LWVO.

"Golden Week" Lawsuit Update

On 9/13/2016, the US Supreme Court declined an emergency request to restore Golden Week. This means early voting will begin in Ohio on October 12, the day after the October 11 voter registration deadline.

On 8/23/2016, a federal appeals court overruled the lower court and upheld elimination of Golden Week. This means early voting will begin October 12, after voter registration closes. It is as yet unknown whether plaintiffs plan to appeal this ruling.

Voter Purge - Lawsuit Update & Voter Outreach Plans

In April 2016, a group of voting rights advocates sued the Ohio Secretary of State (SoS). This suit alleges that the SoS removed voters from the rolls in violation of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) by using voter inactivity as a basis to trigger removal. In late June, a federal court ruled in favor of the SoS, and the voting advocates appealed. Appeal briefs were filed in July. The US Department of Justice filed an amicus (friend-of-the-court) brief agreeing with voter advocates that failure to vote cannot be a basis for removal, and a similar joint amicus was filed by Common Cause, LWVUS, and Project Vote.

Regardless of what happens with the lawsuit, we are forced to deal with the reality that approximately two million names have been removed from Ohio's voter registration list in recent years.

Voters, League Prevail in Federal Voting Rights Case

Major Civil Rights Challenge

Illegal Action Had Blocked Eligible Citizens from Registering, Voting

Washington, DC: The League of Women Voters has just won a major federal voting rights case. A federal appeals court blocked the illegal action of Brian Newby, U.S. Election Assistance Commission executive director, who earlier this year unilaterally allowed Alabama, Georgia and Kansas to require voters to produce difficult-to-obtain proof of citizenship documentation when completing the federal mail voter registration form. This action has illegally kept voters from the polls, caused confusion, and threatened the lawful voter registration efforts of the League and other groups.

You can catch updates on these activities and others on the state website at www.lwvohio.org.

Susan Hesselgesser, Executive Director

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All donations as of August 29, 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.

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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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Joan H. Albrecht, Linda Blum, Patricia Burnside, Andrea & Vincent Cobb, Ana & Matthew Crawford, Marni Flagel, Dr. & Mrs. Ronald Fletcher, Carol Graff & Lee Schatzley, Vivienne Himmell (in memory of Evelyn Ferguson), Becky & James Kirkland, Paula & John MacIlwaine, Mario, Viola Matyas, Ellen McCloskey, Judge Alice O.

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

Andrea Cobb; Susan Hesselgesser; Porter, Wright, Morris & Arthur LLP; Elaine Sendelbach; Kathy Turner; and Carol Winslow

Welcome New Members!

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What an honor to have a seat at the table with a group of talented and committed advocates against gun violence. John Ritchie, the director of this phenomenal film, gave us a little background information about the how and why he created this film. He also indicated he used one of the crowd sourcing tools to get funding for the film. Dayton native, Ian Cook, was asked about his skills as a cinematographer. Those skills were well represented in this film. Eric Zamonsky from the Brady Campaign was well informed and led much of the post-film discussion. Todd Huster also represented the Brady Campaign. Darren Byrd, who described himself as a "street advocate," shared some of his insights from working inside the community. Martha Clark, the state lead for Organizing For Action, put her skills to good use in organizing the showing of the film and inviting a panel for discussion. The Dayton League of Women Voters was represented by our Action Director, Valerie Lee, who just won't stop talking about the issue of gun violence.



The event was well attended, even though it was shown on a holiday weekend. Judging from the questions asked by the audience, there is a great deal of repressed passion surrounding this topic and a shared frustration for our democracy in our inability to move common sense legislation to quell the rising tide of gun violence. By chronicling the lives of the victims of gun violence, it personalized the tragedies for those of us who only view gun violence through news reports. The film and the discussion focused on the passage of universal background checks—legislation that has been proposed time and again by the President and obstructed by our Congress. His executive action can be examined at the White House webpage: (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/01/04/live-updates-what-president-doing-keep-guns-out-wrong-hands>).

John Ritchie, the film's director, would like to encourage those with an interest in stemming the tide of gun violence to stream the film and write a positive review. Choose a link from the following:

Google play:

https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/91_A_Film_about_Guns_in_America?id=k9AuPh3vrfs

VUDU:

<http://www.vudu.com/movies/#!content/794943/91-A-Film-about-Guns-in-America>

iTunes:

<https://itun.es/i6hS6Xp>

He also would find it helpful to have the film shown to groups to stimulate discussion and a call to action.

Secondly, ask candidates for political office to share with you their position on gun violence prevention and pending legislation. Armed with that information, you should vote your conscience.

Readers might also be informed by a recent article that appeared in the *New Yorker* magazine pertaining to the business and politics of selling guns.

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/06/27/after-orlando-examining-the-gun-business>

Valerie Lee, Action 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.

Quick! What is a synonym for nonpartisan? Need help? How about neutral, liberal, libertarian, libertine, rugged individualist, free spirit, isolationist, carte blanche, tolerance, mugwump, centrist, uncommitted voter, maneuvering, swing vote, third force. Do any of those match your thoughts? Or, like raisins in a chocolate chip cookie, did word connotations deliver surprises?

My own choice was non-participation—not included in the above category. For that word the thesaurus offers passivity, inaction, procrastination, watchful waiting, idleness, and—a startling phrase—passive self-annihilation. Although perhaps cynical, I find it helpful to delve into why that choice popped up so quickly.



In the current political climate, I know some people are considering not voting in November, which makes me wonder what problem they think that will solve. I find it unfathomable that any person would abdicate/renounce/give up/refuse/resign his or her place at a table that has given us the feast of freedom that comes with full participation in a democratic government.

Abstention can bring only weakness. "They tell us, Sir," said Patrick Henry in 1775, "that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary...Sir, we are not weak..."

Unlike not voting, participation in nonpartisan political programs, such as those sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area, only strengthens one's understanding of the spirit of democracy: respect for individuals, the value of diversity, the empowerment of the grassroots, and the power of consensus.

The plate can seem pretty full, but the dessert is always delicious.

Nancy Bain, Membership Director

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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There is a lot of talk about voting in the 2016 election. Below is a little tutorial for League members to share with their families, friends and neighbors.

No fear about voting at the polls on Election Day! We have had several calls from voters who are concerned about voter fraud and having an overwhelming amount of "observers" at the polls.

I attend our Board of Elections meetings in Montgomery County. First, please be assured that no one is allowed to monitor the polls unless they have been registered and approved to be there. Additionally, every polling location is balanced with teams of democrats & republicans. There is also a balanced team of election judges on hand to answer questions and keep watch. This year, every polling location will have extra machines; all of which have been checked over to ensure they are in-tune and calibrated to correctly record every vote. In addition, on hand at every location, is a Super Poll Worker who can jump in and trouble-shoot problems with machines, electronic poll books, and other unexpected circumstances.

Photo ID

I would also like to correct a common misconception that not requiring a photo ID means voters do not need any identification to vote, presumably allowing voters to cast duplicate ballots. Wrong! Identification IS required to vote; it just does not have to be a government issued photo ID. Other forms of accepted identification are U.S. Military ID, utility bill, bank or financial advisor statement, pay stub, government check that has your name and current address. Your signature on the electronic poll book must also match the signature you used when you registered to vote. Secretary of State Jon Husted calls instances of voter fraud in Ohio "a small blip." Out of 5.56 million voters in the last presidential election, only 115 voters were referred to prosecutors for review; of those, only a handful were actually prosecuted.



Quick Tips on Voting Absentee:

Use black or blue ink
 Fill in the Oval completely
 Do not √ or X the oval
 Check the envelope for instructions & correct postage
 Sign your ballot envelope
 Fill it in and send it in. It must arrive on Election Day.

Remember your absentee ballot IS YOUR BALLOT. If you lose or damage it, call the Board of Elections for a new ballot. If you try to vote at the polls after receiving an absentee ballot, you will have to vote a provisional ballot. Provisional ballots are not counted until several days after the election.

Early Voting begins October 12. You must vote at your local Board of Elections.

Montgomery County: 451 West Third Street, Dayton. Parking entrance is on Second Street. No charge for parking.

Greene County: 551 Ledbetter Road, Xenia

Election Day is Tuesday, November 8. Vote and Bring a Friend!

Susan Hesselgesser, Executive Director

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Current Resident or:

Our President's Corner

Let's talk about the Constitution of the United States of America. Do you think you understand it? Have you ever read the entire document? Generally speaking, I think LWV members are better informed than most on issues of government, but the Constitution, the presiding document for our democracy, deserves some attention.

During this campaign season, the second amendment has been getting a fair amount of attention. It says, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." That's it... one simple sentence...but constitutional scholars have been arguing for decades about the interpretation of that sentence. One argument is that the right to bear arms is absolute and unlimited. Another argument is that the right to bear arms is present only as it was necessary to maintain a Militia, that the comma after the words "free state" is significant and limits the right to bear arms. To further confuse the issue...if the right to bear arms cannot be infringed upon, then how is it that this absolute right is infringed upon all the time by states that pass laws (Connecticut for one) prohibiting the sale of certain kinds of weapons? How about background checks...more infringement? Can we really have it both ways, or do we need to clarify exactly who gets to own weapons and which weapons should be available? A new state law in Texas allows licensed gun owners to carry concealed handguns in most places on public college campuses including dorms and classrooms. Good idea? Bad idea? Food for thought.



Patty Skilken, President LWVGDA