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# THE VOTER

A Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area

1920 - 2020

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## Women and the Vote – Fighting Then, Surging Now

Susan B. Anthony is my favorite suffragist. Granted, I love them all, but Susan is the one who somehow touches my heart, the one I hope I am secretly related to. On my very short bucket list, I want to take the pilgrimage other women have taken to her grave in Rochester, New York and place my “I VOTED” sticker on her tombstone to pay my respects to the woman who sacrificed all for my right to vote.



Susan voted once, illegally, roughly 40 years before women had the right to do so. She bullied her way past the poll workers with an argument under the Fourteenth Amendment which reads: “no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.” Susan was determined to vote in the Presidential election for Ulysses S. Grant. Two weeks later she was arrested and fined \$100. Defiantly, Susan challenged the judge to hold her in jail until she paid the fine; knowing better, the judge refused. Susan proclaimed she would never pay the fine, and she never did.

I thought of Susan because of a *New York Times* article (February 25, 2020) brought to my attention by League member/friend Vivienne Himmell. It is titled “The Jersey Exception” named for the New Jersey law which made New Jersey, from 1776 thru 1807, the only state that allowed women to have equal voting rights with men. The article debates whether this was an effort at gender equality or a legal loophole. Nevertheless, women eagerly voted, doing so in groups, likely because voting took place in “taverns awash with drunkenness and guns.”

Eventually, during a bitterly fought election in 1806, reports of fraudulent voting and corruption were rampant, with charges of chaotic elections because of “petticoat electors” and men in dresses voting illegally multiple times. None of these stories were proven true. Nonetheless, in 1807, the women of New Jersey lost their voting rights, thus allowing only white men that privilege. After that decision, New Jersey women joined the ranks of most women in the United States, and were denied the vote for another 113 years.

In 2020, we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment; though written in 1869, it was not passed by Congress until 1919. It is known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment. Just as Susan voted in a presidential election in 1872 and changed history, women of 2020 are reported to be the driving force that will choose our next President. We will do so freely without fear of jail or fines and have the privilege of wearing our “I VOTED” sticker proudly, without scorn, because we can, because of Susan B. Anthony.

~Susan Hesselgesser, Executive Director, LWVGDA

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Greene County

\*In-kind contribution

\*\*In-kind contribution + monetary contribution

### Recent Contributions Appreciated

*General Fund – a 501(c)(4)entity*

*Education Fund—a 501(c)(3)entity*

ATOM Financial Products, Susan Hesselgesser,  
Sandra McHugh, Penny Wolff



## Welcome Our New Members

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## LWV Reading Series

*In honor of the centennial ratification of the 19th Amendment and Women's Right to Vote, the League of Women Voters Greater Dayton Area is hosting its own reading series. The books are about the amazing accomplishments of women—before, during, and after the vote—that somehow did not make it into the history books. So borrow or buy the book, and then make plans to join us for a discussion of what women were doing 70 - 100 years ago.*

### **Radium Girls:**

*the Dark Story of America's Shining Women*  
By Kate Moore

**Tuesday, May 12 at 6:30 pm** *\*\*subject to change\*\**  
Lily's Bistro, 329 E 5th St (in the Oregon District)

In the early 20th Century, one of the best jobs young girls and women in America could have involved something exciting and brand new: radium. Sparkling, glowing, and beautiful, radium was also, according to the companies that employed these young women, completely harmless. A century later the truth about radium and its assorted isotopes is known all too well. This is the story of these young women, seemingly so fortunate, who were poisoned by the jobs they felt so lucky to have. [NY Times Bestseller; USA Today Bestseller; Wall Street Journal Bestseller; Amazon Charts Bestseller]

**RSVP by Friday, May 8**, to DJ Shade at [wendellshade@gmail.com](mailto:wendellshade@gmail.com), in order to give the restaurant a head count.

### SAVE THE DATE FOR UPCOMING DISCUSSIONS:

- Tuesday, August 11**

*We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of the American Women Trapped on Bataan*, By Elizabeth Norman



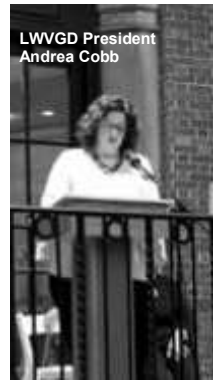
On March 7, 2020, over 200 League members and League friends gathered at the Dayton Art Institute to celebrate the work of the League and the many women and men who stood for creating a more perfect democracy since 1920.



Selfie Station Fun!



Gary Leppla gives the toast



LWVG President Andrea Cobb

100 Years in the Making:  
 Celebrating our Centennial Anniversary  
 And our  
 2020 Dangerous Dames of Dayton



Jill Kingston, 2020 Dangerous Dame



The dessert bar was a big hit!



Dayton Institute of Arts looked beautiful



Judge Alice O. McCollum, 2020 Dangerous Dame



Susan Page signs her book



Keynote Speaker Susan Page

# VOLUNTEER VOICES



## Volunteer Voices – an interview with David Bodary, PhD, our League Program Vice President



**Q. How do you decide on topics and speakers?**

**R. Bodary:** Issues of greatest importance to our membership are determined at the Annual Program Planning event, where topics are ranked by our members. Once determined, we work with [Executive Director] Sue Hesselgesser, check the calendar for program dates, look for experts to speak on those topics, and collaborate with existing programs in the community where possible.

**Q. What other initiatives are included in your portfolio?**

- R. Bodary:** Our partnership with [Dayton Access Television \(DATV\)](#) is an initiative we began last October. We take topics of interest, such as food insecurity, and gather together a few local experts for a facilitated discussion. The programs presented are nonpartisan and help people become better informed. League members can help by sharing topics of interest.
- Our [Natural Resources Committee](#), Co-chaired by Kathy Turner and Paul Lamberger, offers at least one event annually. This year, volunteers are invited to participate in Five Rivers MetroParks' [Adopt-A-Park 2020: Healing Nature](#) event, scheduled for Saturday, April 18 from 9 am -12 pm. **Please note: for the latest parks info on COVID-19, please check [www.metroparks.org/covid-19-updates](http://www.metroparks.org/covid-19-updates).**
  - The [Fair Elections for All Committee](#) Chair Kim Senft-Paras and her team are launching our newest program, to educate and engage the community on redistricting based on the 2020 census and any possible suppression efforts. A kickoff panel discussion open to the public will be held May 7, 6:30 pm at the Woodbourne Library, 6060 Far Hills Avenue in Centerville. **Note: Woodbourne Library is currently closed. Check their website for updates: [www.WClibrary.info](http://www.WClibrary.info).**
  - Action Director Valerie Lee coordinates actions at every level—local, state, and national—based on League positions. More information is available in the membership handbook.

**Q. Where do events like Dine and Dish, Capitol Chat, and Dangerous Dames fit in?**

**R. Bodary:** Those events are organized by the [Funding & Development Committee](#), under the direction of Linda Fish. These events also inform but additionally include a fundraising or development component.

**Q. What do you hope to accomplish as Program Vice President?**

**R. Bodary:** My hope is that we can continue to expand access to unbiased, reliable information—Democracy is not a spectator sport! We cannot just watch it happen and then complain. I hope people will see these programs, learn, then engage in what they would like to see happen with respect to natural resources, government practices, or social justice issues.

If you would you like help, please send an email to [laurel.kerr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:laurel.kerr@sbcglobal.net).

## LEAGUE NEWS AROUND THE STATE AND NATION

**A  
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A Note to Our Members:

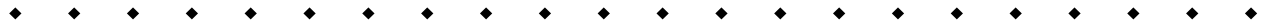
Out of an abundance of caution, following the direction of Governor DeWine and, most importantly, in consideration of the safety and health of our volunteers, the **League office will be closed** to the public until further notice. At this time, we will be answering phone calls and emails during normal office hours. If you need to come into the office, please give us a call at 937-228-4041.

Additionally, we are **re-scheduling May’s Annual Meeting**; we will consider new dates as we see the threat of the Coronavirus diminish.

Please also note that League of Women Voters **Ohio Statehouse Day has been cancelled** as an in-person event. An electronic media event for that day is being planned. More information will follow.

These are challenging times. Please take care of yourselves and your families. We look forward to better days in the months ahead.

~Susan Hesselgesser, Executive Director



### SHOULD SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARM TEACHERS?

In 2019, at the League of Women Voters Ohio State Convention, a motion was approved to launch a new study. The original motion, as presented at LWV State Convention, reads as follows:

*Moves consideration of a new study to assess the impact on the health and safety of students, school personnel and communities when school personnel are armed while on school grounds. Rationale includes a potential increase in risk of harm if school personnel are armed. Further, school boards are allowed to arm school personnel without informing the community. Our scope would include risk of harm to students, school personnel and communities, mishandling of firearms, training, cost, accountability and liability issues. LWV Hudson will take the lead for the study.*

The committee from around the state (Arming School Personnel – ASP) has continued to move forward in undertaking deliberative actions. I serve as an adjunct member willing to review documents, offer suggestions, and provide feedback from experts in the southwest Ohio area. The ASP has now completed consensus questions ready to use in interviews across the state. I plan to keep our membership updated as the study continues to evolve. If this is a topic of interest, you may wish to review the well-researched document compiled by Everytown for Gun Safety:

<https://everytownresearch.org/reports/keeping-our-schools-safe-a-plan-to-stop-mass-shootings-and-end-all-gun-violence-in-american-schools/>

You might also be interested in news coverage of a local forum that assembled several professionals in our area, along with a survivor of gun violence, to discuss security in our local schools:

<https://dayton247now.com/news/local/school-safety-panel-discusses-gun-violence-threat>

~Valerie Lee, Action Director



***In  
Memoriam***

Deb Wenig, who served as a past president of our Dayton League, died in January, 2020. Deb came to us from the New York State League of Women Voters, and was described as “innovative, enthusiastic, and a breath of fresh air.” We send our condolences to her family.



**APRIL 22, 2020**

**Get Your 2020 Directory of Public Officials Today**

It's time to order your copy of the 2020 *Directory of Public Officials*. This handy booklet contains names and contact information for all federal, state, and local elected officials representing constituents in Montgomery and Greene Counties, plus information and assistance numbers for political parties and social service agencies. Many changes have been made this year following last fall's local elections. The latest issue is hot off the presses and is available now.

**Members** may order ONE booklet at the reduced price of \$3, including postage and handling. All additional copies/orders are \$6 each up to 10 copies. Orders exceeding 10 copies will be discounted to \$5 each. Send your check today to ensure that you receive your booklet. Please use the order form below, or fax your order to **937.228.4104**. You may also order online at **www.lwvdayton.org**.

Please make checks payable to: **Dayton Area League of Women Voters Education Fund**. Send order form and check to 127 N Ludlow St, Dayton, OH 45402-1703.

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Talbott Tower  
127 N. Ludlow Street  
Dayton, OH 45402-1703

*"Now that you have the vote,  
what are you going to do with it?"*

*~founder Carrie Chapman Catt*

 For up-to-date League happenings, legislative alerts and news, check out our Facebook page, **LWV Dayton OH.**

Then **SHARE** our page with friends and family!

Current Resident or:

# April 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 National Hug a Journalist Day
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Easter Sunday	13 Board Meeting New Date TBD	14	15 Tax Day	16	17	18 National Columnists Day
19	20	21	22 Earth Day	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		