



THE VOTER

The monthly publication of the Toledo-Lucas County League of Women Voters

February 2009

FEB. 26 CONSENSUS MEETING TO EXAMINE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The Spaghetti Warehouse on 42 S. Superior St. in downtown Toledo will again be the site of LWVTLC's board and general meetings this Thursday Feb. 26. After a short board meeting at 5:30 pm to take care of details related to the upcoming Reception for Public Officials and Signature events, league members will grapple with whether or not to support adding the National Popular Vote Compact to LWVUS advocacy positions. The league's position statements are published under the title of Impact on Issues and available on the LWVUS web site.

Delegates at LWVUS 2008 Convention voted to study the advisability of using the National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact among the states as a method for electing the U.S. President. Since 1970 LWVUS has held the position that the direct popular vote election of the President and Vice President is essential to representative government and that the Electoral College should be abolished. This position was revised in March 1982 and updated in June 2004.

The NPV Compact proposal offers a method of achieving the result of election of the President by popular vote without amending the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College. Instead, this method uses the mechanism of the Electoral College to ensure that the candidate who receives the most popular votes is elected President of the United States.

Under the proposed legislation to enact the National Popular Vote Compact, all of the state's electoral votes would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The bill would take effect only when enacted, in identical form, by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes; that is, enough electoral votes to elect a President (270 of 538).

Included in the printed version of this newsletter are condensed versions of the pro and con arguments. The complete and expanded arguments as well as background information, a list of references used by the committee to formulate these papers and the text of the NPV Compact are available online at http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=National_Popular_Vote_Compact

Becoming familiar with these documents will prepare us to knowledgeably discuss the issue and allow us to move the meeting along to consensus.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ANNUAL LUNCHEON

March 7 the Great Lakes Consortium for international training and development will celebrate its 10th anniversary at its annual luncheon celebrating International Women's Day held at the Inverness Country Club from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. The theme is "Merrymaking Around the World". To attend contact Elizabeth Balient at 419-530-8572 or through the Great Lakes Consortium at P.O. Box 352424, Toledo, OH 43635.

President's Letter

Once again our busy time of the year is upon us. This month, on February 26, we will meet for a consensus on the issue of whether we believe that a compact between the states is the best way to choose a President of the United States. The National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact provides a way to choose the President by popular vote without amending the Constitution. The crux of this idea is that states would sign a compact to commit to the idea that the winner of the national popular vote would receive the state's electoral votes...or is it that the winner in a particular state would receive all of the state's electoral votes? Come to the February 26 meeting and find an answer to this compelling question.

Statehouse Day is March 17 in Columbus. This is an opportunity for ALL members to learn from the experts about current issues facing Ohioans and to discuss them with the legislators and other League members. And, members can speak directly with the decision makers and voice their ideas, concern and opinions. This year, Statehouse Day focuses on the budget shortfall and on how we are all going to feel the pinch; how we can harness the power of the League to face Ohio's financial crisis. In the morning session, invited speakers include economist Howard Fleeter to explain the budget crisis in laymen's terms, and the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, Armond Budish, to discuss legislative priorities and economic realities in light of the budget. During the afternoon, we meet with legislators and League Lobbyists. Our League members usually carpool and go down to the Riffe Center in Columbus for the day, getting home around 6:30PM. Registration for the event is due March 1 and the cost is \$35 for lunch and lots of materials. Please contact Rosemary or Sue for more information.

On March 31 we are honoring Lucas County Women Elected Officials, past and present, at a reception with all public officials that will be held at the Mansion View Inn, 2035 Collingwood Blvd from 5:00PM to 7:30PM. If you have some time, please volunteer to help by calling Kim Penn. If your time is short, just come and meet your colleagues and your elected officials.

Plans are underway for our Signature Event on April 23 at 6:00PM. Our Theme will be "Making Democracy Work". If you can find the time, please call Yvette Gordon or Ann Payne and help with our largest project of the year.

Peg and Rosemary
Co-Presidents

PRAISE FOR LUCAS COUNTY STUDENTS

Voter Services of LWV-Toledo-Lucas County is so proud of the 350 Lucas County High School students and one from Owens Community College that worked at the polls in some capacity on Election Day, November 2008. We reported last fall of our efforts to get Toledo Public Schools to inform high school students of the opportunity to work at the polls and be excused from school. The results of our efforts and the TPS Board of Education's cooperation are that 107 TPS kids worked! Each of the 351 students participating was sent a letter of congratulations and a certificate of acknowledgment and appreciation for their contribution to the effort of Making Democracy Work.

Each poll worker I spoke to that worked with these students had so much praise for them. Four students worked in the location that I worked as a presiding judge and it was such a treat to work with them.

Thanks to Pam Wilson of the Board of Elections for providing information needed to honor the students.

Bonnie Bishop

DANCE EAT AND LIVE HEALTHY

LWVTLC is in partnership with the Toledo Lucas County Library to try to have a healthy impact on the increasingly unfit physical condition of our young people. The library through the efforts of Judy Jones, manager of the Mott Branch, has obtained a grant from the Met Life Foundation. The grant, awarded to only 17 libraries in the country and only one other in Ohio, provides for a myriad of programs and partners one being organized by Yvette Thompson Gordon is a weekly hour long exercise and information session for elementary schoolers. The League's role in the project is to organize the sessions that will last for a six week period. Yvette has arranged for dance demonstrations and classes for the first segment of the hour, then information about nutrition and health for the second segment and exposure to various career opportunities for the third segment. Volunteers from the Department of Rehabilitation and Dietary at University of Toledo, members of the UAW St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center nursing staff, United We Step Dance group and Glass City Hustlers and the Zapada Group are providing the content and doing the instructional parts of the sessions. Yvette is hoping that leaguers will be interested in coming down to Mott Branch and taking a look at our newest project as well as lending a hand with some of the little chores like passing out supplies to the kids. These little tasks require no expertise yet bring much reward in seeing the fruition of a great idea. Our presence will also underscore that this is indeed an LWVTLC sponsored project. So please sign up for a time slot at the general meeting on Feb. 26. or contact Yvette by phone or e-mail. It's only an hour from 4:00 to 5:00 pm during one of the six weeks that the project will run starting March 2.

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HOW CONSENSUS WORKS

Webster defines consensus as "agreement on matters of opinion." For the League of Women Voters, however, consensus has a far broader meaning. In League parlance, it means agreement among a SUBSTANTIAL number of representative groups of members (not just a simple majority) reached after sustained study and group discussion. Consensus is a prerequisite to the League taking any action on any national, state or local issues. Consensus also determines what action if any, is to be taken on the item under consideration. No action is taken where there is a lack of agreement; and, although this may at times be a disappointment to some members, it is essential that when a League position is announced, it means that members are not only informed but are in basic agreement.

League members are expected to examine all sides of an issue. The sources of information must be weighed, various factors considered, and facts established before opinions are formed.

Minority opinions should be listened to with open minds and be included in reports to the board. Every member is encouraged to participate. The discussion leader should seek to draw out opinions rather than to express them. When reaction to specific aspects of the item presented is indicated, specific questions may be asked of the membership and the answers reported to the board. The board should also be informed about the tenor of the meeting. For example, was there enthusiastic approval; much opposition, doubt and uncertainty; or hesitation to come to a conclusion?

Once the board, at the level of League conducting the study, evaluates the thinking of its members and finds sufficient areas of agreement, the League "has a position" on the item under consideration. A substantial and representative number of its members now approve or disapprove certain policies and may want to take action. The general membership is informed at League meetings and through League newsletters. The national League reports consensus on national issues, the state League on state issues and the local League on local issues.

SIGNATURE EVENT FOCUSES ON MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

This year's fundraiser signature event is using one of League's more popular slogans to define its focus. Making Democracy Work has long been a League way of describing what we do as an organization by providing opportunities for voter education and activism. LWVTLC in keeping with its past tributes will again recognize individuals and groups that fall into the unsung hero category, this time for activities that have promoted democracy. Nominees are being considered but awardees have yet to be finalized so if you think you know of some individual or group that falls into this broad category don't hesitate to forward the name to Yvette Thompson Gordon, Signature Event committee chair and LWVTLC vice president.

The April 23 event, a dinner with awards and keynote speaker, will again be held at the Reynolds Garden Cafe on Reynolds Rd. Retired Professor and former Dean of Arts and Sciences at Owens College, Gerald Bazer, will be our keynote speaker. Prof. Bazer's historical writing about American presidents has often appeared in the Toledo Blade's Editorial page.

As a fundraiser the event has had mixed success but each year the LWVTLC profit has increased slightly. This year Yvette and her committee are trying to get a head start on soliciting advertisements for the souvenir booklet and are asking all members to help with this major but potentially very profitable task. If every member could sell one ad of any size we would be farther along in sales than for any of the previous events and closer to making this event a truly successful fundraiser. The available ads are a quarter, half and full page for a cost of \$40, \$60 and \$100 respectively. So think about with whom you are doing business. Maybe the dry cleaners that you've patronized for many years now, or the beauty shop where you've regularly had your hair done, or the grocer there are any number of possibilities. All it takes is to ask. Forms for the ads will be available at the next general meeting Feb. 26 and also in the mailed version of this newsletter.

SAVE THE DATE!
CALENDAR 2008-2009

Feb. 26 5:30pm Brief Board then Consensus Meeting on National Popular Vote Compact.
Spaghetti Warehouse 42 S. Superior Toledo

Mar. 5 Voter Deadline

Mar. 7 Great Lakes Consortium sponsored luncheon commemorating March 8

Mar. 8 International Womens Day

Mar. 11 Naturalization ceremony Central Elementary School

Mar. 17-21 Sunshine Week

Mar. 17 Statehouse Day, Columbus

Mar. 21, 10:30am Board Meeting location tba

Mar. 31, 5:00-7:30pm Reception for Public Officials, Mansion View 2035 Collingwood Blvd.

April 3 Voter Deadline

April 6 Naturalization ceremony Findlay College

April 7 World Health Day

April 15 Tax Deadline

April 16, 7:00pm “Criminal Enforcement of Federal Environmental Laws (or the Lack of it)”
UT Prof. Frank Merritt. Lake Erie Center 6200 BayShore Rd. Oregon

April 22 Earth Day

April 23, 6:00pm Signature Event, Reynold’s Garden Cafe 1220 S. Reynolds Rd.

May 1-3 LWVO convention, Crown Plaza, Dublin OH

May 7 Voter Deadline

May 28, 6:00pm Annual Meeting

June 9 Voter Deadline

June 30, 4:00-9:00pm Joint Board Meeting

All league meetings are open to all members. Please come and bring a guest.

MARCH RECEPTION FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS NOTES PAST ELECTED WOMEN

Taking its theme from Women’s History Month the LWVTLC meet and greet reception for public officials will recognize past women office holders in Lucas County. Committee research has uncovered scores of women who held public office. The first, Etta Green Randall was a member of the Sylvania School board in 1895, 25 years before the 1920 constitutional amendment granting women suffrage. Peg Smith and Jonnie Taylor, who did much of the historical research, were amazed at the number of women who were elected in Lucas County over the 89 years since women could vote.

The March 31 reception which will be held at the historic Mansion View Inn on Collingwood Blvd. from 5:00pm to 7:30pm is intended to provide an open friendly and easy time to chat with county wide elected officials Everyone listed in the TRY has been invited to attend. The event is free to all and open to the public. There will be a cash bar for the purchase of wine and soda pop and the committee is asking league members who attend to assist it by bringing a plate of finger food. Kim Penn, chair, and the entire committee are hoping for a large turnout of members and others interested in finding out about these early women political pioneers and meeting and greeting our elected officials.



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**The League of Women Voters of
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*The League of Women Voters of
Toledo-Lucas County
is a member of
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