



THE VOTER

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

January 2008

February 21 General Meeting to Focus on Program Planning

This month's General Meeting on February 21 at 7:00 p.m. at the Holland Branch Library will be our annual Program Planning meeting. In many organizations, the Board determines the organization's positions on issues. In the League, the members determine the positions through study and agreement. Like consensus, program planning is another example of the grassroots heart of the League. Program planning is the opportunity for every member to recommend which existing League positions should be kept and which should be dropped. It is also the opportunity for members to recommend areas for new study. Program planning happens at all three levels of League: in even numbered years for national positions and odd numbered years for state positions. Program planning marks the end of the line for positions that are out of date or on which member agreement is no longer clear. It also is the first step on the road from study to action (from InLeague LWVO).



The positions held by the League at the national and state levels support the stands we take at the local level of League so our involvement in assessing those positions is vital. In this Voter you will find a summary of the LWVUS impact on issues statements and the LWV Toledo-Lucas County program for advocacy. Do they represent what you think is important work for the League to be doing? Is there something missing or irrelevant? This is where we assess, especially locally, what we stand for. For more background information about the LWVUS positions go to lww.org and click on issues. For more background about the local positions, come to the meeting.

The decisions we make regarding the local program on February 21 will be voted on by the members who attend the Annual Meeting on May 22 where other important aspects of League function such as the budget, and election of officers and board members will also be decided. Similarly, the LWVUS positions that we discuss at this month's general meeting will be taken up, along with the immigration study consensus, at the convention this year in Portland, Oregon, June 13-17.

Ask Olive

Dear Olive,

Can you believe this primary season?! How many candidates are running? . . . and boy am I getting tired. Olive, help! Where can I get REAL information about where they all stand on the issues? I need a little relief from the spin. Point me in the right direction, please.

- Dizzy, dizzier, dizziest on the east side.

Dear East Side 3D,

Child, you have come to the right place. I have in my possession a voter's guide published by the LWVUS. It quotes in context all the candidates who responded to their questionnaire. No editing. No correcting. No analyzing. Just whatever they said about fossil fuels, the Iraq war, the Middle East, immigration, political campaigns and financing, and health coverage. Granted, it doesn't cover everything you might want to know about but maybe enough for you to stop moving in circles. Come over, we'll have tea and I'll let you read it or you can go to LWVOHIO.org and download it yourself.

As always, Olive

You can send your questions to **Ask Olive** by mailing them to POB 2506, Toledo, OH 43606 or e-mailing them to info@lwwtoledo.org.

Olive Colton is a founding mother of the Toledo League of Women Voters now known as the League of Women Voters Toledo Lucas County.

Presidential Candidates Voters' Guides

The League of Women Voters of Ohio in coalition with other good government groups forming the Midwest Democracy Network solicited responses in September 2007 from all the declared presidential candidates to questions about federal campaign finance, government ethics and lobbying regulation, federal communications policy, election administration and voting rights, and congressional redistricting. The responses of the only candidates to reply, Senators John Edwards and Barack Obama, were released on October 31 and are available on the following web sites:

- The Michigan Campaign Finance Network: <http://www.mcfn.org/press.php?prId=49>
- The Joyce Foundation: <http://www.joycefdn.org/Programs/MoneyPolitics/midwestdemocracynetwork.aspx>
- Dane 101, a web site for Dane and Madison counties in Wisconsin: http://www.dane101.com/current/2007/11/27/election_2008_only_two_candidates_respond_to_questionnaire_from_Midwest_Democracy_Network

LWVUS in combination with several D.C. area Leagues polled presidential candidates for a Voters' Guide, now available on the LWV.org and LWVOHIO.org web sites. The following five questions were asked:

1. What should be done, if anything, at the federal level to reduce our use of and dependence on fossil fuels?
2. What should be our short term and long term goals in Iraq and the Middle East?
3. What should the federal government do, if anything, to ensure that every American has health coverage?
4. Please explain why you do or do not support setting spending limits for political campaigns and providing a set amount of public funding for all candidates who agree to take no private contributions.
5. What should the federal government do about immigration?

LWVTLC Supports CareNet Funding

League members responded to a request from Jan Ruma, of the **Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio**, administrators of **CareNet**, and League member, Karen Krause, to show support for CareNet by appearing at the January 15 City Council meeting where the funding resolution for CareNet would be on the agenda.

Mayor Finkbeiner had again threatened to veto any resolution passed by Council that would fund CareNet through the city's General Fund.

Three LWV-TLC members as well as Ms. Krause, who has worked tirelessly for years on the issue of lack of insurance for Ohioans, attended the Toledo City Council meeting in support of the city providing \$65,000 in operating funds for CareNet. A letter urging the funding was written by League co-presidents to Mayor Carty Finkbeiner and all City Council members.

Councilman Mike Craig, who introduced the legislation reluctantly agreed to a first reading instead of taking a vote. The date for a vote was set for January 29, 2008.

On January 29, City Council was presented with a source of alternative funding by District 5 councilman **Tom Waniewski** that was supported by Mayor Finkbeiner. According to the January 30

Blade article, contributions totaling to \$65,500 were promised from United Way, the University of Toledo, Mercy Health Partners, HCR Manor-Care, Toledo Hospital, Health Care REIT Inc., St. Luke's Hospital, and the Health Department, as well as from individuals including \$1,000 from the Mayor and \$300 from City staff. Council unanimously passed a resolution to fund CareNet from the General Fund if the promised financial support did not materialize by February 29.



The League is closely following this issue because our position on health care supports universal health care and the LWV-TLC now includes it in our local advocacy program. Two years ago our Signature Event honored the founders of CareNet, the Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio, and CareNet providers. This local program is a rare example of community sponsored, funded, and supported health care for the working poor. However, this struggle over funding is not new. Should this program be funded through the City General Fund? Is it at least as important as collecting the garbage? Or providing police or fire service? Can this last minute fundraising be relied on to meet CareNet's needs in the coming budget cycles? Is there another way? What are your thoughts? Send them to LWVTLC by US mail or email.

Program for Advocacy

2007-2008

League of Women Voters of Toledo-Lucas County

Approved at the Annual Meeting May 24, 2007

Election Reform

Support election reform that guarantees no citizen is disenfranchised.

Support reforms to ensure that the Board of Elections exhibits responsible management of elections, including adequate and continuous training of poll workers, fair and equitable distribution of the population among polling places and precincts and voting machines within precincts, as well as thorough and accurate counting of votes.

Community Studies

Study the structure and functions of governmental units in Lucas County.

Local Government Funding

Support adequate, fair and equitable funding for local government programs and services.

The Environment

Support organizational, financial and technical methods of preventing environmental pollution.

Support cooperation and coordination among governmental agencies and the private sectors involved with water management, air quality, toxic waste issues and land use that include the principals of smart growth and citizen participation inland development decisions plus other services not pertaining directly to the environment, such as economic development. Encourage personal responsibility toward environmental conservation.

Education

Support the best utilization of human and physical resources to provide a high quality system of publicly supported educational systems in the county.

Support efforts to ensure that all schools are accessible, responsive and accountable for student performance: that they exhibit responsible management: that they are accountable to citizens through locally elected officers and they comply with the same laws, rules, standards and policies.

Healthcare

Encourage the city of Toledo and Lucas County to continue financial support to a program such as CareNet that provides healthcare services to low-income residents of Lucas County who do not have health insurance and do not qualify for governmental healthcare programs. Support local cooperation and coordination among governmental agencies and medical providers to expand the program for the un-insured and under-insured.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote. Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation. Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment. Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance. Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President. Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote and work to abolish the Electoral College. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision making.

Individual Liberties. Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices. Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress. Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency. Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Natural Resources

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

Resource Management

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Agriculture Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Income Assistance. Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

Support Services. Provide for essential support services.

Housing Supply. Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

Support policies and programs that promote the well-being, development and safety of all children.

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Death Penalty

The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

League Member Honored By Maumee Rap

League members continue to make significant contributions striving to preserve the environment. League member **Sue Horvath** was recently honored for decades of work protecting our waterways.

At the 20th anniversary of public-private efforts under the **Maumee Remedial Action Plan**, commonly known as the Maumee RAP celebration, many awards and recognitions were presented and the highest went to Ms. Horvath.

Ms. Horvath is best known in local environmental circles as the woman who, along with former Ottawa Hills activist June Brown, tirelessly dogged state and federal officials about toxic chemical leaching out of several waterfront landfills along the Ottawa River. Years of negotiations resulted in caps being instilled over local dumps.

In 2003, Ms. Horvath was bestowed with the state's highest honor for protecting Lake Erie, the **Ohio Lake Erie Award**.

Congratulations, Sue, for your most recent award and we are grateful for all you do

President's Letter - Peg Hull Smith, Co-President



Over the past year, Bonnie, Ann and I, along with **Linda Lalley**, our State LVW President and **Peg Rosenfeld**, our LWVOhio Election Expert have engaged in several conversations with the Secretary of State's office about election reform. **Jennifer Brunner** has undertaken many election reforms and you should check out the new SOS website which is jam-packed with useful information and easy to navigate!

One of the more interesting reports on the website is the SOS recommendations on election reform coming from the EVEREST report (also available on the website), a **risk assessment study** of Ohio's Voting System initiated by the SOS and completed in December, 2007. The ten recommendations are as follows. 1) Eliminate points of entry creating unnecessary voting system risk by moving to Central Counting of Ballots. 2) Eliminate DREs and Precinct-based Optical Scan Voting Machines that tabulate votes at polling locations. "Simply put...migrating to central counting of ballots ensures greater stability to the computer-based voting systems because it eliminates multiple points of entry to a system not adequately secured". 3) Utilize the AutoMark for voters with disabilities. 4) Require all ballots be Optical Scan Ballots for central tabulation and effective voter verification. 5) Maintain "no fault" absentee voting while establishing Early (15 days prior to the election) and Election Day Vote Centers (of the size of 5 to 10 precincts), eliminating voting at individual precincts or polling places of less than 5 precincts. 6) Require all Special Elections (issues only) held in August 2008 to be voted by mail (no in-person voting), except at the Board of Elections. 7) Implement Pilot Programs for vote centers at the March 2008 election in 2 to 3 counties already using optical scan voting. 8) Adopt legislation to allow a county to vote on whether it desires to vote by mail for a temporary or permanent period of time. 9) For the March primary election permit county boards of elections using precinct-based optical scan machines to move the machines to a central location to implement centralized counting of optical scan ballots. 10) For the March 2008 primary election, require counties utilizing DREs to offer paper ballots to voters who do not want to vote on DREs.

These SOS recommendations provide us with much to think and talk about. Even Secretary Brunner recently said: "What we started out with were recommendations. As we discussed the recommendations, we looked at how much change would be advisable within one year" so perhaps requiring precincts to send ballots to central locations before tallying them won't be put into effect before the election this November. Let the *VOTER* know what you think. Check out the SOS website too.

Save the Date!

February

21 General Meeting - 7:00 p.m.
Holland Library
1032 S. McCord Road
LWVUS and Local Program Planning

March

10 Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.
At the home of Kim Penn
616 Chatham Court

April

14 Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.
At the home of Peg Hull Smith
4430 Nantucket, Toledo
24 Third Annual Signature Event
Social Hour, 5:30 p.m.,
Dinner, 6:15 p.m.
Topic: Juvenile Justice
29 Statehouse Day
LWVO Columbus

May

12 Board Meeting
22 Annual Meeting

June

13-17 National Convention, Portland, OR
19 Joint Board Meeting

Also of note to VOTER readers:

The ACLU of Ohio has sued the Secretary of State and Cuyahoga County to block the switch to a new voting system in time for the March 4 presidential primary. The suit contends that the system to be put in place violates voters' constitutional rights by not allowing them to check their ballots for errors, leading to higher numbers of rejected ballots. For more information check LWVTLC web site www.lwvtoledo.org or go to: www.acluohio.org/pressreleases/2008pr/2008.01.17.asp

Immigration Study Consensus Meeting

At our meeting on **January 24**, LWVTLC Co-Presidents, Peg Hull Smith and Bonnie Bishop, led about 20 Leaguers and guests through the immigration study consensus questions at the general meeting on January 24 at Sanger Library. Discussion was always thoughtful and at times spirited; and, as usual at League meetings, long. Our Co-Presidents noted and recorded the preferences and concerns expressed to send to LWVUS as LWVTLC's contribution to the consensus process. The study committee and the LWVUS board will use the combined results of all local Leagues' efforts to formulate the proposed addition to the LWVUS program, which will in true League style be reviewed, dissected, analyzed and finally voted upon at the national convention in June. To see what other Leagues are saying about the study and immigration sign up for the immigration list serve at lwv.org

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY
PO Box 2506, Toledo, OH 43606**



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