



THE VOTER

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

Save the Date!



- Feb. 22 General Meeting Beirut Restaurant, 6:00 p.m., Program for Advocacy
- March 2 International Women's Day Luncheon, The Courtyard at the Navy Bistro. 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Info: 419-530-8572.
- March 12 Board Meeting West Toledo Library
- March 21 LWV Bowling Green imPACT Town Hall meeting, 7:00 p.m. Simpson Building 1291 Conneaut Ave.
- March 22 General Meeting 7:00 p.m. Reynolds Corners Library. Dr. Patsy Scott, City of Toledo Information and Communication Technology Director, will talk about new trends in technology and update us on Toledo's wireless internet capability.
- March 29 State House Day at the Riffe Center, Columbus
- April 16 Board Meeting
- May 4 & 5 State Convention - Sheraton Suites, Cuyahoga Falls
- May 10 Second Annual Signature Event
- May 14 Board Meeting
- May 24 General Meeting, Annual Meeting
- June 11 Joint Board Meeting

The LWV Toledo-Lucas County Program Planning Meeting, February 22



This month's General Meeting, February 22, 6:00 p.m., at the Beirut Restaurant, 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 taking, 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 in odd numbered years for state positions. Most local Leagues conduct program planning annually. Program planning marks the end of the line for positions that are out of date or on which member agreement is no longer clear.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 *In League 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 LWV Ohio action agenda 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 LWVO positions go to <http://www.lwvohio.org/advocacy.htm> and click on 2005-2007 Agenda for Action in the body of the first paragraph. For more background about the local positions come to the meeting.

The decisions we make regarding the local program on February 22 will be voted on by the members who attend the **Annual Meeting** on **May 24** where other important aspects of League functions such as the budget, and election of officers and board members will also be decided. Similarly, the LWV Ohio positions that we discuss at this month's General Meeting will be taken up at the **Convention**, this year in Cuyahoga Falls on May 4-6.

Presidents' Letter

♦ Bonnie Bishop and Peg Hull Smith



"I'm tired of hearing that democracy doesn't work -- it isn't supposed to work. We are supposed to work at it."

- Alexander Wolcott

Last Thursday, during our League membership meeting at the Holland Branch Library, I met a new League member who came because she was interested in our upcoming discussion on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) in NW Ohio, and wanted to hear our speaker, **Gloria Greene** of the Perrysburg LWV, speak on this environmental issue. After Gloria spoke about the proposed moratorium on all new CAFOs, and our League members concurred, our new member asked "what happens next?" Of course, I and others answered in terms of the League process and we ended up saying that action alerts would be sent to us by our State and National Leagues and we would respond by sending letters or emails or postcards to our elected representatives to push for action on pending bills on this issue.

Later, I got to thinking about this notion of local League action and wondered how our local League members might be responding to these calls for action: **Do we really rush to send emails or letters to our elected representatives?** Or, are some League members occasionally like I am sometimes, so busy taking care of job and family and volunteer activities that action alerts go by the wayside?

And, in the process of mulling this question over, it really dawned on me **how important it is to answer such calls to action.** For the very first time, I think I realized how vitally important this last piece of the process really was. This last piece that begins when we study an issue, then the issue moves to concurrence or consensus, then upward to state or national, then approval at

conventions, then onward to our lobbyists who are in the trenches pushing for what we have decided is important, and thence back to us when a bill on the issue is in committee or on the floor of a State or National House or Senate or on a Governor's desk awaiting signature. The success or failure of all of the previous steps now rests back with us, with the very League members who began to study the issue and came to consensus or concurrence. Of course, I already knew all of these steps; I already knew the process, for heaven's sake. After all, I have been a League member for 37 years now.

But, now I really got it!! We have to complete the process. We have to get our members and friends to contact our representatives whenever bills important to us are moving along the pipeline (or not moving even). Why start a study and consensus process and then fail to complete the deal by not taking care of the last piece?

So, I vow to be a better responder to action alerts I receive. The GrassRoots Lobby Corps is the League's online activist corps. The **National Voter** reports in its February issue that the **Lobby Corps** has grown tremendously "in numbers and impact in 2006." Because our online activists are responding to the urgency and importance of our alerts in increasing numbers, more of our messages are reaching members of Congress. To keep flooding Congress with our concerns, forward the next action alert you receive to people you know with a personal note asking them to sign up to receive free League action alerts by e-mail.

If you are not a member of our Lobby Corps, sign up at www.lwv.org and click on "**take action.**" Respond with action to our State League's appeals for action as well.

Complete that last step in the process. Join me in taking action on the important issues.

~ Peg

Statehouse Day is March 29

This month's general meeting will focus on the League's advocacy positions and next month we'll get an opportunity to put those positions to work by **lobbying our local representatives and senators** in Columbus during **Statehouse Day**. This annual event is a great way to get up close and personal with our elected officials, see the state capital and how it functions, and learn lots of interesting things from our lobbyists, experts in the various topics offered in the workshops, and from each other. As interesting and informative as the day in Columbus is, the ride there and back can be just as rewarding and great fun. Most Leaguers who go carpool and whenever and wherever Leaguers get together you know there will be great conversation. So please **mark you calendar** and make your reservation to attend. If you're looking for a ride or want to drive give the League line a call: 419-475-4371.

PROGRAM FOR ADVOCACY
2006-2007
League of Women Voters of Toledo-Lucas County
Approved at the Annual Meeting May 25, 2006

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 principles of smart growth and citizen participation in land 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 institutions 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.

Under the Radar: LWVO Education Lobbyist Provides Information

Every week **Joan Platz** sends a detailed education update via e-mail to those on her list serve. It tells the status of education related legislation on both state and national levels, reports on the State Board of Education meetings, explains and comments on various studies related to education and also reports on important LWVO activity. In the **February 12 edition** she does some analysis of the February school issues elections, gives us a look at the President's budget proposal focusing on its education impact including the following web sites for more info: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/> for the office of Management and Budget, [\[budget/budget08/summary/index.html\]\(http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget08/summary/index.html\) for budget information from the U.S. Department of Education, and for an analysis of the President's budget go to <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/budget/index.cfm>. She tells of the upcoming State Board of Education meeting agenda where reports are to be made by various oversight committees and reports on recent studies of education reform mentioning the following web site for summaries and evaluations of research on educational programs <http://www.cddre.org/> and finally gives a heads up about an opportunity for schools from the National Endowment for the Arts. To get on Joan's list serve contact her at \[platz@chemistry.ohio-state.edu\]\(mailto:platz@chemistry.ohio-state.edu\).](http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Government

Constitution

Support clear, flexible, organized, and internally consistent Constitution. Support specification that taxation is a General Assembly responsibility and that funding should be flexible. Support independence of judges, with preference for merit selection. Oppose term limits for the General Assembly.

Districing

Support an impartial districing process with opportunity for citizen participation. Support districts that are compact, contiguous, bounded by a non-intersecting line, and follow political boundaries as much as possible.

State Government Finance

Support taxation that is fair and equitable, provides adequate resources for government programs while allowing flexibility for financing future program changes, is understandable to the taxpayer and encourages compliance, and is easy to administer.

Social Policy

Primary and Secondary Education

Support the use of public funds only for public schools. Support an elected State Board of Education whose responsibility is policy making/planning. Support state education standards as a method of attaining a high-quality education. Support state funding for education that guarantees a realistic and equitable level of per-pupil expenditures, and support local school districts assuming a reasonable share of the financial burden.

Higher Education

Support funding by the state to ensure that all Ohio citizens have access to higher education that provides general education and job preparation. Support Board of Regents, appointed by the Governor with confirmation by the Senate, to be a planning, coordinating board with broad policy-making powers.

Juvenile Justice

Support community-based, least restrictive placement; rights and humane treatment of children who are juvenile offenders; alternative educational services; gender-specific treatment programs; unbiased treatment regardless of race or ethnicity; statewide uniform standards for dealing with juvenile records. Oppose holding children in adult jails.

Natural Resources

Water

Support policies and procedures that provide for joint, cooperative planning and administration along watershed

lines and across political boundaries; stringent water quality standards accompanied by strong enforcement and means of implementation; and adequate state financing, including incentives to local governments and industries for expediting water pollution abatement.

Solid Waste

Support the philosophy that solid waste, from generation to ultimate disposal, must be purposefully and systematically controlled by all levels of government in order to provide efficient service, protect the environment, and achieve successful resource recovery. Support measures to forestall depletion of our natural resources and to recover nonrenewable resources.

Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste

Support state policies and programs that emphasize the following hazardous waste management options in order of priority: waste reduction, toxicity reduction, and waste elimination; waste separation and concentration; energy/material recovery; waste exchange; chemical, biological, physical, and thermal treatment; and underground injection and land disposal.

Land Use

Support both urban revitalization and farmland preservation and the curbing of urban sprawl. Support the role of the state in providing authority and incentives for local governments to exercise innovative additional land use planning and regulatory techniques such as land banking, planned unit developments, purchase and transfer of development rights, limited development ordinances, scenic easements, agricultural districts, cluster development, conservation reserves and land trusts, urban enterprise zones, environmental impact assessments, impact fees, tax abatement, and zoning efforts. Support use of eminent domain under certain circumstances.

Interbasin Transfer of Water

Support diversion of water only after study of the ecological, economic, and social implications indicate that diversion would be sustainable and only after the development of a plan to protect the affected areas during all stages of development, operation, termination, and post-termination. Support public participation in the decision-making process. Support participation of all concerned governments in Great Lakes resource decision-making.

Think Green Tips to Keep Our Environment Healthy

Window and glass cleaner is easy with these tips: To avoid streaks, don't wash windows when the sun is shining. Use a vinegar-and-water solution, cornstarch-vinegar-and-water solution, or lemon-juice-and-water. Wipe with newspaper unless you are sensitive to the inks in newsprint. (Source: <http://es.epa.gov/>)



Lake Erie Basin Committee Resolution Consensus Meeting



At Last month's general meeting LWVTLC members heard **Gloria Greene** from **LWV Perrysburg** speak about **Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)** and their effects on the environment. Following a question and answer session and discussion of pros and cons the **Lake Erie Basin Committee Resolution** was **supported** by consensus of the members. The resolution proposed the support of a precautionary moratorium on all new CAFOs that produce untreated animal waste. It specified the improvement of wastewater handling equivalent to the state requirements for municipalities producing the same volume of waste and safe management and disposal practices to maintain adequate ground and surface water quality standards.

In the discussion, Leaguers recognized the economic and practical needs of agriculture in this area and supported the economic stimulation that sometimes occurs in areas where CAFOs locate. The global demand for cheap sources of dairy and meat products is clearly part and parcel of the rise in industrial agriculture. But the volume and concentration of waste created by CAFOs was also recognized as a major threat to the watershed. The ultimate cost of repairing the environment after it has been polluted consistently falls to government supported by taxes. Greene spoke of algae blooms in the lake which have been increasing and are toxic. According to a University of Michigan Study, Maumee River basin communities will spend an estimated \$1.1 billion in an effort to comply with Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO), Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO), and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) requirements in the next 20 years. As a result of unfunded Federal Mandates, water and sewer rate increases will be required of citizens which amounts to about \$1200 per person. Federal funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) has been reduced by nearly 37% since 2004. The USDA subsidizes CAFOs to the tune of thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars a year adding up to hundreds of thousands in many cases and in two Michigan cases over a million dollars over the decade from 1995 to 2005. To see these figures go to <http://www.ewg.org:16080/farm/region.php?fips=39000>. The current USDA funding bill which expires in 2007 will likely come before congress this session. Its 1.6 billion dollar budget has 60% allotted to animal agriculture.



The notion of the small, intrepid midwestern family farmer feeding the world from his fields is a romanticized vision of a past that perhaps never existed but surely does not exist in today's global industrialized food processing system. The solution as proposed by Greene is to treat the large animal operations as what they are, industry and hold them to an industrial standard. According to Greene, these operations could be done in a warehouse.

Correction

The correct email address for Board Member Sharon Friedman is sharon.friedman@bex.net

For more information and background on the Great Lakes and industrial pollution Greene suggests reading *The Great Lakes Water Wars* by Peter Aninn and *The Ecology of Commerce* by Paul Hawkin.



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The League of Women Voters of Toledo-Lucas County is a member of Northwest Ohio Community Shares



How to be Lobbyist

LWVO Lobby Lunches **2nd and 4th Tuesday** of each month **11:30 a.m.** are an opportunity to learn what's current in the legislature from the **LWVO volunteer lobby corps**. Do you see yourself as an Ohio politics wonk, want to become a maven, or just curious and can't get to Statehouse Day? This is the place for you!

Trinity Episcopal Church, 4th floor
125 E. Broad St., Columbus

Call LWVO toll free 877-598-6446 for more information.

The 2007 Directory of Public Officials, They Represent You

is now available on our website, www.lwvtoledo.org.



Printed copies are available at League events/meetings and all branches of the public library. **Pick up your copy at our Program Planning meeting** on February 22 at the Beirut Restaurant.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY
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Visit The League at: www.lwvtoledo.org