



THE VOTER

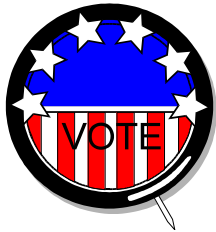
The monthly publication of the Toledo-Lucas County League of Women Voters

September 2008

Voter Services Report

The role of the League of Women Voters as a respected source of unbiased and non-partisan information has never been more important. Our role in this historic and important presidential election has been demonstrated by the requests that come in to the League phone line.

We have had three requests for speakers and even more are anticipated. We are in the planning stage of co-sponsoring a forum, to be held in October, for candidates running for County Commissioner seats and will be announcing details soon. In response to a request, Ann Payne assembled voting information, and along with Rosemary Alloy, distributed it at an event at the Ability Center in June. Nancy Watt of the Ability Center took all of this information including the TRY and is transforming it into Braille publications.



Lucia Cooper, Kim Penn and I participated in an **Election 2008 Education Workshop** offered twice this month. We accepted the invitation to be presenters with The Blade, WGTE and the Toledo Lucas County Library. It was a successful workshop and well attended with approximately 75 local educators attending and an opportunity to learn about the exceptional services offered to teachers. The turnout by local teachers was encouraging and it is interesting that only four of them were men.

One of the key goals that Voter Services focused on last year and again this year has been accomplished! Last year, letters were sent to all of the Lucas County schools encouraging principals, superintendents, etc. to excuse **17-year-old students from school to work for the election**. The Board of Elections reported that about **200 students participated last year** and received praise from other poll workers. This year, Toledo Public Schools will present the project to students in government classes, which we hope will yield an even greater turnout. The student workers will be compensated, just as all poll workers are. **The Voter Services committee will award each participating student with a certificate to acknowledge this important community service.** A change in Ohio law allows these students to participate in working the polls, so the League encourages everyone with a connection to these youths to have them consider working. Seventeen-year-old high school juniors will be precinct locators and 17-year-old high school seniors will qualify as poll workers that assist voters.

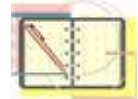
The work of the LWV-TLC members mentioned above is very much appreciated. Lucia is a National League member and has recently become active, Welcome Lucia!

There have been two Voter Service meetings thus far and the next one is scheduled for September 16, 2008 at 7:00 pm at my home. Please attend. I can be reached at 419-474-5030 for questions and/or comments.

- Bonnie Bishop, Voter Service

Save the Date!

2008-2009 Calendar



September 16, 7:00 p.m.

Voter Services Meeting,
2676 Algonquin Pkwy.
(Bonnie Bishop's home)

September 27, 10:30 a.m.

Board Meeting – Cafe Marie
3344 Secor Road

November 6, 6:30 p.m.

Board Meeting, 7632 Shadywood
(Darcy Yates' home)

December 9, 11:30 a.m.

Holiday Luncheon, Carranor Polo Club, 502 E. 2nd St., Perrysburg sponsored by the Perrysburg LWV

January 26, 6:00 p.m.

Board Meeting and Program Planning - location TBA

February 26, 5:30 p.m.

General Meeting
Consensus on LWVO tax position

March 21, 10:30 a.m.

Board Meeting - location TBA

April 23, 6:00 p.m. Signature Event

May 28, 6:00 p.m. Annual Meeting

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

Membership Reminder

It is time to submit your 2008-09 Dues. Deadline to be included in the LWV TLC Membership Directory is September 30.

Please make check payable to LWVTLC. Individual \$55, Household \$80, Student \$30. Mail to LWVTLC, PO Box 2506, Toledo, OH 43606-2506.

Directory Information: Name, Address, Phone #, email address. For questions or more information call Darcy Yates, 419-885-1257.

Many thanks to those who have already sent your checks!

President's Letter



It is summer again and a wonderful time for League members to recoup and recharge. A time to get away from some of the daily activities and think about larger issues, as our board recently did at our annual Joint Board Meeting. We missed **Diane Mieczkowski's** insightful comments as we welcomed back **Uta Schaub** to the Board and new Board member, **EJay Murphy**. During our four-hour working dinner meeting we talked about our successes and challenges over the past year and then worked on (1) a calendar for this coming year and (2) revitalizing committees and establishing a League Observer Corps (more about this later). Our lawsuit with the SOS and Governor is not settled. Although it has been three years this month since it was filed here in Toledo, negotiations are still underway as a Presidential election draws near. We are lucky to have our own League Co-President for the past two years, **Bonnie Bishop**, chair the **Voter Service Committee** this year. Bonnie and **Kim Penn, Lucia Cooper, EJay Murphy, Jane Meyer, and Janet Esch** are all beginning some serious work on upcoming election workshops (see calendar if you'd like to attend or help). The Board felt that this fall will be filled with election activities (or as Bonnie so aptly put it, "we will be going crazy with forums and workshops and speeches") and so we have left the calendar somewhat free of formal meetings and events so that everyone can concentrate their efforts in the voter education area. So, **keep checking the calendar** every month to find out what is happening and give us a call and join in on some of the activities. **Voter Education is such an important mission!**

Darcy Yates is heading up our membership committee and **Meg Murphy** and **Sharon Friedman** are working with her. They are an exciting team! Expect to hear from them.

Ann Payne will be writing *The Voter* and Terry Mills will be putting the copy together and doing our Website as well (both such thankless jobs and both so important). If *The Voter* doesn't come each month, expect to get a postcard from Sharon in lieu of *The Voter* to remind you of events!

As more committees coalesce you'll be hearing more about them. We'd love to have more volunteers - look at the Calendar and see what you might be interested in and give our **new Co-President, Rosemary Alloy**, or me a call. Rosemary is working on activating an **Observer Corps**. I think it has been about 10 years since we were active in this area of the League. Read her article in this *Voter*, think about it, and then dovetail your passion (say education, or environmental or health issues) with League. Thanks Rosemary, and a warm welcome. My thanks also to Bonnie Bishop, my Co-President for the past two years. You have been a joy to work with.

- Peg Smith

Observing Your Government in Action - Protecting Your Right to Know

An Observer Corps is a structured way for individuals to exercise their right to know while providing a valuable service to the community and the League. An observer **attends a government meeting, notes what happens and reports back**. Observers help **promote government transparency and help ensure that citizens are aware** of decisions that impact their lives.

Local League of Women Voters Observer Corps across the country attend and monitor a wide range of offices and agencies, headed by both elected and appointed officials. Some examples are boards of election, parks, water district, solid waste, planning, schools, county commissioners, health, libraries, to name just a few. Thanks to the sunshine laws all government entities must do their business in open meetings so any entity is a possible object of Observer Corps interest.

The Toledo-Lucas County League is interested in starting an Observer Corps and is asking for all of our members to respond to this idea. Do you have a passion about something affecting the community for good or ill that you'd like to know more about? Would you like to be the fly on the wall getting access to the background information? League observers should be good listeners and able to summarize and interpret proceedings in a fair way. There is a simple format and worksheet that most Leagues use for reporting. League observers must be discrete and courteous and not working for a personal or partisan agenda but above all, be interested in local government and issues.

Please contact **Rosemary Alloy** and let her know if you would be interested in attending a meeting to find out more about how a League Observer Corps works. Rosemary's phone is 419-578-0712 or e-mail alloy7@aol.com.

LWVTLC Attended Governor's Education Forums

Governor Ted Strickland invited the League to join with him in attending his **Conversations on Education Forums** being held across the State. Our League was invited to the **Toledo Forum** held at Rogers High School on August 20. As in each of the 12 Forums, Governor Strickland first outlined his six guiding principles on education, received comments on those principles and then asked for ideas from the audience on ways to transform our education in the State. The Governor talked about creating a world-class system of education in Ohio and would like to help Ohio citizens renew and reform their educational system.

The principles he discussed were:

- 1) Strengthen our commitment to public education.
- 2) Make a direct link between education and jobs in Ohio.
- 3) Recognize our current educational strengths when we reform our system.
- 4) Recruit and retain skilled teachers and follow their lead.
- 5) Develop a personalized educational system.
- 6) Test and assess for accountability.



The Governor also discussed some ideas (not proposals) that might be useful in transforming our schools. These were to take a more interdisciplinary approach to education so that we help students make the connections between disciplines and encourage more analytical thinking, give students more hands-on learning experiences so they learn to process information by knowing how to sift through information to find correct solutions, give students more time to learn (either by increasing the school day or school year or both), focus more on developing major skills such as analytical thinking, redefine the path to becoming a teacher, base tenure on results not longevity, give the principals more authority in our schools, and base more learning on student collaboration.



Governor Strickland appears to have started the process of reforming education in the State, and has plans for putting together the ideas generated from the **Forums into an Education Proposal**. Stay tuned for more forums on these issues. You can see and hear the Forums on the Governor's website: www.conversationsoneducation.governor.ohio.gov.

Report on Community Shares - May, 2008

Our League has been a **member of Community Shares** now since 2003 and we received the first of our monies (\$3,919) from the 2003 Workplace campaign that Community Shares conducted that Fall. We have continued to be active participants in Community Shares, serving on the Executive Committee as Secretary of the organization and now as Membership Chair. During that time there have been 21-27 agencies that have participated each year and, while we have not ranked high in total designations, we have remained quite consistent in monies brought into our Education Fund. This year we **added \$3,295 to our Education Fund** from the workplace giving campaigns conducted at the City of Toledo, UT/MCO, and MCO/BGSU retirees, Owens Community College, Springfield, Sylvania and Washington Local Public Schools, and Gallon & TaKacs. Our thanks to all of the men and women from these workplaces who think of us when they consider giving to agencies in the community.

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



Since Community Shares is a **participant organization**, we must contribute volunteer hours and conduct our own agency giving-campaign as well. We support Community Shares in its endeavors in helping us increase our Education Fund. If you know of anyone working in a company in town or on the Board of Directors of a local company, please talk to them about Community Shares so that we can increase our access into the private sector businesses in Lucas County. This enables workers in a workplace to have a greater choice in the agencies that they choose to support and helps a lot of local folk. The agencies that have joined with us are: Beach House, Collingwood Arts Center, ACLU Foundation, Assistance Dogs of America, Campaign for Migrant Worker Justice, Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence, ABLE, Inc., Toledo Area Jobs with Justice Coalition, Gallon, Takacs, Boissoneault & Schaffer Co., Natures Nursery, Old West End Association, Wood County Humane Society, Children's Theater Workshop, Maumee Valley Save-A-Pet, Planned Parenthood, Make A Wish Foundation, Equality Toledo, Mountain Mentors, MLK Kitchen for the Poor and FOCUS.

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

OF TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY

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