



# THE VOTER

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

October/November 2005

## Save the Date!

**Monday, October 17:** Board Meeting

**Thursday, October 20, 7:00 p.m.**  
Toledo Judicial Candidates' Forum  
University of Toledo Law School

**Monday, October 24, 7:00 p.m.**  
Toledo Public School Board Forum  
Crystal Ellis Center  
DeVilbus High School Building

**Tuesday, October 25, 7:00 p.m.**  
Sylvania Public School Board Forum  
Burnham Building Auditorium  
6850 Monroe Street (just west and north  
of the Sylvania Public Library)

**Tuesday, November 8 - Election Day**

**Monday, November 14:** Board Meeting

**Thursday, November 17, 7:00 p.m.**  
General Meeting / Sanger Library  
Speaker: Toby Hoover, Executive Director  
of the Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence

## Thank You!

League members continue to demonstrate their commitment and generosity. We wish to Phyllis Barnes, Peg Smith, Sharon Friedman, Cathy Chamberlain, Darcy Yates, Uta Schaub, Alice Edwards, Nina Sabrack, and Robert Joseph who made contributions to the operating fund and Sherrie Smith, Sharon Friedman, Robert A. Joseph, J. Berning, Louise Bankey Ttee, M. Alice Edwards, Mary Karazim, Sue Nichols, Lori Sue Jacek who made contributions to the Education Fund. We would also like to thank Darcy Yates who contributed her earnings from working at the polls, and The Estate of Helen Hatch estate which has made a contribution as well. The generosity of League members assist in our efforts to make democracy work.

## Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence to Speak at November 17 General Meeting

Our speaker at November General Meeting. is **Toby Hoover**, the Executive Director of the **Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence (OCAGV)**. The organization started as a committee of volunteers whose goal is to increase safety in Ohio in regards to firearms. They educate about gun homicides, suicides, and unintentional deaths and injuries. The Coalition supports and encourages local, state and federal legislation to reduce the accessibility of firearms in our communities and families.

This should be an informative meeting and the public as well as our members are encouraged to attend.

## Update on Voting System Reform Lawsuit

As reported in the August Voter, the League of Women Voters of Ohio and Toledo-Lucas County, along with more than a dozen individual plaintiffs, filed a suit in federal court on July 28. The suit, against the office of the governor and secretary of state was filed in an attempt to force the state to bring about meaningful reform to Ohio's election process.

On August 29, the state filed a motion to dismiss and the next day the League's attorneys had a status conference with Judge James Carr. Both events turned out positive for our side. Judge Carr indeed denied the state's motion to dismiss.

The conference on the 30 went very well. The trail date is next June, which, according to our attorneys, is very favorable. It gives us enough time to prepare and is early enough for there to be at least some reforms in place by the November 2006 elections—assuming, of course, we are successful.

In the meantime, we were asked to assemble documentation that proves we have standing to be a plaintiff. In other words, how have we been hurt and what have we tried to do to solve election problems in Lucas County. Bonnie Bishop had in her possession the largest number of documents so she volunteered to pull everything together and forward it to the attorneys. The documents all pertain to our concern about election irregularities and to problems we have had carrying out our voter service mission. In addition, Ann Payne provided an eloquent statement about our mission.

Bonnie and Ann have agreed to be disposed by the state's attorneys sometime in October.

## Presidents' Letter

- Sue Nichols and Peg Hull Smith

Now that the Fall is upon us and the very hot summer has gone, we both seem to be find that the pace of our lives has increased as has the pace of our League activities. We joined with the Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals in August to host our Mayoral Forum and this collaboration was a tremendous success. Thanks to **Stephanie Kaiser** and **Bonnie Bishop** for all of their stewardship on this forum and the two upcoming Forums in October. We are looking forward to a continued successful collaboration with this young and inspired group.

The recent audit of our financial records for 2004-05 revealed that everything balanced – to the penny! A whopping big thanks to our treasurer for last year, Terry Mills.

We thought you might be interested in some financial highlights of this report. First, **Bonnie Smith** worked tirelessly to raise money so we could produce a printed *Voters Guide* and she was so successful that she raised \$1,800 more than the expenses for the Guide! Overall, Bonnie Smith raised \$6,800 – a really phenomenal amount of money for us. Second, our members contributed \$906 to our operating fund and \$333 to the education fund, as well as contributing to the State League's Phonathon. We should all pat ourselves on the back for this important help to our League. Finally, we have received \$3,831 (after dues and assessments) from Community Shares. We seem to be in the best financial shape that either Sue or I can remember and are anxious to move forward.

There will be no October general meeting because we want to encourage all of you to attend the October 6 City Council at Large candidate forum, the October 20 Judicial candidate forum, October 24 Toledo Public School Board forum and October 25 Sylvania Public School Board forum.

Please call us with your ideas. We want to really involve all of you so that we can become a stronger League.

## Our Members in the Community

Many League members are participating in important and interesting work, including new member **Gabrielle Davis**. A recent article in *The Blade* that stated the University of Toledo College of Law will serve as the clearinghouse for information gathered on domestic violence deaths and Ms. Davis will be involved with the panel that will use the data gathered. The panel is being formed in an effort to reduce death from domestic violence.

I would love to hear from our members that are participating in advocacy efforts through volunteer work or through their careers. I have become increasingly aware that many of our members contribute greatly to the community by sharing their talents with various organizations.

I will close with words from Marian Wright Edelman, "*If you don't like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it one step at a time.*"

- Bonnie

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### The Passing of Barbara Frisbie

It with great sadness that we inform our members that Barbara Frisbie, a lifetime League member, passed away recently. For many years Barbara maintained The League's office in her home and did The League's audits. A member for 50 years, she will be missed by her many friends and for her dedication to The League.

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### Dues Reminder

For members that forgot to pay dues for 2005-2006, this will be your final Voter so please send in your payment so you don't miss out on this great Newsletter!! Seriously, we must have your dues and we know you just forgot and will send in a check soon. Thank you.

Watch for a special membership meeting in the near future.

*Membership,  
Meg Murphy and assistant, Bonnie Bishop*

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### Poll Workers Needed

Members are encouraged members to work at the polls. You can either work a full day, or if they can find a partner who belongs to a different party or who is an independent, you can work a split shift. Call the Board of Elections at 419-213-4001.

Information regarding local issues will be sent to those members with email and mailed to those without email. The information on both the State and Local issues will be made available in the public libraries.

## The LWVO Positions on the November State Ballot Issues

### **Issue 1: Jobs for Ohio Initiative (Third Frontier)**

**Stance:** The League **SUPPORTS** Issue 1.

**Relevant Positions:** LWVO Land Use: LWVO supports...urban revitalization...LWVUS Principle: The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should...promote a sound economy...

**Rationale:** While we have lingering concerns about expanding "public purpose" to include private sector recipients, we are willing to risk it with this proposal to improve the economy. Safeguards are to be put in place by the General Assembly, and we expect to monitor that process. The bulk of the funding (designed to ensure passage) will benefit local governments in building and repairing infrastructure, and we can certainly support clean water, stormwater drainage, and roads and bridges repair. The Third Frontier portion going to private businesses would be less than one percent of the gross state product per year, according to an August 5 On the Money (Levin, Driscoll, & Fleeter) report.

### **Issue 2: Early Voting**

**Stance:** The League **SUPPORTS** Issue 2.

**Relevant Position:** LWVUS Voting Rights: Voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed.

**Rationale:** LWVO has included no-excuse early voting in person in its 10-point agenda for election reform, and although this amendment includes both in-person and mail-in voting, we recommend support to expand opportunity for all citizens and to take away any excuses for not voting. Early voting would alleviate some of the problems, such as long lines and fatigue, that disenfranchised numerous voters in the 2004 election.

### **Issue 3: Limiting Political Contributions and Reforming Campaign Finance**

**Stance:** The League is **NEUTRAL** on Issue 3.

**Relevant Positions:** Government: Ohio Constitution, General Criteria. LWVO believes a constitution should be a clearly stated body of fundamental principles. LWVUS Position on Campaign Finance: ...methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably ... and allow maximum citizen participation.

**Rationale:** The League finds that the two positions above—the Ohio Constitution as a clearly stated body of fundamental principles and LWVUS goals for campaign finance reform—stand in conflict with one another as applied to this amendment. As much as we would like to see the proposed dollar limits in effect, they are too specific to be inserted in the Constitution. Even though the amendment seeks to redress the negative impact of campaign finance law that took effect earlier this year, the detailed nature of its content is more appropriately a legislative matter. As such, the League will remain neutral on Issue 3 and use it as an opportunity to educate the public about citizen participation in the legislative process and the purpose of our Constitution.

### **Issue 4: Independent Redistricting Process**

**Stance:** The League **SUPPORTS** Issue 4.

**Relevant Position:** Government, Apportionment/Districting. LWVO supports an impartial districting process that may include, but is not limited to:

1. Districting...based substantially on population equality with a variance of nor more than plus or minus 5 percent among districts;
2. Use of a bipartisan commission comprised of an odd number of members to determine ... district lines;
3. Congressional and state districts that are compact, contiguous, bounded by a non-intersecting line and follow local political boundaries as much as possible.
4. Opportunity for citizen participation.

**LWVUS position:** Congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population.

**Rationale:** This proposal, while it adds the criterion of competitiveness, meets other criteria included in our position. It establishes a bipartisan commission (although the qualifications and process are complex); it includes citizen participation (a plan may be submitted by anyone and will be subject to public review); and it includes the plus or minus five percent criterion for population of state House of Representatives districts. Because the major goal is to ensure competitive elections, the criteria of compactness and contiguous territory are secondary, but they are included. The winning plan would create the fewest county, municipal, or township fragments while establishing competitive districts. While LWVO does not have a position on competitiveness as such, the League supports Issue 4 because the proposal meets other key provisions. The upside is that the citizens of Ohio would benefit from more competitive elections; the downside is that the actual districts may not look less gerrymandered.

### **Issue 5: Independent Election Administration**

**Stance:** The League **OPPOSES** Issue 5.

**Relevant Position:** Ohio Constitution, General Criteria:...It should...be logically organized and internally consistent.

**Rationale:** The diffused accountability in this proposal is not the improvement we would like to see in the administration of elections, because of the large size of the independent board and the lack of clear authority on the part of the executive director. The proposal would place an inherent contradiction in the Constitution between the powers of the independent board and the secretary of state.



## The Voter

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PO Box 2506, Toledo, OH 43606

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### *Welcome New Members!*

Welcome our new members, **Gabrielle Davis**, **E. Jay Murphy**, **Rosemary Alloy**, **Martha Pituch**, **Nancy Watts** and **Jill Kelly**.

We are excited to report that we have some returning members as well. **Laura Berling** has rejoined the League and we are so happy to have her back. She moved and is a busy mom as well as working full time. Many of you will remember that she co-chaired Voter Services a few years ago. **Jodi Bartelt** also rejoined and is now Jodi Walker. Ms. Walker is a previous Board member. **Robert Joseph** and his wife, **Doris Miller**, also rejoined. We welcome them back.

It is so exciting to have new members! But, as always, we deeply appreciate the work of our members that have stayed with us over the years.

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



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY**  
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Visit The League at:  
[www.lwvtoledo.org](http://www.lwvtoledo.org)