

The Akron Voter

Volume 5, Issue 4

October 2012



President's Remarks by Tina Merlitti

VOTE EARLY! I know you have heard this before but this year more than any other it could save you much time and many headaches. We have never before seen so many changes in voting districts, precincts, and polling locations all at one time—and during a presidential election that will no doubt have a very large turnout. This promises big headaches to come!

Your congressional districts and county council districts have changed. You may not see the names on the ballot that you have voted for in past elections, and you may see names you haven't seen before.

Your precinct has likely changed. The number of precincts have been reduced so

there will be more people going to fewer tables of workers. The polling locations have changed in many cases. There are fewer locations with more people. Some locations have as many as 5,000 register voters assigned to them.

Even if you haven't done so in the past, please consider voting by mail. Voting in the comfort of your own home allows you the time to use our Voters Guide, do your own research or phone a friend when you have questions about your ballot.

An absentee ballot request form can be obtained by calling the Board of Elections at 330-643-8626 or you can download a form at www.summitcountyboe.com. If you do vote by mail, your ballot must be postmarked by Election

Day, November 6th.

Early Voting in person can be done at the Board of Elections starting October 2nd. The Board of Elections is located at 470 Grant Street in Akron. Parking at the Board of Elections is limited, but you may park at the McDonald's headquarters at 801 Wolf Ledges Parkway.

Our League of Women Voters Voters' Guide is available on line at www.lwvaa.org or at your local library, Acme store or various other locations. We take great pride in providing this non-partisan information to you to help you be more informed about the issues and candidates so you can vote the entire ballot. I encourage you to use this guide as you vote this year.

You can use our guide to vote

from home or bring it to the polls with you if you vote early or on Election Day so that you can refer to it during voting.

In addition, you can attend our judicial candidates' night on Thursday, October 23. It always seems like the judicial races are the most difficult to get information about, so this is your chance!

Candidates for Summit County Common Pleas, Probate Court, and 9th District Court of Appeals will be in attendance at a forum at the Jewish Community Center, 750 White Pond Drive, Akron at 7:00 PM on Thursday, October 23. Make plans to attend!

Tina

Inside This Issue

Board Briefs	2
Did You Know?	2
Membership Contest	3
LWVO positions on State Issues 1 and 2	3
Notable Quotable	3
Welcome new members!	4
Volunteers for Observer Corps Needed!	4
Voter Information Websites	5
First Woman to Run For President of the U.S.	5

Action and Advocacy: Support State Issue 2!

Take Action! Support State Issue 2, Voters First!

This state constitutional amendment will create a non-partisan redistricting commission to draw congressional districts for Federal offices in the state of Ohio. It sets forth standards for the commission to follow, including competitiveness, compactness, keeping communities

together, reflecting how Ohioans have actually voted, and protecting minority representation in accordance with the law.

Help support Issue 2 for the November election!

- Encourage groups to endorse the plan!
- Email lwvaa@lwvaa.org to get on our speakers list!
- Commit your time, money,

and influence to supporting the campaign!

- Follow our effort at www.drawthelino.org and on our Facebook page!

And as always, Thank You for all you do to support the League and to help

Make Democracy Work!



Board Briefs

by Martha Lester, Secretary

Meetings are usually held the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm at Christ United Methodist Church on Mineola Ave. in Akron and are open to the public. The next board meeting will be Wednesday, October 3, 2012.

At the September 6 meeting the Board heard the following reports:

Summit County Board of Elections:

- President Tina Merlitti said Leagues in Summit County are observing meetings and encouraging the board to resolve disputes re early voting
- LWVOhio has met with Secretary of State's Office re Summit County BOE
- Early voting will be held at the Board of Elections, with overflow parking at the McDonald's headquarters next door.

Voter Registration:

- Mary King and her assistants have had a Voter's Registration table at Lock 3 Summer concerts and other events.
- We have had requests from several community social agencies to educate and register the people they serve.

Voter Service:

- Questions were sent to local candidates for the Voter's Guide and responses are coming in.
- We will be hosting several Candidates' forums including one for judicial candidates on October 23.
- Issues on the ballots may be confusing and will require clear and explicit explanation.
- Precincts have changed.
- We need to remain vigilant about voter access and disenfranchisement

LWVAA Board and Committees:

- Jill Cabe has agreed to fill the vacancy for Vice President Organization
- Maureen Sullivan will chair the Telephoning Committee and the Speakers' Bureau
- Jessie Malkin will be our New Media Chair in charge of Facebook and Twitter

On the calendar:

- October 3 Board meeting at NW Branch Library, 1720 Shatto Ave.
- October 3: "State of Political Discourse" at NW Branch Library, 6:30 PM
- November 6: Election Day



Did You Know — Sojourner Truth

by Maureen Sullivan

Sojourner Truth (1797? – 1883) was an abolitionist, women's rights activist and former slave. She is perhaps best remembered for her "Ain't I a Woman?" speech which she gave right here in Akron, Ohio in 1851.

Sojourner Truth was not born a slave in the South. She was born a slave in Ulster County, New York. She was later freed and spent much of her life working as a live-in household worker.

She was a religious person and believed that the Holy Spirit told her to change her name from Isabella to Sojourner Truth (Sojourner means "Itinerant Preacher"). She traveled to Brooklyn, Long Island and joined a commune in Northampton, Mass. It was during these journeys that

she became an abolitionist and women's rights activist.

Her parents were perpetually depressed. They were also enslaved and had lost about 12 children to the slave trade. In Sojourner Truth's narrative she tells us that her parents would sit around the fire and tell her about her siblings who had been sold away. Her mother would look up at the stars and say, "See those stars? Those stars are shining on your brothers and sisters. We don't know where they are, but we're all under the same heaven."

After the Civil War Sojourner Truth worked in Washington D.C. with the freed people and refugees. Because there was little work in the East, she encouraged people to head West and was de-

lighted with the exodus to Kansas in 1879.

She met with three different presidents and there was a picture painted of her meeting with Abraham Lincoln.



Sojourner Truth was ill for the last three years of her life. She died in Battle Creek in 1883 and is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery.

For further reading see, "Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol" by Nell Irvine Painter.

More information about the League of Women Voters or LWVAA, plus updated information on meetings and events can be found at: www.lwvaa.org or

follow us on
twitter

Find us on
Facebook

Membership Contest!

by Ardith Keck

We need blood! New blood, that is. The Membership Committee of our League is sponsoring a contest to see who can come up with the most new members. Here are the rules:

Who? Any new member or former member whose membership has lapsed for three years

Why? We love our members but the same people get tired of doing the same things and need some help.

Who? Of course, we love active members who love to get involved, but we want those members who just want to join to support us, too.

How? Just **ask** everyone you know. All your relatives and friends and neighbors. You never know until you **ask**.

When? The contest runs from early summer until Election Day.

Where? We have prizes for a League member who gathers the most new mem-

bers. So, you and your friend could be having dinner at one of Akron's best restaurants on us. And there's more, in case of a tie. Pretty exciting!

Who? The Treasurer, Sharley Greer, or any member of the Membership Committee- Katie Fry, Sara Gibbs, Erica Greer or Ardith Keck must have your information by Election Day.

So, get started and just **ASK!**



LWV Ohio's Stance on State Issues 1 & 2

In taking a stance on questions pursuant to the Ohio Constitution and proposed constitutional amendments, the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) considers the public policy positions which the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) and LWVO have adopted after careful study and member consensus.

Issue 1: Question Presented Pursuant to Article XVI, Section 3 of The Constitution of The State of Ohio: Should there be a convention to revise, alter, or amend the Ohio Constitution: NEUTRAL.

Under the Ohio Constitution, every 20 years voters are asked: "Shall there be a convention to revise, alter, or amend the constitution?" If voters decide in favor of the constitutional convention, the General Assembly will make provisions concern-

ing electing delegates for a convention to revise, amend or change the Ohio Constitution.

Stance: LWVO's position on the Ohio Constitution (adopted 1968) calls for a clearly stated body of fundamental principles that should provide for the flexible operation of government and be logically organized and internally consistent; the relevant LWVUS position calls for the right of citizen participation, Given compelling rationales both for and against holding a constitutional convention at this time, LWVO takes a neutral stance on Issue 1.

Issue 2: Proposed Constitutional Amendment to Create a State-Funded Commission to Draw Legislative And Congressional Districts: SUPPORT.

This constitutional amendment proposed by initiative petition seeks to change the

way legislative and congressional districts are drawn in Ohio. It would require the creation of an independent citizens commission with the responsibility to draw district lines in proceedings open to the public. The commission's decisions regarding district lines would be required to be based on objective, good-government criteria. If Issue 2 is approved, new districts would be drawn for the 2014 election, and following every census thereafter.

Stance: LWVO's position on redistricting (adopted 1980) calls for an impartial districting process with opportunity for citizen participation. Accordingly, LWVO supports Issue 2.

Go to www.lwvohio.org to access the League of Women Voters of Ohio Education Fund's Ballot Issue Explanations for the 2012 General Election.

Notable Quotable

"Democracy is the only system that persists in asking the powers that be whether they are the powers that *ought* to be."

Sydney J. Harris (1917-1986) American Journalist



Welcome New Members!

LWVAA wishes a warm League welcome to the following new members:

Karen Barta

Sarah Hegnauer

Carolyn Durway

Chaeli Moyer



Observer Corps Volunteers Needed!



If you have been following the partisan shenanigans going on at the Summit County Board of Elections this fall, you know how important it is to keep an eye on our local government. That is why the League of Women Voters Observer Corps is such an important part of what we do.

We know from experience that elected officials take notice when a League member shows up to watch the proceedings. Sometimes the meetings are confusing and a lot of the business gets done in committee. Don't let that deter you.

There are 3 things to remember if you decide to attend public meetings as a member of the Observer Corps:

1. Wear a League button identifying you as a League member. (ask me to get you one if you don't own one)
2. Do not offer comments of any sort since you are representing the League
3. If you are so inclined, submit a BRIEF synopsis, preferably by email, to me (jmgd3@neo.rr.com) of proceedings but this is secondary to attending the public meeting. This is NOT required.

From time to time there are special community meetings like the recent Cuyahoga Valley National Park Planning meetings. Feel free to jump in at anytime

and drop me a line if you participated as an Observer. I will forward your communications to our Newsletter Maven, Erica Greer. She will also pass it along to the Webmeister, Bruce Greer. Together, they are known as the Great Communicators.

Here are the meeting schedules:

Summit County Council

Regular Council meetings are the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month. A 5:00 p.m. caucus precedes Council Meetings.

Committee meetings are the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month .

All meetings are held in the Council Chambers, The Ohio Building, 175 South Main Street, Akron, Ohio.

In addition, the Council is regularly scheduled to meet the third Saturday of each month at 8:00 a.m. at the Akron Family Restaurant. The council discusses pending legislation, short and long term goals, general matters of interest and concern, and constituent issues.

For further information, please contact the Summit County Council at 330.643.2725.

MetroParks Serving Summit County

Upcoming Meetings:
Tuesday, September 18, Noon

Wednesday, October 17, Noon

Commissioners meet at the administrative offices in Sand Run Metro Park. For more information, please call the administrative offices at 330-867-5511, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Akron City Council

Meetings are every Monday night at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers. Committee meetings begin at 2:00. in the afternoon. Much of the work is actually done in the committee meetings.

166 S. High St., 3rd Floor, Akron, Ohio

Akron Public Schools

Meetings are the 2nd & 4th Monday of the month, 5 p.m. Administration Building, 70 N. Broadway, Akron, Ohio. Telephone:330.761.1661

Summit County Board of Elections

470 Grant Street Akron, Ohio 44311 . (330) 643-5200

Meetings begin at 9:00 AM and are scheduled for October 9 and 23 and November 5, 20, and 27. (330-643-5200)

I look forward to hearing from you and for the League of Women Voters being the watch dog of Summit County Government. Please email your meeting preferences to jmgd3@neo.rr.com.

The deadline for the November Akron Voter is October 15. Please send any materials you may have to Akron Voter Editor Erica Greer at erica@greerzone.com, or via mail to 408 Ott Dr. Clinton, OH 44216

Voter Information Websites

by Webmaster Bruce Greer

One of LWVAA's primary functions is to provide voters with timely information to help them make informed and intelligent decisions when they cast their ballots. Our Voters Guides have become a trusted source of unbiased information on candidates and issues.

Our goal is to provide non-partisan assessments of the pros and cons of vari-

ous issues facing voters and to allow candidates to articulate their views in their own words.

LWVAA believes that accurate facts offer the best chance of selecting the best candidate or issue. As a result LWVAA has compiled a list of links on our website which offer non-partisan fact-based information which we hope will be help-

ful in providing more in depth data for voters.

Some of those websites are shown below. You can access these links and more on our website www.lwvaa.org/voter_info.htm, as well as an expanded version of LWVAA Ed Fund Voters' Guide and links to the LWVO voters' guide.



National & State non-partisan election information from LWV US Ed Fund



Official site for the Summit County Board of Elections



Non-partisan information on Ohio Issues from LWV Ohio Ed Fund



Nonpartisan coalition formed to ensure that all voters have an equal opportunity to participate in the political process.



Non-partisan, nonprofit "consumer advocate" for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics.



Non-partisan, nonprofit organization revealing the influence of campaign money on state-level elections and public policy in all 50 states



Non-partisan nonprofit guide to money's influence on U.S. elections and public policy.



PolitiFact, a project of the *St. Petersburg Times*, examines political statements and rates their accuracy

Victoria Woodhull, First Woman Candidate for U. S. President

Although one of the most famous women of her day, few people today remember the first woman candidate for President of the United States, Victoria Woodhull. She and her running mate, Frederick Douglass, the first black candidate for Vice President, were nominated by the Equal Rights Party in 1872.

Victoria Woodhull was a leader in the women's suffrage movement, and a long-time activist for women's rights and labor reform. Many years ahead of her time, she advocated for an eight-hour day, a graduated income tax, profit sharing, and social welfare programs, besides advocating for women's political and social equality.

She was also an advocate for free love, by which she meant the freedom to marry, divorce, and bear children without government interference. In her day,

women were often trapped in loveless or abusive marriages without options. A divorce was difficult to come by and of such a scandalous nature that a divorced woman was stigmatized and socially ostracized.

With her sister, Tennie Claflin, Victoria Woodhull founded the first American brokerage firm operated by women. She and her sister also published a weekly newspaper, where she was able to express her radical views on topics ranging from sex education and free love to legalizing and licensing prostitution to vegetarianism.

It was her article about the revered minister, Henry Ward Beecher, however, which got her into the most trouble.

Henry Ward Beecher, the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle*

Tom's Cabin, had preached against her ideas on free love, but at the same time was conducting an affair with a married woman. She publicized the affair in her newspaper to illustrate the sexual hypocrisy and double standards of the day.



She was arrested and jailed on Election Day, 1872, for "publishing an obscene newspaper" because of her article about Beecher.

In the end, her candidacy yielded no electoral votes, and the popular votes cast for her were not counted because her candidacy was viewed as illegitimate because she was a woman.



ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID
AKRON, OHIO
PERMIT NO. 445

380 Mineola
Akron, OH
44320-1399

President: Tina Merlitti (330) 724-2520

Membership: Ardith Keck (330) 836-1974

Editor: Erica Greer (330) 882-3106 or
newsletter@lwvaa.org

IMPORTANT DATES

- October 2:** Early voting begins
- October 3:** LWVAA Board Meeting, 5:00 PM
NW Branch Library
1720 Shatto Avenue, Akron
- October 3:** The State of Political Discourse Today
NW Branch Library, 1720 Shatto 6:30 PM
Special guest Stephanie Warsmith of ABJ
- October 9:** Deadline to register to vote
- October 23:** Judicial Candidates' Forum 7:00 PM
Shaw Jewish Community Center
750 White Pond Drive, Akron
- November 6:** Election Day



**Join the nation's most respected grassroots political organization —
Become a member of the League of Women Voters!**

Membership in the League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, is open to any citizen of voting age, male or female. Annual dues of \$60 include local, state and national membership, including newsletters from each. Dues are \$30 for those under 30 years of age. Household membership (same address) is \$30 for each additional member.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____



**Vote for civility in
civic discourse —**

**Make checks payable to LWVAA and send with this completed form to:
LWVAA, 380 Mineola Ave., Akron, OH 44320
or join online on our website: www.lwvaa.org**

**Join the League
Today!**

**Help Support our Summit County Sister Leagues —
Attend one of these upcoming events!**

LWV Tallmadge will hold a **Voter Awareness Night**

**Thursday, October 18
7:00 to 9:00 PM
Tallmadge High School Auditorium**

The film **“Patriocracy,”** which looks at the extreme polarization in America, will be shown.

Special guest **Dr. Steve Brooks** of the Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron will lead a discussion of **“The Civility Project,”** which explores civility in Ohio politics.



LWV Hudson meeting in support of the proposed
State Issue 2 “Voters First” Redistricting Amendment

**Thursday, October 18
7:00 PM
Hudson Library and Historical Society
96 Library Street, Hudson**

Come and learn more about the importance of redistricting, and how the amendment proposed in State Issue 2 will benefit **You** as an Ohio Voter.



LWV Hudson Candidates’ Forum

**Wednesday, October 24
7:00 PM
Laurel Lake Community Room
200 Laurel Lake Drive (off Boston Mills Road), Hudson**

You can post questions ahead of the forum on the LWV Hudson website:
www.lwvhudsonohio.org