

The Akron Voter

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November 2012



President's Remarks by Tina Merlitti

Is your ballot still sitting on the dining room table? Get your \$1.30 in stamps or drop it off at the Board of Elections 470 Grant St., Akron ASAP. There are still a large number of ballots that have been mailed out to voters but not returned to the Board of Elections. I know it took me quite a bit of time to get around to filling mine out and turning it in. You still have time as long as your ballot is postmarked by November 6th, Election Day.

Shhh! I will tell you a secret: the sooner you vote, the sooner the phone calls and mailings will stop. Campaigns don't want to spend money they don't have to. Many of the campaigns track who has already voted so they don't waste time and money contact-

ing you.

Our League has made a big grassroots effort to encourage early voting this year due to all of the changes in Summit County districts, precincts and polling locations. Our members work year round to provide nonpartisan information but no time is as critical as election time.

This has been a very busy election season and our members have worked very hard to encourage new voters, educate current voters and work with changes in our current voting districts, precincts and polls.

I want to thank all the people who helped make our efforts to educate and encourage voting possible. Many people spent their summer nights registering voters at various locations

throughout Summit County. We put out good information in our Voter newsletter, on Facebook and Twitter. We sent members out to speak to various groups about voting and the issues on this year's ballot. We produced and distributed thousands of Voters' Guides and provided our web based Voters Guide to help voters educate themselves about the issues and candidates in Summit County.

We have held forums on voting, talking about the impact of negative campaigns and introducing judicial candidates to area voters. We worked with local media, government officials and businesses to get information to the public. We have partnered with League of Women Voters in Hudson and Tallmadge to observe the Board of Elec-

tions, provide information on Issue 2, voting, and the countywide candidates. On Election Day our three Leagues will have poll observers at several locations to watch that voting goes smoothly. Now it is in the hands of the voters.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR (see flyer for details)

November 29th, please join us for a postelection wrap up meeting in partnership with the Akron Press Club and the Bliss Institute. We will hear from the fact checkers themselves.

December 1st, bring a friend and join our members to celebrate a job well done and a new year of great programming.

Tina

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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.drawthelinohio.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 held the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm at Christ United Methodist Church, 380 Mineola Ave. in Akron and are open to the public. The next board meeting will be Thursday, November 1, 2012.

At the October 3rd meeting the Board heard the following reports:

- President: Tina Merlitti discussed the need for poll observers, and whether or not we should man the office on Election Day.
- Membership: Chair Ardith Keck distributed the Member Profiles people had returned, with their volunteer choices indicated.
- The board discussed the need to re-

mind remaining members who have not yet paid their dues and how best to do that.

- Voter Service: Gerry Hall and Sara Gibbs talked about the Voters' Guide, and how and where it would be distributed; they also brought a sample copy for us to review.
- Program: VP Karyn Katz requested permission to proceed with booking locations for the scheduled meetings. The LWVAA board discussed the slate of meetings, and where we might add additional meetings over the course of the year.
- Publicity: Chair Sara Gibbs reported that the Voters' Guide is one of LWVAA's best publicity venues. Peo-

ple frequently request Guides, and relate how much they rely on them.

On the Calendar:

- November 1: Board Meeting
- November 6: Election Day
- November 29: Luncheon at the Martin Center in conjunction with Akron Press Club and Bliss Institute
- December 1: Holiday Party at the Keck's



Did You Know — Rachel Carson

by Maureen Sullivan

In the 50 years since marine biologist Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was published, the Environmental Protection Agency was born and the United States has tightened the use and regulation of toxic chemicals.

Rachel Carson was born on May 27, 1907 in Springdale, PA. She grew up on a farm which enabled her to learn first hand about nature and wildlife. Even though people tried to discourage her from becoming a scientist because she was a woman, Rachel went on to get a degree from Pennsylvania College for Women and furthered her studies at Johns Hopkins University.

Her first two books, *Under the Sea Wind* and *The Sea Around Us* were

immediate best sellers and freed her from financial worry.

During the 1950's, Carson conducted research into the effects of pesticides on the food chain. Her findings were published in her very influential book *Silent Spring*.

The serialization of the book in *The New Yorker* brought the book to the attention of the chemical industry as well as the American public. Other publicity included a positive editorial in the New York Times and serialization in *Audubon Magazine*.

DuPont (a main manufacturer of DDT) threatened legal action against the magazines unless they canceled the planned publication features.

In one of her last public appearances, Rachel Carson testified before President Kennedy's Science Advisory Committee. The committee issued its report on May 15, 1963, largely backing Carson's scientific claims.



Rachel Carson
1907-1964

Environmental historian Thomas Dunlap said of Rachel Carson, "She was the catalyst for the modern environmental movement, and in that sense we are all children of Carson."

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 mem-

bers 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 members. 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!**



Say "Enough" — Vote Yes on State Issue 2

LWVO Press Release

Three Generations of LWVO Presidents urge: Don't believe the false promises. If Voters want reform, we must vote YES on Issue 2!

The League of Women Voters of Ohio unveiled a timeline of "Ohio Redistricting Reform History," documenting 40 years of attempts to reform the way we draw congressional and legislative districts. Current LWVO co-presidents Nancy Brown and Meg Flack were joined by past presidents Anne Smead (1999-2001) and Joan Lawrence (1975-77). The timeline revealed a disturbing pattern of false promises of reform, with parallels to the current campaign in opposing Issue 2.

"Everyone agrees that our current system of drawing district lines is broken," said Nancy Brown, current co-president of LWVO. "What many voters don't realize is how long politicians have been stalling and blocking our attempts at reform."

The timeline shows that Ohioans have endured partisan gerrymandering every ten

years, at the hands of whichever political party was in control at the time. The party in control manipulates district lines to its own benefit, drawing districts so heavily stacked in favor of one party or the other that voters have no hope of holding them accountable by voting them out.

"Your vote should mean something. You should be able to vote in or vote out the candidate of your choice. But you don't have that option when the districts are drawn to take away that choice," said LWVO past president and former state legislator Joan Lawrence, who began leading efforts in the 1980s to enact redistricting reform. "Back then, Republicans supported reform. Democrats—the party then in charge of drawing the districts—opposed it, and we lost," said Lawrence.

"For almost 40 years, every time the League has advocated redistricting reform, the political party in control has opposed our efforts and promised they would fix it later, only "later" has never happened" add-

ed Anne Smead. In 1999, LWVO once again campaigned to place redistricting reform on the ballot in order to reform the 2001-2002 redistricting process. Smead recalled that members of the then-majority Republican Party offered to place a reform measure on the ballot which would take effect in 2011 rather than 2001. The League was unable to collect enough signatures to place the issue on the ballot in 1999, and the Republicans never followed through.

"It's the same rhetoric today," LWVO Co-president Meg Flack added. "Opponents of Issue 2 say, 'Trust us; if you vote down this ballot issue, we'll pass reform later.' Ohio voters have heard this hollow promise before."

"The politicians have had their chance - many chances, in fact - and continually vote in their own self-interest rather than in the interest of voters. It's time for voters to say 'enough' and make reform a reality by voting Yes on Issue 2," concluded Joan Lawrence.

Notable Quotable

“Democracy is not just the right to vote, it is the right to live in dignity.”

Naomi Klein, Canadian journalist, author, and activist



LWVAA Ed Fund Hosts Judicial Candidates' Forum

On Tuesday, October 23, LWVAA hosted a judicial forum for candidates from the Summit County Municipal Court, Summit County Probate Court, and the Ninth District Court of Appeals. Co-hosting the event were the Shaw Jewish Community Center, the Summit County Association for Justice, and Patch.com.

Many thanks to the Shaw Jewish Community Center for the use of this beautiful facility!



Candidates for Probate Court and 9th District Court of Appeals
Elinore Stormer, Alison McCarty, Jennifer Hansel, & Clair Dickenson



Candidates for Summit County Municipal Court (left to right)
Kathryn Michael, Tammy O'Brien, Paul Gallagher, Dave Lombardi, Amy Corrigan Jones, Eddie Sipplon, Tom Teodosio

LWVAA moderator Ardith Keck with David Koch, CEO of the Jewish Community Board of Akron (right)



Interesting Reads for Fun or Pleasure — or Gifts! by Jodie DeLamatre

The American Way of Eating by Tracie McMillan

Blood, Bones, and Butter: The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef by Gabrielle Hamilton

Confederates in the Attic by Tony Horowitz

Corporations are not People by Jeffrey D. Clements

Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine and the Murder of a President by Candace Millard

Immortal Life of Henrietta Lax by Rebecca Skloot

In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin by Erik Larson

The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism by Andrew Bacevich

The Swerve: How the World Became Modern by Stephen Greenblatt

To End All Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914-1918 by Adam Hochschild

Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand

Under the Banner of Heaven by Jon Krakow

The deadline for the December-January *Akron Voter* is December 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



Member Spotlight on..... Jill Cabe

When did you join the League?

I first joined several years ago because I wanted to be more involved in the community. Life got in the way and I let my membership lapse. However the current political situation has motivated me to re-join.

Why did you join LWVA? And why have you stayed in League?

My grandma had been a league member and I joined after she died. And now I'm back.

What positions, if any, have you held within the League?

I was the newsletter editor, which was great fun. I had never done a bulk mailing before. I am happy to help out if I can, but I won't call anyone on the telephone! It drives me crazy to get those calls at home at 6:00 pm on a Wednesday night. I am currently filling out the remainder of the term for Vice President Organization.

What do you find most rewarding about being a League member?

I really admire the League platform. The non-partisanship, the positions on the issues, and Voter Guide are fantastic additions to our community.

What do you think is the biggest issue voters face?

Right now I suspect many voters are confused. Polling places have changed, ID requirements are different, provisional ballots, and stories on the news all combine to make voting more difficult. The negativity is annoying, but it is also deeply rooted in American politics.

Are you involved in any other community organizations?

I am on the board of the West Hill Neighborhood Organization. We are working to improve the neighborhood and the quality of life in the West Hill area. I am

at a point in my life where it is time to get involved and give back.



(Jill did not submit a photo for this article)

What interests do you have outside of the League?

I love to read and grow weeds in my garden. I love the public library in Akron – it is a tremendous resource. I live near the towpath (I just have to walk to the bottom of Maple Street – walking down there is great and climbing back up is its own work out) and often go to the MetroParks. I am an unabashed cheerleader for Akron, Cleveland, and NE Ohio in general. I am lucky to work for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and it is an amazing time to work in public education.

Meeting on “The State of Political Discourse Today” by Erica Greer

On October 3, Akron Beacon Journal political reporter Stephanie Warsmith spoke about the state of political discourse in our society today. As she pointed out, it is no secret to anyone following the election campaigns that we have reached a very low point, but it is also true that American political discourse has often been full of vitriol, half truths, and outright lies.

Given the current state of affairs, the Akron Beacon Journal has partnered with the Bliss Institute at the University of Akron, Round River Consulting, Mount Union, and various other Ohio entities to start the Ohio Civility Project. The purpose is to have citizens evaluate political advertisements, and to rate them in terms of the civility—or lack thereof—displayed.

Ms. Warsmith gave attendees at the meeting some sample ads, along with the rating score sheets, and they got to do their own civility ratings.

A lively discussion followed, not only about the civility of political discourse, but also about the tone, the veracity, and the sheer amount of advertising. All of these contribute to a serious threat to our democracy.



Special guest Stephanie Warsmith



Participants consider their civility ratings



The unfortunate truth of the matter...



League of Women Voters®
of the Akron Area

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Akron OH 44320

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IMPORTANT DATES

November 1: LWVAA Board Meeting 5:30 PM
CUMC 380 Mineola Ave, Akron

November 6: Election Day

November 12: Elizabeth Cady Stanton born, 1815

November 22: Thanksgiving

November 29: Akron Press Club Luncheon
11:30 AM Martin Center at U of Akron
The Role of PolitiFact in the Elections

December 1: LWVAA Holidays party at the Keck's
754 Delaware Ave, Akron

December 6: LWVAA Board Meeting 5:30 PM
CUMC 380 Mineola Ave., Akron



**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!**

SAVE THE DATE — LWVAA HOLIDAYS PARTY!

Mark your calendars for
Saturday, December 1, 2012
for the annual **LWVAA Holidays Party**.
You won't want to miss the chance to relax and enjoy
the company and lively conversation of your fellow
League members to kick off the Holidays season!
Make plans to bring a guest as well!

As always, please bring an hors d'oeuvres or dessert
to share. League gatherings are noted for their
attention to really good food!

**Look for your invitation with further details
arriving in mid-November!**



Have you renewed your membership?



In case it has slipped your mind in these busy times, please take a moment right now to renew your membership in LWVAA.

Dues are \$60 per year (just \$5 per month for individuals)
\$30 per additional member in the same household
\$30 for members under 30 years of age.

You can pay by check, made payable to LWVAA and sent to
Sharley Greer's attention at:

LWVAA
380 Mineola Ave.
Akron, OH 44320

OR, you can renew online on the League website. Just go to
www.lwvaa.org and click on JOIN on the homepage.

Whichever method you choose, don't put it off —

RENEW TODAY!