

December Voter 2014

[Campaign Preview](#)

[HTML Source](#)

[Plain-Text Email](#)

[Details](#)

LWVAA December, 2014

[View this email in your browser](#)



LWVAA Upcoming Events

December 2
All Member Call
866.740.1260
PIN# 4691505
12:00 - 1:00

December 4
LWVAA Board Meeting
380 Mineola
6:00 - 7:30

December 6

President's Message

As most of you know, the League is working to change the way judges are elected in Ohio. Our LWVAA president, Nancy Brown, recently wrote an [editorial in the Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) supporting an appointment-retention process for judges for Ohio. This past week the *Akron Beacon Journal* also [published an editorial](#) supporting judicial election reform.

Ohio Supreme Court [Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor](#) wrote an [editorial recently in the Akron Beacon Journal](#) that called for the appointment-retention system for the judiciary. Chief Justice O'Connor has published a three-point plan that includes the depressing observation that "[one quarter of the people who go to the polls on Election Day do not bother to vote for the judges.](#)" Finally, League member and retired Summit County Common Pleas Judge Jane Bond also [argues for altering the judicial selection process](#)

Holiday Brunch
Portage Country Club
11:00 - 1:00

January 8
LWVAA Board
Meeting
380 Mineola
6:00 - 7:30

January 17
Program Planning
Meeting
Location TBD
10:00 - 12:00

February 4
Last day for Acme
Cash Back Receipts

[altering the judicial selection process.](#)

This topic may seem dry and boring, but it directly relates to our work to educate and engage voters. An independent judiciary that is tasked with applying the law and not applying the interpretation of the law that best suits the local party (any and all of them) is a vital part of the checks and balances of a democracy.

Conduct a little experiment this holiday season. When you are out with friends and family, ask them if they voted (this may provoke eye-rolling because they know you are a League member and voting is dear to your heart). If your friends are like mine, most of them *do* vote. Then ask if they voted the entire ballot. Ask if they voted for the judges (don't ask who they voted for of course, that is a closely held right to privacy) and, if you feel comfortable, ask them how they decided. I suspect that the responses of those you love and respect will convince you more than ever that the League on the right track with this issue.

Jill C. Cove



Holiday Brunch

Holiday Brunch

Saturday, December 6, 2014

11:00 - 1:00

Portage Country Club

Our annual holiday party this year is a brunch at Portage Country Club. We will be joined by the members of the Hudson and Tallmadge Leagues and Ilene Shapiro, Summit County Council President, will be our speaker. The cost is \$18.95

per person, with tax and gratuity additional. All members, friends, and guests are welcome.

Each guest is asked to bring a food donation of [single-serve items for Dare to Share](#), a student-run charity at Tallmadge High School.



Observer Corps Opportunities

by Jodi DeLamatre

The Observer Corps is alive and well thanks to several League members, including Ardith Keck and Jean Questel covering half of Summit County Council meetings, Karen and Ray Barta covering Akron Public Schools, Harriet Cutler attending MetroParks of Summit County and Tina Merlitti, Gerry Hall and members from other Leagues attending Summit County Board of Elections.

The primary reason for the Observer Corps is for local governments to know that we are there. 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. Being there is very important.

The slots will be filled on a first-come-first-served basis. Take along a friend. Just remember, a League member may not speak at these meetings when in the Observer capacity.

Currently, we need coverage at the Akron Summit County Public Library meeting on the fourth Thursday of every month at 4:00. The location varies by library branch. To check the location of the meetings you need only to visit the ASCPL website <http://www.akronlibrary.org/ad-btmtg.html> The next meeting is December 11 at the Main Library.

For Summit County Council, we need additional coverage on the first Monday for County Council Committee meetings and the second Monday for the regular County Council meetings. You need not attend both, please choose one.

Akron City Council meets every Monday night at 7:00 p.m. Committee meetings are the afternoon prior to the meeting beginning at 2:00 p.m. Council Chambers are at 166 S. High St., 3rd Fl. Akron, OH 44308. All slots are available. Choose one or more.

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. I will get you one if you don't own one.
2. Do not offer comments of any sort since you are representing the League.
3. 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 or would like to begin. I look forward to hearing from you and for you to help the League of Women Voters as the watch dog of Summit County Government.



HB 663 - Secrecy for Executions

HB 663 passed out of the House on November 20. This bill would hide the identity of the drug makers whose drugs are used for executions in Ohio. This bill does not consider the legality of the death penalty itself. Rather it permits the the lethal injection formula, and the supplier of the drugs used in the lethal injection, to be a secret.

[The Cleveland Plain Dealer published an article on November 26](#) explaining some of the issues around this bill and the potential that, if passed, this new law would trigger lawsuits for Ohio. The ACLU, a frequent League partner on issues, has a good [summary of the bill here](#) with a link to the full text. [LWVO issued an action alert](#) for our state on this issue and our members are encourage to [contact your State Senator](#) to share your opposition to this legislation. As long as the public funds executions, we believe that the public has a right to know who and what is involved in that process.



Gerrymandering in Action

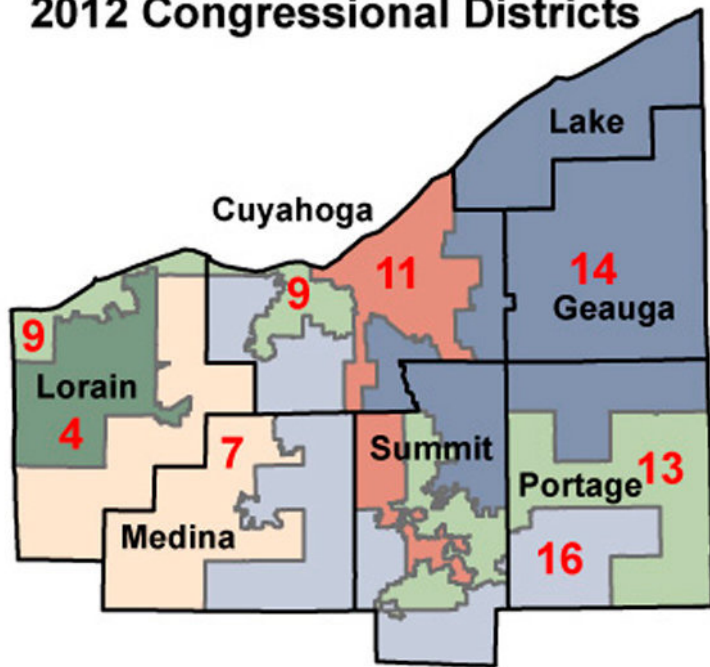
LWVO in conjunction with [Common Cause Ohio](#) has issued a November 25 [press release](#) describing the preliminary effect of the new redistricting on Ohio's 2014 elections. League members will not be surprised to find that:

- Predicted partisan percentages (known as partisan indexes) of both the Ohio Senate districts and the US House districts perfectly predicted the winners, based on political party.
- Partisan leaning also predicted the results of 96 out of 99 Ohio House races.
- Even more troubling, four of the Ohio Senate winners (23%) faced no opponent in the general election, and 14 of the Ohio House winners (14%) faced no opponent. One U.S. Congressman, Bob Gibbs, also faced no opponent.

What does this mean? It means that the gerrymandered redistricting implemented after the 2010 census is working perfectly - just as it was designed to. The League recommended bi-partisan map re-drawing and keeping communities together as part of a reform plan to solve this issue.

Consider [Summit County](#) as a prime example of the problem, where the residents may be in one of four congressional districts that include a swath of the state from Wooster to Youngstown and up to Cleveland and over to Ashtabula. How does this structure represent the citizens of Summit, let alone Akron? It doesn't. Summit County was chopped up to dilute the vote. The League is working to fix this in partnership with politicians (including Sawyer and LaRose) and non-profits around the State. But the damage in 2014 has already been done.

2012 Congressional Districts



Acme Cash Back

As you do your holiday shopping, be sure to save your receipts from Acme for our Cash Back fundraiser. Receipts can be collected and saved from September 18 to February 4.



[Join us today](#) to support democracy nonpartisan action and voter rights in your community.



Copyright © 2014 League of Women voters of the Akron Area, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you are a current or past member of the League of Women Voters.

Our mailing address is:

League of Women voters of the Akron Area
380 Mineola
Christ United Methodist Church
Akron, OH 44320

[Add us to your address book](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

MailChimp.