



THE AKRON VOTER

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Akron Area

May, 2017





LWV Ohio 2017 Convention

Submitted by Barbara Hunsicker, LWVAA President

We have a lot to be proud of with the LWV Ohio Convention that took place at the Sheraton Suites in Cuyahoga Falls this past weekend, May 5-7. Although the weather discouraged outdoor activities, inside was bustling with about 120 high-energy attendees from all over the state.

LWVAA

Upcoming

Events

May 18, 2017

Fair Districts Training

LWVAA Office
1250 W. Exchange St.,
Akron, Ohio
6:30 p.m.

Learn the rationale
behind the ballot initiative

Equip yourself to speak
knowledgeably to friends,
small groups & potential
petition signers

Please [RSVP](#) and bring
a friend!

May 23, 2017

Fair Districts Training

LWVAA Office
1250 W. Exchange St.,
Akron, Ohio
6:30 p.m.

Learn the rationale
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Equip yourself to speak
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The convention opened Friday, May 5 with a meet-and-greet reception where members connected with old friends and made new ones.

On Saturday, concurrent sessions included the topics of non-discrimination; climate change; fake news; considerations when thinking of running for office; engaging new members; and the Civility Project. Each time slot also included Fair Districts training for members who will make presentations on the upcoming petition drive for placing congressional redistricting on the 2018 ballot.

Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro opened the first plenary session, welcoming attendees and praising the Leagues' work to educate and engage voters. The luncheon speaker was Chris Carson, President of the LWVUS who discussed the league's plans to move from talking about how to be more effective to taking action to be more visible and influential in communities.

The dinner keynote speaker, Barbara Sykes shared AARP's vision for insuring that affordable health care is available to all citizens. Ms. Sykes was appointed director of the Ohio AARP in August 2016 and is well-known in the Akron Area as a former state representative and community leader.

At the plenary session addressing league business, a new two-year budget was passed that includes maintaining the per-member-payment (PMP) \$25 per year. An amended league position on Juvenile Justice was adopted that expands the statement, "The LWV of Ohio supports the right of juveniles to unbiased treatment regardless of race or ethnicity" to include gender, gender identity, religion, disability and other personal characteristics.

The position of the Florida LWV regarding charter schools was also approved with edits to make language consistent with terminology used in Ohio. A new study on health services proposed by Kent members was approved as well.

Finally, the top advocacy priority based on a large percentage of participating leagues is Congressional Redistricting. Approval of summary language by the attorney general is expected soon after which signature gathering may begin.

The convention Planning Committee included members of the Hudson, Kent, Tallmadge leagues, along with Akron Area members Ardith Keck, Mary Ann Jopperi and Barbara Hunsicker. We met several times since the beginning of 2017 to organize on-site duties, the most complex being recruiting and organizing 34 volunteers representing all four leagues.

small groups & potential
petition signers

Please [RSVP](#) and bring
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June 8, 2017

**LWVAA Annual
Meeting**

Spaghetti Warehouse
510 S Main St, Akron,
OH 44311

5:30 p.m. Networking
6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:00 p.m. Business
Meeting

Members and invited
guests are welcome

July 1, 2017

**LWVAA New Fiscal
Year**

July 6, 2017

LWVAA Board Meeting

1250 W. Exchange St.,
Akron, Ohio
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Board Members only

August, 2017

Beverly Dorson of the Hudson league was volunteer coordinator and did a stellar job of making sure volunteers were where they should be at the appointed time.

The LWVO addressed several of the most timely policy issues through the workshop sessions and responded to member requests for information and training on the congressional redistricting. They hit the mark this year with excellent speakers who informed and stimulated conversation on what we can do on the local level to be part of the solution.

Our work is cut out for us!

Fair Districts for Congress Too: Ohio Can't Wait!

Submitted by Jackie Darrow, Chair Voter Service

If you haven't heard about the Fair Districts ballot initiative yet, it's time to start.

Why now? Because if we succeed in getting this issue on the ballot in 2018 and it passes, Ohioans will have a bipartisan body in place to re-draw its US Congressional district maps after the 2020 census. If we don't succeed, Ohio will retain its single-party dominated district map-drawing process until the next census in 2030, a process that has resulted in some of the nation's most highly gerrymandered districts.

Gerrymandered districts deliver safe, non-competitive seats favoring a single party. These districts leave members of the opposite party without a voice as legislators don't feel the need to respond to their concerns. We're seeing the impact of gerrymandering today as legislators on recess from Washington refuse to hold town halls that are open to all citizens. When opposing voices are suppressed there is a chilling effect on democracy. Fair districts yield fairer elections.

That's why Fair District for US Congress is the number one priority for both the State League and our Akron Area League. That priority was made loud and clear at the LWVO Convention May 5-7 with Fair Districts training offered during every break out session.

The training not only prepared us with key messages to use during the upcoming petition drive but also to train other League members. We hope to build a cadre of trained LWVAA members who will be able to comfortably

LWVAA Summer Picnic

Mingo Lodge
Sand Run Park
1501 Sand Run Pkwy
Akron, Ohio

5:00p.m.

September 7, 2017

LWVAA Board Meeting

1250 W. Exchange St.,
Akron, Ohio
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Board Members only

explain the reasons behind the ballot initiative as leaders at community meetings and as volunteer petitioners for some of the 305,000 validated signatures required to get the measure on the 2018 ballot.

So fair warning: You are going to hear more until we succeed. And to get there we need your help. To learn more, attend Fair Districts Training (see posted dates). If you want to find another way to help please [email me](#) or call the League office at 330.836.7079 to discuss opportunities. Ohio can't wait!

For updates on the ballot initiative go to fairdistrictsohio.org.

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