THE AKRON VOTER

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Akron Area

June, 2015

LWVAA Upcoming Events

June 25
LWVAA Board Meeting
Old and New Board
380 Mineola
6:00 - 7:30

August 20
Annual Picnic
Shady Hollow Pavilion
Sand Run Metro Park
6:00 - 7:30

September 10
LWVAA Board Meeting
380 Mineola
6:00 - 7:30

President's Message

We had an excellent Annual Meeting this year - productive discussion, good conversation, and everyone was home in time to watch the Cavs.

Our new budget was approved, last year's Annual Meeting minutes were approved as well, and we revised our by-laws to reflect changes to bring us in line with LWVO. We also passed an update to our Regional Program adding the Tuscarawas River water shed to our position on water quality.

Welcome to our new Board members and Committee Chairs and thank you for your commitment to League. The Newsletter position is still available if anyone is interested. It is fun and easy to do in our new electronic format and would look great on a resume for a young person interested in politics and publicity.

President Elect: Barbara Hunsicker
Secretary: Jackie Derrow
VP Organization: Roberta Aber
Program: Karen & Ray Barta
Health Care: Barbara Venesy
Membership: Ardith Keck
Natural Resources: Arrye Rosser

Newsletter: *Available*
Nominating: Gerry Hall, Maureen Sullivan, Gina Van Vorous
Publicity: Jessie Coffey
Voter Registration: Mary King
At-Large Board Member: Martha Lester

Our in-coming and out-going Boards meet June 25 to plan for the upcoming year including what promises to be an interesting and active local election season. We have committed to a fairly small fundraiser this coming year so be prepared to attend or contribute and encourage friends to join us as we work to provide non-partisan information in a way that no other local non-profit does.

Jill C. Cole

Annual Picnic August 20

Please plan to attend our annual picnic in honor Women's Equality Day on August 20 at Shady Hollow Pavilion in Sand Run Metro Park from 6:00 - 7:30. League will provide the paper supplies and beverages and we ask that each attendee bring a dish to share. Barbara and Oscar Hunsicker will talk about their experiences at the recent LWVO convention. Barbara is our new president-elect and this is a excellent opportunity to get to know her better! You, your friends, and prospective members are always welcome.

LWVGC Upcoming Forums

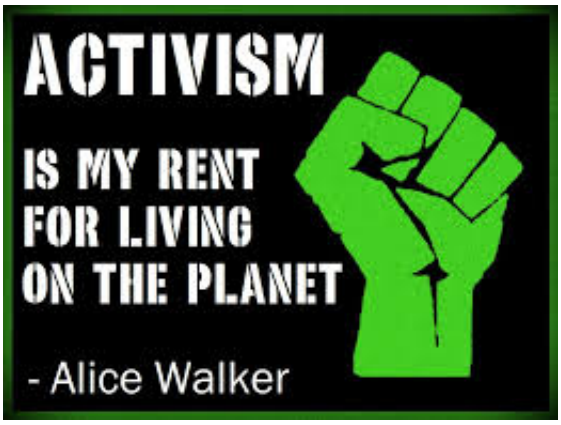
League of Women Voters Great Cleveland has several interesting upcoming forums that Akron Area members may want to attend. Of special interest is:

How to Become an Education Activist in NE Ohio
Wednesday, August 19, 2015, 7:00-8:30p.m.
Siegal Facility 26500 Shaker Blvd., Beachwood
Cost: Free & Open to the Public

Michele Pomerantz, CMSD
Lyman Millard, Breakthrough Schools
Gregory Hutchings, Supt. of Shaker Heights
Mary Rose Oakar, elected member State Board of Education (tentative)
Jill Miller Zimon: Moderator

Parents and other concerned individuals can be some of the best advocates for education change. This forum will cover local education topics and focus on the ways you can advocate for education and education change. Questions addressed will include: how to develop and deploy strategies to benefit education, advice to give others on how to influence education policy and whom to influence in matters related to education in Ohio.

REGISTER HERE or for more information contact: Sheryl Hirsh, 216-368-2091



Pizza and Politics Report

On May 21 League members and friends met to discuss politics over pizza at Cafe Bricco in Fairlawn. We were delighted to have Tammy Shomo, past president of Tallmadge and new LWVO Board member join us as well. Discussion centered n voter service plans for the fall and upcoming membership and voter registration activities. Participants also brought toiletries to donate to ACCESS, the shelter for women and children. Thank you to everyone who attended!

Edith Chase Lecture Report

Submitted by Jean Questel, Mary Lou Gault, and Gerry Hall

On June 5, the Kent League of Women Voters meeting, “Not a Drop to Drink”, honored their long time member, Edith Chase. Her interest and concern for water quality led to the formation of the Kent Environmental Council in 1970 and the development of LVO’s Lake Erie Basin policy. Her scientific papers on water quality and knowledge of hydrology brought her national renown. She was a founding member of the Ohio Coastal Resources Advisory Council in 1982. In 2005 Edith Chase was named Coastal Steward of the Year by the U.S. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration. She received the Outstanding Environmental Leader Award from the Burning River Foundation in 2014.

The justification for her concern & desire to protect Lake Erie became very evident in Toledo’s 2014 water

pollution disaster. Tom Henry, a *Toledo Blade* reporter, explained how the indifference to water quality by the state and local government officials caused the problem. They ignored warnings and neglected modernizing the 74 year old water treatment plant in Toledo. Excessive algae growth was evident in Lake Erie as early as 1995. 20 parts per billion was considered safe for swimming, but such a quantity in drinking water is toxic level. The crisis came when unusual wind currents caused the algae to pile up and the water plant could not purify the water. The water coming from their spigots was an ugly, toxic green sludge the left 500,000 people with "Not a Drop to Drink" or even to wash with for 3 days.

According to Dr. Robert Heath, Chair of the Coastal Resources Advisory Council, the blue-green algae is not really an algae but mycrocystic bloom, a common bacteria found all over the world. It produces toxins and only very small amounts are safe in drinking water. Mycrocystic bloom grows when an excess of both phosphorous and nitrogen are in fresh water. 40% of the phosphorous in Lake Erie comes from agriculture. Only legislative intervention can correct this problem since advisory councils have no authority.

Kristy Meyer, Managing Director of the Agriculture, Health, & Clean Water Programs for the Ohio Environmental Council, emphasized the fact that no matter how valid the scientific data may be or how obvious the mycrocystic bloom, all of the agencies involved in keeping Ohio's water clean and safe are merely advisors. Only legislative action can bring the changes and enforcement necessary to protect our natural water supply. All of the speakers urged concerned citizens to call Madison Lisotto, Governor's Legislative Liaison, at 614-420-6915, to urge support of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that calls for a 40% reduction of phosphorous flowing into Lake Erie.

Meeting attended by Mary Lou Gault, Gerry Hall, Jean Questel, Martha Lester, Harriet and Harlow Cutler.

Observer Corps APS Update

by Ray and Karen Barta

May 11, 2015
The meeting began at 5:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members shared community and school reflections. Curtis Walker talked about attending a luncheon at which student scholarships were awarded. He also described going to Cedar Point with students who were there through the generosity of the LeBron James Family Foundation. Veronica Sims thanked Mayor Plusquellic for all he's done. She also congratulated for being named managing director of Weathervane Playhouse. Patrick Bravo said he went to the same scholarship luncheon as Rev. Walker. Tim Miller attended a program at the Akron Art Museum about the integration of math and art. Bruce Alexander went to a Positive Academic Support System program and saw the teachers and students involved in the program. He also went to Firestone High School for a jazz ensemble concert.

Two men who had requested to address the board spoke about the need for space for a summer reading program with which they were involved. They hoped the school district would provide the space.

Two seniors from each high school were recognized for having taken part in the superintendent's seminar.

Mark Black, APS Executive Director of Secondary Schools, and Yvonne Culver, APS Program Manager

for College and Career Access, gave a graduation update.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved, and the superintendent's recommendations were approved.

President Lisa Mansfield acknowledged what Mayor Plusquellic has done for the city and how he's been a partner with the schools. She noted that this is prom season and that people should be careful when driving. She also commended the student who took part in the Ohio Music Educators' Association competition.

Treasurer Ryan Pendleton reviewed the five year forecast.

Committee reports were given. The board recessed at 7:27 for executive session.

June 8, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. president Lisa Mansfield. The pledge was led by NJROTC cadets from Garfield High School.

A Veteran's Honorary High School Diploma was awarded to Carroll S. Fraley, III.

Community and school reflections were shared by board members. Patrick Bravo said that he was glad that all Akron public school students have access to free breakfast and lunch. Bruce Alexander talked about going to graduations at North and Kenmore high schools. Tim Miller talked about a community meeting at the Akron Zoo.

Distinguished Emeritus certificates were given to retiring employees.

Superintendent David James asked Mary Outley-Kelly, executive director of the elementary schools' curriculum and instruction, to explain the change in the cut scores of the third grade reading test and the impact that would have on the summer school reading program for third graders. She said that because the

cut score was upped by a few points, the number of third graders who need to attend summer reading school has increased from 38 to 58.

Four people had requested to address the board. Two who represented Buchtel High School PTA spoke about considerations they hoped the board would make to help them be more effective in their roles. The other addressed the board privately.

At this point, the board went into executive session.

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