



The Akron Voter

Volume 2, Issue 3

October, 2008

President's Remarks

By: Erica Greer

Well, here we are, immersed in the political process – League gas and further the work of the League at the same time, helping to educate voters so that they can make informed choices in November. Perhaps some of them will even be inspired to join the League!

I hope you will take some time out of your busy lives to do a little work for League at the same time. LWVAA and LWV Hudson are sponsoring some interesting forums, candidates' nights, and a town hall meeting on the Sewers for Scholarships issue coming up in October.*

Wouldn't it be great to see these events well-attended? You can help, not just by attending yourself (although I certainly hope you will make a point to get to at least some of them), but also by spreading the word. Let your friends, colleagues, co-workers, and family know about the events. Or go even further – tell them about the events, and then invite them or one of our newer members to attend with you. You'll save on

League's involvement in the presidential debates, which you will find elsewhere in this issue. This year at Convention, delegates requested that LWVUS President Mary Wilson attempt to get the League involved again. She wrote letters to leaders in both parties, but neither party nor its candidate were interested in allowing the League to participate. (After reading the brief history, you will understand why!)

Many of you are probably hard at work volunteering for the candidates of your choice, updating your poll-worker training, helping register voters, canvassing neighborhoods, or donating time and money to various candidates or issues. I salute your involvement in

Erica

*For a complete list of upcoming events, their times and locations, please see Relevant Dates on the back cover, or check out our website at www.lwvaa.org.



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FYI: Randy Cole/Brian Williams Debate

On Thursday, October 9, candidates for state representative of Ohio's 41st District, Randy Cole (R) and Brian Williams (D) will hold a debate at Portage Country Club. Cost for the luncheon and debate is \$12 and will be moderated by the LWVAA.

Reservations will not be accepted and about 50 individuals are expected. For more information, please contact Gerry Hall at (330) 688-1375 or Permback@aol.com.



The League of Women Voters Role in Presidential Debates: A Little History

By: Erica Greer

The role of the League of Women Voters in the Presidential debates was an important one. The brief history that follows was taken from NationMaster.com, an online encyclopedia. Reading about the League's involvement and the circumstances of its withdrawal from the debates made me proud, once again, to be a part of such a dedicated and highly principled organization. I think you will feel the same.

In 1952 it [the League of Women Voters] hosted the first nationally-televised debate in U.S. history. It differed from the televised Kennedy-Nixon debate in 1960 in that all candidates from both parties were present instead of just the two nominated candidates. The League remained out of the arena of debates until the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) amended the equal time provision, declaring presidential debates "bona fide news events," which, if hosted by a third party, exempted debates from the equal time provision. [In fact, no presidential debates were held in 1964, 1968, or 1972.]

The LWV stepped in as the third party needed for this new regulation and hosted presidential debates from 1976 to '84. The LWV codified the formats of presidential debates, splitting them

into categories based on how questions are asked. The League used an open format, allowing follow-up questions among candidates. These types of questions are difficult to prepare for before a debate -- they're unpredictable.

The League ran a tight ship from 1976 to '88. As a nonpartisan organization, it was ardent in affording equal time to all candidates. The organization was also the keeper of the format, the questions and the debate in general. It served as host, and the candidates were invited to participate or not; the debate would go on without them. The LWV's refusal to acquiesce to candidates' demands made presidential debates a powerful force in U.S. politics.

This made presidential debates dangerous.... In a given election cycle, candidates from any party could face humiliation, the loss of a lead in the polls and defeat, all because of a single debate. So the two major parties in the United States came together to wrestle control of presidential debates from the League of Women Voters.

In 1987, the LWV withdrew from debate sponsorship, in protest of the major party candidates attempting to dictate nearly every aspect of how the debates were conducted. On October 2,

1988, the LWV's 14 trustees voted unanimously to pull out of the debates, and on October 3 they issued a dramatic press release:

The League of Women Voters is withdrawing sponsorship of the presidential debates ... because the demands of the two campaign organizations would perpetrate a fraud on the American voter. It has become clear to us that the candidates' organizations aim to add debates to their list of campaign-trail charades devoid of substance, spontaneity and answers to tough questions. The League has no intention of becoming an accessory to the hoodwinking of the American public.

The two major political parties had their own loyalists ready to take over the debates and did so in 1988 under the name of the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD). The two parties presented the 1988 debates and have done so every election cycle since. The commission has been headed since its inception by former chairs of the Republican and Democratic parties.



Observer Corps Report

By: Jean Questel

September 8 was the kick-off date for the Observer Corps. Sharon Gandee and Ethel Chambers attended the Committee Meetings of the Akron City Council, which are held weekly from 2-4:00 p.m., and Sharon returned for the 7:00 weekly Council Meeting. Janet Dobson and Jean Questel attended the Summit County Council Committee Meeting at 4:30 in the Ohio

Building. On September 15 the Council will meet to consider the business discussed at the Committee Meeting.

One meeting is hardly the basis for a report from the Observer Corps. The following remarks are really just "First Impressions."

Summit County Council

1. Ohio Building?? Found it! Easy! The parking deck is on High Street across from the Court House. A ramp in the center of the parking deck goes directly to the elevator, and Information Desk, and the Chamber. And everyone who saw these two strange women hastened to offer help!

-Continued on next page-

Observer Corps Report (Continued)

By: Jean Questel

2. Council: Tim Crawford had a white beard! Heydorn, Shapiro, Pierce—3 women on Council? Good to see women there. That voice? Oh yes, there's Pete Crossland. Shapiro & Pierce—What are they saying? Why don't they speak up like Heydorn or use their microphones?

3. The Business: The first reading of 15 resolutions, most requesting additional

funds and declared an emergency. The most surprising business was the plan to build a 4-story building at 219 S. Main Street and "...allow pedestrian ingress, egress and access..." to the parking deck.

Great admiration for Marijean Donofrio who was unmercifully grilled for her request for an additional \$587, 400 to pay for the mailing of absentee voting applications and to print the ballots for the

election. She anticipates 2 pages (both sides) at a cost of 34 cents per page. Every Council person insisted voting was important.

4. The parking was free! Just have the ticket stamped at the Council meeting and sign it.

5. Conclusion: What a lot of money and people are required to run the county!

ACME CASHBACK

This fund raising program has been a consistent winner for League over the years. It's simple, has no overhead cost, and is not labor intensive for League members.

The format for the program this year is based on the purchase of Acme brand products. These products include: Food Club, Full Circle, Dining In, Top Crest, tapes, Top Care, Domestix, Paws Premium, Acme Fresh Market, ValuTime,

and others. When you shop at Acme, the "Community CashBack" amount is shown at the end of each register tape. We receive 5% of this amount. Because of the severely shortened time period this year it will be more challenging than ever to come up with a good batch of products.

The current CashBack period will begin

on 09-28-08 and end on 02-21-09. I will be accepting tapes through 02-28-09.

Please forward tapes to me at:
P.O. Box 26
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44222

Thanks for saving your tapes for League!

Janice Jacobs

2008 Election Checklist

- **VERIFY** your registration. Even if you have registered before!
- **EDUCATE** yourself about the issues.
- **DECIDE** how you are going to vote before you get to the polls.
- **VERIFY YOUR POLLING LOCATION** if you have moved or are unsure of where to go.
- **VOTE EARLY** to avoid long lines by absentee ballot or by going to your local Board of Elections.
- **TAKE YOUR IDENTIFICATION** to the polls.
- **ASK FOR A PAPER BALLOT** if the lines are long and you cannot wait.
- **ASK FOR A PROVISIONAL BALLOT** if you have a problem voting.
- **THERE WILL BE NO EARLY VOTING AT THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS.** Early voting will be at The Job Center, 1040 East Tallmadge Ave. Akron, OH; Monday-Friday 8 am to 8 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 12 pm to 4 pm.

Editor's Note

Submissions for the November newsletter can be mailed to Diana Kingsbury at 1309 Perry Dr. NW Canton, OH 44708 or e-mailed at kings-

The deadline for all submissions is OCTOBER 15TH.

Your contributions to the newsletter are

Greatly appreciated and help to maintain the informative nature of the Akron Voter. THANK YOU!

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LWV MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!!

Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a League member. 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: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Send to:

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