



President's Remarks

January, 2008

By: Erica Greer

A very Happy New Year to you and yours!

If it's January, it must be Program Planning time...

One of the things I like best about League is that it is actually a working model of how democracy is supposed to function. League decisions to study issues or take action do not come down from the top; rather, League leaders take their direction from you, the individual members of League.

Those of you who have been in League a long time probably understand how this process works, but for newer members, the workings of League are not always so transparent. You maybe wondering what I'm talking about – how do we individual members of League go about telling the leaders – whether at the national, state, or local level—what we would like League to study or take action on?

The process by which this is accomplished is called Program Planning. In League speak, “program” refers to those selected issues chosen by members at the local, state, and national level for study and action; for example, the current two-year study on immigration is part of LWVUS’ “program” for the current biennium.

During the program planning process, members examine current League positions on the National (in even years) or State level (in odd years), as well as at the local level, and note whether they want the positions to be kept as they are, to be changed in some way, or to be eliminated. They also consider any issues they would like to have studied. Finally, members decide what they want the National (or State) and local Leagues to make their highest priorities for study and/or action. These recommendations—*your* recommendations -- are then submitted to the local board for its approval. Upon board approval the recommendations are submitted to National or State League for consideration at Convention, or at the Annual Meeting in the case of local program.

Then at National or State Convention, or at our Annual Meeting, the delegates (or the voting members in the case of the local League) get to discuss, debate, challenge and finally vote on those very recommendations for change, study, or action. Delegates representing Leagues from all over the reb provide the direction for the National or State organization over the course of the next biennium; individual members likewise direct the course of LWVAA.

Armed with this information, I hope you see how important the Program Planning meeting is. According to League bylaws, changes, issues for study, and priorities cannot be initiated at Convention or at the Annual Meeting without a majority vote of the delegates; the Program Planning process is your best opportunity to make your opinions known.

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President's Remarks (continued)

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Please plan to take part in true democracy at work, and join your fellow LWVAA members at the Program Planning meeting on Saturday, January 26 at 9:30 AM at the church on Mineola. If you wish, you can brush up on national positions (available on the LWVUS website or in *Impact on Issues*, available at the LWVAA office) and local positions (printed in your handbook).

If your New Year's Resolution involves making a difference, this would be a great way to get started. Hope to see you there!

Coalitions of Organizations to Which LWVO Belongs

Social Policy - Health Care

- Access to Benefits Coalition (ABC)
- Campaign to Protect Ohio's Future
- Coalition for Affordable Healthcare in Ohio (CAHO)
- Coalition for Family Health
- Have a Heart Ohio (HAHO)
- Ohio Family Coverage Coalition
- Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio (UHCAN)

Social Policy - Education

- Coalition for Public Education
- Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding
- Ohio Fair Schools Campaign

Social Policy - Other

- Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)
- Juvenile Justice Coalition
- Lift the Cap Coalition
- Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence
- Ohioans to Stop Executions
- OSU Institute on Women, Gender, and Public Policy

Natural Resources

- Great Lakes Restoration Coalition
- Greater Ohio
- Help End Lead Poisoning (HELP)
- Ohio Environmental Council

Government Related

- Freedom of Choice Ohio (FOCO)
- Ohio Disability Vote Coalition

A Word From the Education Fund

By: Janice Jacobs

At a recent League meeting there were a lot of questions about how the Education Fund began. I think the following report from Chairman, Gerry Hall, tells us not only the beginning but the current day status as well. Thanks for taking time to read about one of the things that makes Akron Area League so special.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE AKRON AREA EDUCATION FUND ANNUAL REPORT

In a February 1987 LWVAA Newsletter, Eleanor Aggarwal reported that in 1984, a group of forward-looking League members formed a committee to investigate the possibility of establishing a LWVAA Education Fund. It had become obvious that the League could no longer depend on dues and the meager funds obtained in an annual finance drive to sustain the League and allow it to continue to make an impact on the community.

LWVAA needed to raise tax-deductible funds, so, with Board approval, the committee undertook the work of researching by-laws and getting legal advice. Their final draft was approved on April 5, 1986. Since that time, the Education Fund has worked to raise funds from the area community, members and friends to fulfill our statement of purpose which is – The League of Women Voters of the Akron Area Education Fund is a public foundation which provides the community with information about public policy issues and encourages citizen participation in government.

Currently, the Education Fund's assets are around \$50,000, with most of that money in an endowment fund. The interest from investments, along with donations from local corporations, members, friends, and Acme Cash Back, fund League voter education and information activities. The endowment fund has built up over the years, mainly from several large bequests from thoughtful members. (Please keep the Education Fund in mind when writing or revising your will.)

This year the Education Fund paid for League's voter service activities including publishing the Voters Guide, both the printed edition, 10,000 copies, and the expanded website version. The Education Fund also covered the expenses of candidate forums. The Education Fund supported the Summit-Portage Leader Institute, a leadership training program for high school girls sponsored by five area Leagues, and paid for three area high school girls to attend Buckeye Girls State. Sadly, in September, the Education Fund held a memorial luncheon in honor of board member and good friend, Jean Stevens.

The Education Fund pays a portion of LWVAA's office expenses and is allowed to pay a percentage of the per member payments (dues) to both LWVO and LWVUS. An important part of the success of the Education Fund is the continued financial support of the League members. Their generous yearly contributions keep the Education Fund viable.

We owe a big thank you to that 1984 committee for the foresight to establish the LWVAA Education Fund.

Gerry Hall, Chairman May 24, 2007

**Submissions for February's newsletter may be sent to Diana Kingsbury at 1309 Perry Dr. NW Canton, OH 44708
or e-mailed to dmk24@uakron.edu by January 15th. Thank You!**

Immigration Policy: Enforcement Issues

Summarized by: Jean Questel

The enforcement to control illegal immigration in the United States has been constrained by economic and social forces. Until 1965, the Bracero program, regulated by the US and Mexican governments, assured that legal Mexican migrant laborers came temporarily to work on farms or railroads and returned to Mexico. Each worker had \$30.00 deposited in Mexico by the US government to cover return expenses. A portion of each worker's pay was withheld to establish a savings account in a Mexican bank. Often, these accounts were not established, and the workers were denied the withheld savings when they returned to Mexico. Wages were also regulated by the governments. By the 60's, the migrant workers began to organize and strike for better working conditions and pay. The Mexican government reduced the number of migrant workers (braceros) they would provide. Unauthorized workers (wetbacks) began crossing the border to do the farm work. When the Border Patrol tried to check the farms for illegal workers, the farmers protested against these Gestapo tactics. The law was changed to allow employers to pay \$30.00 per worker to the Mexican government. There was no oversight by the Mexican government, and the Border Patrol was denied right to search farms for illegal workers.

In this same time period the Civil Rights marches were in progress, and in 1965 the Immigration and Nationality Act changed the US immigration policy to lift race-based restrictions. A 20,000 limit per country with a 170,000 ceiling for Western Hemisphere nations opened the opportunity to emigrate to people in the Middle East and Africa. Congress capped the number of immigrants from Eastern and Western Hemisphere nations at 290,000 per year in 1978. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) did not receive enough funds to check expired visas and green cards. An estimated 30% became illegal by overstaying their visas.

In 1996 US-VISIT legislation was passed, which required fingerprinting foreigners seeking entry to the US. This process prevented many criminals from entering the US. In 2001, the Patriot Act (Promoting Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) was introduced to protect our country by requiring all agencies to share information about immigrants, have tighter controls on visas, and mandated a tamper-resistant entry-exit documentation system be in place by 2003. The INS was dismantled in 2003. Twenty-two agencies were consolidated into Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) under the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is responsible for 400 federal statutes in the US and US embassies. ICE also stands for "Integrity, Courage, Excellence". The assistant secretary of ICE is appointed by the president and reports directly to Homeland Security. The six offices focus on investigating and training, protecting Congress and federal agencies, and "eliminating border economic transportation and infrastructure vulnerabilities". Their major work is not border control but court procedures of illegal individuals. The legal system involves arduous appeals and court extensions that are very expensive and allow violators to remain in the US for extended time. The ICE is overseen by the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) and guided by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Act (IIRIRA) of 1996.

Immigration is considered a federal issue, but the 1996 IIRIRA authorized state and local governments to participate in enforcing immigration laws through Memo of Understanding (MOU), a training program directed by ICE to allow designated officers in state and local areas to handle immigration problems. Objecting to the cost and fearing retaliation if they took on immigration enforcement, most states did not participate. In 2002 Florida undertook MOU. States are now beginning to want to expand arrest and hold tasks and assume the cost.

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Immigration Policy: Enforcement Issues (continued)

Summarized by: Jean Questel

In 1986 the Border Patrol received a large boost in funds to enlarge its forces and expand its area of oversight. Money has continued to be sent to protect the Mexican Border, but it has not solved the illegal entry. An estimated half million people enter each year. The only solution to curtail illegal immigration that has received bi-partisan support in Congress is the Secure Fence Act of 2006. A 700 mile fence costing nine billion dollars is to be built by 2009. Since state and local law enforcement officers can not arrest illegals that they catch, Mexicans are released to return to Mexico, and aliens from other countries are given notices to appear in court, which they seldom do.

The IRCA of 1986 established sanctions on employers who knowingly hired illegal immigrants. Swift Company followed the ruling and was sued by its employees for harassment because the process to check Social Security numbers and other identification could take months. They were found guilty and fined. In 1997 a Basic Pilot Program was introduced that allows employers to verify job-seekers' documents. However, to question the document or ask for additional verification can lead to harassment-discrimination charges. Again, Swift was found guilty in 2006 when ICE agents raided their business and found illegal immigrants in their employ.

In 2006 ICE introduced a new program, IMAGE, which asks employers to voluntarily hand over all workers' documents. Few businesses have enrolled, which suggests that employing illegals outweighs the threat of fines nor non-compliance. In the past employer sanctions have not been aggressively nor systematically enforced or prosecuted. An average of less than 1/10 of one percent of US work sites have been investigated.

Enforcement? Much money has been spent and many programs have been introduced; yet, the problem of immigration continues to grow.

Books of Interest for LWVAA Readers

Submitted by: Jodie M. DeLamatre, Reference and Archives Librarian

Behrman, Greg *The Most Noble Adventure: The Marshall Plan & the Time when America Helped Save Europe*

Bowman, James *Media Madness: The Corruption of Our Political Culture*

Brownlee, Shannon *Overtreated: Why too much Medicine is making us sicker and poorer*

Chang, Ha-Joon *Bad Samaritans: The Myth of Free Trade and the Secret History of Capitalism*

DiMento, Joseph F.C. & Doughman, Pamela *Climate Change: What it means for us, our children and our Grandchildren*

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Books of Interest (continued)

Submitted by: Jodie M. DeLamatre, Reference and Archives Librarian

Ellis, Joseph J. *American Creation*

Frum, David *Comeback: Conservatism that can Win Again*

Gilmore, Glenda Elizabeth *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950*

Greenspan, Alan *The Age of Turbulence*

Heilbrunn, Jacob *They Knew They were Right: The Rise of the Neocons*

Hitchens, Christopher *Thomas Paine's Rights of Man*

Ivins, Molly *Bill of Wrongs: The Executive Branch's Assault on America's Fundamental Rights. (Her last book)*

Kaplan, Fred *Daydream Believers: How a few Grand Ideas Wrecked American Power*

Lewis, Anthony *Freedom for the Thought that we Hate*

Lewis, David *Levering God's Crucible: Islam and the Making of Europe*

Madigan, Charles M. *The Collapse of the Great American Newspaper*

Rhodes, Richard *Arsenals of Folly: The Making of the Nuclear Arms Race*

Thomas, Clarence *My Grandfather's Son*

Toobin, Jeffrey *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court*

Attention League Members: Acme CashBack Ends February 16th

Just a reminder: the Acme CashBack program will be ending on February 16, 2008. Any register tapes that you have should be turned in to Janice Jacobs by February 28, 2008.



U.S. and Ohio: Messing With Mother Nature

By: Marna Lilliedale Becker

Photographing with heat-seeking cameras, inland along the Gulf Coast, has identified an ecological disaster. Old growth trees have drowned from being in stagnant water for over a year from the Hurricane Katrina disaster and the heavy rains following it.

The area gathered together, where the photo maps glow red from rising levels of carbon dioxide, is the size of the state of Maine. The number of trees killed is ten times the number destroyed by the eruption of Mount Saint Helen's. Instead of oxygen being created, a staggering quantity of carbon dioxide is being released.

Global warming is also evaporating Lake Erie's water to a lesser degree than Lake Superior. In some places, Lake Erie (the shallowest of the Great Lakes) freezes all the way to the bottom. Lake Superior's deep water is 55 degrees year-round because of the earth's thermal heat. Its surface water never completely freezes, exposing it to the air.

Some who own property along Erie's shore in Ohio want it down to the low water mark instead of just to the high water mark. The shore between the marks has been held in trust for the public for over 200 years. The state of Ohio is considering privatizing some of the 312 mile North Coast shoreline.

The Ohio Environmental Council Law Clinic and the National Wildlife Federation have intervened in a landmark court case that they will take to the Ohio Supreme Court if necessary to prevent erosion and other ecological damages and illegal activities. The shoreline is used by families, hikers, fishermen, rescue teams, inspectors, etc.

We need to act NOW! Why incur expenses that can be better spent? Sad to use resources to block the greedy, but it must be done. Stop the land grab! The shore properties are already obtaining extra land from the evaporation of the Lake's water. If the slope is small, the property they gain is extensive. We are so blessed to have water of quality and quantity.

Inspiration for the New Year:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

-Margaret Mead-





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Relevant Dates

January 26: Program Planning Meeting

Become a Member Today!

Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a League member. Annual dues of \$50 include local, state and national membership, including newsletters from each. Dues are \$25 for those under 30 years of age. Household membership (same address) is \$50 for first member, \$25 for each additional member.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____ (Home) _____ (Work) _____

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