



President's Remarks

April, 2008

By: *Erica Greer*

When a dozen Leaguers completed the survey of membership last spring, it became clear from the numbers that LWVAA needed to take serious steps to revitalize our organization. While we are not experiencing a net loss in membership, our overall membership is aging, with a consequent decrease in the number of members willing and able to be active contributors to the work of the League. (Please refer to the September Voter for the detailed results of the survey.)

Accordingly, 15 Leaguers devoted an entire Saturday last November to the strategic planning process. We brainstormed about our vision for the League in future, what our priorities for the organization should be, and about goals and objectives for LWVAA in the areas of organization, program, and action.

The final draft of the LWVAA Revitalization Strategic Plan was at last approved by the Board at the March meeting, after much discussion, revision, and re-revision. I encourage you to read it with the understanding that the process is only two-thirds complete. We will be meeting again in April to work on the Action Plan that will help us realize the goals and objectives that we defined in this first part of the process. When the Action Plan is complete, we will share that with you as well.

Erica

LWVAA REVITALIZATION STRATEGIC PLAN

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.

Vision Statement: We envision the League of Women Voters of the Akron Area to be a dynamic organization actively involved in local politics so that a diversity of citizens recognizes the League as an essential resource that motivates them to become increasingly involved in civic affairs and feel compelled to join the League.

Priorities

1. Greater diversity (education, race, sex, gender, SES) in LWVAA membership.
2. LWVAA must be more proactive rather than reactive.
3. An increase in active membership would lead to an increase in issues meetings which would in turn result in increased attendance and greater participation.

President's Remarks (continued)

By: Erica Greer

Goals and Objectives

Organization

Goal: LWVAA will attract new and diverse members and will regularly provide those new members with an orientation to League procedure, protocol and policy.

Objectives:

1. A new membership orientation protocol will be developed and offered twice a year.
2. LWVAA will target three diverse groups each year to whom we will market our organization.

Goal: LWVAA will annually plan, evaluate and measure goals and objectives and progress towards its vision.

Objectives:

1. Objectives and goals will be integrated with the priorities established at the Annual Meeting in June.
2. Before the Annual Meeting in June, the outgoing board will review and assess whether objectives and goals from the previous year were met.

Program

Goal: LWVAA will provide regular opportunities for members to understand League protocol for study, consensus and action.

Objectives:

1. The protocol for study, consensus and action will be posted on the LWVAA website, in the August Voter and annually in the handbook.
2. This topic will be included in the new member orientation protocol.
3. LWVAA will participate in local, state and/or national studies as membership directs.
4. LWVAA will develop a template for communicating and distributing the results of a study.

Action

Goal: LWVAA will be an active participant in the local political arena.

Objectives:

1. Each year the newly constituted board will determine the focus of the observer corps for the upcoming year.
2. The corps will attend a majority of the meetings for the group(s) identified and make regular reports to League membership.
 - a. As a result of League participation members will recommend areas of concern for consideration for LWVAA studies and priorities.
3. LWVAA will request a seat on appropriate boards and commissions
 - a. As a result of League participation members will recommend areas of concern for consideration for LWVAA studies and priorities.
4. After completing a study, LWVAA will continue following, reporting and taking action till the issue is resolved or no longer relevant.

LWVAA Fundraiser: Theater Night Out

By: Lois Arnold

The League's fundraiser will once again be a night out at Weathervane Community Theater. The play is *Enchanted April*, a drama written by Matthew Barber. Meet two bored English housewives of 1922 London, who are tired of their humdrum, conventional lives. The month of April spent in Italy, with two other ladies, provides the restorative power that allows each woman to "bloom again" in unimagined ways.

All the details for this FUN evening are on the attached flyer. You should have received 15 raffle tickets that I hope you will sell or purchase. If you need more let me know.

Please sell as many raffle tickets and admission tickets as you are able to sell. Invite family and friends. The League needs your support and you will have an enjoyable evening. If you can bring something for the dessert served after the play please call Sharon Gandee at 330-864-4659.

THE LAST DATE TO PURCHASE THEATER TICKETS IS APRIL 16, 2008.

Send your check for theater tickets and raffle tickets to:

Lois Arnold
337 E. Bramble Circle
Akron, OH 44321-2779



YOUR TICKETS WILL BE HELD AT THE BOX OFFICE

Juvenile Justice Committee Report

The Juvenile Justice committee, comprised of Betty Landers, Marjorie Thiell, and Harriet Cutler, will be co-sponsoring an event entitled "Gangs" with the Akron Police Department at the Highland Square Library on April 10th, from 6:30-8:30 pm. If you have any questions, please contact Harriet Cutler at 330-836-9036.

Editor's Note

Submissions for the May newsletter should be sent to Diana Kingsbury at 1309 Perry Dr. NW Canton, OH 44708 or dmk24@uakron.edu by April 15th. Thank you very much!

Lake Erie Basin Committee Report

By: Mary Lou Gault (Co-coordinator and LWVAA member)

March 13 Beacon, page B4, carried a troubling item regarding toxins in the Great Lakes " ...Congress forces Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to release draft that indicates cancer, premature births caused by water pollution...." Within that same article was a special insert " ...Reformulated Gasoline....Environmental Protection Agency's stricter limits for ozone may cost Ohio motorists at the gas pump....."

Regarding the first item, CDC officials released the draft after accusations of a cover-up. The document was produced by scientists at the CDC. But the administration quickly distanced themselves from the work saying that some of the science is weak. CDC officials also said they have asked an independent scientific advisory organization - the Institute of medicine - to review the drafts and give its own assessment of the work's quality. It is unusual but not unheard of for the Institute to review CDC research. It is expected to finish the assessment by the end of June.

To continue the item I started in the last newsletter:

"..We divide Lake Erie into three basins, a very shallow Western Basin (average depth 24 feet) with a very flat bottom between Sandusky and Erie. The Western Basin is the warmest during the summer and receives the most nutrients and sediment. When Lake Erie stratifies during the summer, the thermocline (the layer of water where the temperature gradient is greater than that of the warm layer above and the cold layer below) normally forms at a depth of about 45-50 feet. As a result, we seldom have a thermocline in the Western Basin, and the cold bottom layer (hypolimnion) beneath the thermocline in the Central Basin is very thin - about 10 feet thick. Consequently, if the Lake is too productive from receiving too many nutrients (the problem that occurred in the 60s and 70s when Lake Erie was incorrectly called a "Dead Lake") it is likely that the dissolved oxygen in the Central Basin hypolimnion will be used up during the summer creating an area of anoxia - the "Dead Zone." This changes the chemistry with the hypolimnion, causing it to move from an oxidizing environment to a reducing environment which allows phosphorus and metals in the sediment to dissolve into the water. This hypolimnetic water causes a number of serious problems if it is sucked into Central Basin water plants.

(Tune in next time for the conclusion.)

Inspirational Thoughts:

"With realization of one's own potential and self-confidence in one's ability, one can build a better world."

-The Dalai Lama

"Democracy is never a thing done. Democracy is always something that a nation must be doing."

-Archibald MacLeish

ACME CASH BACK = \$\$\$ FOR LEAGUE

By: Janice Jacobs

Our cash back check for 2007-2008, in the amount of, \$114.89, is in process and should be received soon. This is less than last year, because of the way the program was restructured this year.

Many thanks to the fine folks at Acme. Throughout the inception of this program contributions of more than \$1.6 million have been made to various non-profit Akron area community organizations.

The dates and other particulars for next year are not yet available, but it's a good idea to start saving your tapes again around September 1st. You may notice the little "Acme Cash Back" printout and amount at the bottom of each register receipt. I'll let you know ASAP.

Of course, the credit really goes to all the Leaguers & Friends who save their tapes throughout the year. Once again, thank you, to all who contributed!!

Lois Arnold
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Sieglinde Hays

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The Everest Report

As excerpted from the email article The EVEREST Report: Climb Every Mountain, but Don't Start an Avalanche by Peg Rosenfield, LWV Election Specialist (www.ohioimpact.org)

What is the Everest Report?

The EVEREST report stands for Evaluation and Validation of Election-Related Equipment, Standards and Testing Report, "a risk assessment of Ohio's current voting system."

-(continued on next page)-

The EVEREST Report (continued)

After the 2004 Ohio election, a variety of individuals and organizations expressed concerns about election integrity, security, and the accuracy of various voting system technologies. Building on other states' assessments, which had exposed serious flaws in their voting systems, the Ohio Secretary of State had our state's voting systems, equipment, and controls tested by outside experts. This was paid for with \$1.9 million in federal funding. With Battelle Memorial Institute of Columbus managing the project, three academic teams from Penn State, University of Pennsylvania, and Santa Barbara WebWise -and two commercial laboratories, SysTest Labs of Denver, Colorado, and MicroSolved Inc., of Columbus, Ohio -performed a number of tests on the three types of voting machines used in the state. The teams assessed the voting systems' security, performance, configuration and operations, and internal controls management. The resultant EVEREST Report, released December 14, 2007, could form the basis of new legislation and directives to county Boards of Elections.

EVEREST Report Recommendations

Secretary of State Brunner -advised by a bipartisan team of 12 election board directors and deputy directors who evaluated all assessments and participated with her in making the recommendations -made ten recommendations in the EVEREST Report.

These ten recommendations can be grouped into four general topics:

1. Replacing Direct Recording Electronic (DRBs) touch-screen voting machines with optical scan ballots. Require counties using DRBs for the March Primary to offer paper ballots to voters who do not want to use DRBs (recommendation number 10).
2. Multiple precinct polling places (MP3s). Two EVEREST recommendations (5 and 7) deal with multiple-precinct polling places, or vote centers, consisting of 5 to 10 precincts located together at a library, community center, senior center, shopping center or other accessible public buildings with adequate parking.
 - Election-day voting takes place at multiple-precinct polling places, and with some voting sites open 15 days before election day (recommendation 5).
 - Multiple-precinct polling places be piloted in the March, 2008 primary election and mandated for use in the November, 2008 general election (recommendation 7).
3. All-mail ballot elections for issues. Two EVEREST recommendations (6 and 8) concern all-mail ballot elections for issues:
 - That any special election in August, 2008 be conducted by mail (recommendation 6)
 - That each county hold an election on whether voters want to have all-mail elections (Recommendation 8).
4. Use of AutoMark for voters with disabilities. One recommendation (3) proposes that voters with disabilities use AutoMark, which would allow them to vote a secret ballot in private. The AutoMark uses a touch screen to mark an optical-scan ballot, which can then be scanned like a ballot that has been marked by hand.

The best way to decide what you think is important about these recommendations to assure fair, honest, transparent elections in Ohio is to read the information for yourself.

For the complete text of the findings of the EVEREST report, go to <http://www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/info/everest.aspx> and scroll down to 'EVEREST Report of Findings (PDF)' and click on it.

For the detailed version of the League of Women Voters of Ohio '10-Point Proposal for Election Administration Reform', go to <http://lwvohio.org/2007/Advocacy/ElecReformAg2-1-07.pdf>

For news reports on reactions to the Secretary of State's recommendations, go to <http://dispatch.com>. In the search box, enter 'Secretary of State Brunner' and scroll down to 'Archive'. Click 'search'. Sign in. The first 12 articles listed cover the controversy.

For the complete text of SB286 (Cates), go to http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=123_SE_286

Statehouse Day/Council

By: Erica Greer

The Power of League: Speak Up and Connect!

League of Women Voters Ohio annual Statehouse Day and Council are coming up on Tuesday, April 29, from 8:30 to 3:30 at the Vern Riffe Center in Columbus. The theme this year is "The Power of League: Speak Up and Connect!" This theme is truly appropriate, as Statehouse Day provides a wonderful opportunity to connect with other Leaguers all around the state, as well as to get updates on issues of importance from LWVO specialists and lobbyists. There will be workshops on health care, election administration, election reform, education funding, and Lake Erie issues. How better to be prepared to voice your concerns or ask questions of the legislative representatives that you also have the opportunity to meet and connect with in the afternoon?

In addition to workshops with updates on issues, there will also be opportunities to get hands-on instructions on how to use web-based methods for contacting legislators, as well as instructions on how to use LWVO Cap-Wiz and imPACT's Speak Up and Connect features. Communicating with legislators has some new twists that make it easier than ever to lobby from home.

Council is being held the same day, and LWVAA is entitled to send two delegates to participate in the budget process. In addition, the Board of LWVO is inviting ALL Leaguers to attend Statehouse Day. There is more information in the Winter, 2008 Ohio Voter or at the website, www.lwvohio.org. Registration deadline is April 18.

If you haven't been to Statehouse Day lately – or perhaps ever – make plans to attend. It's truly a day well spent. Let's have a large presence from LWVAA!

LWVO Statehouse Day/Council April 29, 2008 • 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Statehouse Day Registration Deadline: April 18, 2008 (One form per person)

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

*Local League President or Council Designee Attending _____

**Each local League that has paid three quarters of its 2007-2008 LWVO PMP is entitled to send two delegates, (The President or alternate, and one other delegate) to the Council session.*

Issue workshops you will attend: AM _____ PM _____

Fee: \$35 per person Council Delegate 2nd Delegate Visitor \$15 student

Vegetarian lunch? Yes No

**Make checks payable to LWVO and remit this form with payment to:
LWV Ohio • 17 South High Street, Suite 650 • Columbus, Ohio 43215
For information call: (614) 469-1505 or toll free (877) 598-6446**



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Akron, OH
44320-1399

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Relevant Dates

April 10: Juvenile Justice meeting (@ the Highland Square Library)

April 24: LWVAA Fundraiser (@ the Weathervane Community Playhouse)

April 29: Statehouse and Council Day (@ the Riffe Center, Columbus)

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)

Send to:

League of Women Voters of the Akron Area (LWVAA)
380 Mineola Avenue
Akron, Ohio 44320 1399

**LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
AKRON AREA**



For more information call: 330.836.7079

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Website: <http://www.lwvaa.org>