



President's Remarks

June, 2008

By: Erica Greer

It's hard to believe the first year of my term as president is coming to an end. Where has the time gone? It seems like yesterday I was writing my first president's remarks.

And what a rewarding year it has been. I've had the privilege of working with a wonderful board and officers who have shared the load and made my job easier.

So much has been accomplished! We've had some great meetings, well-attended by Leaguers and non-Leaguers alike; got a new user-friendly website up and running, thanks to Bruce Greer; installed a new office computer, thanks to Ed Fund and a grant from GAR Foundation; and developed the first part of a strategic plan to revitalize LWV AA. We've added 17 new members, and sadly, lost a long-time friend and member of LWV AA in Barbara Hiney.

One of the most exciting parts of this first year for me was the project with Dr. Stephen Brooks, Associate Director of the Bliss Institute at the University of Akron. His class on New Age Marketing looked at LWV AA, our challenges and our priorities, and produced a report on how LWV AA could best use new media such as podcasts and web video to help us fulfill our mission, raise our profile in the community, and attract a diversity of new members. This information will be an excellent resource for us as we move forward. The class presentation was attended by around 15 members of LWV AA and Ed Fund, the President of LWV Hudson, Belinda Wing, and also President of LWV Ohio, Linda Alley, who is so excited about the report that she wants to share it with LWV US so the ideas can be used by Leagues all over the country!

The Annual Meeting is just ahead. I hope I will see many of you at Papa Joe's Restaurant on Thursday, June 5 from 6:30 pm till 8:30 pm. There will be a cash bar at 6:00, so come early and enjoy a cocktail or glass of wine before dinner. Your input is so important! We will be voting on a proposed dues increase, a budget for the next fiscal year, program for 2008-2009, and a slate of Officers and Directors. If you prefer to skip dinner and attend the meeting only, it should begin at 7:15. Either way, this is your opportunity to have a say in the direction for LWV AA in the coming year.

Finally, I will be attending National Convention, which will be held in Portland, Oregon from June 13 to 17. Thanks to Ed Fund, who has agreed to sponsor a second delegate, Sara Gibbs will be accompanying me, which will effectively double the number of workshops and caucuses we will be able to attend. We are both really excited about the opportunity – there is so much to learn and experience, and we promise to return full of energy and great new ideas to share.

Erica

Juvenile Justice Committee Report

By: *Harriet Cutler*

Akron Police Report on Juvenile Gangs in Akron to Community Group

Sergeant Michael Zimmerman of the Akron Police Department Gang Unit spearheaded a report on the growing problem of juvenile gangs in the Akron area. The Juvenile Justice Committee of the LWV AA hosted the meeting on April 10th at the new Highland Square Library. It was attended by 45 concerned and vocal citizens.

It was well established that we have a serious problem in Akron. The social development, education, economic, and drug trafficking conditions were reviewed as contributing factors to growing gang membership.

Citizens were concerned that the gang problem was not being addressed with more positive steps in the community, school, and family. Sergeant Zimmerman pointed out risk management programs at the elementary schools, block clubs, task forces, and community groups coordinating efforts and enforcement of laws as positive approaches to develop more law abiding kids.

June Book List

Submitted by: Jodie DeLa matre

Dry Spring: The Coming Water Crisis of North America By: Chris Wood

Futurecast: How Superpowers, Populations & Globalisation Will Change the Way you Live and Work By: Robert J. Shapiro

Green: Your Place in the New Energy Revolution By: Jane Hoffman & Michael Hoffman

Leading from the Center: Why Moderates Make the Best Presidents By: Gil Troy

Never Been a Time: The 1917 Race Riot that Sparked the Civil Rights Movement By: Harper Barnes

One Minute to Midnight By: Michael Dobbs

Pearls, Politics and Power: How Women Can Win and Lead By: Madeleine M. Kunin

Putting our House in Order: A Guide to Social Security and Health Care Reform By: George P. Shultz & John B. Shoven

The Road to Democracy in Iran By: Akbar Ganji

Rome 1960: The Olympics that Changed the World By: David Maraniss

Unmaking the Public University: The Forty-Year Assault on the Middle Class By: Christopher Newfield

Why the Dalai Lama Matters: His act of Truth as the Solution for China, Tibet, and the World By: Robert Thurman

Housing Committee Report

By: Erica Greer

The predatory lending and foreclosure crisis in Summit County and Northeast Ohio came to the public's attention in the past few years, and the fallout is not over yet. This prompted Brenda Preer and Ethel Chambers of the Housing Committee of LWVAA to host an extremely interesting meeting called Predatory Lending – Dealing with the Aftermath.

Three informative panelists joined us on Thursday, May 15 at the Fairlawn Bath Library: Lolita Adair, local realtor, fair housing advocate, and chair of the Home Foreclosure and Predatory Lending Task Force for Summit County; Cynthia Sich, member of LWVAA and Director of the County of Summit Office of Consumer Affairs; and Steve Baughman, Counselor at the Fair Housing Connection Service, Inc.

Ms. Adair has been an advocate for fair housing and justice since the early 1960's. With the advent of the relaxation in banking regulations, Ohio neglected to pass regulations regarding mortgage lenders, and the subprime lenders found fertile ground here. We are suffering the consequences of these lending practices, overinflated home appraisals, unscrupulous lenders, unsecured mortgages, and speculative buyers. Ms. Adair wants everyone to be aware that ALL of us are paying the price for this scandal, as neighborhoods deteriorate with foreclosed houses sitting empty, tax bases erode, property values decline, and, inevitably, the taxpayer is conscripted for the bailout.

Ms. Sich's Office of Consumer Affairs was established in 2005 specifically to address the fallout of the predatory lending debacle. Summit County was one of the first counties to establish a foreclosure outreach program such as this, so in that sense we were in the forefront of this fight. Her office conducts research, education programs for prospective buyers or those in danger of foreclosure, and advocates for victims of predatory lending.

One of the agencies that partners with the Office of Consumer Affairs is the Fair Housing Contact Service Inc., where Steve Baughman, our third panelist, works as a counselor. He talked about steps people can take to help prevent foreclosure, including basic budgeting techniques, working to get borrowers out of hybrid ARM loans into fixed rate mortgages, and advocating for them with lenders. The subprime ARM loans started borrowers out at 9% interest for the first two years, and then interest rates could adjust upward every six months until reaching a maximum of 17%!

One point all of the panelists stressed was that the perpetrators of the predatory lending crisis were *not* our local banks. Most of the unscrupulous lending was perpetrated by unregulated mortgage brokers who then bundled these high-risk loans into complex securities and sold them to investors.

The panelists also encouraged us to write to our Congressmen to advocate for stronger banking laws, to prevent such a problem from ever recurring.

Lake Erie Basin Committee Report

By: Mary Lou Gault (Third and final installment of the Lake Erie Shore Lines article from Feb/March 2008 titled "Harmful Algal Blooms, the Dead Zone, and Nutrients")

Eliminating the Dead Zone and harmful algal blooms (HABs) are clearly admirable goals. However eliminating HABs may be more critical and practical for the following reasons.

Eliminating the Dead Zone is likely to require very large reductions in the amount of phosphorus entering the Lake. As climate change causes the Lake to become warmer and water levels to go down, oxygen will be used more quickly and the Central Basin hypolimnion will become thinner and contain less oxygen. Therefore, it will likely become impossible to reduce phosphorus loading enough to eliminate the Dead Zone. Furthermore, we are finding evidence that the Dead Zone may have existed for hundreds of years simply due to the shape of Lake Erie.

Harmful algal blooms directly affect human health and reducing nutrient loading enough to eliminate them is much more likely to be within our grasp. This will also reduce the magnitude of the Central Basin Dead Zone, for much of this blue-green algae float out of the Western Basin and into the Central Basin where it sinks to the bottom and consumes oxygen as it is decomposed by bacteria. If we produce less algae, there is less to be decomposed and use oxygen in the Dead Zone.

All of these issues are the focus of a great deal of research at Stone Laboratory and by Ohio Sea Grant College Program and many other federal and state agencies as we try to develop new techniques to remove microcystin at water treatment plants, determine the sources of phosphorus entering the Lake, determine the role of nitrogen in this process, and much more. It is very important that we succeed in these efforts to allow Lake Erie to remain the most productive of the Great Lakes and Ohio's most valuable natural resource.

* * *

The next Lake Erie Basin Committee meeting is in Rocky River on Wednesday, July 16, 2008. If you have an interest in this area, please let me know. I will not continue as co-coordinator but Don and I will continue to represent LWWAA at LEBC meetings. LWWAA member Jeanne Orr will become Treasurer of LEBC on July 16, 2008. Natural Resources Chair Martha Lester attends LEBC meetings. We have good representation.

Keep your eye on the Great Lakes Compact.

Editor's Note

Submissions for the July newsletter should be sent to Diana Kingsbury via e-mail at kingsbury.diana@gmail.com or mailed to 1309 Perry Dr. NW Canton, OH 44708 by June 15th. Thank you!

How Women Got the Right to Vote

Submitted by: Mary Lou Gault

Remember this election that all men, no matter what their color, had the right to vote before women did. And the women who fought for this right did NOT have a President that was for them, but very much against them.

This is the story of our grandmothers and great grandmothers as they lived only 90 years ago.

It was not until 1920 that women were granted the right to go to the polls and vote.

The story begins: The women were innocent and defenseless. And by the end of the night, they were barely alive. Forty prison guards wielding clubs and their warden's blessing went on a rampage against the 33 women wrongly convicted of "obstructing sidewalk traffic."

They beat Lucy Burn, chained her hands to the cell bars above her head and left her hanging for the night, bleeding and gasping for air. They hurled Dora Lewis into a dark cell, smashed her head against an iron bed and knocked her out cold. Her cellmate, Alice Cosu, thought Lewis had had a heart attack and was dead. Additional affidavits describe the guards grabbing, dragging, beating, choking, slamming, pinching, twisting and kicking the women.

Thus unfolded the "Night of Terror" on November 15, 1917, when the warden at the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia ordered his guards to teach a lesson to the suffragists imprisoned there because they dared to picket the United States President Woodrow Wilson's White House for the right to vote.

For weeks, the women's only water came from an open pail. Their food - all of it colorless slop - was infested with worms. When one of the leaders, Alice Paul, embarked on a hunger strike, they tied her to a chair, forced a tube down her throat and poured liquid into her until she vomited. She was tortured like this for weeks until word was smuggled out to the press.

So -- refresh my memory: some women won't vote this year because.....

Why? We have carpool duties? We have to get to work? Our vote doesn't matter? It's raining?

Last week I went to a sparsely attended screening of HBO's new movie "Iron Jawed Angels." It is a graphic depiction of the battle these women waged so that I could pull the curtain at the polling booth and have my say. I am ashamed to say I needed the reminder.

All these years later, voter registration is still my passion. But the actual act of voting had become less personal for me, more rote. Frankly, voting often felt more like an obligation than a privilege. Sometimes it was inconvenient.

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How Women Got the Right to Vote (Continued)

Submitted by: Mary Lou Gault

My friend, Wendy, who is my age and studied women's history, saw the HBO movie, too. When she stopped by my desk to talk about it, she looked angry. And she was -- with herself. "One thought kept coming back to me as I watched that movie," she said. "What would those women think of the way I use -- or don't use -- my right to vote?"

She continued: "All of us take it for granted now, not just younger women, but those of us who did seek to learn. The right to vote," she said, "had become valuable to me 'all over again!'"

"HBO released the movie on video and DVD. I wish all history, social studies and government teachers would include the movie in their curriculum. I want it shown on Bingoo night, too, and anywhere else women gather. I realize this isn't our usual idea of socializing, but we are not voting in the numbers that we should be, and I think a little shock therapy is in order."

It is jarring to watch Woodrow Wilson and his cronies try to persuade a psychiatrist to declare Alice Paul insane so that she could be permanently institutionalized. And it is inspiring to watch the doctor refuse. Alice Paul was strong he said and brave. That did not make her crazy.

The doctor admonished the men: "Courage in women is often mistaken for insanity."

We need to get out and vote and use this right that was fought so hard for by these very courageous women. Whether you vote Democratic, Republican or Independent party -- remember to vote.

The LWVAA Extends a WELCOME to its Newest Members!

Kathleen Arthur

*Katherine Reilly

*Donald Cunningham

*Donna Schadt

Janet Dodson

H. Paul Schwitzgebel

Ernest and Jennifer Dantis

Andrea Teodosio

Fern Greenamyre

*Steven VanAuken

Susan Klein

*Mr. and Mrs. Carl W. Klotz

* Denotes National Membership

Susan J. Lax, Esq.

*June Marsh

Chris McDonnell

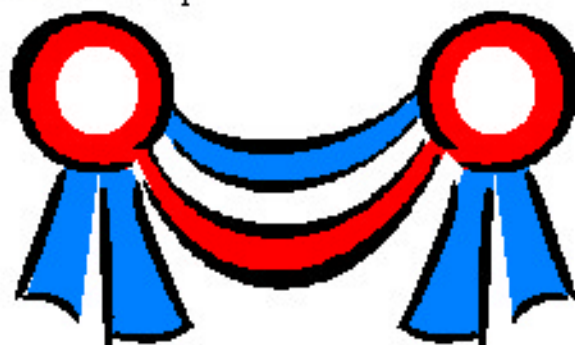
Bonnie Parks

*Mrs. D.W. Peabody

Denise Finder

Bonnie Pitzer

Willette Riley



LWVAA Hosts a Really FUN Fundraiser!

By: Erica Greer

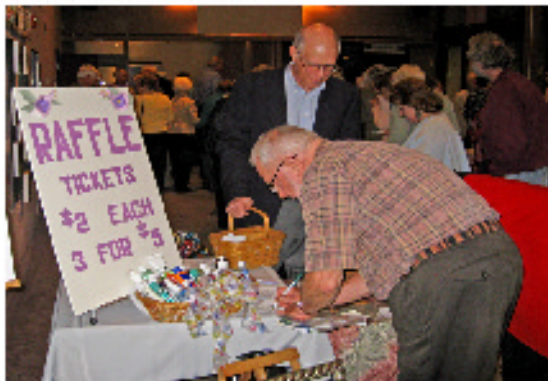
Eighty or so Leaguers and friends of LWVAA had a great time at the LWVAA fundraiser at the Weathervane Theater on April 24. The play, *Enchanted April*, proved a delight. The staging was imaginative, the sets gorgeous, the acting wonderful, and judging from the amount of laughter, men and women alike found the play most entertaining.

Before the play and during intermission, County Councilman Pete Cross and worked energetically promoting the raffle, and did a brisk business selling tickets.

After the play, attendees got to meet the members of the cast, and then descended upon the wonderful array of desserts and hors d'oeuvres donated by League members. Many thanks to Sharon Gandee for coordinating the donations and to her and her crew for keeping the buffet amply supplied. I can attest there was some really good stuff on that table!

The evening was capped off with the drawing. Four lucky winners walked off with a basket of goodies from GoJo, two portraits from Incognito portrait studio, and a beautiful diamond pendant from Sterling Jewelers. LWVAA is grateful to those companies for donating the prizes for the raffle.

A great big Thank You to Lois Arnold, who coordinated the event, for a really fun and successful evening. And thanks to all of you who attended, purchased raffle tickets, or donated food items. Together we raised \$1254 to support the work of LWVAA!



Member Interest Survey Results 2007/2008

Submitted by: Sara Gibbs

Committee Volunteers:

Campaign Finance: J. Quinn, E. Ferrin,

Education: J. Shippy, J. Questel, J. Orr, S. Gandee, H. Cutler,

Election Reform: J. Questel, N. McGrath, E. Ferrin,

Government: M. Thiell, J. Questel, M. Olds, G. Hall, E. Ferrin, H. Cutler,

Health Care: J. Small, S. Lax

Housing: H. Cutler,

International Relations: B. Taylor, G. Massa, E. Ferrin, H. Cutler, P. Lepingwell, J. Orr, S. Lax, S. Klein

Juvenile Justice: M. Thiell, S. Lax

Natural Resources: J. Orr, J. Small, S. Smith, C. Freitag, S. Klein

Voter Service/Registration: M. Becker, J. Orr, A. Mitch, N. McGrath, G. Hall,
E. Ferrin, J. Small, D. Pinder, S. Lax

League Operations and Activities:

Fund Raising: J. Orr

Membership: S. Gibbs, D. Kingsbury, E. Greer, S. Greer, D. Pinder

Host Member Event: A. Keck, S. Gibbs

Letter Writing: J. Questel

New Letter/ The Voter: D. Kingsbury, P. Lepingwell, S. Lax

Observer Corps: J. Questel, N. Boykin,

Speaker's Bureau: J. Questel, J. Orr, A. Keck, S. Lax

Public Relations/New Media: S. Gibbs



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Relevant Dates

June 5th: Annual meeting

June 13th-17th: National Convention

June 15th: Newsletter Deadline

June 21st: Combined Board 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) _____

Send to:

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**LEAGUE
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