

President's Remarks By: Erica Greer

As I begin my third and final year as president of LWVAA, I must say I never dreamed it would be such an exciting summer!

First of all, we actually have a President-Elect! Diana Kingsbury graciously agreed to take that position at the Annual Meeting. Knowing there is someone waiting in the wings makes my job so much easier—thanks Diana!

Then, in the space of just a few weeks, LWVAA has been called on to speak about our concerns about the recall provisions in the Akron City Charter not once, but three times—by the National Conference of Mayors wanting

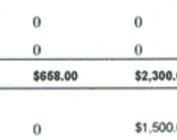
to be used at the Mayor's Institute at Harvard and NYU, by WAKR newsman Larry States wanting to know how League planned to address our concerns as part of a follow-up piece after the recall election, and by Mayor Plusquellic, who came to our board retreat on July 18. The picnic will be on Thursday, August 27 in commemoration of Women's Equality Day (August 26), which honors the day that women finally got the right to vote. We are having a very exciting speaker to help us celebrate this milestone. Debra Johanyak, an Akron native and author of *Behind the Veil* will talk to us about her experiences married to an Iranian and living in Iran at the time of the 1979 hostage crisis.

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The LWVAA Board voted to recommend that the Akron recall parameters as set out in the Akron City Charter. Since the Charter Review Commission will most certainly be looking at those requirements, the board felt that it would be advisable for us to develop a position so that we will be able to advocate for or against particular changes. As it stands now, we can only advocate based on League principles, but that wouldn't allow us to

This article constitutes the required member notification. The picnic will be the general meeting at which the proposed change will be voted on. Please think about the pros and cons of this proposed study and come to the picnic ready to discuss this proposed change to LWVAA program for 2009-2010.



REVENUE	2008-2009	08-09 "Actual"	2009-2010	EXPENSES (continued)	2008-2009	08-09 "Actual"	2009-2010
Dues	\$7,080.00	\$4,630.00	\$7,890.00	ADMIN CMTE'S			
Contributions	\$100	\$100	\$100	Membership	\$500.00	\$425.00	\$600.00
Community	0	0	0	Postage	0	\$75.00	\$150.00
Memorials	0	\$40.00	0	PayPal	0	0	\$100.00
Membership	\$2,000.00	\$2,215.00	\$1,700.00	Voter Guide ad	0	\$48.00	0
ED Fund	0	0	0	Member Directory* (Moved)	0	0	0
Operating	\$1,400.00	0	\$1,365.00	PR/Fund Raising	\$500.00	0	\$1,000.00
1/4 PMP	\$826.00	0	0	Meetings/Programs	\$100.00	\$110.00	\$200.00
1/4 PMP LWVO	\$694.00	0	0	Room rentals	\$250.00	0	\$250.00
Reimbursement	0	\$133.00	0	Legislative Breakfast	0	0	0
Interest	\$350.00	0	0	Annual Meeting	0	0	0
Fund Raising	\$2,000.00	\$160.00	\$1,500.00	TOTAL	\$1,350.00	\$668.00	\$2,300.00
Activities/Reservations	0	0	0	DELEGATES			
Annual Meeting	0	0	0	National Convention	0	0	\$1,500.00
Legislative Breakfast	\$200.00	0	0	State Convention	\$1,000.00	\$900.00	0
NSF Reimbursement	0	0	0	Workshops	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Memorials	0	0	0	TOTAL	\$1,100.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,600.00
Misc. LWVO	0	\$188.00	\$100.00	ASSESSMENTS-DUES			
Reserves	\$2,270.00	0	0	National PMP	\$3,304.00	\$1,541.00	\$1,758.00
TOTAL	\$16,820.00	\$7,366.00	\$12,555.00	State PMP	\$2,773.00	\$1,867.00	\$2,054.00
EXPENSES	2008-2009	Year-to-Date	2009-2010	Lake Erie Basin	\$25.00	\$30.00	\$30.00
OPERATING				TOTAL	\$6,102.00	\$3,438.00	\$3,842.00
Maint/Insurance	\$300.00	\$297.00	\$300.00	COMMUNICATIONS			
Supplies/Misc/Printing	\$400.00	\$223.00	\$600.00	Newsletter			
Postage	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	Printing	\$1,000.00	\$728.00	\$800.00
Telephone/Internet	\$900.00	\$726.00	\$700.00	Postage	\$1,000.00	0	0
Rent	\$900.00	\$900.00	\$900.00	Bulk Mail Fee	\$168.00	(Moved)	0
Computer/Operations	\$200.00	\$105.00	\$200.00	Member Directory	\$450.00	\$407.00	\$300.00
New Media*	(Moved)			New Media*	0	0	0
Maintenance	\$1,200.00	0	0	Equipment	0	\$500.00	\$683.00
Bulk Mail Fee	0	\$180.00	\$180.00	New Media Design	\$1,500.00	0	0
TOTAL	\$4,050.00	\$2,481.00	\$2,930.00	TOTAL	\$4,018.00	\$1,636.00	\$1,683.00
BOARD				TOTAL EXPENSES	\$16,820.00	\$9,237.00	\$12,555.00
President's Fund	\$200.00	\$125.00	\$200.00	LWVAA BUDGET			
Publications for Board	0	0	0				
TOTAL BOARD	\$200.00	\$125.00	\$200.00				

Annual Meeting Report

LeFever's River Grille in Cuyahoga Falls provided a beautiful setting for LWVAA's annual meeting this year. We had a good turnout and had a lot of business to conduct, but we still had plenty of time for good food and good conversation.

In addition to the business we conducted, Councilman Frank Comunale was on hand to present a County Council commendation to Marjorie Thiel for her 50 years of membership in the League of Women Voters. Congratulations Marjorie! Besides commending Marjorie, Mr. Comunale had some very nice things to say about the importance of the League, and we learned that he was a League member even before coming to Akron, where is a long-time member.

The membership adopted a revised program as well. Because a study of the feasibility of merging the Akron, Summit County and Barberton Health Departments is already underway, we decided to eliminate the recommended League study on that topic. Instead, we voted to ask for permission to observe the Public Health Feasibility Study Committee meetings, rather than duplicate that effort. A letter making that request to study chair Bill Considine has been sent and permission received.

We passed some bylaws changes including changing the election of the president

The budget was amended at the annual meetings to increase the amount budgeted for the handbook. There was a corresponding change made on the revenue side indicating an increase in contributions from members. The revised budget appears elsewhere in the Voter as requested.

In addition, we voted to eliminate the separate program for City of Stow and City of Cuyahoga Falls, and established two priorities: 1) to educate the public regarding the MRDD system, particularly regarding change in funding and priorities; and 2) to focus on emerging issues of importance to the community by providing education or taking action.



50-year member Marjorie Thiel enjoying the scenery at LeFever's River Grille.



League members discussing business at the Annual Meeting



Councilman Frank Comunale addressing the membership

League Member Cynthia Sich Honored

LWVAA extends congratulations to member Cynthia Sich, Director of the Summit County Office of Consumer Affairs. Her office received the 2009 Achievement in Consumer Education (ACE) Award from the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators (NACAA) in recognition of its Financial Education Series. The NACAA represented 160 government

consumer agencies and 50 corporate consumer offices in the United States and abroad. To be chosen as the outstanding Office of Community Affairs for consumer education from among so many is quite an honor.

The Financial Education Series is designed to help those who are experiencing temporary reduction in income or looking

for ways to save for either short term or long term goals. These informative sessions have been held at different venues around the country, and try to help consumers learn more about how to budget, how to get through a financial crisis, and how to avoid foreclosure. Check the Office of Consumer Affairs website, www.summit.oh.us/conaffairs for updated offerings this fall.

Board Briefs By: Erica Greer

We begin a new regular feature this month. We hope you will enjoy learning more about what your LWVAA Board is working on. Perhaps you'll even see something you'd like to be involved with—we welcome member participation. And of course board meetings are open to the membership—just please let us know if you wish to observe. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm at Christ United Methodist Church on Mineola Ave. in Akron.

order of business was to review the strategic plan as developed in 2007-2008 to see how we are doing. The general consensus is that progress has been made in some areas, but that we must increase membership, keep working to increase diversity, develop a new-member orientation to help get new members familiar with League and hopefully more involved, and to continue to reach out to the community in various ways, via voter service, voter registration, and the speakers' bureau.

We then reviewed the Membership Recruitment Initiative with an eye to calendar planning. The goal is to raise League's visibility in the community year-round, not just during election season. Members came up with the outline of an annual calendar that still

needs to be fleshed out with dates and locations. This will be published in the next edition of *The Voter*.

We also considered the advisability and feasibility of conducting a study on the local requirements for recall initiatives and discussed plans for the annual picnic, to be held August 27 in commemoration of Women's Equality Day.

Mayor Plusquellic asked to come and speak to us about legislation he is sending to City Council to change one provision of the recall process, which he asked our board to consider at the next board meeting in August.

LWVO and LWV Toledo/Lucas County Lawsuit Settled

In 2005, LWV Ohio, LWV Toledo/Lucas County and 12 Ohio citizens filed suits against the offices of the Governor and the Secretary of State, charging that over the past 30 years these offices had failed to protect the fundamental rights of eligible Ohio voters to cast a meaningful ballot, as required by the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

We all remember pictures from the 2004 election of students from Kenyon College who waited up to 12 hours to cast a vote on one of the two voting machines allotted their precinct, and voters in some precincts in Franklin County waited up to 7 hours. Other people who were legally entitled to vote were turned away at the polls due to errors in state reporting systems.

long lines and aren't erroneously turned away. The new standards are to take effect immediately, and will be in place for the next state election in 2010. These standards will remain in place until 2015.

The case grew out of the 2004 Presidential election and the United States Supreme Court's *Bush V. Gore* decision, which held that different geographical regions of a state could not adopt differing ways of administering elections. At the time the suit was filed, there was no centralized election planning by the secretary of state in Ohio, and election officials in individual counties ran voting using their own guidelines instead of according to a single standard.

On June 16, the plaintiffs reached an historic agreement with the State of Ohio which is binding on the state to provide for uniformity and consistency in Ohio election procedures so that the opportunity to vote can be enjoyed equally by all Ohio citizens, regardless of where they vote. The settlement requires the Ohio secretary of state to take affirmative steps in how it plans its elections in order to prevent problems in the future. It also requires each county to put together a comprehensive Election Day plan so that voters don't face

"The agreement reached represents the best interests of Ohio voters and guarantees careful planning, evaluation, and oversight of the process that will provide greater access to the election process. It is our hope that it restores public confidence in our election process," explained Peg Rosenfield, elections specialist for the League of Women Voters of Ohio.

The plaintiffs were represented by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, Under Law, Demos, and the law firms of Proskauer Rose LLP, Arnold & Porter LLP, and Connelly, Jackson, & Collier LLP, along with the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area People for the American Way

Submissions for the September *Voter* should be submitted to Diana Kingsbury by August 15th. You can submit articles via e-mail at kingsbury.diana@gmail.com or mail at 1309 Perry Dr. NW Canton, OH 44708. Thank you!

What is Driving the Rapid Rise in U.S. Healthcare Costs? By: Rhondra Tewes, LWVMA, a member of the LWVUS Healthcare Education Task Force

[This article is taken from the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org. Sources for the statistics cited in this article are available there, but are not reprinted here because of space constraints.]

and patients to navigate, and leads to inefficient care delivery. Confusing paperwork and rules for multiple insurance programs allow patients to fall through safety nets. Medically, patients are often subjected to duplicate testing and suffer negative drug interactions due to multiple providers and no central medical records system.

Despite high expenditures for multiple private, state and federal health insurance programs, a Families USA 2009 report, *Americans At Risk*, found that 86.7 million people—one out of every three Americans under the age of 65—were uninsured for some period of time during 2007 and 2008. These Americans either pay for medical care out of their own pockets or delay needed care altogether. Another 16 million Americans are considered underinsured. This figure puts the 50 percent of consumer bankruptcies in the United States that stem from medical bills into perspective.

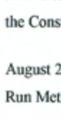
- **Health Insurance Premiums:** In 2008, employer health insurance premiums increased by 5% or twice the rate of inflation, with an annual premium averaging nearly \$12,700 for an employer health plan covering a family of four.
- **Administrative Costs:** Administrative overhead can cause health care insurance premiums to balloon: compare Medicare at 3% with an average of commercial carriers at 20%, and investor-owned Blue Cross/Blue Shield at 27%.
- **Percentage of Total Health Care Costs:** The typical American family of four spent \$15,600 on total health care costs in 2008, or 25% of the combined family income of \$60,000. In 2003, a comparison of health care costs in the U.S. and Canada found that administration accounted for 31.0 percent of health care expenditures in the United States and 16.7 percent of health care expenditures in Canada.
- **Highly Fragmented System:** A fragmented system is hard for employers

- **Bricks and Mortar:** Capital spending drives operating costs and determines the geographic distribution of resources. When operating and capital payments are combined, as they are currently, prosperous hospitals can expand and modernize while impoverished ones cannot, regardless of need or quality.
- **Emphasis on Treatment:** Advancements in clinical treatments, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices are accompanied by increasing costs, including costs of research and development, and advertising directly to patients as well as providers. *The decision to allow advertising directly to patients has greatly increased the demand of new products and services.*
- **The Uninsured:** Health care for individuals who are uninsured raises the costs for all Americans because providers (physicians, clinics, hospitals) make up the losses by shifting the cost to paying consumers.
- **Impact of Other Insurance:** Often overlooked, the medical expense portions of liability, workers compensation and auto insurance for homes, cars, and businesses also contribute to the cost of health care.

- 1 <http://www.nche.org/facts/cost.shtml>
- 2 <http://www.nche.org/documents/Costs-Workers-2009.pdf>
- 3 <http://www.milliman.com/expertise/healthcare/products-tools/mmi>
- 4 <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/short/349/8/768>
- 5 <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/290/6/798> (see "Capital Spending, Health Planning and Profit")
- 6 <http://download.journals.elsevierhealth.com/pdfs/journals/0002-9343/P11S0002934306012654.pdf>
- 7 <http://familiesusa.org/issues/uninsured/>
- 8 http://www.pnhp.org/news/2007/sepember/about_singlepayer_i.php
- 9 <http://www.familiesusa.org/assets/pdfs/americans-at-risk.pdf>
- 10 <http://www.annals.org/cgi/content/full/148/1/55>

LWVAA VISION STATEMENT

We envision LWVAA to be a dynamic organization involved in local politics so that a diversity of citizens recognize the League as an essential resource that motivates them to become increasingly involved in civic affairs and feel compelled to join the League

 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

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Membership: Jodie DeLamatre (330) 376-0399

Editor: Diana Kingsbury (330) 309-7555

IMPORTANT DATES

August 13 : Board meeting, 5:30 at CUMC

August 26: Women's Equality Day commemorating the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution giving women the right to vote.

August 27: Annual Picnic, Shady Hollow Shelter Sand Run Metro Park 6:00-8:30 PM

September 1: Candidates' Night, Akron-Summit County Main Library, 60 S. High St.

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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:

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