

## President's Remarks By: Erica Greer

**Happy Holidays!**

Perhaps it is just me, but 2009 seems to have rolled past in a veritable blur—how could it possibly be time for the holidays already? But election season is behind us, so it must be true.

Next up on our League calendar is one of my favorite meetings: Program Planning. I know many League members seemed to be confused about the purpose of Program Planning, but please plan to attend this meeting and I promise you will finally understand what it is and why it is so important.

Program, in League speak, simply refers to those issues chosen for study and/or action.

Therefore, the purpose of Program Planning is to identify those issues on the national or state level every other year, and on the local level each year. In addition, we identify priorities for our local League for the upcoming year. Since this will be an even-numbered year, we will be doing national program planning on Saturday, January 16.

There are a couple of reasons Program Planning is one of my favorite meetings. First of all, it is the essence of League as a grassroots organization, as well as a working model of representative democracy. The issues the State and National League study and take on as priorities do not come down from the top—they come up from the grassroots, as each local League debates, discusses, and submits

their suggestions. After the State Decades—countless studies and carefully worded positions League's response, they take our input and approve what becomes a "board recommended program." The same is true at the local level, as the LWVAA board will also approve "recommended program" organization, and ahead of that local members have debated its time in so many ways.

In both cases, I hope you'll plan to participate in Program Planning either at state or national convention, or at the LWVAA annual meeting for local program planning. In both cases, I hope you'll plan to participate in Program Planning either at state or national convention, or at the LWVAA annual meeting for local program planning. In both cases, I hope you'll plan to participate in Program Planning either at state or national convention, or at the LWVAA annual meeting for local program planning.

Erica

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## Hats Off to the League of Women Voters!

We have an exciting year coming up—the League of Women Voters turns 90 on February 14th! LWVAA, which turns 70 in 2010 as well, is making some exciting plans, and I hope you will be a part of them.

On February 2 at 10:30 AM, we will be holding a press conference at the Sojourner Truth delivered her famous "Ain't I a

Building on High Street in downtown Akron (the Jobs and Family Services Building). The Mayor of Akron and the County Executive will be on hand to honor the League for its 90 years of service to the voter and the community.

As you may know, Sojourner Truth was an African-American abolitionist and suffragist who delivered her famous "Ain't I a

Woman" speech right here in Akron!

Also on tap in February are plans for a luncheon to honor local "Woman in Democracy," a tribute to the many women elected office holders in the Summit County area. Of course



## Hats Off to the League of Women Voters! (continued)

Without the passage of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote in 1920, the culmination of 72 years of impassioned hard work by the American women suffragists (which later became the League of Women Voters), none of these women would have had the opportunity to be serving their communities. I hope you will plan to join us to honor these public servants and the role that the League has

played for all these years on Saturday, February 27 at the Fairlawn Country Club.

Further events will be coming throughout the year—we'll keep you posted in future issues of The Akron Voter. I hope each and every LWVAA member will be able to attend at least one of these celebrations in 2010!

## Census/Redistricting with the Tallmadge LWV By: Mary Lou Gault

On Thursday, November 19, I attended the Tallmadge League of Women Voters impact meeting at the Tallmadge Community Center.

The town hall meeting started with a presentation by State Senator Tom Sawyer (28th District), who reminded us of the importance of the U.S. Census and gave interesting background information.

alich assured us any census information cannot be obtained by the FBI, IRS, nor INS.

U.S. Census Partnership Specialist Audrey Somerville addressed some issues wherein people deliberately avoid the census: fear of government; confidentiality; irregular housing; complex and fluid households; language barriers and new immigrant's apprehensions. Somerville told of efforts to provide centers to aid anyone in filling out the simple census questionnaire. She stressed the importance of local community involvement in aiding the census takers.

Census forms will be mailed around March 15-17, 2010.

Redistricting was presented by Anne Nelson, LWVO. A fair plan for redistricting is a definite possibility. Explaining how the process has developed over the years and sharing results of a recent "contest" by LWVO for a fair plan, there is hope that fair redistricting for Ohio may become a reality.

Local Census Office Manager, David DeShon told us the census would be very simple in 2010 and provided sample copies to those in attendance. It will be available in the near future on-line (2010census.gov). DeShon stated his territory encompassed Medina, Summit, and Wayne counties, a total of some 750,000 citizens. Assuring us the census is safe, he also requested workers. There is a definite procedure to applying for, testing for, and acquiring the job to help with the 2010 Census. Hourly rates ranged from \$8.25-\$19.50.

If you think helping would send you out to homes that do not respond, we were told of many ways that an individual would be able to assist with the census.

The U.S. Census Bureau is NOW HIRING.

Office Staff—office clerk, recruiting assistant, administrative assistant and office operations supervisor—Fall 2009 and early 2010.

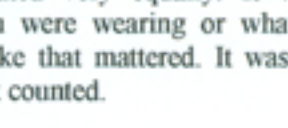
Field Staff—early 2010—enumerator, crew leader, crew leader assistant and field operations supervisor.

Mary Helen Hart, LWVO, helped with the power point presentations, stressed the importance of staying informed and encouraged the use of the LWVO impact website.

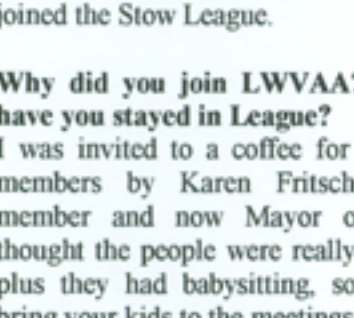
The League of Women Voters prides itself on its ability to educate our fellow citizens. Here is an excellent opportunity to do your part. Learn about the process and share your knowledge with family, friends and neighbors. If you'd like a copy of the census form, let me know and I'll mail you one.

## Words of Inspiration

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."  
—HENRY FORD



## LWVAA Member Spotlight On...Gerry Hall



meeting was about balance of trade, and I was so impressed with the presentation. I felt like I actually understood it! And League was the first women's group I had been to where the members didn't all just sit around and talk about kids and cooking, but about larger issues.

**What positions, if any, have you held with the League?**  
It's probably easier to say what positions I haven't held. I've never been treasurer, but I think I have held just about every other position. I have also been Project Director and President of Ed Fund. I've been doing Voter Service for a number of years now.

**What do you find most rewarding about being a League member?**  
I think it is the people I meet and work with. They are all interested and interesting people. I remember noticing at a State Convention what a wide variety of people were there, from all walks of life, but all

were treated very equally. It wasn't what you were wearing or what you looked like that mattered. It was your ideas that counted.

**What do you think is the biggest issue voters face?**  
I think it's making an informed decision. It's not an easy task.

**Are you involved in any other community organizations?**  
The only other organization I'm currently involved with is my church. And even when I was more involved, it was usually something that was an offshoot of League, like Kids Voting, Leader Institute, and the YES Project.

**What interests do you have outside of the League?**  
I enjoy reading, playing bridge, golfing, and travel.

## Board Briefs By: Erica Greer

Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm at Christ United Methodist Church, 380 Mineola Ave. in Akron. Meetings are open and members are welcome to attend.

The board met in brief session prior to the dessert reception for prospective members at the home of Lois Arnold.

Action taken included: nomination of Erica Greer for the Inspiration Award for the Women's History project; we should be entitled to two delegates to the National Convention in Atlanta on June 11-15; the

board agreed to sign on as a co-sponsor of Governor Strickland's Momentum 2010, an Ohio Women's Summit to be held on International Woman's Day, March 8, in central Ohio.

**Membership:** We had 10% response rate to our invitations to the prospective member reception.

**Observer Corps:** Has volunteers to cover all City and County Council meetings but would like additional volunteers to relieve those currently volunteering.

**Voter Service:** Candidates' nights were very well attended this year, including over 100 people at the Copley School Board candidates' night. We need to do a better job of distributing Voters' Guides, and to make them more visible at some locations, such as Acme stores.

**Webmaster:** Work is proceeding on the new website. We had over 3,000 visits to our website in October, and almost 1,000 visits in the first 4 days of November.

## Editor's Note

The deadline to submit articles for the February Voter is January 15th. Articles may be e-mailed to kingsbury.diana@gmail.com or mailed to 1309 Perry Dr. NW Canton, OH 44708. Thank you!

## Rural Health Care: Where the Needs Are Great and the Resources Are Few (PART II) By: Doris Isolini Nelson (of LWVCA and the LWVUS Task Force on Health Care)

(This is part two of a report on rural health care by the LWVUS Health Care Task Force. Part one appeared in the November 2009 Voter.)

**Implications for Reform**  
"The obstacles faced by health care providers and patients in rural areas are vastly different than those in urban areas. Rural Americans face a unique combination of factors that create disparities in health care...Economic factors, cultural and social differences, educational shortcomings, lack of recognition by legislators and the sheer isolation of living in remote rural areas all conspire to impede rural Americans in their struggle to lead a normal health life." (2)

Consequently, the health care crisis in rural America calls for the multi-faceted solution to the complex problem of delivering health care.

- Eliminate professional workforce shortages
- Improve and expand the National Health Services Corps. The National Health Service Corps was created in the 1970s because many rural physicians retired or moved during the 1950s and the 1960s, leaving many areas in the country without essential health services. Increasing specialization and technological advances fed the trend (5). Through scholarship and loan repayment programs, the Corps helps designated shortage areas get medical, dental and mental health providers (6).

As of March 31, 2009, there are thousands of designated "Professional Shortage Areas" in primary, dental, and mental health practitioners in the United States (7).

- Create incentives for rural medicine (1) Increase the cap on the cost of rural residency training programs in primary care and general surgery and provide appropriate funding for faculty to train additional residents in those areas.
- Create incentives for primary care: Provide interest-free loans and tax credits on income for primary care and general surgery residencies in rural and underserved areas.
- Provide equity in reimbursement "Medicare payments to rural hospitals and physicians are dramatically less than those to their urban counterparts for equivalent services." (2)
- Correct disparities in infrastructure (4) This is particularly important in the development of HIT within hospitals and among providers. Electronic medical records can also assist primary care doctors consulting with specialists who are geographically separated from the care of their patients.

- Medical training programs targeted to rural needs.
- Incentives for primary care practitioners in isolated communities.
- Development of community health centers that provide both health education and services.
- Financing of appropriate HIT and staff (1)(2)(5)(6)(7)

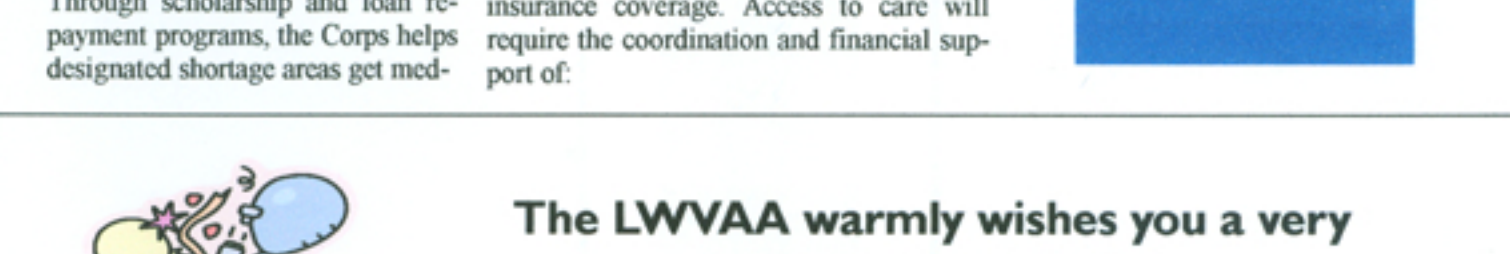
Providing for health care needs of rural Americans will require more than universal insurance coverage. Access to care will require the coordination and financial support of:

- http://www.ruralhealthweb.org/go/left/health-reform-and-advocacy-toolkit/rural-reform-priorities
- http://www.ruralhealthweb.org/go/left/about-rural-health/what-s-different-about-rural-health-care
- http://www.nrharural.org/go/rural-health-topics/frontier/
- http://www.uppermidwesthrhc.org/pdf/policybrief\_hit\_policy.pdf
- http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/
- http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/about/history.htm
- http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/about/

Remember, census data is kept confidential. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share an individual's responses with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities.



## The LWVAA warmly wishes you a very HAPPY NEW YEAR!!



## United States Census 2010 (From the U.S. Census Bureau)

The first census took place in 1790 to determine the number of seats each state would have in the U.S. House of Representatives. The census also was created to gain a better understanding of where people lived and to establish patterns of settlement as the nation grew.

The Census Bureau was established in 1902. Today, in addition to administering the census of population and housing, the Census Bureau conducts more than 200 annual surveys, including the American Community Survey, the Current Population Survey and economic censuses every five years.

The census is a count of everyone residing in the United States, both citizens and non-citizens. The U.S. Constitution requires a national census every 10 years to count the population and determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. Both citizens and non-citizens are counted, as required by the Constitution.

You will receive a census questionnaire consisting of 10 questions in March 2010, either by U.S. mail or by hand delivery. Some people in remote areas will be counted in person. Households should complete and mail back their questionnaires upon receipt. Filling out the questionnaire should only take about 10 minutes. Households that do not respond may receive a replacement questionnaire in early April. Census takers will visit households that do not return questionnaires to take a count in person.

It is extremely important that census counts are accurate, and that everyone participate. Every year, the federal government allocates more than \$400 billion to states and communities based, in part, on census data. Census data are also used to determine locations for retail stores, schools, hospitals, new housing developments and other community facilities. Census data also determine boundaries for state and local legislative and congressional districts.

## Mark Your Calendar for Statehouse/Council Day!

From LWVO:  
"Mark your calendar! Statehouse Day (SHD) 2010 and State Council will take place April 14, 2010 in Columbus. Of course, having local League leaders and advocates in town for these concurrent events is a perfect excuse to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters. So in addition to deliberating over LWVO's next fiscal year budget and briefing you on essential reform issues—from the lawsuit settlement to redistricting and the Census—we

We will invite legislators to join us for a reception complete with birthday cake. We are working on the agenda for SHD to provide an exciting and informative program. Information will be forthcoming on specifics but we wanted to remind you to mark your calendars and begin making arrangements to come to Columbus on April 14, 2010. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Statehouse Day Coordinator Scott Britton toll free at 1-877-LWV-OHIO (1-877-598-6446).

If you have never attended Statehouse

Day, it is a really great way to learn more about what League is doing on the state level. It is also a great chance to network. With other Leagues around the state and also to learn more about the advocacy work of LWVO's amazing volunteer lobby corps. We usually carpool down to Columbus, so if you are interested in attending, please contact Erica (330) 882-3106 or erica@greerzone.com. It's an informative, interesting and fun day, and all are welcome to attend!

## The League's Mission

The mission of the League of Women Voters is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.


The League of Women Voters of the Akron Area has been in existence since 1940. For the past several decades, LWVAA has worked hard to encourage informed and active citizen participation in the government at the local, state, and national level. LWVAA's strength is found in the grassroots involvement of dedicated citizens within Akron and surrounding communities. LWVAA is both nonpartisan AND political. This unique structure ensures that the best possible outcomes for citizens are studied and directly pursued within the government. For more information, please visit our website at www.lwvaa.org.

## 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

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<b>IMPORTANT DATES</b>	
January 7: Board Meeting 5:30 pm (CUMC)	
January 16: Program Planning 9:30 am (Cuyahoga Falls Public Library)	
February 2: Press Conference 10:30 am (Sojourner Truth Building)	
February 4: Board Meeting 5:30 pm (CUMC)	
February 27: "Women in Democracy" luncheon (Fairlawn Country Club)	