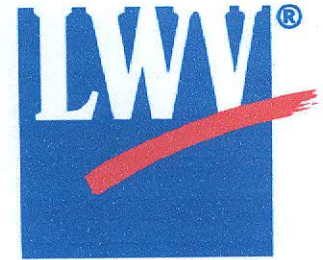


# The Akron Voter



Volume 4, Issue 5

January 2012



## President's Remarks by Diana Kingsbury

Happy New Year!

What better time to reflect on the past year and look forward to the months ahead. LWVAA has much to be proud of in the work we have done to make democracy work. As you know, the League works actively 12 months out of the year to ensure voters are engaged and informed, and it is with the start of a new year that we review our positions and set priorities.

I invite you to participate in this year's program planning meeting on Saturday, January 28th from 10 am to noon at the Highland Square Library. In even-numbered years, we focus on our organization's national positions, determining which positions should be re-

tained, dropped, or updated. We may also recommend new issues for study at the national level. The decisions we make as a local League are provided to the LWVUS board, who then decides what program to recommend to Convention. The Convention delegates then vote to set program for the coming biennium. The League of Women Voters is fundamentally "grassroots" and it is through this process that we are able to participate fully in the national activities of our organization.

Along with a review of LWVUS' positions, we will also take a closer look at our local League's priorities and positions as a way to chart the course for the year ahead. Members are encouraged to bring their ideas for possible studies, in addition to ways in which we might improve the work we are doing.

Program planning is a great meeting to attend for new and seasoned members alike. Participants have the opportunity to learn more about the focus areas of LWVUS, as well as to determine which pressing issues should be the focus of the League's work in the coming year. If you have never participated in a program planning meeting, or if you are interested in getting more involved in LWVAA in 2012, this as a great opportunity to make a big difference!

In addition to program planning, several other exciting activities are coming up in 2012. On Friday, January 6th, LWVAA, in conjunction with the Akron Press Club and the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, is co-sponsoring an appearance by Ohio U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown. Additionally, LWVAA, LWV Hudson and LWV Tallmadge will

be participating in an interview of Summit County Board of Elections officials as part of the settlement reached in LWV's lawsuit against the Secretary of State's office. It is through such activities that we provide voter service to our community.

Also, make plans to attend our "Women in Journalism" event scheduled for Saturday, March 17th at the Fairlawn Country Club. It is sure to be very exciting, as we honor women who have worked actively as journalists to help inform the public, with Pulitzer Prize-winning author Connie Schultz as our keynote speaker. Please stay tuned to future issues of *The Voter* for more information.

Looking forward to seeing you in 2012!

*Diana*

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## Connie Schultz to Speak — Save the Date!

Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 17, when Pulitzer Prize-winning author Connie Schultz will be the keynote speaker at LWVAA's Women in Journalism celebration. The event, being held at Fairlawn Country Club from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, will be held to commemorate Sunshine Week and Women's History Month, and to

honor women journalists in Summit County.

This event will recognize the important and changing role of women in journalism, as well as the essential role of journalism in our democracy. Without journalists to keep "sunshine" on our elected officials, our democracy

would be much less open and accountable.

Watch future issues of *The Voter* for further information about this exciting event!



## Board Briefs

by **Martha Lester, Secretary**

*Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm at Christ United Methodist Church on Mineola Ave. in Akron and are open to the public. The next board meeting will be January 5, 2012.*

At the December 2nd meeting (before the Holiday Get-together) the Board:

- Heard that Presidents from the Leagues of Kent, Hudson, Tallmadge, and Akron met to discuss common interests and plan for cooperation on future events.
- Expanded plans for the "Clean Air Promise": Following up on the November 10, 2011 Forum on Akron

Area Air Quality and an article in the Beacon Journal with a letter to the editor and to elected officials. We expect every public official in Summit County to sign the pledge to work for enforcement of cleaner air quality standards.

- Had a report that the membership meeting in November was a success with 5 new members present. The December meeting speaker is Summit County Council-at-Large, Ilene Shapiro, discussing "The Green Project."
- Learned that meetings held by way of electronic media must be conducted

simultaneously (i.e. conference calls or on-line). They can not be a series of e-mails.

- Added to the calendar:  
**January 6:** Akron Press Club Luncheon with Sherrod Brown  
**January 28:** Program Planning  
**March 13:** Privatization Study / Consensus Meeting with Hudson  
**March 17:** Women in Journalism brunch at Fairlawn Country Club



## Did You Know — Presidential Inaugural Trivia

by **Maureen Sullivan**

George Washington (3/4/1793) He delivered the shortest inaugural address at just 135 words \*.

James Madison (3/4/1809) The first inaugural ball was held for him.

Martin Van Buren (3/4/1837) He was the first president who was not born a British subject.

Abraham Lincoln (3/4/1865) Lincoln's inauguration was the first to include African-American participation in the parade.

William McKinley (3/4/1897) His was the first inaugural ceremony recorded by a motion picture camera.

Woodrow Wilson (3/4/1917) For the first time women were included in Wilson's second inaugural parade. (The parade was actually held on 3/5/1917 because 3/4/1917 was a Sunday.)

Calvin Coolidge (3/4/1925) Coolidge's second oath of office was administered

for the first time by a former U. S. President (William Taft) who was the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. It was also the first inaugural ceremony broadcast nationally on the radio.

Harry Truman (1/20/1949) The first inaugural to be televised.

John Kennedy (1/20/1961) The first time a poet (Robert Frost) participated in an inaugural ceremony.

Lyndon Johnson (11/22/1963) The first (and so far) the only president to be sworn in by a woman, U.S. District Judge Sarah T. Hughes.

William Clinton (1/20/1997) The first inaugural ceremony broadcast live on the internet.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution changed the date of inauguration from March 4 to January 20. Franklin Roosevelt's second inauguration was the first to be held on that date.

\* George Washington's second inaugural address – March 4, 1793:

Fellow Citizens:

I am again called upon by the voice of my country to execute the functions of its Chief Magistrate. When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the people of united America.

Previous to the execution of any official act of the President the Constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence: That if it shall be found during my administration of the Government I have in any instance violated willingly or knowingly the injunctions thereof, I may (besides incurring constitutional punishment) be subject to the upbraidings of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony.

**The deadline for the February *Akron Voter* is January 15. Please send any materials you may have to *Akron Voter* Editor Erica Greer at [erica@greerzone.com](mailto:erica@greerzone.com), or via mail to 408 Ott Dr. Clinton, OH 44216**

# LWVAA Holidays Party

by Erica Greer

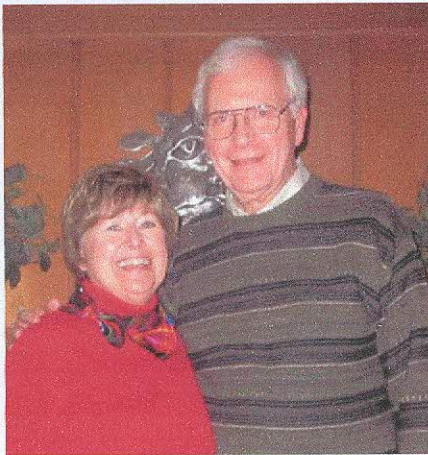
More than 30 League members and guests gathered to kick off the Holidays on Friday, December 3 at the home of Bill and Ardith Keck. Those in attendance shared fabulous food and good cheer, and as at all League functions, stimulating conversation.

Summit County Council At-Large Ilene Shapiro was a special guest, and told us

about her involvement with the Summit County Green Policy Task Force. The Green Policy Task Force, unanimously adopted by Council on March 3, 2008, was established to examine and develop plans and other methods in an attempt to make Summit County a more sustainable and environmentally-conscious place to live.

The task force includes representatives

from County Council, Summit County Engineers office, MetroParks, First Energy, Sierra Club, Ohio EPA, Solid Waste Management Authority, Akron Public Schools, Greater Akron Chamber, and others. The Task Force looks for ways the County can reduce the use of natural resources through energy efficiency, water conservation and sustainable land use.



Our hosts, Ardith and Bill Keck



Council At-Large Ilene Shapiro discusses the Summit County Green Policy Task Force



Ed Fund Project Director Janice Jacobs and Voter Service Chair Gerry Hall



Gerry Hall with new members Carl & Lucinda Meador



Robert & Bea Walker with Lois Arnold & Pete Crossland

## Notable Quotable

“Cowardice asks the question, 'Is it safe?' Expediency asks the question, 'Is it politic?' But conscience asks the question, 'Is it right?' And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular but because conscience tells one it is right.”

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# Meet ALEC

by Elisabeth McNamara

The following article by Elisabeth McNamara, President of LWVUS, is taken from the website of LWVUS: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org). For more information about facts cited in this article, please use the links available on the LWVUS website.



ALEC isn't a guy. ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council, is a factory for anti-voter legislation, funded by power barons like Kraft Foods, McDonalds, Pfizer and the Koch brothers.

They are the driving force behind the recent flood of discriminatory voter ID laws, like the one in Texas, where a state-issued concealed handgun permit is an acceptable form of identification...but a state-issued student ID from a university is not.

The League is working tirelessly to fight back against these voter suppression schemes that could disenfranchise up to 5 million Americans in next year's elections.

Voter impersonation is not the epidemic that these special interest groups would have you believe. Here are the facts:

### FIVE MYTHS ABOUT VOTER IMPERSONATION:

**MYTH:** Voter impersonation is a widespread problem.

**FACT:** Between 2002 and 2007, after undertaking a massive investigation into voting irregularities, the U.S. Justice Department did not prosecute a single individual for impersonating another voter at the polls.

**MYTH:** Third party registration drives contribute to voter impersonation.

**FACT:** Since 2008, only 31 cases of suspected voter impersonation have been reported to Florida authorities. But due to a restrictive new law there, the League has been forced to suspend its Florida voter registration activities for the first time in 72 years.

**MYTH:** Everyone either has an ID or can easily obtain one.

**FACT:** 11 percent of eligible voters or about 21 million people, don't have updated, state-issued photo IDs. Further-

more, most states require producing a passport or birth certificate to get one. This presents a tremendous burden for people who work multiple jobs, lack transportation, have disabilities, live outside the state they were born, are poor or elderly.

**MYTH:** Election Day registration invites voter impersonation.

**FACT:** An investigation by the Secretary of State in Maine – which was the first state to adopt Election Day registration – did not find evidence of voting irregularities due to same day registration.

**MYTH:** Early voting increases voter impersonation.

**FACT:** Incidents of impersonation in early voting are just as rare as they are in Election Day balloting. A CBS News report on 17 early voting states revealed no widespread signs of irregularities in the 2008 election.



# Election Year 2012 Resolutions

by Alison McQuade

The following was taken from the LWVUS website, [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

The Iowa Caucuses are less than a week away – an early kickoff to what will surely be a long and intense election year 2012. Instead of the usual New Year's resolutions, the League is putting together a list of **Election Year Resolutions/Hopes** for the upcoming year:

1. Ensure all eligible voters are registered to vote and can exercise their right to vote without having to overcome unnecessary and restrictive hurdles.
2. Educate the electorate on the candidates and issues on their ballots and help them find their polling place.
3. Encourage informative and productive debates between candidates so voters can learn about their elected representatives through more than just sound bites.
4. Fight to make sure voters decide the outcome of elections, not special interest money.
5. Promise for clean air for children and their families, and change the discussion to the important issues facing Americans in 2012.





## Member Spotlight on.....

## Katie Fry



### When did you join the League?

I joined just about a year ago — last winter.

### Why did you join LWVAA? And why have you stayed in the League?

I joined for two reasons. First, I had attended a national conference on community engagement and deliberative democracy. Elisabeth McNamara, President of LWVUS, was there talking about League activities in those areas. She spoke about how important it was to go home and join local groups working on those goals. I made a commitment to do that when I got back to Akron. Then, second, shortly after I got back, I was approached by Sara Gibbs, who had overheard my conversation with a friend, to join the League and to work on a project, educating the public about the Citizens United Supreme Court decision. It seemed like a natural fit with my commitment to get involved locally, so I joined.

I have stayed in the League because I saw it doing beneficial meetings and educational sessions. I think my early involvement with

a project was important in my rejoining.

### What issues would you like to see League focusing on?

I think the League needs to focus on campaign finance reform — I believe a constitutional amendment is needed to get these huge sums of money out of our political process. We can't address important issues until we get the money and its outsized influence out of our politics.

### What do you find most rewarding about being a League member?

I think it is being a part of an organization with the values that the League has, of informed participation at all level of politics. I have also met many interesting, informed people who are passionate about these issues.

### What do you think is the biggest issue voters face?

The campaign finance issue is huge. Most people get their information about candidates and issues from the mainstream media,

and the candidate with the most money certainly has an advantage in that arena.

### Are you involved in other community organizations?

I am active with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron, where I facilitate a class about sustainable food and eating locally. I am on the steering committee for the Summit Food Policy Coalition, and am very active in the local food movement. I am also on the Advisory Board and Wellness Council for the Austen Bioinnovation Institute.

### What interests do you have outside of the League?

I love cooking, gardening, hiking, and reading. I am co-owner and partner for Round River Consulting, LLC, and we are very active in the local food movement. We are very encouraged by legislation that Senator Sherrod Brown is co-sponsoring called the Local Farms Food and Jobs Act.

## Martin Luther King Day — a History

*from Wikipedia*

*The following article is taken from Wikipedia. Please follow the link to see all source information and related links:*

*<http://.wikipedia.org/wiki/>*

*Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a United States federal holiday marking the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It is observed on the third Monday of January each year, which is around the time of King's birthday, January 15. The floating holiday is similar to holidays set under the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, though the act predated the establishment of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day by fifteen years.

King was the chief spokesman for nonviolent activism in the civil rights movement, which successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed on January 20, 1986. At first, some states resisted observing the holiday

as such, giving it alternative names or combining it with other holidays. It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2000.

The idea of Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a holiday was promoted by labor unions in contract negotiations. After King's death, United States Representative John Conyers (a Democrat from Michigan) and United States Senator Edward Brooke (a Republican from Massachusetts) introduced a bill in Congress to make King's birthday a national holiday. The bill first came to a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1979. However, it fell five votes short of the number needed for passage. Two of the main arguments mentioned by opponents were that a paid holiday for federal employees would be too expensive, and that a holiday to honor a private citizen would be contrary to longstanding tradition (King had never held public office). Only two other persons have national holidays in the United States honoring them: George Washington, the first President of the United

States, and Christopher Columbus, the navigator, colonizer, and explorer from the Republic of Genoa, whose voyages across the Atlantic Ocean led to general European awareness of the American continents.

Soon after, the King Center turned to support from the corporate community and the general public. The success of this strategy was cemented when musician Stevie Wonder released the single "Happy Birthday" to popularize the campaign in 1980 and hosted the Rally for Peace Press Conference in 1981. Six million signatures were collected for a petition to Congress to pass the law, termed by a 2006 article in *The Nation* as "the largest petition in favor of an issue in U.S. history."

At the White House Rose Garden on November 2, 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill, proposed by Representative Katie Hall of Indiana, creating a federal holiday to honor King. It was observed for the first time on January 20, 1986.



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**IMPORTANT DATES**

**January 1: Happy New Year!**

**January 5: LWVAA Board Meeting, 5:30 PM  
CUMC, 380 Mineola Ave., Akron**

**January 16: Martin Luther King Day**

**January 28: Program Planning  
10 AM to Noon  
Highland Square Library**

**February 2: LWVAA Board Meeting, 5:30 PM  
CUMC, 380 Mineola Ave., Akron**



**Join the nation's most respected grassroots political organization —  
Become a member of the League of Women Voters!**

Membership in the League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, is open to any citizen of voting age, male or female. 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.

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to LWVAA and send with this completed form to:  
LWVAA, 380 Mineola Ave., Akron, OH 44320  
or join online on our website: [www.lwvaa.org](http://www.lwvaa.org)**



**Vote for civility in  
civic discourse —**

**Join the League  
Today!**



*Have you  
renewed your  
membership?*

In case it has slipped your mind in these busy times, please take a moment right now to renew your membership in LWVAA. We must have our final count for LWVUS by January 31, 2012!

Dues are \$60 per year (just \$5 per month for individuals)  
\$30 per additional member in the same household  
\$30 for members under 30 year of age.

You can pay by check, made payable to LWVAA and sent to Sharley Greer's attention at:

LWVAA  
380 Mineola Ave.  
Akron, OH 44320

OR, you can renew online on the League website. Just go to [www.lwvaa.org](http://www.lwvaa.org) and click on JOIN on the homepage.

Whichever method you choose, don't put it off —

**RENEW TODAY!**