



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

THE VOTER

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May-June, 2014



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GET READY FOR THE PRIMARY!

The 2014 Ohio Primary is Tuesday, May 6. In this edition of the Voter, we have all the information you need on the importance of voting in a primary, how to vote and the explanation of State Issue 1 and Hamilton County Issue 3.

- a Democratic Party and issues ballot;
- a Green Party and issues ballot;
- an issues-only ballot;
- a Libertarian Party and issues ballot; or
- a Republican Party and issues ballot.

For this primary, Ohio voters can select one of five types of ballots:

Read more on page 3!



The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to all women and men over 18. For information, call 513-281-8683, or write to the LWVCA office at 103 Wm H Taft Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45219, or email info@lwvcincinnati.org.

JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

May 20, 2014

By *Pinky Kocoshis, VP of Organization and Member Services*

We will be electing our Board for the coming year; receive reports on League activities; and approve our budget for 2014-2015.

The annual meeting of the LWVCA is Tuesday, May 20, in the Geier Room at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church. Registration and social time begins at 5:15 p.m., with dinner served at 6 p.m. Join us as we celebrate our accomplishments from the past year! Spouses and guests are also welcome to join us.

We hope to make this a festive event, along with conducting this very important business of the League.

As always, we are in need of volunteers to make this a successful evening. I have a loyal committee, but can always use one more! We need to leave the Geier Room neat and tidy. Please contact me if you are interested in helping out. See you there!

We will have a buffet dinner catered by Power Inspires Progress (PIP) with their fabulous African Stew, along with other goodies. Look for the entire menu and registration form in Workbook I in your mailbox!

Look for your registration form in Workbook I, coming soon to your mailbox!

LWV DIVERSITY POLICY

The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making.

The LWVCA affirms its commitment to actively seek diversity in its membership, leadership and programs.



LWVCA Education Fund is a member of Community Shares

CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER



We are excited to welcome **Becky Haltermon** as our new Office Manager. She will be meeting individually with Board members and Committee Chairs to learn about their roles and how they can work together in a meaningful manner. When you are in the office, we hope you'll introduce yourself to Becky, welcome her to the LWVCA and ask how you can help (we've already told her that League members are not bashful!).

Are you on the list to receive the **League Leaders' Updates**

from LWVUS? If you would like to subscribe, please send an email to database@lww.org and put "Subscribe to Leaders' Update" in the subject line. You'll find these emails packed with information. You will be able to contact your elected officials with accurate, up-to-date information.

Several members will have attended the **Statehouse Day** in Columbus by the time this issue goes to print. It's a wonderful way to connect with other Leagues throughout Ohio and find out what works well for them, and we hope that you

will consider this event next year. A variety of topics will be discussed, and information concerning our positions relative to voting issues will be presented.

Take a few minutes now to go to the LWVCA website and discover the new voter information service that our League is offering in preparation of the **Tuesday, May 6 primary**. In place of SmartVoter, you'll find a path on the homepage to **VOTE411**, a similar but improved voter information service. See the separate article

about **VOTE411** later in this issue.

The **LWVCA Annual Meeting** will have some new features this year. Please watch for the announcements concerning the meeting on **Tuesday, May 20**.

In League,
Helen and Don Rhoad
2013-15 Co-Presidents

NOTE FROM THE NEW LWVCA OFFICE MANAGER



"Votes for women!"

That was the congratulatory text I received from my brother-in-law when I announced to my family that I had been chosen to be the new Office Manager at the LWVCA.

I laughed when I saw it, because, yes, I am proud of the Cincinnati suffragists who founded the League nearly 100 years ago. But now, as I get to take part in the diverse services offered by the LWVCA, I feel excited not only by the past but of the

future of our organization.

With your guidance and support, I'm looking forward to raising the LWVCA's public profile, tackling office operations to make them more efficient and exploring new options to keep you, our members, engaged and involved.

I'm excited about this work because, while I have sizeable shoes to fill, I am part of an extraordinary team. I am constantly impressed and inspired by the dedication of LWVCA's volunteers, the

wisdom of its Board of Directors and the passion of its members.

Most importantly, I am honored to be working to fulfill the League's mission. After a little thought, I texted my brother-in-law back, saying, "Informed votes for all! This means YOU!"

Thank you to everyone who is a part of the LWVCA! This means YOU!

Becky Haltermon,
Office Manager

Make sure you stop by the LWVCA office to welcome Becky to our team!
Interested in meeting with Becky? You can reach out to her by calling 513-281-8683
or emailing becky@lwwcincinnati.org.

YOUR PRIMER ON THE PRIMARY!

By Janet Steiner and Voter Service Committee

As another primary election rolls around in Ohio, here is helpful information for anyone new to participating in the process and a review for the rest of us! In the following pages, you'll read information from LWV Ohio providing information on State Issue 1 and County Government Committee's explanation of Hamilton County's Issue 3.

Frequently Asked Questions about Ohio's Primary Process

What is a Primary Election? A primary election is an election that narrows the field of candidates before an election for office. Primary elections are one means by which a political party nominates candidates for an upcoming general election. This kind of election is necessary if two or more candidates from the same political party are running for the same political position. The victor will then run in the general election against opposing party candidates. The primaries take place months before the general election.

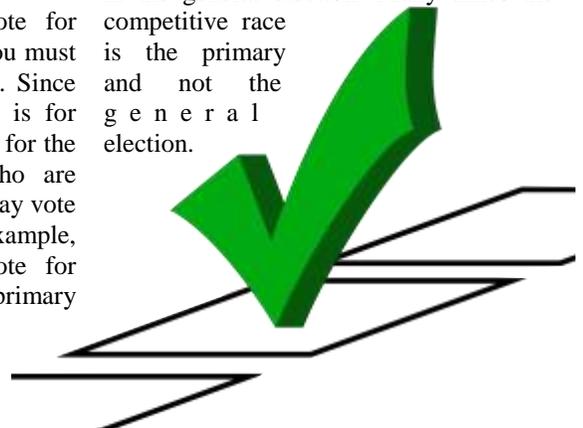
Who can vote in a Primary Election? A resident must register to vote at least 30 days before the election. The deadline for registering to vote in this year's primary was April 7. In order to be eligible to vote in the state of Ohio, you must meet the minimum voting age of 18. You may register to vote before turning 18 years of age as long as you will have reached the age of 18 before the next general election (November 4). Voters 17 years of age who will turn 18 on or before the general election date may register to vote and vote a 17-year-old voter ballot in the primary election. The 17 year-old-voter's ballot only includes races that carry over to the general election.

Party Affiliation In order to vote for candidates in a primary election you must be affiliated with a specific party. Since the purpose of primary elections is for each party to choose its candidates for the general election, only voters who are registered with a particular party may vote for that party's candidates. For example, Democratic voters may only vote for Democratic candidates in the primary election.

There may also be issues on the

Primary ballot and an elector can **request an issues only ballot** if he/she does not want to declare a political party and vote for candidates. Some examples of issues that may be on a Primary ballot can be tax levies for schools or cities, liquor laws, charter amendments, etc.

Why Primary Voting is Important Every ten years the political party that holds the majority in Ohio General Assembly sets the district lines for the state. Because they may draw the lines to make a district's registered voters predominantly of their party, known as gerrymandering, the candidate elected in the primary is usually assured of winning in the general election. Many times the competitive race is the primary and not the general election.



REMEMBER THESE IMPORTANT 2014 ELECTION DATES!

May 6, 2014
Primary Election Day

Oct. 6, 2014
Voter registration deadline for November
general election

Nov. 4, 2014
General Election Day

OUR TRANSITION TO VOTE411

By April Piatt, Voter Service Committee

Spring is a time of change and transitions, and, as the Cincinnati area readies for the upcoming primary, LWVCA is hard at work with changes of our own – our transition to VOTE411.org. While the nationally-recognized VOTE411.org is new to LWVCA, the website has proven to be an asset in finding new ways to involve and educate voters across the country. The website is easy to navigate for both those behind the scenes and for the voter. Once up and running and populated with candidate information, the



website will be a well-organized tool for all races and issues.

As with any new beginning, there will be a lot of groundwork to prepare our League, the website and the voting public. LWVCA volunteers have been busy

training and are anxious to put our new knowledge to good use.

This new venture will take the efforts of many to get the word out to fellow Leaguers and ultimately, the voters. So spread the word!

ISSUE SUMMARY AND PROS & CONS ABOUT STATE ISSUE 1

By LWV Ohio

Ballot Language

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO EXTEND THE INFRASTRUCTURE BOND PROGRAM BY AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF ADDITIONAL GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS TO FUND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS (Proposed by Joint Resolution of the General Assembly)

To amend Section 2s of Article VIII Constitution of the State of Ohio

A YES vote means approval of the amendment.

A NO vote means disapproval of the amendment.

A majority YES vote is required for the amendment to be adopted.

If approved, the proposed amendment will take effect immediately after the election.

LWV Ohio Explanation

In 1987, 1995 and 2005, voters approved the issuance of bonds to fund state aid to local public-works projects. The approval in 2005 permitted the state to finance \$1.35 billion of infrastructure capital improvements over a 10-year period.

This constitutional amendment would permit the state to issue an additional \$1.875 billion of general revenue bonds for the next 10-year period.

This amendment would:

Assist in the financing of capital improvement projects of municipal corporations, counties, townships or other governmental entities designated by law. The projects are limited to roads and bridges, waste water treatment systems, water supply systems, solid waste disposal facilities and storm water and sanitary collection, storage and treatment facilities, including real property, interests in real property, facilities and equipment related or incidental to them.

Limit the bonding authority to no more than \$175 million in each of the first five years and no more than \$200 million in each of the next five years.

Proponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. This amendment would provide a much-needed influx of funding for the infrastructure needs of local governments, including repair of roads and bridges and water and wastewater facilities.
2. After issuance of the proposal bonds, Ohio will still be well below the state's 5 percent constitutional debt limitation.

Opponents of the proposed amendment argue that:

1. In repaying the bonds, legislators lose flexibility in allocating funds for other state services that may be more urgent.
2. The amount proposed is insufficient to meet the current infrastructure needs.

LWV OHIO'S POSITION ON ISSUE 1: PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE BONDS

By LWV Ohio

The League SUPPORTS Issue 1.

At its March 2014 board meeting, LWV Ohio decided to support Issue One which will permit the State of Ohio to issue up to \$1.875 billion in revenue bonds to provide funds for capital improvements to cities and counties in Ohio. Improvements to roads and cleaner water are certainly priorities that the League can support.

The Board's support was based on LWVUS principles on government standards and policies and the LWV Ohio position on land use.

NONPARTISAN DESCRIPTION OF HAMILTON COUNTY ISSUE 3

By Chris Moran and the County Government Committee

Ballot Language

PROPOSED TAX LEVY (RENEWAL) HAMILTON COUNTY

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A renewal of a tax for the benefit of Hamilton County, Ohio, for the purpose of PROVIDING FUNDS FOR COMMUNITY MENTAL RETARDATION AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PROGRAMS, INCLUDING THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOLS, WORKSHOPS, CLINICS, RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES AND SUCH OTHER SERVICES AS PROVIDED IN CHAPTER 5126, OHIO REVISED CODE at a rate not exceeding four and thirteen-hundredths (4.13) mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to forty-one and three-tenths cents (\$0.413) for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for five (5) years, commencing in 2014, first due in calendar year 2015.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

LWVCA Explanation

In Issue 3 is a proposed 4.13 mills property tax levy on residential and commercial property in Hamilton County to provide funding for services for infants, children and adults with developmental disabilities. The levy is estimated to provide annual revenue of \$72,650,000 for Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) for 5 years.

It will cost the owner of a home with an estimated market value of \$100,000 approximately \$118.30 annually which is the current annual cost to that homeowner.

The levy was placed on the ballot by the Hamilton County Commissioners at the request of Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services (HCDDS) following a review by the Hamilton County Tax Levy Review Committee.

What the levy will do?

Issue 3 is a renewal of a property tax levy to fund DDS in Hamilton County. Property tax levy funding provides approximately 72 percent of the \$104 million dollar budget with about 8 percent State funding and 13 percent Federal funding. Services are provided annually to about 9,000 individuals and families which include case management, schools, adult centers, infant therapy, family support and housing support. Developmental disabilities are disabilities manifested before the age of 22 and include lifelong intellectual or physical disabilities.

Background

Hamilton County DDS is a county organization, established and required by state law, that serves people with developmental and intellectual disabilities in Hamilton County. In 2009, the Agency

name changed from Hamilton County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities to Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services in response to Legislation passed to remove the words “mental retardation” from the names of state agencies. Over the past five years, revenues have declined and expenditures have increased. The elimination of the tangible personal property tax decreased revenue during the 2010-2014 levy cycle. Demands for service have increased due to aging of the population and accompanying health issues and with minimal increase in service staff and decreased funding.

DDS is currently operating at a deficit. DDS will need a combination of additional funding and cost reductions to break even at the end of upcoming levy period. If this proposed levy renewal fails, required services would have to be funded by the County General Fund.

Hamilton County DDS has adjusted its budget by eliminating 35 staff positions, implementing an Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP), moving contracted agencies to a uniform rate, requiring service providers to become Medicaid providers and increasing the fee school districts pay for Hamilton County DDS school service operation costs. Through use of private provider contracts as a primary means of service delivery, DDS provides services to a greater number of people at a lower per unit cost. DDS is exploring shared service opportunities with Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board, the Council on Aging and neighboring counties.

Based on their disability, many DDS clients have both Medicare SSI and Medicaid coverage to pay for their health care needs. Medicaid expansion will have limited, if any, impact in increased funding as currently providers bill Medicaid and DDS pays the 40 percent match amount to the state that bills DDS.

Continued

DDS is overseen by a seven-member Board of Directors of which five are appointed by the County Commissioners and two are appointed by the Probate Judge. The Board appoints the Superintendent who reports to the Hamilton County Commissioners. A 1967 state law mandated establishment of County Boards of Mental Retardation. The first property tax levy in support of programs and services in Hamilton County passed in 1974 and has been renewed on a regular basis. The previous levy for Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities programs passed in 2009.

Tax Levy Review Committee Report

Established in 1995, the Tax Levy Review Committee (TLRC) reviews county-voted levy requests and makes recommendations about the requests to the Board of Hamilton County Commissioners. The TLRC finds Hamilton County DDS to be a well-functioning organization which has received a five year best practices accreditation from the state of Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. DDS has maintained its quality of services, compares well with peer jurisdictions in Ohio for case load management and cost of services and has complied with all

the recommendations included in the previous tax levy review.

TLRC Recommendations: Set a levy at 4.13 mills which will provide annual revenue of approximately \$73.2 million. Implement action steps that could eliminate the forecasted annual deficit of \$2,640,000 per year in the next levy cycle including:

- Require all school districts to transport students to Hamilton County DDS school locations.
- Replace higher-cost employees who will retire due to changes in the State Retirement Systems with lower-cost employees.
- Offer an early retirement Incentive program in 2015.

For more information

To review the TLRC's reports, visit tinyurl.com/tlrcreports.

For more information about Hamilton County DDS, visit www.hamiltondds.org.

CELEBRATING LIFE MEMBER HELEN BLACK!

By Helen Rhoad, Co-President

LWVCA member Helen Black recently celebrated her ninetieth birthday with a celebration at Indian Hill Church with a large group of friends in attendance. At the celebration, I presented her with a certificate acknowledging her Life Member status for being a League member for 50 years and for her work in the area of Natural Resources. Congrats, Helen!

Helen Black



JOIN US FOR JUNETEENTH



By Chris Moran, LWVCA volunteer

Plans for Cincinnati's Juneteenth Festival are in the works and will be held this year June 14 to 15, 2014, at Daniel Drake Park.

LWVCA has been asked again to participate in celebrating the end of legal slavery in the United States. League members staff an information booth at the festival and distribute a list of the times for the activities and musical events of the weekend. Also, it is

a great opportunity to make available information about the League and what we do. And it's fun to be there.

At least six League volunteers are needed for three two-hour shifts beginning at noon on Saturday, June 14. Chris Moran is the League contact and would welcome your smile and League presence at the party. Call or email her for more information.

Learn more about Juneteenth at : www.juneteenthcincinnati.org.

LWVCA ASSISTS WITH WESTWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION

By Sandra Mowell, Vice President of Voter Service

Members of the Westwood Community Council Board approached LWVCA to see if we could help with their upcoming election. For the first time in several years, there would be a contested election for the five openings on their board and they wanted an impartial third party to oversee the distribution of the ballots to their members and to tally the results.

Many thanks to these voter service volunteers who stepped up to help: Burton

Roehr, Ernest Mowell, Pinky Kocoshis, Mary Kay Gardner, Cecilia Kloecker, Kathy Helmbock, Janet Steiner and Lucia Hudson. These volunteers verified the mailing of ballots to all the neighborhood members eligible to vote in this election and then counted over 600 returned ballots. Westwood Community Council had an outstanding participation for this election, an example of how an election with some competition for offices can affect voter turnout!

When a group needs an experienced and trusted source to help with an election, is

it any wonder they turn to the League? Our help maintaining the integrity of elections is just another valuable service our organization provides to our community--a service we would not be able to offer without the support and commitment of our determined members! Our volunteers spent collectively about 35 hours on this project. If you know someone who values our contribution to the community who isn't a member yet, please consider asking them to join us. Opportunities to make a difference abound!

Mark Your Calendars!

SUMMER TOUR OF OVER-THE-RHINE JUNE 14

By Elizabeth Brown, Chair of LWVCA Housing Committee

The LWVCA's Summer Tour is scheduled for Saturday, June 14 and will focus on Development and Housing Issues in Over-the-Rhine. Please register for the Summer Tour, which is free, by calling the LWVCA office 513-281-8683 or e-mailing info@lwcincinnati.org.

The event's agenda:

10 a.m.

Meet at the performance stage at the north end of Washington Park. There is parking underneath the park and the elevator from the parking garage is close to this area. Some people will be carpooling from the LWVCA office parking lot in Mt. Auburn. Meet there at 9:30 a.m. if you would like to catch a ride.

10 - 10:30 a.m.

Walk with a tour guide for about three blocks. The guide will point out housing owned by the nonprofits Tender Mercies and OTR Community Housing, along with new condos.

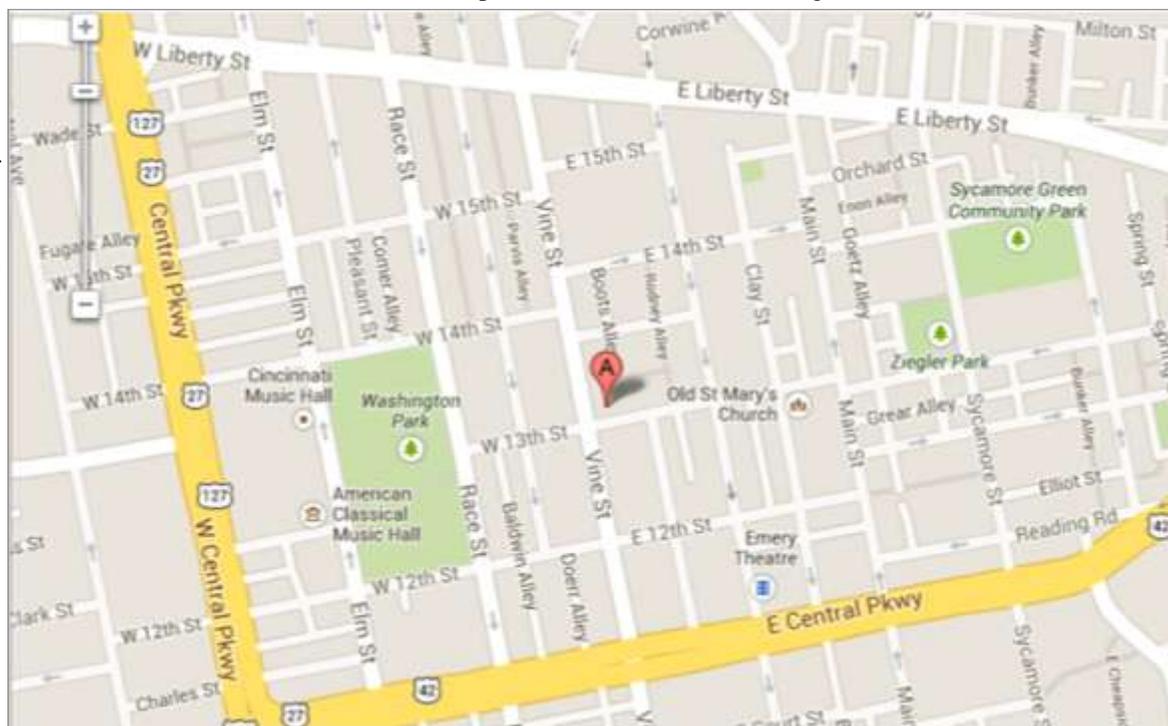
10:30 a.m.

Gather at the Miami University Center for Community Engagement (1300 Vine St.) to discuss the changes in Over the Rhine, the successful development of market rate

housing and attempts to preserve affordable housing for low-income residents. Learn about relocation of the Drop Inn Center and efforts to create mixed-income housing.

Noon

On your own to enjoy lunch at one of the numerous restaurants on Vine Street or explore the City Flea Market in Washington Park.

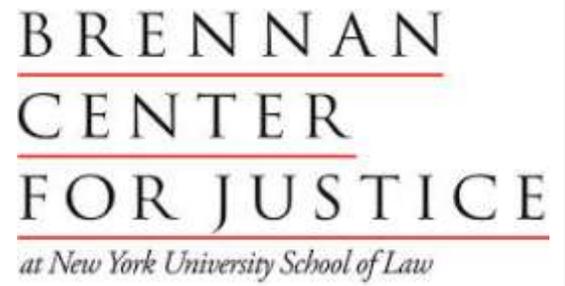


THE BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE EXPLORES SOLUTIONS FOR OUR GOVERNING CRISIS

By Brennan Center

In February, The Brennan Center for Justice convened a conference to address the growing problems of government dysfunction and polarization, which have created a system that has failed to find pragmatic solutions or respond to fundamental public needs. The panel

discussions touched on a number of topics, including how to fix broken government, restore trust and rebuild the promise of American democracy. You can attend their conference online and choose the areas that interest you by visiting brennancenter.org/governing-crisis-exploring-solutions.



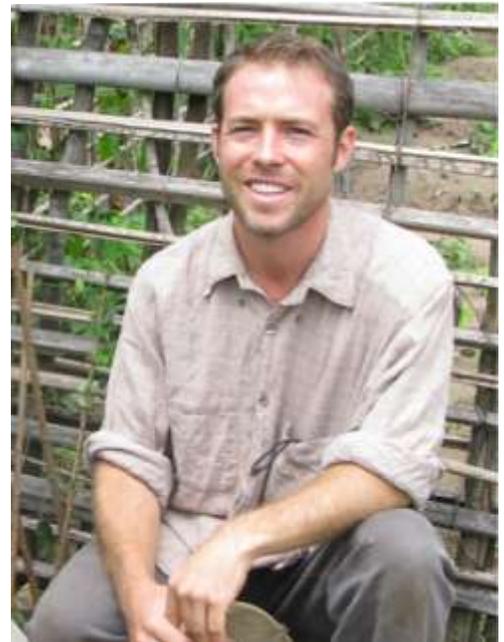
Mark Your Calendars!

ADVENTURES IN THE GARDEN OF EATIN’

Wes Duren, VP of Organic Landscape and Construction at Marvin’s Organic Gardens, will help us explore the connection between nature, nutrition and sustainable living. Wes has held many workshops on planting native edible and medicinal plants in our local neighborhood and school gardens. He

is a sustainable source for nutritional school meals.

He and his family have a “Giving Garden” program at their farm near Lebanon, OH, that offers tips and incentives to encourage families to plant extra produce for local food pantries.



Wes Duren

Part of the series
**Changing Course:
Local Solutions to a Global Crisis**
Sunday, April 27, 7 to 9 p.m.
St. John’s Unitarian Universalist Church,
Resor Avenue in Clifton

Wes will also talk about his two trips to the heart of the Congo on a mission to promote sustainable farming in a war-torn country highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and famine.

COSPONSORS: St John’s UU Green Sanctuary Partners, Woman’s City Club, Environmental Action Group, League of Women Voters, Sierra Club, The Environmental Community Organization (ECO)

holds interactive seminars at schools and universities showing students, teachers and parents how to integrate the concept of “The Edible Schoolyard” into their curriculum and into their daily practice as

ACT ONE REGISTERS VOTERS AT CINCINNATI STATE

By Melissa Currence, Act One Mentor



Members of Act One, a membership initiative of LWVCA and Woman’s City Club of Greater Cincinnati for people ages 18-35, recently completed a voter registration drive at the end of March at Cincinnati State and Technical College. Act One chose this timing to make sure these newly registered voters would be ready to vote in the May Primary. Over the two-day drive, the group helped approximately 55 voters register or update their addresses... Quite the success!

Melissa Currence, Kelly Glover, Kristin Luery, Sandra Mowell, Susan Steele and Janet Steiner.

Thanks to these members for providing snacks, which helped gather attention for our booth: Kelly Glover, Kristin Luery, Helen Rhoad, Lindsey Riehl, Janet Steiner and Mary Van Ausdall.

Special thanks to Kelly Glover for organizing the event and to the following members who helped register voters:

Act One members are staying busy! The group learned more about voter registration at our March meeting and will be learning more about the Cincinnati City Hall in April from Woman’s City Club.

Help Wanted

LWVCA INVESTMENT COMMITTEE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

*By Fred Heyse, LWVCA
Investment Committee Chair*

The funds held in reserve for LWVCA are invested fairly conservatively to help with our budgets. These funds are monitored by the Investment Committee that advises the Board to make prudent changes in these investments. We thank Becky Algenio for her past service on the committee. Current members

include Joan Honeck, Burt Roehr, Dee Shaffer, Margaret Standriff (Treasurer), Marcia Togneri and chair Fred Heyse.

If you have an interest in stock/bond mutual fund investing and have time for one meeting a quarter, please let us know. We would welcome additional guiding thoughts for the good of the League.

OFFICE HELP IS NEEDED

*By Mary Kay Gardner, Office
Volunteer Coordinator*

public and help with various office projects.

We still have room in our Office Volunteer schedule! Are you available the second Tuesday or Thursday each month?

This important volunteer job is fun and always interesting - you just never know what will come up!

We are looking for a couple of good women or men to answer phones, greet the

We will provide training for you. Please call Mary Kay Gardner or the LWVCA office at 281-VOTE (8683).

INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES WITH LWV OHIO'S VOTER EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

By LWV Ohio

2014 will be an important year for voter education and engagement in Ohio. LWVO will be working on four major initiatives: providing voters with nonpartisan information about the candidates and issues on their ballot this year; educating Ohioans about the state court system and how to cast an informed vote for state judicial candidates; helping voters navigate election law changes that go into effect this year; and surveying voters about what early voting choices

they would like to see in place for future elections.

The Voter Education and Engagement Project Intern, which is an unpaid position, will have the opportunity to learn about all these facets of Ohio elections and help develop and distribute LWVO's unbiased and sought-after voter service materials. Skills gained will include knowledge of Ohio government and politics, research and writing and grassroots organizing. This is an ideal internship for students of political science,

government, law, communications or social work – although we will gladly consider applications from students of any background.

We will be accepting interns for Summer 2014 and for Fall 2014. Interested students should submit a letter of interest and a resume to the attention of Carrie Davis at cdavis@lwvohio.org. Applicants are encouraged to apply early, as internship positions will be filled on a rolling basis.

Remember to Renew!

2013 KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

It's simple to sign up—but—your signup lasts only one year!

LUCKILY it's equally easy to RENEW!

DIRECTIONS. Please sign up for the program - or renew - using the name League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area Education Fund or our NPO number #80874. Just go to

Kroger.com, click on Community, click on Community Rewards Program and input the information for the League. In a few weeks you should see our name at the bottom of your receipt. Kroger will give a donation for every dollar you spend.

Every little bit helps! Please sign up or renew today!



COMMON CORE STANDARDS IN THE NEWS

By Burton Roehr, Chair of LWVCA
Education Committee

What is your opinion about the Common Core Standards (CCSS), the relatively new program to improve student learning in our schools? Are you aware that there is movement to get the Standards repealed in states where they've been adopted and implemented? In 2013, our Ohio House removed \$10 million in funds originally pegged for Common Core technology from its budget proposal and a bill was introduced to repeal the program completely. During the same period, Indiana's legislature voted to halt the state's move toward the Common Core and Michigan's House voted to ban the use of general funds for the program (source: *Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 29, 2013; *Columbus Dispatch*, Aug. 1, 2013). This year the debate has been taken up by the Kentucky Legislature.

According to Ms. Kelly Kohls, founder and president of the Ohio School Boards Leadership Council, the Republican National Committee passed a resolution opposing the Common Core Standards, and the Hamilton County GOP is meeting to discuss the repeal of the program because of federal overreach (source: *Enquirer*, Feb. 23, 2014).

More information about the CCSS may be found in a series of Voter articles in the February, March and April 2013 editions. Please refer to those articles to refresh your memory of why they were put into place, who developed them, and what they hope to accomplish at lwcincinnati.org/newsletter.html.

What has changed in the last several years? What issues have led to these reversals in the states?

Recent Arguments For and Against the Common Core Standards

Against: The CCSS are an intrusion by the federal government into what states must teach in their public schools. It is the prerogative of each state to determine what will be taught in its public schools,

and this program removes the control from the local community. While adoption/implementation of the standards is voluntary, incentives from the federal government make adoption obligatory.

For: The CCSS were developed when the

frequent feedback on whether the students are grasping the material and where there may be a lack of understanding. Remediation can then be instituted to ensure that the student(s) may continue to progress.



National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers agreed to the concept of a uniform set of standards. Since 2010, 45 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the CCSS. The federal government's role has been to provide incentives in the form of grants to states to help them implement the standards if they choose to adopt them. The states, moreover, determine the curricula for teaching the standards. The federal government has not decreed that any state must adopt the standards, but any state that wished to compete for Race to the Top funding grants had to adopt the CCSS. Additionally, if a state wished to apply for a waiver from some of the requirements of No Child Left Behind, that state had to implement the CCSS.

Against: It's being pushed by textbook publishers and others who stand to make a lot of money from the changes.

For: While producers of educational material will profit from sales of their material to school districts, that's not a reason to avoid the CCSS.

Against: This approach is based on frequent testing, which has not been vetted and leads to "teaching to the test."

For: It is true that the testing segment of the CCSS is still in development and trial and will not be available until the 2014-15 school year. However, the idea behind the testing is that teachers will be able to gain

Because the assessments that are coordinated with the material have not been available, other older testing tools have been used to determine student progress. The result has caused confusion, antipathy to any testing, and general complaints about the CCSS.

Against: Implementing the CCSS is expensive and districts may not be able to afford it. The program requires new texts and study materials as well as increased use of computers by the students.

For: The goal of CCSS is to teach students to analyze data critically and develop thinking skills as opposed to memorization and rote learning. We cannot afford not to implement these standards, as these are the skills young people need in the 21st century for careers and college. The tests are predicted to be given on computers, which will be a problem for some districts, but proponents point out that computer skills are critically needed if students are to succeed in today's environment.

Local districts have implemented the CCSS and seem to be pleased with what they are designed to do. Until the planned assessments are put in place, they are "making do" with the tools available to them now. It will be interesting to see what judgments will be passed when the standards and their proper assessments are in place and operating as designed.

In Memoriam: **THE LEAGUE** **COMMEMORATES**

LWVCA member Virginia Lose passed away on March 26, 2014. Virginia was one of the organizers of the Eastern Day Unit, which started in October 2008. Her friends in the Eastern Day Unit will miss her. She was a faithful and well-informed participant of our meetings. Her family, many friends at Marjorie P Lee and League members will miss her greatly. A celebratory Jazz Service will be held Monday April 14, at 4 p.m. at First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati (Linton Street and Reading Road).

THE VOTER **COLLATING SCHEDULE*** ***Remainder of 2014***

June 19
July/August Voter
Hilltop North

*All dates are subject to change.
Call Pinky Kocoshis when your Unit's time is coming up!

MOVING?

Please remember to contact the office with your new address and contact information! This will ensure you receive any League communications and helps keep our records up-to-date.

Please also let us know when you change email addresses! Send notices to info@lwvcincinnati.org with "Address Change" in the subject line.



Join the League of Women Voters

Because Democracy is not a spectator sport!

All citizens, male and female, 18 years and older, are welcome. Take the opportunity now to support our work promoting democracy and civic engagement.

Dues include Cincinnati, Ohio, and National membership, including newsletters from LWVCA and LWVO.

- Individual - \$60.00
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- Dues pose a hardship. I can pay _____
- Optional additional deductible contribution:

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Email: _____

Mail to LWVCA, 103 Wm. H. Taft, Cincinnati, OH 45219

The Voter is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area (LWVCA).

Editors:
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Becky Haltermon

Please submit articles to:
newsletter@lwvcincinnati.org

Next deadline: Friday June 6
for the ***July/August 2014*** issue



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of the
CINCINNATI AREA**
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MAY-JUNE 2014 LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

All meetings are open to the public and are held at the League Office, 103 Wm. Howard Taft, **unless otherwise noted**. Bring a friend!

Thursday	May 1	1:30 p.m.	County Government Committee
Tuesday	May 6	2 p.m.	LWVCA Board Meeting
Thursday	May 8	7 p.m.	Natural Resources Committee
Monday	May 12	12 p.m.	Housing Committee
Tuesday	May 20	5:45 p.m.	Annual Meeting
Thursday	May 22	1:30 p.m.	County Government Committee
Thursday	May 22	6:30 p.m.	Communication Committee
Monday	May 26		<i>LWVCA offices closed for Memorial Day</i>
Tuesday	June 3	2 p.m.	LWVCA Board Meeting
Friday	June 6		<i>Deadline for submissions for May/June "Voter"</i>
	June 6-10		LWVUS Convention 2014, Dallas, TX
Monday	June 9	12 p.m.	Housing Committee
Wednesday	June 18	12 p.m.	Eastern Day Unit Discussion- Lee Retirement Com., 3550 Michigan Ave., Hyde Park
Saturday	June 14		Juneteenth (<i>see page 6 for more information</i>)
Saturday	June 14	10 a.m.	Summer Tour of Over-the-Rhine (<i>see page 7 for more information</i>)

All meeting dates/times subject to change. Please be sure to check the calendar on our website www.lwvcincinnati.org for the most up-to-date meeting and activity information.