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THE VOTER

A Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area

1920 - 2021

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Springing Into Action

Hello!

Yea, spring! After all the months of being cooped up inside, it finally feels as if we are beginning to return to a “level” of normal! With many of us now vaccinated and able to gather in small groups, I’ve been able to see, first-hand, the impact the League makes in our community.

Last month, Naturalization Ceremonies resumed, and throughout April, after years of preparation, nearly 300 new citizens, took their Oath of Allegiance. I attended the first ceremony along with Jo Lovelace Hill, Wendy Dyer, and Jan Underwood. I didn’t quite know what to expect, but I was told that I’d likely cry. As I started helping folks get registered to vote, and chatted with them about their journey, I gained an even deeper appreciation of what a privilege it is to live in the United States. The excitement and pride they felt as they officially became citizens was inspiring. And yes, I cried!

I also had the opportunity to participate in a community mapmaking session. As we prepare for the upcoming redistricting process, our League is once again taking the lead to ensure that the process is fair, and that citizens’ voices are heard. I got to join a group of League members led by Kim Senft-Paras, Lucy Anne McKosky, Laurel Kerr and Matt Krug, who gathered to practice before the Redistricting Committee, takes its “act on the road.”

During the session, everyone got the chance to discuss what boundaries define their community,



shared what they believe makes their community great, as well as the challenges it is facing. If you didn’t get the chance to watch the webinar, **People Powered Day of Action: Redistricting in Ohio**, presented by Jerry Sutton, please check it out on our YouTube site (search League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area). It will give you an excellent overview of what’s taking place across Ohio to ensure that the new districts REALLY represent our communities!

I am proud to be part of the League of Women Voters and look forward to the coming months when (fingers crossed!) we might be able to gather in PERSON!

~Chris Corba,
Executive Director, LWVGDA

DAYTON LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS CONTRIBUTORS

General Fund - a 501(c)(4) entity

MAJOR LEADERSHIP CIRCLE MEMBERS

CABINET LEVEL (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Estate of Sarah Deets

GOVERNOR (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Dr. Ronald L. Fletcher & Dona C. Fletcher
Theresa Gasper

SENATE (\$500 - \$999)

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Vincent & Andrea Cobb
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Sandra McHugh & Jerry Sutton
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The Rubi Girls
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Margaret Quinn & Ron Pohlman
Carolyn Rice, Montgomery County
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Joyce Young***

Education Fund - a 501(c)(3) entity

CURRENT MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

Anonymous
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Peggy Berry
David & Susan Bodary
Frieda and Mike Brigner
Peggy Coale
Pat Bradley-Falke
Barbara Buddendeck**
Vincent & Andrea Cobb
Robert & Mary Daley in support of
our Naturalization Ceremony
Project

DATV*
Dr. & Mrs. Ronald L. Fletcher
Bill Gerhard, in memory of
Judy Gerhard
Carol Graff, in memory of
Bryon L. Schatzley
Sharon Harmer
Jane & Dick Hattershire
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LWVO Voter Registration Grant
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Making A Difference
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The Virginia W. Kettering
Foundation
Penny Wolff
Women's History Project
Greene County

*In-kind contribution **In-kind contribution + monetary contribution ***deceased

Recent Contributions Appreciated

General Fund—a 501(c)(4)entity: Gary & Catherine Adler, Harmony Creek Church Honorarium for Speakers Bureau presentation, Paul Woodie

Education Fund—a 501(c)(3)entity: Pat Bradley-Falke in support of our *Directory of Public Officials*, Robert & Mary Daley in support of our Naturalization Ceremony Project, Jeanne Eickman in Honor of Susan Hesselgesser, Paula Ewers, Ruth Meadow in Memory of Brenda Whitney

All contributions as of March 31, 2021

Honor survivors of gun violence on National Gun Violence Awareness Day



WEAR ORANGE

JUNE 4

Join **Dayton Moms Demand Action** for their Wear Orange Weekend Event as they walk for survivors of gun violence and support the FUDGE Foundation. The FUDGE Foundation was started by Dion Green, a Dayton mass-shooting survivor, in honor of his father, Derrick Fudge.

HOW: Ask some friends to join you (stay COVID safe!) or walk alone. Optionally, you can ask for sponsors for your walk, donate to the FUDGE Foundation yourself, or both ([bit.ly/walkforsurvivors!](https://bit.ly/walkforsurvivors))

Wear orange attire if you can. Take pictures to share on social media with the hashtags **#WearOrange #WalkForSurvivors2021** and **@DionGre95543236**.

WHERE: It's your choice: Walk around the block, on your favorite path, or to your favorite hang out. Just walk!

WHEN: Anytime the weekend of **Wear Orange**, June 4-6.

WHY WEAR ORANGE ON NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY?

The **WearOrange.org** site explains that orange is the color that Hadiya Pendleton's friends wore in her honor when she was shot and killed in Chicago at the age of 15 — just one week after performing at President Obama's 2nd inaugural parade in 2013. After her death, they asked us to stand up, speak out, and Wear Orange to raise awareness about gun violence.

Since then, orange has been the defining color of the gun violence prevention movement. New York gun violence prevention advocate Erica Ford spearheaded orange as the color of peace through her work with her organization, Life Camp, Inc. Whether it's worn by students in Montana, activists in New York, or Hadiya's loved ones in Chicago, the color orange honors the more than 100 lives cut short and the hundreds more wounded by gun violence **everyday**.

The movement gains momentum when gun sense activists come together to fight for a future free from gun violence. Wear Orange originated on June 2, 2015—what would have been Hadiya's 18th birthday. Now, it is observed nationally on the first Friday in June and the following weekend each year. This year, National Gun Violence Awareness Day will be June 4, 2021.

For more information on gun safety reform and action, read the League of Women Voters CEO Virginia Case's recent testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee at <https://www.lwv.org/lwv-ceo-virginia-kase-written-testimony-senate-judiciary-committee-gun-safety-reform>

Learn more about advocacy efforts toward ending gun violence at: **Everytown.org**; **WearOrange.org**; and **MomsDemandAction.org**

On April 27, we gathered together in a Zoom Retirement Party for Susan Hesselgesser as we honored her dedication and contributions to our League of Women Voters since 2009.

We began our trip down memory lane with a look back to 2009, when Janis James was President and Susan was our part-time Education Director. Janis related how the Board recognized the need for an Executive Director to cover much more than our educational needs: it was necessary to hire someone to help manage the myriad of details that were previously all covered by volunteers, since so many League leaders now had full-time jobs.

Susan applied for that position and was immediately hired as our very first Executive Director under Jo Columbro's Presidency 2011-2013; Vivienne Himmell reminisced about Sue and Jo's time together serving our League.

Next Dona Fletcher talked about life with Susan from 2013-2015; since Patty Skilken was unable to attend the Zoom in person, Pat Bradley-Falke related Patty's memories from 2015-2017; Susan Byerly spoke about working with Susan in 2017-2019; and since Andy unfortunately was unable to attend in person, Penny Wolff finalized the Presidential Memories section of the evening by delivering Andy's heartfelt recollections of Susan from 2019-2021.

If you were not able to attend the Zoom Party, search for the video on League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area on YouTube, or find the link to the YouTube site on our website, **LWVDayton.org**.

One of the gifts that our League gave Susan was a hard-bound book of the play that she wrote for our December Holiday Party, complete with pictures of our League actors and actresses who performed that night. This is the link to use if you would like to purchase your own copy of "An Original Play of the History of the LWVGDA (1920-2020) written by Susan Hesselgesser – a budding author and playwright: <https://www.blurb.com/b/10698553-an-original-play-of-the-history-of-the-lwvgda-192>

In Memoriam

We mourn the recent death of League member John Moskeland. John was the husband of Lillian Moskeland and the father of Andy Cobb, our League President. We offer our heartfelt sympathy to all of John's family.

Interested in volunteering at
Naturalization Ceremonies?

Contact Wendy Dyer at **wendydyer4186@gmail.com**

Did you know?

On June 4, 1919, the US Congress passed the Women's Suffrage Bill, the 19th Amendment.



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Republicans and Democrats move farther apart in views of voting access

The Pew Research Center presented a comprehensive look at various aspects of election rules and procedures at state and federal levels. Partisan divisions have grown exponentially as legislatures across the nation have introduced election law changes primarily attributed to debunked accusations of voter fraud. Findings from a national survey conducted from April 5-11, 2021, cover many of the contentious issues presently being examined by the League of Women Voters.

You can read the full article at this link:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/04/22/republicans-and-democrats-move-further-apart-in-views-of-voting-access/>

On March 3rd, 2021, the House of Representatives passed HR1, or the *For the People Act*. Now the bill has come to the Senate as S1. The *For the People Act* is a bill in the United States Congress to expand voting rights, change campaign finance laws to reduce the influence of money in politics, limit partisan gerrymandering, and create new ethics rules for federal officeholders.

LWVUS has issued talking points that will allow all Leagues to speak with one voice as we work to educate the public pertaining to this important piece of legislation:

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/talking-points-templates/talking-points-people-act>

The following should also be noted in determining how best to proceed:

“While we (LWVUS) do support the legislation, we recognize that it is not a perfect bill. There are pieces of it that the League will not promote or work to advance. State and local Leagues who are interested in supporting the *For the People Act* publicly should focus on (the League’s talking points).”

~Valerie Lee, Action Chair

Why we need a comprehensive package of democracy reforms:



- The For the People Act includes strong provisions for improving transparency in campaign finance and strengthening government ethics enforcement.

- It should be easier, not harder, to vote. The For the People Act improves access to voting with reforms like Same Day Registration and Automatic Voter Registration.
- More needs to be done to protect voters' voices. The For the People Act requires independent redistricting commissions, ends voter roll purges based on failure to vote, and restores the Voting Rights Act.
- Our government should respond to the will of the people, not the interests of powerful corporations and wealthy donors.

Members Voted to Merge Funding Accounts at LWVGDA 59th Annual Meeting

The 59th Annual Meeting of the LWVGDA took place on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 with 53 members attending via Zoom. League President Andy Cobb welcomed the group and introduced League member Michelle Maciorowski, of MMM LC and Jon Scandling of Frantz Ward LLP (Cleveland), members of the Ohio Bar Association, who provided a program about the First Amendment and how it relates to the penalties for peaceful protests and civil disobedience at pipeline and other critical infrastructure sites proposed in SB 33.

During the meeting, Membership adopted a resolution to merge the 501(c)(4) (General Fund) and 501(c)(3) (Education Fund) into one entity. Beginning on July 1, 2021, LWVGDA will operate solely as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with all donations now tax deductible. This change came after careful discussion among the Board with legal advice at each step and support from our state and national Leagues. By merging the two funds, developing the annual budget, as well as bookkeeping will be streamlined. Membership also voted to accept revised Bylaws for the new entity.

Mario recognized Andy Cobb, outgoing President, for her outstanding contributions to the League. Under Andy's leadership we engaged during a momentous presidential election, came out of a pandemic in good shape and finalized the merger of our two League entities, ensuring that we will move forward as a cohesive financial organization. Winifred Frazier and Paul Lamberger were recognized for 25 years of League membership.

We honored the memory of League members Lillian Sagstetter, Helen Watkins, Betsy Retterbush, Esther Wright, Brenda Whitney, Shirley Omietanski, Sarah Deets, Joyce Young, Ronald Katsuyama, Nancy Fisher and Murray Chapple with a moment of silence and offer our deepest condolences to their families.

The slate of officers was approved as presented: President, Mario; President Elect, Beth Schaeffer; Program VP, David Bodary; Voter Service VP, Jo Lovelace Hill; Webmaster, Rita Peterson; Funding and Development Director, Linda Fish; and Greene County Rep, Sandra McHugh. Rebecca Morgan, Pat Bradley-Falke, and Wendy Dyer were also approved as presented for the nominating committee.

Dick Hattershire, Treasurer, reported that despite the pandemic, the League's finances are in good shape. While income declined, expenses were lower. Membership voted to recommend the proposed Education Fund budget to the Education Fund Trustees for approval and to accept the General Fund budget, presented by Janine Kinnison, Chair of the Finance Committee. The budgets will be combined, effective July 1, 2021, when the merger of the Funds is completed. Neither projected income nor expenses will change after the merger.

Membership also voted to accept Recommended Programs, presented by David Bodary, Program VP. These include Social Justice: voter registration, suppression concerns, voter literacy; Government: redistricting, gerrymandering, fair elections, and election reform; and Environment: climate change, water safety, and environmental justice issues. The programs will be provided via our program on DATV, *LWV Empowering You*, webinars and hopefully, in-person presentations.

Tonya Wilson-Wood, representing the Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee, updated Membership about their important work. The committee is currently planning a diversity training program for Board members and Staff, which will take place in July. The opportunity for diversity training for the membership at large is to be determined.

Chris Corba, Executive Director, gave an overview of highlights of the year, which were graciously penned by Susan Hesselgesser. Andy Cobb shared during her remarks, that she enjoyed her time as President, and looks forward to continuing her work with the League as a member. Mario, incoming President, thanked Andy again for her dedication to the League and the meeting was adjourned.

VOLUNTEER VOICES



League members are needed to defend democracy in the state of Ohio

First and foremost, learn more about **redistricting** and why it's such a big deal from Fair Districts Ohio at <https://www.fairdistrictsohio.org/>. You can also find information and links for all the actions listed below at this website.

About Fair Districts Ohio: **Fair**

Districts Ohio is an organization committed to fairer state legislative and congressional maps. They are a nonpartisan team of voting rights experts and organizations working to create a better and more equitable representational democracy. The coalition includes Common Cause Ohio, the League of Women Voters of Ohio, A. Philip Randolph Institute of Ohio, the Ohio Council of Churches, the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition, and more.

Receive alerts

when there's a need to reach out to legislators, then email, call or text when requested. This is a quick and easy way to be proactive from your cell phone.

Talk to people about redistricting and why it's important. Find a group that would be willing to host a speaker and connect them to Kim Senft-Paras kimsenftparas5@gmail.com or use the link in the Fair Districts website. Presentations help to create an informed citizenry, critical for good government.

Join or host a gathering for community input to discuss what's important to YOU in keeping your

community together within a district. This input helps create stronger maps and builds a sense of engagement in the process.

Send postcards or letters to the members of the redistricting commission and your own state representative and

senator. Order postcards at no charge and share them with others. Join or host a postcard writing party. Have fun with it!

Prepare written testimony: When the public is invited to provide input, you will want to be ready! Written testimony is the first step for in-person testimony at a public hearing. Nothing beats showing up at the Ohio Statehouse to provide in-person testimony, but written testimony alone is still powerful. The link for submitting

redistricting testimony is not yet available, so stay tuned to LWV Dayton and Ohio

websites, social media posts, and other alerts regarding this opportunity.

Sign up to be part of the Transparency Team. Become a familiar name and face to your state representative and senator! Email Kim Senft-Paras, our League's Fair Elections Committee Chair, to learn where to sign up or if you have any questions.

Looking for other ways to connect with the League? Contact Laurel Kerr, Volunteer Coordinator laurelkerr1549@gmail.com.

“When public officials (of ANY party) draw legislative district maps to only benefit their political party it hurts our democracy. This practice is called Gerrymandering.” – from the Fair Districts Ohio Website

“Formed from the movement that secured the right to vote for women, the League of Women Voters' most important efforts continue to be expanding participation and giving a voice to all Americans.” – from the League of Women Ohio Website

Thank you to all who attended the April 29 LWVGDA People Powered Day of Action program. A “tip of the hat” to Jerry Sutton for his presentation and to everyone who made the program possible including promoting the event; taking reservations; moderating; working the magic of technology; and being available to share areas of expertise and interest.



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"Now that you have the vote,
what are you going to do with it?"

-founder Carrie Chapman Catt



For up-to-date League happenings, legislative alerts and news, check out our Facebook page, **LWV Dayton OH.**

Then LIKE and SHARE our page with friends and family!

Current Resident or:

June 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 National Gun Violence Awareness Day	5
6	7	8	9	10 Naturalization Ceremony	11	12
13	14 Board Meeting FLAG DAY 	15	16	17	18	19 JUNETEENTH
20	21	22	23	24 Naturalization Ceremony	25	26
27	28	29	30			