



July 2021

VOLUME 98, ISSUE 6

THE VOTER

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

1920 - 2021

WEBSITE: lwvdayton.org | EMAIL: league@lwvdayton.org | PHONE: 937.228.4041 |    

Reconnecting

Being unable to see loved ones has taken a toll on all of us. It had been over a year since we were together as a family, and my husband and I hadn't seen our daughter, who lives in Minneapolis, since February of 2020. Last month, after we all received our vaccinations, she was able to come back for an extended visit. Our son joined us for a weekend, and we finally got to celebrate the birthdays and holidays we missed due to the pandemic.

Sadly though, in contrast to the connections many of us are experiencing as restrictions lift, is the division taking place in our country. Each day it seems that we see more and more unwillingness to compromise and to work toward common goals.

The League, on the other hand, works to bring people together to reach consensus, and to make a difference. Recently, I attended an event with a few dozen members to write postcards to legislators demanding fair districts. The turnout was amazing, and many told me that this was the first League event they had ever attended! Simply gathering



Friends catch up at LWVGDA's first in-person event in over a year

was restorative on so many levels. Not only was there lively conversation and laughter, but each of us came away knowing that we made our voices heard.



Post cards are ready to be sent to lawmakers at our recent event at Leslie Merry's home

As our world begins to reopen, I can't think of a better way to get back in the swing of things than getting together with League members, either virtually or in person, and taking action!

There are lots of ways to get involved. Host a community discussion on redistricting, engage a member of our Speakers' Bureau to make a presentation for a group with which you are involved, join a committee, or attend an event.

Your League needs you! Please give us a call so we can get you reconnected.

Be well.



Smiling faces at LWVGDA's "Fair Districts Now" Postcard Writing Party

*~Chris Corba,
Executive Director, LWVGDA*

From the President's Desk

Oh my gosh, is it July already? What a year this has been.

My name is Mario and I am the new president of our Dayton League. I moved to Dayton over 25 years ago and my first job – and introduction to Dayton's political scene – was with Kids Voting. That experience took me from a casual voting citizen to one who realized that the power to cast *MY* vote was one of the greatest privileges we are afforded as Americans. Watching school-aged children immerse themselves in studying candidates and issues taught me that having factual information was key to making an informed choice on how I wanted my city, my state, and my country to run. I have been an official League member since 2001.



This past year has allowed us to see different ways of doing the same old thing. I, and other members of the Board, will be spending time this year taking a look at how we do things – to see how we can be more effective in order to enhance our mission of empowering voters.

Items of note: At the May Annual Meeting, the membership voted to merge the Education Fund and the General Fund, effective July 1, 2021. As a result, going forward, all of your donations will be tax deductible as allowed by the Internal Revenue Service. Also, one of the first things the Board will do is to participate in training conducted by the League of Women Voters US on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. It is a timely opportunity for us to plan how to more fully engage all voices in our community.

As always, your ideas and comments are welcome. Email them to league@lwvdayton.org. Thank you: I'm looking forward to the next two years!

~Mario, LWVGDA President



Happy
Independence
Day
USA!

A NEW LIST OF DAYTON LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS CONTRIBUTORS

WILL APPEAR IN OUR AUGUST NEWSLETTER

*The League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area
Invites you to join us for*



Bring a Friend and Enjoy Appetizers, Pizza & “Brews” at
Wandering Griffin Brewery & Pub
 3725 Presidential Drive
 Beavercreek, OH 45324
Thursday, August 26, 2021
6pm-8pm

Purchase Tickets by
August 13

Then sit back and enjoy our

Keynote Speaker: Tom Archdeacon

Dayton Daily News Award-Winning Sports Columnist

As he reminds us that men did play an important part in the ratification of the 19th Amendment.
 In life and in Sports, teamwork is the “magic” ingredient.

Ticket price: \$30 for one; bring your favorite guy and the price is \$50 for 2 tickets! COD bar
 Don't miss out! Make your reservation (& your favorite guy's too) now through our website lwvdayton.org;
 or make your check payable to: LWVGDA, 127 N. Ludlow St., Dayton, OH 45402 **by August 13, 2021.**

DID YOU KNOW that a mother's letter to her son helped push the last-minute final vote for ratification of the 19th Amendment into the 'win' column? On August 18, 1920, the all-male Tennessee legislature was divided between those who didn't support the vote (wearing red roses in their lapels to show their intentions) and those who did support the vote (wearing yellow roses in their lapels). The Tennessee Senate had already approved the amendment, but a tie in the House meant defeat. They could only win if ONE of the House opponents changed his mind. The roll call had landed on Harry T. Burn; at 24 the youngest state lawmaker. He had voted twice to table the amendment. On his lapel was a red rose. But beneath the rose, in the pocket of his suit jacket, was a letter delivered that morning from his mother, Febb Burn. Between updates on the farm and the family, she had slipped in three references to the vote. “Hurrah and vote for suffrage,” she told her son, “and don't keep them in doubt. Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. ‘Thomas Catt’ with her ‘rats.’ Is she the one that put rat in ratification? Ha!
 No more from Mama this time. With lots of love.”
 And her son knew what he had to do. “Aye,” said Harry Burn, and he pulled off his red rose.
 Tennessee became the “Perfect 36th” and women were legally able to vote!

LWV LEADERS CAN RETIRE BUT THEY CONTINUE TO COMMAND THE STAGE

The Miami University of Ohio Commencement 2021 speaker was Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins. The following information was provided on the university website:

Jefferson-Jenkins, a 1974 Western College for Women graduate, was elected as the 15th national president of the League of Women Voters in 1998, serving two terms and also chairing the League of Women Voters Education Fund. She was the first woman of color to be elected president.

Under her leadership, the League helped pass the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA), which closed the most significant loopholes in campaign finance regulation at the time. She also led a charge to focus on local elections while increasing the number of voters who participated in all elections.

You can find the full biography in the commencement announcement:

<https://www.miamioh.edu/news/top-stories/2021/02/carolyn-jefferson-jenkins-named-commencemnt-speaker.html>

As I listened to her address, she set a high bar with respect to expectations as it was her plan to be inspirational and aspirational. She did not disappoint. She referred to a speech delivered by Robert Kennedy in South Africa on June 6, 1966. By quoting from the RFK speech, she opened the door to the profound impact his words left with the South African audience. His words still carry relevancy for our own country in these perilous times. I leave you with some quotes from that memorable speech.

“The essential humanity of man can be protected and preserved only where the government must answer – not just to the wealthy; not just to those of a particular religion, not just to those of a particular race; but to all of the people.”

“Few will have the greatness to bend history; but each of us can work to change a small portion of the events, and in the total of all these acts will be written the history of this generation.”

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

“Few men are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change the world which yields most painfully to change.”

You can listen to the full Day of Affirmation address as delivered by Robert Kennedy here:

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/asset-viewer/day-of-affirmation-address-june6-1966>

Submitted by Valerie Lee, Action Chair

**Join League of Women Voters
Greater Dayton Area
at www.lwvdayton.org/member-form/
or call us at 937.228.4041**



Barb Cantwell
139 Oak Knoll Dr.
Dayton, OH 45419
barbc53@icloud.com

Corruption is Legal in America...

Are you looking for some meaningful ‘must-see TV’ on these long summer nights? I urge you to watch ***UnRepresented***, an award-winning documentary that is perfect for observers of politics and students alike.

From the film’s own description:

UnRepresented is an award-winning documentary that uncovers the mechanisms that drive the cycle of corruption in Congress—giving political insiders enormous, unchecked power. The film explores how special interests bankroll political campaigns and relentlessly lobby to rig the system in their favor, all while following the letter of the law.

Featuring luminaries and leaders including Harvard Law Professor Lawrence Lessig and former member of Congress Rep. Justin Amash, the film reveals the powerful possibilities to reform our government to better represent the people.

UnRepresented serves as a rallying call to bring committed public servants, activists and everyday Americans together to take action across partisan lines to change our flawed political system.



PBS Stations nationally are showing the documentary as part of their “mission to shed light on the blatant legalized bribery in Congress and to reform our flawed political system.”

You can watch *UnRepresented* on WPTD Dayton Think TV on the following dates in July:

- Friday, July 30, 9 pm on 16 OHIO/WORLD
- Saturday, July 31, 2 am on 16 OHIO/WORLD

Learn more about the film at

www.weareunrepresented.com

~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.

VOLUNTEER VOICES



A Potpourri of New Opportunities and Updates!

1

The LWVO is conducting a criminal justice study in Ohio that will result in an LWVO position. They are starting the process by dividing into five study sub-committees (Policing Practices, Pre-Trial and Trial Procedures, Sentencing, Incarceration, and Re-entry) to do an initial research project on the status of each of these areas in Ohio. After initial research, the subcommittees will conduct interviews and develop research findings. This is one time when participants are NOT required to be a League member, although membership is encouraged. If you'd like to participate, email Elizabeth Grieser from the LWVO Criminal Justice Core Planning Committee at **lwvocriminaljustice@gmail.com**. Groups will be formed by early July, so connect soon! Much of the work can be done independently and distributed utilizing "shared drives," with virtual meetings.

2

The Redistricting effort is in full swing, in an all-hands-on-deck moment in history! Don't miss out on an opportunity to engage by: Asking your group to host a presentation, participating in community map conversations, writing postcards to state officials, bugging state officials to do the right thing, or getting people together for any of these activities! The Fair Districts Ohio coalition provides excellent support, and the local League has teams ready to assist with any of the component activities. Questions? Contact Kim Senft-Paras at **kimsenftparas5@gmail.com**.

3

The Social Justice committee wants you to know that House of Bread is welcoming back volunteers. While HOB is not open to volunteer groups yet, contact Deb Mustard-Gibson at **debbiegibson55@yahoo.com** or 937.409.4456 if you'd like to learn more about this rewarding experience, or participate once the League group is back in action.

4

Rita Peterson, our website guru, is looking for an assistant or two to help with updates to the WordPress website. The website is undergoing some noticeable and engaging changes. If you haven't looked recently, please check it out at **LWVDayton.org!**

5

Lastly, new members can look for an invitation to an in-person Deck Party, Monday, July 19, 5-7 pm at the Merry home. Invitations will be emailed soon! This is a great way to connect with other new members and a few of us "old" members as well.

If you have questions about any of these opportunities or to learn about other ways to connect, please contact me!

~Laurel Kerr, Volunteer Coordinator

laurelkerr1549@gmail.com

REDISTRICTING 2021: IT'S AN ALL HANDS ON DECK PROPOSITION

Under the Fair Districts banner, Common Cause distributed, upon request, free postcards that graphically depicted gerrymandered districts. The postcards were to be personalized and mailed to members of the redistricting commission along with Ohio legislators.

Volunteer coordinator, Laurel Kerr, and Action Chair, Valerie Lee, took advantage of the opportunity to “Do Something” inviting League members to a north or south of town location for a postcard party. In the north, Stephanie Smith assisted with the guest list and supplies while membership Chair Leslie Merry and Fair Elections Committee Chair Kim Senft-Paras partnered with Laurel to host a much-in-demand gathering. Based on the success of this activity, we hope to plan additional geographically-based events offering League members, who want opportunities, to put passion into action. If you would be interested in hosting a party, please contact Laurel at laurelkerr1549@gmail.com. We have a team willing to support your efforts in every way!



League member
Stephanie Smith

Voters Guide Sponsors Needed

Last year, a record number of people came out to vote. And where did they turn for trusted candidate and issue information? The League of Women Voters Greater Dayton Area *Voters Guide*!

The Dayton League has provided voting information for the community since we were founded over 100 years ago. In 2021, we hope to print 150,000 copies of the *Voters Guide*, including a version in Spanish, to be inserted into the *Dayton Daily News*, *La Guardianiana*, *AIM Media*, and other community papers as our budget allows. Copies will be delivered to Montgomery and Greene County libraries, area high schools, colleges, and local businesses. The *Guide* will also be available on our website and Vote411, the national League’s online resource.

The *Guide* provides information about candidates’ views, written in their own words – we do not correct spelling, punctuation, or grammar – and pro and con information on issues. The *Guide* also prepares citizens to vote by providing voting hours, voting options, eligibility, and ID requirements.

The *Voters Guide* is provided as a community service, not a fundraiser, **but we can’t do it without your help**. Each donation helps to underwrite printing and distribution costs. Your tax-deductible gift of \$100 will put the *Guide* into the hands of 1,000 voters! Plus, those who sponsor 1,000 copies or more will be listed prominently on the back page of the *Voters Guide*, because you made it happen!

You can use the donation form on the back panel of this newsletter, or make your donation through our website, **LWVDayton.org**. Don’t hesitate to call us if you have any questions at 937.228.4041. Thank you for your consideration!

☞ *Estate Gifts to support the Voters Guide can be a lasting legacy reflecting your commitment to a better democracy*



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127 N. Ludlow Street
Dayton, OH 45402-1703

*"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:

YES! I want to sponsor the *Voters Guide*

I have enclosed my tax-deductible gift:

- \$100/1,000 copies
 \$200/2,000 copies
 \$300/3,000 copies
 \$400/4,000 copies
 \$500/5,000 copies
 \$600/6,000 copies
 \$700/7,000 copies
 \$800/8,000 copies
 \$900/9,000 copies
 \$1000/10,000 copies
 \$_____ Other Donation

How would you like your name/business/group listed in the *Voters Guide*?

I would like to distribute *Voters Guides* at my business!

Name of business: _____

Phone: _____ Address: _____

Please send a check, with this form, payable to LWVGDA, to:
127 N. Ludlow Street, Dayton, OH 45402

You may also pay online by visiting our website at **lwvdayton.org**
Click Donate | Make a Donation. You do not need a PayPal account to donate online.
Questions? Give us a call at 937.228.4041