



THE VOTER

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

1920 - 2021

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Thanks to the Unsung Heroes of BOE

As we prepare for Election Day, I want to offer kudos to our Boards of Elections who are responsible for administering each aspect of local elections. These public servants are truly unsung heroes.

Until joining the League, I had never attended a Board of Elections (BOE) meeting. After auditing meetings throughout the summer, I've learned so much about the effort and the thousands of hours of staff time needed to assure that we have secure, accurate elections. Moreover, I've been impressed by the pride that the staff and Boards have for their role in the process.

If you know anyone who doubts the legitimacy of our elections, I challenge them to attend a Board meeting so that they can see first-hand the checks and balances in place that assure a fair election. One of the first Montgomery County BOE meetings I attended was a week after the May 4th special election, and an agenda item was to authorize the provisional ballots. After staff had handled and painstakingly studied each ballot, the Board members themselves examined each carefully before approval.



IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES

- October 4 Last day to register to vote
- October 5 Voting by Mail (Absentee Ballot) starts
Early In-Person Voting starts
at County Board of Elections sites,
from 8 am to 5 pm weekdays
(Closed on Columbus Day October 11)
- October 30 Early In-Person Voting 8 am to 4 pm
- October 31 Early In-Person Voting 1 pm to 5 pm
- November 1 Absentee ballot postmark deadline
Early In-Person Voting 8 am to 2 pm
- November 2 ELECTION DAY**
Polls Open 6:30 am to 7:30 pm

BOE staff also help candidates understand the exact procedures of filing a candidate petition and to assure there is no "fatal error" like an incorrect date, too few, or even too MANY signatures that will deem that petition invalid. While incredibly complex, the process used by the Boards to vet petitions is fair and consistent, assuring that elections are free and competitive. Board members are every bit as disappointed as the candidate when a fatal error is made; they know how much time and energy goes into the process.

So, when you go to the polls this Fall, remember the hard work and countless hours it takes to make democracy work. I know I plan on bringing doughnuts to the next meeting I attend!

*~Chris Corba,
Executive Director, LWVGDA*

Our Contributors Fuel Our Mission

Thank you to the following who have made a contribution to the League as of August 31, 2021 and since our September Voter

Jack and Carlyle Barnard
Alice Dinicola
Judy Dodge
Linda Fish
Mary Gmeiner

Catherine Mong
Rebecca Morgann
Sandy Nearingard
Kathy Peoples
Maureen Pero

Jane Rafal-McGee
Mary Robertson
Carol Winslow

Voters Guide Time!!

During the week of October 10, **35,000** Voters Guides will be delivered to the League office! If you are able to help distribute *Guides* to schools, businesses and libraries, please call the office at 937.228.4041.



Congratulations to Rebecca Morgann!

League member Rebecca Morgann was recently inducted into the Greene County Women's Hall of Fame which celebrates women who have "made significant contributions to making Greene County a better place to live." Rebecca was recognized for her efforts as an advocate for persons in need. Rebecca serves on the Board of Trustees of the Family Violence Prevention Center of Greene County and is co-founder of the 100+ Women Making a Difference in Greene County, which, to date has raised over \$420,000 for Greene County charities.

Well deserved!

SAVE THE DATE

On the evening of **November 3rd**, F&D is proud to present a Zoom event with local author Sharon Short. Under the name of Jess Montgomery, Sharon writes *The Kingship Historical Mysteries Series*, intriguing fiction that is based on the true stories of women in Ohio in the 1920s.

Stay tuned for more information on this event.

From the President's Desk

October marks our final push into the election season. Volunteers have been at every major event, registering voters, making sure that registration information is current, and providing information on upcoming elections so that voters are prepared to cast their ballots on November 2.

But voter registration is just a part of what we do. There are volunteers who are finalizing the *Voters Guide*, which provides information on every candidate running in a contested race. Distribution will begin the first week of October.

Candidate interviews are being produced by the League at DATV and MVCC which will run continuously on their channels. You can also see them by going to our website www.lwvdayton.org. In addition, the League is moderating candidate forums throughout the community. This year we are pleased to join with the NAACP on two candidate nights featuring school board races and local government races.

Our nonpartisan reputation is our strength and value to the community. From our *Voters Guide*, our Candidate Videos, to the *Empowering You!* broadcasts on pressing topics, we strive to make sure they are fair and balanced. It is not the League way to tell voters what to do. It is our mission to make sure that the information is out there so that each voter can make an informed choice.

Keep an eye out - at some point in October, we will be sending out a survey to the membership regarding our monthly newsletter, *The Voter*. It is important to us that we provide a newsletter that truly interests and serves our membership. Your responses are important as we move forward.

Also for consideration – we are looking for an Historian! The League has its own version of a catch-all drawer and it would be wonderful if it could be put in some sort of order. We have a rich 100 year history and it should be celebrated. Maybe you and a friend? Give the office a call if you are interested. And, as always, your ideas and comments are welcome. Email them to leaguedayton@sbcglobal.net. Thank you.



~Mario, LWVGDA President



League Activity Round-Up

Implicit Bias Training Available to Members

Through funding from the United Way and in collaboration with Sinclair Community College, the Dayton Mediation Center, and the League of Women Voters, an **Implicit Racial Bias Training** will be provided **Saturday October 23, 10 am - 12 pm**. This training will be conducted online via Zoom, and will be a follow up to an online independent training through the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State University.

Register by emailing implicitbiastraining@gmail.com

*"Not everything that is faced can be changed,
but nothing can be changed until it is faced."
~James Baldwin*



Once you register for the Implicit Racial Bias Training, you will receive a confirmation email with the link for the Kirwan Institute where you will find some 'homework' for the class, and other information about the Kirwan Institute's work.

~David Bodary, VP Program

League Leads Education on Gerrymandering

The League hosted "Gerrymandering and Ohio Redistricting Reform: Fair Districts = Fair Elections" on September 14 at Woodbourne Library in Centerville. Guest speaker and League member Dennis Turner, Professor Emeritus with University of Dayton Law School, provided an educational program explaining the harm gerrymandered districts do to representative government. Jo Lovelace Hill made sure attendees had the opportunity to register to vote.



Jo Lovelace Hill is ready to register voters



Professor Emeritus Dennis Turner explains gerrymandering

League Gets On the Record for Fair Districts

Many League members were in the audience AND in front of the microphone offering testimony on the negative effects unfairly drawn districts will have on the Greater Dayton area at a public hearing on redistricting reform August 24 at Sinclair Community College.

Members reassembled again on Sunday, September 12, to provide comments on House and Senate District maps introduced by the Ohio Redistricting Commission.

This fight for FAIR DISTRICTS is not over!



A few of the many League members that attended the August 24 Regional Hearing on Redistricting Reform

PFAS Found in Dayton Water Supply

PFAS chemical contamination is a nationwide problem, and it has hit hard in Dayton. PFAS are the group of dozens of per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances found in manufactured items such as non-stick cookware, food boxes, stain repellents, waterproofing, cosmetics, some pharmaceuticals, and most importantly for the Dayton area's aquifer, in the firefighting foams that have been used extensively at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, at the Dayton airport, and at Dayton's firefighter training center. Ohio has now outlawed the use of firefighting foam containing PFAS. The watchful Miami Conservancy District has found these chemicals in local rivers, streams, wastewater treatment plants, and in some aquifer sampling sites. The city of Dayton has found small amounts in its water supply. The state discovered unacceptably large amounts in wells at Aullwood Audubon Farm and some surrounding properties in Butler Township near the airport.

The PFAS family of chemicals are often called "forever chemicals" because they don't easily break down. The United States Environmental Protection Agency has set a health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion (PPT) for this group of chemicals, but they are re-studying the levels where PFAS become unsafe. Ohio uses the 70 PPT measure at this point, but other states such as Michigan use a much lower safety number.

Why should we care? Studies of health risks are ongoing, but some studies have shown that PFAS may affect the immune system, decrease vaccination response, increase risk of some cancers, increase cholesterol levels, interfere with hormones, affect learning and behavior in children, and lower female fertility. Effects also vary by duration of exposure, how often exposure occurred, and personal factors such as age and having other illnesses. Many US manufacturers have now replaced the PFAS chemicals in their manufacturing processes but imported goods may still contain them. And many new chemicals are introduced every year. (epa.ohio.gov)

What is being done locally? In 2019, Gov. Mike DeWine ordered that Ohio write a PFAS action plan to test drinking water in both public and private (usually wells) water sources. The plan mandates gathering data, assists private water source owners with resources to respond to contamination, and establishes action levels for response to contamination. In 2020, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency found PFAS levels well above the 70 PPT at the Aullwood Audubon Farm's well, and then at some other neighboring properties with private wells. Aullwood Audubon Farm immediately switched to bottled water, and is currently attaching to the Union, Ohio municipal water system. This contamination may have come from the use of firefighting foam at the nearby Dayton International Airport in the past, or from the factories or warehouses in the surrounding area.

After water on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB) also tested higher than 70 PPT, the Base started using reverse osmosis and activated carbon filtration to clean its water. Unfortunately, this remedy is considered too expensive for municipal water systems to use.

The city of Dayton's website states that it has taken several steps in response to showing positive tests for PFAS in its water supply. (Note that Dayton also sells water to many surrounding municipalities, so this is an area-wide issue.) The city states that no PFAS have been found in Dayton's actual tap water. They have been found in what it calls Dayton's "raw water." Dayton now publishes the amount of PFAS found in its water supply. The city uses 600 monitoring wells to detect PFAS and has used those findings to shut down some production wells. It has hired a consultant to search for further solutions. In what it calls "a last resort," the city has sued WPAFB and the Department of Defense for \$300 million over drinking water contamination by firefighting foam. Dayton has also sued 3M, Buckeye Fire Equipment Company, Chemguard Inc, Tyco Fire Products LP, and National Foam Inc over their sales of firefighting foam products containing PFAS. Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley has said that the city did not know of the potential harm from the chemicals, but that the companies did.

Greene County is also actively testing for the family of PFAS chemicals. They hired a testing company in 2020 and found no PFAS in four of the County wellfields. They also found no PFAS in water the County buys from Fairborn. They found minimal traces of PFAS in water bought from Dayton and Montgomery County. Greene County is planning to install its own new county-owned facilities in the future.

~Kathy Turner, Chair, Natural Resources Committee

VOLUNTEER VOICES



An Interview with Kim Senft Paras, Fair Elections Committee Chair

Kim has made it her mission to end gerrymandering in Ohio. To that end, she has led a dedicated team of volunteers and recruited countless participants in an unflagging attempt to: 1) Educate the general public about the dangers of gerrymandering through Speakers Bureau events, 2) Create community maps with input from several local communities that reflect priorities of local citizens, and 3) Get the attention of the Redistricting Commission through all forms of communication, including requests to League members to send emails and make phone calls, host postcard parties, and write/present public testimony at the local and state levels. The League owes Kim a debt of gratitude for leading this worthwhile and tremendous effort. Read below to see why this issue matters to her, who has helped make the work come to fruition, and what fair elections means to her when it comes to redistricting.

Why is redistricting such an important issue to you?

Redistricting is an important issue to me because:

- State legislative and Congressional redistricting reforms passed overwhelmingly with over 70% of the vote in all 88 of Ohio's counties in 2015 and 2018, respectively. This is how Ohioans said they wanted redistricting to be managed.
- I believe a fair, transparent redistricting process can remake our reputation as a state committed to honesty, integrity, and equality for all our residents.
- Because redistricting happens only every 10 years, it is imperative we get involved to make sure the Commission uses this opportunity to remedy the gerrymandered districts made in 2011.
- Fairness, equity, and justice must be at the forefront of the effort.
- Unchecked, voter suppression and manipulated political redistricting will destroy our democracy.

Tell me about the work of the Fair Elections Committee, and the committee members and their roles.

When I retired from my work as Director of the Washington-Centerville Public Library in September 2019, I was repeatedly asked how I was going to spend my time in retirement – travelling? caring for grandchildren? Well yes, I did plan to do both, but I wanted to commit to an effort that would help others. I had not focused on just what that would be and then I saw an interview with Stacey Abrams concerning voter suppression and knew this would be the initiative I would put my energy toward.

The Board of our local League created the Fair Elections/Redistricting Committee in February and since then I have dedicated my efforts and resources to work for fair elections and to end partisan gerrymandering.

My goal for the committee was to engage and educate Greater Miami Valley residents through their neighborhoods, community groups, service organizations, and political groups using printed materials and presentations to ensure fair elections, encourage impartial redistricting map submissions, and public engagement in the process.

VOLUNTEER VOICES



Continued...

When news of this new committee was posted, League members eagerly contacted me about their interest in being involved. There were opportunities to train as speakers, community of interest mapmakers, and facilitators. Jerry Sutton was the first to contact me and has been our go-to person on the Fair District Speakers Bureau. Many will remember Jerry from his presentation at our Day of Action webinar in April. Matthew Krug, a relatively new League member, dove into mapmaking training. Matt played a vital role in the community of interest mapmaking sessions and created eight maps for our contribution to the Fair Districts' state total. Lucy Anne McKosky shared her expertise, knowledge and assumed any role asked of her – a real team player! New member, Joanne Davis participated in two of our meetings as a notetaker.

Several members and one potential member helped to organize our mapping sessions including Amy Rohmiller, Kettering; Jessica Hunter, NW Montgomery County; Mona Bailey and Zella Cook, SW Montgomery County; Peggy Coale, Beaver Creek; Valerie Lee, Trotwood; and Charlene Chattams, Jefferson Township. Lucy Anne and I organized a session for Centerville/Washington Township residents. Matt gathered community members from Oakwood. Lucy Anne and I had high hopes of mapping 14 areas of Montgomery County and I wanted to engage a group from Yellow Springs, but you can only “work with the willing” as they say.

Dennis Turner provided thorough presentations on gerrymandering for engaged audiences at the Centerville Noon Optimists, the Washington-Centerville's Woodbourne Library and the Centerville Rotary Club the week of September 13. Dennis's commitment to this initiative is longstanding and appreciated.

As with most efforts, it is the people that make the time spent so important and valuable. I am grateful to everyone who engaged in the Fair Districts initiative and put SW Ohio on the map!

What, in your mind, constitutes fair elections, and how do we get there?

The ACLU writes, “Redistricting is the process of drawing the lines of districts from which public officials are elected. When it's conducted fairly, it accurately reflects population changes and racial diversity, and is used by legislators to equitably allocate representation in Congress and state legislatures. When politicians use redistricting to manipulate the outcome of elections however, it's called gerrymandering — a practice that undermines democracy and stifles the voice of voters. Voters should be picking their politicians. Not the other way around.”

In my testimony given at Dayton's Ohio Redistricting Commission hearing on August 24, I asked them to follow the law, set aside party allegiance, and restrain themselves from power grabs by packing and cracking districts. It is essential that the Commission members show their veracity, strength, and transparency by championing accountability, demonstrating bipartisanship, and embracing public participation.

~Laurel Kerr, Volunteer Coordinator

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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:

October 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 LAST DAY to register to vote	5 Absentee Voting by Mail begins Early In-Person Voting begins weekdays 8 am—5 pm F&D Committee	6	7	8	9
10	11 Columbus Day (Polls Closed) Board Meeting	12 Montgomery County BOE Meeting	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 Implicit Bias Training (Zoom)
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 Early In-Person Voting 8 am—4 pm
31  Early In-Person Voting 1 pm to 5 pm	1 Absentee Ballot postmark deadline Early In-Person Voting 8 am to 2 pm	2 ELECTION DAY 6:30 am—7:30 pm	3 F&D Event with author Sharon Short			