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THE VOTER

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

1920 - 2022

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March is Women's History Month

As we celebrate Women's History Month, I think about my mom, Betty Ann, and how the historic events she has witnessed during the past 82 years must have shaped her worldview. Born on March 8, 1940, she watched her family feel the aftermath of the Great Depression. She lived through World War II, the Korean War and the Cold War; the assassinations of JFK, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy; watched a man land on the moon; hushed us kids as we watched Richard Nixon's resignation; prayed for my sister who was in Europe when the Berlin Wall fell; watched as the Twin Towers collapsed on 9/11; and is now trying to survive a pandemic.

My mom started college (and paid for it herself) in 1958, despite my grandmother's objections. Like many young women of that era, she got married two months after she graduated. She taught for a year, gave birth to me sixteen months after her wedding day, and then became a full-time parent to me and my sisters.

She did all the typical mom things of the 70's. She was a Brownie scout leader, made fried bologna sandwiches, baked desserts that complemented the holiday (my favorite was a chocolate cake groundhog for Groundhog Day) and sent us out to play without having a clue what we were up to.

Each of us plays a role in history, no matter how modest the contribution may seem to us at the time.

She never participated in a march, but she voted in every single election. One of my earliest memories is going to the polls with her and standing behind a heavy dark curtain as she cast her ballot. She didn't go to protests to demand women's rights, but she continued to educate herself and insisted that my sisters and I go to college so we could be self-sufficient.

During Women's History Month, we celebrate our collective accomplishments as women. Each of us plays a role in history, no matter how modest the contribution may seem to us at the time. Our children take note as we read, discuss issues, vote, and volunteer. While Mom and I don't always share the same views, she taught me the importance of educating myself, giving back to my community and making my voice heard so I can make an impact in some small way.

How are you making history?

~Chris Corba, Executive Director



Our Contributors Fuel Our Mission

Thank you to the following who have made a contribution to the League as of February 2, 2022 and since our February *Voter*:

Anonymous
Susan Barde
Rosalie Bonacci Roberts
Catherine Clark

Rhine McLin
Network for Good
Peg Schulz, in Honor of
Carol Graff

Kim Senft-Paras
Thomas O. Williams

Thanks to the following

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Please go to our website to see the complete list of Leadership Circle donors

***The Voter* Newsletter Will Move to Email Format in April**

To provide timely news in a more economical and environmentally friendly manner, *The Voter* newsletter will move to an email format starting in April.

The newsletter will be sent to all member email addresses through Constant Contact service. To assure you see the email, and it doesn't wind up in your SPAM or 'Promotions' inbox, you should either tag our emails landing in your "spam" folder as "not spam," or add our league@lwvdayton.org address as a SAFE SENDER. To find How-To's for your email set up (gmail, outlook, hotmail, etc.), go to our website: lwvdayton.org or call the office for help.

Each issue will continue to be saved on our website. Printed copies of *The Voter* will be available upon request from our League office.

CORRECTION from the December/January 2022 issue article on the Peace Heroes Trail: Historian and Museum Director Dr. John Fleming was misidentified at Dr. James Fleming. Apologies to Dr. John Fleming, and thank you to Sandy McHugh for catching the mistake.

From the President's Desk

March is upon us! Phil saw his shadow, so I hope you are staying safe and warm.

With regret, the Board accepted Michelle Arostegui's resignation as League Board Secretary due to family and work obligations. Thank you Michelle, for your service and for your willingness to remain an engaged League member.

I would like you to welcome our new Board Secretary, Keelie Gustin, who was approved in that position at the February Board meeting. A Dayton League member since 2019, Keelie is the Chief Policy Officer for the Miami Valley Community Action Partnership. She is a history buff and has been especially interested in the LWV, recognizing that empowering the individual requires accessibility to the political process and to factual information.

We've got an interesting project coming up Friday, April 8, 9:15 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Arcade. The University of Dayton is hosting a two-day program titled "Imagining Community: Shaping a More Equitable Dayton." In collaboration with Sinclair Community College's Department of Sociology, Geography and Social Work, we will explore how social issues and geography affect active involvement in democracy.

League members Dianne Herman, Lucy Anne McKosky, and Jacqueline Housel (who is also Chair of the Department at Sinclair) will be part of a panel discussion on Social Inequity and Voting. That session will use Ohio legislative maps superimposed onto maps from Sinclair's Mapping Equity Project, which illustrate the impact of the "red line," that divided our community along racial lines, as related to voter access and participation.

On another note, would you like to meet new and fabulous people, while also working for a good cause? You're in luck – we have plenty of volunteer opportunities available!

- Hostess with the Most -est? Funding and Development is getting ready to take a fresh look at our member events. New ideas welcome!
- Want to get a feel for video production? The League has a monthly show on DATV and is podcasting as well. We will be starting to develop monthly membership meetings and could use help coordinating those.
- Have these past few years honed your writing skills? Website content creation could be right up your alley. Also, *The Voter* could use an assistant editor or two!
- Got a feel for numbers? The Finance Committee works to develop the yearly budget and could always use a detail-oriented committee member.



If you're intrigued by any of these possibilities, or have a hankering to do something, but not sure where your skills would fit best, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator Laurel Kerr at **937.409.0536**, by email at **Laurelkerr1549@gmail.com**, or Chris Corba in the office at **937.228.4041** or email at **leaguedayton@sbcglobal.net**. We truly have something for everyone!

And last but not least, our newsletter will be going digital next month. Please share your thoughts – it's really important to us that our changes make your experience as a League member a straightforward and informative educational experience.

As always, your ideas and comments are welcome. Email them to **leaguedayton@sbcglobal.net**. Thank you.

~Mario, President



GUBERNATORIAL PRIMARY DEBATES

Central State University will be host to 2022 Gubernatorial Primary Debates on March 28 and 29. Watch email and social media for details.

VOTING RIGHTS MATTER: Two Bills Aim to Give All Voters Equal Access to Fair Elections

According to National Public Radio, dozens of states have enacted over 200 measures changing voting laws since the 2020 election, including a few that expanded ballot access. Most were supported on the false premise that there was widespread voter fraud in 2020 (this has been debunked). The League of Women Voters observe that voting rights are under attack.

Two Bills, both passed in the US House, now languish in the Senate due to political infighting. A Senate passage would require 60 votes, which the Democrats, who hold a thin majority, have been unable to garner, or a suspense of the filibuster tactic, which again is not supported by enough Senators at this time. The two bills aim to either renew laws embedded in the original *Voting Rights Act of 1965*, or add additional rules aimed at assuring all Americans have access to fair, transparent elections.

The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

The Bill aims to reverse a 2013 Supreme Court decision that struck down key portions of the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*.

Since the decision, many states have reverted to pre-*Civil Rights Amendment* tactics aimed at suppressing voters in mostly Black and Hispanic districts by eliminating polling sites, making voting by mail much harder, or adding cumbersome rules for producing voter identification.

Specifically the Bill would:

- Restore the requirement for states to get preclearance from the Department of Justice for any changes to voting laws, especially:
 - relocating polling sites;
 - imposing stricter voter ID requirements.

The League of Women Voters highly supports passage of this Bill. Many believe this Bill has an easier path to passage than the more sweeping *Freedom to Vote Act*.

The Freedom to Vote Act

This is a more sweeping pro-voter legislation that would:

- Make Election Day a national holiday, aimed at making it easier for all voters to get to the polls that day;
- Allow states to have early voting for at least two weeks prior to Election Day, including nights and weekends;
- Allow voting by mail with no excuses needed, and voters could put their ballots in drop boxes;
- Require that states make voting more accessible for people with disabilities;
- Require that states that specify IDs for voting would have to broaden the types of acceptable identification;
- Require states to offer same-day voting registration and online registration, and make it easier to register at places like Departments of Motor Vehicles;
- Outlaw partisan gerrymandering;
- Impose new rules on how campaigns are paid for by limiting the use of so-called dark money by political action committees.

Despite widespread public support for improving our voting experience nationally, observers agree both efforts face a very uphill battle in today's hyper-partisan environment.

What can you do?

1. Support every American's freedom to vote in fair and accessible elections;
2. Contact Senators Portman and Brown to support these Bills;
3. Stay updated on the progress of these Bills by watching voting rights news on local, state and national LWV sites.

Social Service Committee Looks to Give More in 2022

Deb Mustard-Gibson, Chair of the Social Services Committee, gave an overview of their work at the February Board meeting. They began volunteering at the House of Bread in May 2019. Volunteers do food prep, serving food to the public, and clean up. Also provided are blood pressure screenings and voter registration. COVID, of course, put a crimp in that since April, 2020. The House of Bread still is not accepting groups, but is always appreciative of monetary donations, hygiene products, diapers, books, and activities for children. Please give them a call at 937.226.1520.

The Social Services Committee also provides volunteers to The Food Bank starting in 2021 once a month from 10-3. They do a variety of jobs from creating boxes for pick up to "Backpacks for Kids," a program that supplies families, through students, with provisions to help feed children over the weekend. The Food Bank lets them know at the end of every session how many families and children have benefited from these provisions.

Thanks to those who have previously volunteered and those currently volunteering. Pictured are Deb Mustard-Gibson, Becky Jamison, Jim Welsh, Terri O Connell, Jan Underwood, Phil Dreety, Lucy Anne McKosky, Yvonne and Tony Currington, and David Bodary. Not pictured are Louisa Dreety, Cena Buchanan, Laurel Kerr and Mike Bock.

The Committee is looking to expand their activities but need volunteers! You would be working alongside a great group of people and providing a valued service to the community. If you are interested, please give Deb Mustard-Gibson a call at **937.409.4456**.



LWVO Virtual Statehouse Day 2022

Thursday, April 7, from 10:30am - 2:30pm

Join LWVO for its annual day of learning and advocacy. Experts will conduct a redistricting review of Ohio's process, in comparison to other states, and what's next. Hear more about possible elections legislation from modernizing voter registration, funding Boards of Elections, and changing ID requirements. Finally, you will be given tools to take action on issues that affect voters and our great state from the comfort of your own home.

More details about the event registration and agenda will be shared soon. Stay tuned!

Did You Know?

When you join LWVGDA, you automatically become a member of LWVO and LWVUS! We pay annual fees to each organization, so **only about 10%** of your membership fee is applied toward our annual budget.

We depend on the generosity of our community and members to help make up the rest of our operating expenses. An effortless way to help is to sign up for community giving programs sponsored by businesses you already patronize! Simply designate your contribution to the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area and the League will receive a percentage of the purchases you make.

Kroger Community Giving: www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards

Dorothy Lane Market: www.dorothylane.com/goodneighbor

Amazon Smile: smile.amazon.com/ch/31-1041844

Fair Maps Saga Travels Very Bumpy Road Toward Uncharted Destination

The saga of the League of Women Voters' efforts to ensure a fair redistricting process in Ohio continues. On January 14, the Supreme Court of Ohio quashed the congressional maps submitted by the Ohio Legislature and instructed them to produce revised maps by February 13. The Court's majority opinion stated, "This plan defies correction on a simple district-by-district basis. We, therefore, see no recourse but to invalidate the entire congressional-district plan." The Legislative members said they could not draw new maps by this date, so the Ohio Redistricting Commission now has until March 14 to produce the maps.

On February 7, the Ohio Supreme Court struck down the Ohio Redistricting Commission's second set of Ohio House and Senate maps. A written statement from the majority's opinion included, "The General Assembly produced a plan that is infused with undue partisan bias and that is incomprehensibly more extremely biased than the 2011 plan that it replaced." The Ohio Redistricting Commission must generate a third set of maps by February 17. As of this writing, no meetings or public hearings have been announced for either the Ohio House and Senate or congressional maps. Concerns and questions about the date for Ohio's spring Primary loom large because of

these delays, but the Ohio Supreme Court required the Legislature to promptly deliver fair congressional maps that comply with all Constitutional requirements.

For more than 40 years, the League has been working for a fair redistricting process in Ohio. During that time, Ohio's Congressional delegation went from 11 Republicans (52%) and 10 Democrats (48%) in the 1980's to 12 Republicans (75%) and 4 Democrats (25%) after the 2010 census. The Republican Party also achieved supermajorities of 66% or greater in both houses of the Legislature even though Republican candidates in statewide elections typically receive about 54% of the votes to 46% for Democratic candidates. Members of our local League worked hard in 2015 and again in 2018 to pass amendments to the Ohio Constitution intended to minimize gerrymandering; produce Legislative and Congressional districts that impartially represented Ohio voters; and after the 2020 census, would create competitive districts with outcomes that reflect the typical distribution of votes in statewide elections.

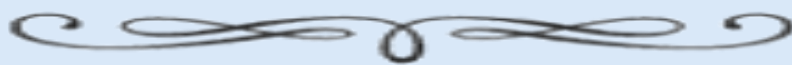
The Ohio League of Women Voters leads the redistricting litigation, but as individuals our engagement and communication with our Representatives is necessary to state emphatically the necessity of proportionality,

compactness, competitiveness, and minority representation to communities, while minimizing splits and closing the efficiency gap, all key indicators of a fair map.

The LWVGDA Redistricting/Fair Elections Committee plans to hold educational forums after the spring Primary in both Montgomery and Greene Counties. Topics to be included at these presentations are: the history of gerrymandering, evaluation of the current process, and the impact of the approved maps on both counties and neighborhoods. Fortunately for us, LWVGDA member, and University of Dayton Professor-Emeritus Dennis Turner, has agreed to share his expertise on the history of gerrymandering and be part of the presentation team.

For timely information on the status of the district maps, sign-up for emails from Fair Districts (www.fairdistrictsohio.org). To be part of the LWVGDA Redistricting/Fair Elections Committee, contact Dianne Herman (dianneherman2@gmail.com) or Kim Senft-Paras (kimsenftparas5@gmail.com) to help us advocate for fair districts and elections.

VOLUNTEER VOICES



The League Congratulates and Thanks Jan Underwood, Photojournalist



2018 Womens March



2018 Womens March



LWV Ohio Convention



LWV Ohio Statehouse Day



LWV Ohio Statehouse Day

What does League member and photojournalist Jan Underwood have in common with Marion's Pizza and Bill's Donuts? If you guessed **Top Choice** in the **Best of Dayton** competition sponsored by the *Dayton Daily News*, you are correct! While Jan does not put much stock in this competition, she is an award-winning documentary photographer, capturing life in the Miami Valley and beyond with photographs of political and cultural events, as well as people engaged in everyday activities. Her goal is to document for the historical record, while sharing a message of what people are doing and trying to accomplish. She tries to be present when the community is out in force trying to make changes.

Jan worked for the *Dayton Daily News* for 30 years, 22 of those years as a photographer and the first eight as a journalist, during which time she used her own photos to illustrate her stories. Jan began studying photography at the Dayton Art Institute school. She continued at Sinclair Community College and the University of Dayton, then went on to earn a Master's Degree in Journalism with a photography concentration from The Ohio State University.

As a photojournalist, Jan covered the League and was familiar with the mission. She joined in 2017 because of her commitment to fair districts and led the effort in getting fair districts petitions signed. Jan is the unofficial local League photographer and was also asked to photograph the last in-person state League convention in 2019. She was scheduled to photograph the 2020 centennial state celebration, but that gig was cancelled due to COVID. Of course, she does all of this now as a volunteer, for which the League is very grateful.

The League relies on its members as volunteer journalists, photographers, web masters, social media contributors, proofreaders, and graphic artists. While Jan and others who do this work have professional experience, this is not required! If you'd like to help document and spread the work of the League, please contact me at **937.409.0536** or **laurelkerr1549@gmail.com**. I would love to hear from you and connect you with someone on the Communications Committee. Looking for something else to do with the League? Let's talk!

~ 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:

March 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Ash Wednesday	3	4	5
6	7	8 Dangerous Dames of Dayton Event	9	10	11	12
13 Daylight Savings Time Begins	14 <i>Board Meeting</i>	15	16 Freedom of Information Day	17 	18	19
20 First day of Spring 	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
	Gubernatorial Debates at Central State University					