



THE VOTER

Monthly News & Updates

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Take a Bow and Take a Breath

Wow. We've been busy. With Issue 1 in August, and the General Election coming up in just a few days, it's been nonstop, and now we're about to embark on a signature campaign to ensure fair districts. Plus, your volunteer efforts reach well beyond League activities. In the midst of all this "busyness," life happens, too. Many of us have experienced profound loss in the past few months and have had to deal with life experiences outside of our control. We can't forget that we need to take time for ourselves so that we can continue to be there for others. So, take a walk, a nap, revisit that hobby, stare into space for a bit and just "be," even if it's only for a few minutes. I've been knitting like crazy. There's something about the click, click, click of the needles, the texture of good yarn and creating something beautiful and useful that brings peace. Yes, everyone in my family will be wrapped in mufflers and mittens this holiday season!



Dedicated Voters Guide Team Utilizes VOTE411

The *Voters Guide* is the centerpiece of our League's mission to provide Miami Valley voters with the information they need to make informed decisions at the polls. Under the direction of editor Andy Cobb and senior advisor Lucy Anne McKosky, a dedicated team of volunteers produced both the usual printed *Voters Guide* and an online guide using the **VOTE411** platform provided by LWVUS. Jan Achbach, Mary Lou Baker Jones, Jo Lovelace Hill, Deb Lukjanovs, Jacquie Housel, Beth Schaeffer, and Mario spent many hours developing content, and Lucy Anne McKosky and Mary Robertson provided the cover graphics. 29,000 copies of the *Voters Guide* were delivered to the League office on October 10 and 46,000 copies were distributed with newspapers in Montgomery and Greene Counties.

Many thanks to all the League members and friends who delivered guides to multiple locations across the two counties. This year's guide covers 151 races in Montgomery and Greene Counties, with nearly 300 candidates. While the printed guide includes biographical information and question responses only for candidates in contested races (54 races, 181 total candidates), all candidates were invited to

Take a little time to breathe.
It's ok.

~Chris Corba, Executive
Director

participate in VOTE411. This year is the first time we have used VOTE411 for local races. The setup required a considerable amount of work, but the investment of effort will pay off in future years, and voters will have access to information about all candidates, not only those in contested races.

~Lucy Anne McKosky/Andy Cobb



“Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it.”

— Susan B. Anthony, women’s rights activist during the suffragette movement in the early 20th century

An Invitation to Participate in the LWVGDA Listening Sessions

In the summer of 2022, a group of League members participated in Listening Sessions held by the ACLU. The purpose of the sessions was to help the Ohio ACLU get a better understanding of the needs in the communities they serve and represent by engaging them in dialogue. Members of the League who participated in the ACLU sessions decided that holding our own Listening Sessions could help the LWVGDA, and particularly the DEI Committee, to create conversations within our membership to:

- Get to know members of the organization at a deeper level
- Learn about issues that are important to members and their communities
- Discuss the League's DEI policy and how we can implement it on a daily basis in our programming, and ultimately, in our lives

After months of planning to determine what questions needed to be asked, how we would structure the meetings and what we wanted to accomplish, we are excited to announce that sessions will be held in November and December of 2023. The Listening



Sessions will require a commitment of three 1.5 hour sessions over the course of three weeks via Zoom or in-person at local libraries. League members will lead the sessions. More information about the sessions will be sent via Constant Contact to ALL League members. If you are interested in participating, please **email the League office** or **call the office** at 937-228-4041. We hope you'll join us!

~Dona Fletcher, Director of Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion

Report Shines a Light on Inactive and Unregistered Voters

A recent study published by the nonprofit Innovation Ohio Education Fund, "**A Justice Agenda – Ohio's Missing Voters,**" shows there are **over 700,000 inactive voters** in



Ohio, and a stunning **2 million citizens who are eligible but unregistered** to vote in Ohio. There are roughly 7.8 million registered voters in Ohio. Worse, voter turnout has declined every year from 2018-2022, especially in densely populated urban counties.

Digging deeper into the problem, researchers found that inactive voters—those who are registered but have not voted in the last three federal elections—include a higher population of Black, younger (college age), and women voters. The report concludes that voter empowerment organizations like the League of Women Voters need to increase efforts to reach unregistered and inactive voters in more surgical and neighborhood-specific ways.

What are we doing locally? In 2022, the Dayton League partnered with Sinclair geography students to create a series of maps showing voter turnout by precinct in Dayton. Similar to the Missing Voters report, voting turnout is low in Dayton, particularly in most state and local elections. As a result of those maps, the League initiated a project to develop relationships with five Dayton neighborhoods to discover what specific barriers keep those populations from voting and to develop an action plan to mobilize resources that will make a difference. We plan to expand the project over time.

Voting is a right afforded to all citizens over 18. Empowering voters currently missing the voting experience will result in a more diverse, just, and representative government for all Ohioans.

~Mary Robertson and Jacqueline Housel

DEI CORNER

Marriage Equality for Disabled Persons

On September 13, twenty couples gathered in



front of a stage at the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to recite their commitment vows, and with their supporters staged a rally in support of marriage equality for disabled persons. They came together to highlight the challenges posed by federal law when disabled persons marry. Those who receive Supplemental Security Income (a Social Security Program for disabled persons and older adults with few assets and little to no

income) risk losing their modest monthly stipend and the Medicaid that comes with it if they marry. Thus, many people with disabilities in the United States face a heart-wrenching choice: either marry their partner and risk losing their life-sustaining disability benefits and health insurance or remain unmarried. Advocates describe it as one of the final frontiers of marriage equality and one which emanates from paternalism, low expectations, and ableist assumptions.

Representative Jimmy Panetta, Democrat from California, has proposed legislation that would remove these marriage restrictions. Senator Sherrod Brown, Democrat from Ohio, and Senator Bill Cassidy, Republican from Louisiana, have also introduced legislation to raise asset limits for SSI. Commentators have noted that a lack of understanding and awareness, in combination with gridlock and hyper-partisanship, have contributed to our legislators failing to address this problem. One of the attendees at the September event was Amber Weise, who wore an ivory dress. She said, "There's this idea that at a wedding, you wear a white dress to symbolize purity. I'm wearing ivory to symbolize that, for disabled people, we don't have the purity of the fundamental right to get married without risking our lives."

~Dianne Herman, DEI Committee

REV UP THOSE CLIPBOARDS!

YOU, yes you will be needed to help get a redistricting reform amendment on the ballot! The amendment would create a 15-member commission of Republicans, Democrats, and independents to draw Ohio's congressional and legislative maps, instead of current or former politicians who are inherently more interested in retaining power than in designing fair maps.

As some may know, Citizens Not Politicians, the sponsor of the proposed amendment, discovered a typo in the language which prompted a delay in getting petitions out for signatures. Petitions are now slated to be ready the first week in December.

Many volunteers will be needed to collect signatures. Petition Booklet Circulator Training will happen throughout November. Register for a session here:

- **November 14 at Noon**
- **November 21 at Noon**
- **November 30 at 6:00 PM**

Our League will communicate additional tasks and events as soon as they are announced.

Have You Seen Our YouTube Channel?

LWW Greater Dayton has now curated many



video presentations and recordings of League programs, including our most recent “Empowering You” segment and the “Facts First: What is Issue 1” program on our YouTube Channel. **Take a look** and save the site in your favorites bar on your browser or app. Thanks to Jan Berger for her work on this valuable communication tool.

UPCOMING CALENDAR

November 5: Last day of early voting

November 6: Absentee ballots must be postmarked (Walk your ballot into the post office!)

November 7: **ELECTION DAY!** Polls open 6:30 AM to 7:30 PM

November 10: Veterans Day (Observed)

November 11: Veterans Day

November 13: LWV Ohio All-Member Call, (Zoom), Noon

November 13: LWVGDA Board Meeting (Zoom), 6:00PM

November 13: Last day for mailed absentee ballots to be received by BOE

November 14: LWVO Lobby Corps (Zoom), Noon

November 23: Thanksgiving (Office closed November 23 and 24)

November 28: LWVO Lobby Corps (Zoom), Noon

December 4: Save the Date – New Member Meeting

December 8: Hanukkah

December 14: Save the Date – Holiday Soiree!



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The League of Women Voters Greater Dayton Area is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice.

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