



THE VOTER

MC Leaguers Meet With US President

LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara visited Columbus during the last week of October to promote the LWVUS' Clean Air Promise Campaign. Elisabeth was here to invite local Leagues to join in the promise and to educate citizens, elected officials and community leaders to the importance of protecting the health of our children and families through stronger clean air policies.



The Clean Air Promise

"I promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution.

Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths.

I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality."

A Call To Action: To make the Clean Air Promise go to the LWVUS webpage, www.lwv.org, or call the LWVO office, 469-1505, and request a promise card. There will also be cards at the LWVMC November 15 meeting.



"We are deeply concerned about attacks on EPA and health protections. Any action to block the EPA from updating Clean Air Act protections, or any delay on behalf of the Administration to avoid implementing new clean air and industrial pollution requirements, is an attack on the health of our children and families, plain and simple."

Elisabeth MacNamara

President's Message

Kitty Burcsu



I haven't written about our 4R Committee in awhile and I do want to keep all of you up to date on its activities, progress and eventual outcomes. The 4R (Revisioning, Reinventing, Reinvigorating and Relevancy) Committee whose members include: Sonja Nelson-Jones (Chair), Lucy Buzzee, Mim Brierley, Kitty Burcsu, Gloria Davis, Ann Henkener, Mary Kaul, Anne Nelson, Amy Pulles, and Beth Taggart, met during the summer to develop an RFP (Request for Proposals) to distribute to prospective consultants. In September the committee interviewed three consultants. Debbie Crawford, Deborah A. Crawford Consulting LLC, in partnership with Deb Peluso, The Change Collaborative, were unanimously selected by the Interview Sub Committee. The 4R Committee met with the consultants on Oct. 19 to kick-off the 4R process. When asked about what excites us about the 4R process, committee members noted the following:

- ❖ Looking forward to getting to the end and having a focus/outcome;
- ❖ Having a venue to think differently;
- ❖ Results of what we do could affect other Leagues;
- ❖ We are going to discover our niche

The committee also discussed challenges and noted:

- ❖ Not everyone sees the problems facing LWVMC;
- ❖ Change is hard; Falling back into our rut of how we've always done things will be easy;
- ❖ We don't know what is working/not working and why/why not;
- ❖ Are we really able to have new thoughts and let go of the old?
- ❖ Committee members are mostly long time LWV members.

Committee members agreed to expand the numbers and composition of the 4R Committee as quickly as possible. So....if you would like to be in the thick of this exciting, provocative and very important process, there's still time!! The Committee will meet again on Nov. 2 from 6 PM – 8 PM at the Jewish Community Center and on Nov. 9 from 6 PM – 8 PM at the Columbus Board of Realtors. The agenda for both meetings will be the same so it is only necessary to attend one of the meetings. If you would like to join the 4R Committee, please e-mail Committee Chair Sonja Nelson-Jones at snelson@thefirmcolumbus.org.

On another note, many members generously pledged to make a financial contribution to help offset the consultants' fees. You will soon be receiving a letter, inviting you to make that contribution. For others who did not pledge at the time, there's still time for you too! Contributions toward consultants' fees will be gratefully accepted at any point.

In closing, the 4R process is an exciting reality on which I will continue to provide updates. As always, I welcome your ideas, your questions and your participation. Thank you.



November MC League Activities

Channel 10 Phone Bank - Volunteer Opportunity

Tuesday, November 8

6:00 am - 7:00 pm

Even though this November is host to an off-year election, there are statewide ballot issues that will generate voter interest. The Channel 10 Phone Bank will be busy. The Phone Bank is the place to be on election day. Contact Amy, 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org, and let her know if you want to work the phones. Please sign up for AT LEAST 2 hours or longer. Volunteers will get instructions ahead of time.

Consensus Meeting for LWVUS on Education

Tuesday, November 15 6:30 p.m.

Wesley Glen, Ravine Room

Agenda: 6:30 – Pizza and drinks
6:45 – Introductions and overview of study and consensus
6:55 – Background papers
7:45 – Consensus questions
8:45 – Adjourn

Pizza and drinks will be available for those who RSVP to Amy, 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org.

Introductions to the five papers to be presented can be found page 8. These five background papers can be found in entirety on the LWVUS and LWVMC webpages.

If you would like a hardcopy please contact Amy, 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org.

A Nation in Debt: How Can We Pay the Bills?

Thursday, November 10, 6:30-8:00pm
Columbus Metropolitan Library
96 South Grant Street

Monday, November 21, 7:00-8:30pm
Columbus Metropolitan Library Whetstone Branch
3909 North High Street

Thursday, December 8, 7:00-8:30pm
Old Worthington Library 820 High Street

Join us in this collaboration of the Citizens for Public Discussion, Columbus Metropolitan Library, Worthington Libraries and the League of Women Voters Educational Events Committee. Each of the three identical forums will be 90 minutes in length and will begin with an NIF-produced video on the topic "A Nation in Debt" .

Gerrymandering Film Online For Free

Get the popcorn ready, call over the neighbors and watch a movie on a current League issue for free.

"Gerrymandering"

Director: Jeff Reichert

Until November 15 all you have to do is go to

www.indiewire.com/article/jeff_reichert_on_gerrymandering_watch_it_now_free/# .

Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on the map.

"The film is about redistricting battles: how the lines that determine who represents us in our state legislatures and Congress are drawn; who draws them; what interests are at stake; and the implications for the average American voter. " Jeff Reichert

December MC League Activities



Don't Miss the Fun at the LWVMC Annual Holiday Brunch



The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus will host its Annual Holiday Brunch, featuring "Raffle Mania" along with a "Silent" and "Live" fund-raising auction on **Sunday, December 4, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.**



The Holiday Brunch will be held at the home of League members **Nancy and Bob Brown at Miranova, One Miranova Place, Columbus 43215**. Parking is available at the adjacent garage, other nearby surface lots, and on the street.

Tickets are \$20 per person, which includes \$10 worth of raffle tickets. To purchase a ticket, simply contact the League office at 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org.



Save This Date In The New Year

"Changing Land Uses: Issues & Solutions"

January 10, 2012

Refreshments at 6:30, Program at 7

Join the League to learn more about the League's two-year study of regional planning and land use in the metro area. Chester Jourdan, director of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, will speak on the regional role in land use and what MORPC has been doing to effect change in central Ohio; a second speaker will provide a local perspective.

Committee Report Membership

The Membership Committee welcomes new members Kay Jenkins, Marilyn Minter, Lisa Freeman-Williamson, Kathrine Skopin, Jackie Ann Wilson, Nancy Garland, Adrienne Dziak,

Barbara Kienzle, Tonya Lewis. The Committee encourages all MC Leaguers to meet these new members and assist them in all things 'League'.

Volunteer Opportunities

It is not too late to volunteer for the Election Day Phone Bank or the December Holiday Party. It is also not too early to volunteer to help out with Democracy In Action. If you are interested in volunteering for any of these activities or would like more information, please contact Amy at 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org.

Committee Report Regional Planning and Land Use Committee

A Look at Local Food Production and Food Deserts

by Barbi Crabill

Over the past year and a half, the Regional Planning and Land Use Committee has looked at a variety of issues related to land use and how changing patterns have direct impact on other areas of the region. The availability of fresh, nutritious food items, or lack thereof, has become a matter of local interest over the past few years. So the committee decided to take a look at the issue of urban farming and "food deserts" to see what affect they may have on land use and regional planning.

In their August 27, 2011 editorial, the Columbus Dispatch asked the question, "What if, instead of just growing seedier by the day, cities' vacant lots grew tomatoes and beans and cucumbers and strawberries?" The editorial went on to point out "turning vacant lots into gardens doesn't just clean up eyesores; it makes fresh produce more accessible to people in the inner city where supermarkets often are rare, and that like Cleveland is already doing, urban gardening projects in Columbus could help improve the diets and provide a large amount of the food needs of city residents.

Local Matters, a central Ohio non-profit, works to increase access to healthy, affordable and fresh Ohio-grown foods and provides nutrition education to kids and families on how to identify these foods and then helps in the preparation of meals using whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Working in collaboration with other organizations such as the Franklin Park Conservatory, Local Matters has launched several projects in and around Columbus to assist residents grow and prepare fresh food. Among these are the Backyard Gardens in Weinland Park, assisting residents with 46 back yard gardens, providing gardeners with materials, advice and support to help them produce and share more food in the neighborhood. Other projects include school gardens and community gardens.

In addition, Local Matters in cooperation with partner organizations, sponsors the Veggie Van, a farm stand on wheels, which delivers affordably priced pre-packaged bags of fruits and vegetables, sourced from Ohio farms whenever possible, to low-income families through schools, community centers, head start facilities etc. A typical bag weighs about 14 lbs. and costs around \$12. Each bag comes with health tips

and recipes, and each pick-up site has a live cooking demonstration and tasting of with a recipe made with items from that week's bag. The Veggie Van accepts EBT (Food Stamps) in addition to credit cards and cash.

Critics often cite poor food choices as the root of obesity and other health problems in both children and adults, especially in low-income areas. Others cite the environmental issues which don't support healthy food options in many of those neighborhoods, such as the lack of transportation, finances, and an absence of full-service supermarkets. The US Department defines these areas as "food deserts", low-income census tracts where a substantial number of residents has low access (1 mile or more in urban areas) to a healthy food retail outlet such as a large grocery store, supermarket or superstore such as Walmart or Meijer. According to Columbus Dispatch reporter Misti Crane in her article published on August 1, 2010, Columbus public health officials have mapped the city's "food deserts" by comparing distance to fast food restaurants and larger grocery stores from each census block to arrive at a "food balance score". 42 neighborhoods with over 99,400 residents were identified in the food desert category. Without transportation, many residents have been forced to get their food at fast food restaurants or the corner convenience store, which typically did not carry fresh fruit, vegetables and other healthier options. The United Way of Central Ohio and its partners with the help of some federal grants are working with several neighborhoods stores to stock more fresh and nutritious food.

The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and the Ohio Department of Agriculture are helping low-income families connect with local farm markets. In June, 2011, at least 7 farmers markets in Franklin County had agreed to accept Ohio's New Directions card, which distributes payments from federal food assistance programs like a debit card or credit card. This provides customers who have limited access to fresh food a new shopping option. Customers are able to buy very fresh, high quality food and receive tips on how to prepare it directly from the grower.

All of these programs are responding to the needs of the community to help improve the quality of life, and revitalize or redevelop neighborhoods.



Twenty years of the Franklin County Consortium for Good Government sponsoring candidates and issues forums kicked off with an award ceremony, a big cake, interesting speakers and about forty people cheering it on.

The 2011 election season ended after the Consortium, staffed and sponsored by the LWVMC for many years, had put on ten candidate forums throughout the Franklin County area.

This year, the total number of sponsoring and supporting organizations making up the Consortium was close to sixty. Some of the organizations enthusiastically promoted the forums to their members; other organizations basically signed on and promoted the idea of educating voters in a lackluster manner.



speakers for and against the issues wouldn't commit to attending and, in fact, didn't attend.

The November 20th wrap-up meeting for the Consortium will be a time to discuss what went well, what could have been better and what absolutely didn't work.

But, in the meantime, this twentieth season was a year to remember. Helping to celebrate the idea that people can and will educate themselves about issues and candidates, on September 15 at Brookwood Presbyterian Church, past Consortium Good Government Award winner Matt Damschroder, Director of Elections to Secretary of State Jon Husted, spoke about the importance of the forums. Mary Jo Hudson, former Ohio Insurance Director, spoke about her experience with Consortium when she was a candidate for Columbus City Council and Skip Cornett, ordained Lutheran minister for 32 years and just retired from his position of Director of Continuing Education and Adjunct Faculty and Liaison to the Jewish Community at Trinity Lutheran Seminary,

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Some of the forums were wildly successful. Bexley turned out 125 non candidates, who packed into Torat Emet to hear and question people running for office or promoting issues important to the community.

A few forums had problems with attendance. The issue forums had problems because some of the



Franklin County Consortium for Good Government, continued from page 6

discussed Political Literacy and Electoral Politics.

Chuck White, retired WBNS-TV personality and community leader MCed the recognition of organizations such as Brookwood Presbyterian Church, NCJW, which founded the Consortium and LWVMC, the Columbus Jewish Federation, and the Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Department of Social Concerns that provided staffing and leadership to the Consortium during the last twenty years of its history.

Scott Britton accepted the award for the League's help. Those picking up awards over the last twenty years and rewarded at the September event included LWVMC members Judy Brachman, Barbi Crabill, and Peg Rosenfield.

The Consortium started in the fall of 1991 when the National Council of Jewish Women ("NCJW") and Brookwood Presbyterian Church ("Brookwood") joined together to sponsor a single candidates forum. The goal - to help voters make educated choices when they go to the polls to vote and to encourage those eligible to vote to go vote.



Since then, the Consortium has, along with the League, worked very hard both to increase the public's knowledge about candidates and issues and to remind Central Ohioans that if we wish to have a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," we must educate ourselves about all the candidates and issues and then utilize our constitutional right to vote.



Janyce Katz



Volunteer Opportunity

If you are interested in volunteering for next year's candidates forums with the Consortium, contact Amy at 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org.





Voice of Leaguers

The **Advocacy Committee** has announced a consensus meeting to help craft a national position on the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education on November 15.

Consensus Meeting for LWVUS on Education

Tuesday, November 15 6:30 p.m.

Wesley Glen, Ravine Room

A copy of the consensus questions were published in the October VOTER. Further information concerning this meeting is on page 3 of this issue of the VOTER.

The following is a brief introduction to the five papers that will be presented during the November 15 meeting. You can find the complete copy of the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education: Historical Perspective paper printed in the October VOTER. The other four complete papers can be found on the LWVUS webpage, www.lwv.org.

*** Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting ***

Role Of Federal Government In Public Education: Historical Perspectives

By Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins and Margaret Hawkins Hill

Defining League Positions in Public Education

The League of Women Voters United States (LWVUS), through its positions on equality of opportunity, supports public education and a range of federal education programs. Areas where specific positions were developed are: integration, quality education, tuition tax credits, federal programs and education financing. Some programs are designed to meet the needs of special education students as well as the economically disadvantaged and ethnic minority students. The League worked for the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 that prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutes that receive federal aid. Historically, many state Leagues have their own positions that speak to equality, to funding, and to assessments and standards at the state level. Additionally the League, under its position on early intervention for children at-risk addresses issues related to the federal role in public education. To understand and reach consensus on the present and future role of the federal government in public education, it is important that we have some understanding of the history of the federal government's role in education activities. This paper and the links provided on the LWVUS website (www.lwv.org) delineate the materials that support this study.

*** Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting ***

Legislation and Funding for the Education Of Children Who are Disadvantaged

By Patricia O'Brien Libutti, PhD

On April 9, 1965, the 89th Congress voted on The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA, P.L. 89-10). The time from introduction to vote on this bill was only 87 days – a record time for legislation. ESEA was set in the center of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty and was influenced by the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*. ESEA provided, in a very short time, massive changes in the ways students who differed from the norm by reason of disadvantage would be treated.

Over the next four decades, the federal government moved toward educational equity for all children and faced a variety of barriers and challenges. But this movement didn't just appear out of thin air.

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**Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting
Legislation and Funding for the Education Of Children Who are Disadvantaged, continued**

Many pieces of legislation and numerous legal cases set the way for sweeping legislation.

The last reauthorization of ESEA was enacted by the 107th Congress as *The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB, P.L. 107-110) and covered:

- children of poverty,
- children in rural areas,
- children who are Native Americans,
- children who are neglected and delinquent,
- children who are migrants
- children who are homeless
- children who are learning English,
- children impacted by disasters
- children who are disabled.

In this section of the League of Women Voters *Study on the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education*, we are taking a broad view of K-12 student groups who have been the focus of legislation for the funding of their education. A “snapshot” of each group will contain a definition on membership in the group, pertinent federal education laws, data on available demographics, and achievement and challenges for the group. We will also look at the proposals made in *A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (March 2010) to see how educational needs are addressed.

*** Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting ***
Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding
By Pat Aaron

What Is Currently Available?

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)(1992) creates standards and guidance for early childhood providers across the country. The organization stresses that “programs must be comprehensive in nature, and developmentally appropriate for children so that both age specific and individual characteristics are addressed and designed to meet the needs of children and families served.” Their position statements promote and endorse an integrated, well-financed system of early care and education for the learning and development of all children, including those living in poverty.

One of the first early childhood education initiatives in the United States was the Head Start Program, which began in 1965 under the authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Head Start programs, funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provide children from low-income families and children in some at-risk categories access to early education. Early Head Start, initiated in 1995, appropriated funding for health information and

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**Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting
Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding, continued**

education to low-income parents, mostly pregnant mothers or mothers of infants and toddlers. Many early childhood (EC) programs operate under the auspices of Title I of the ESEA. Under Title I, local education agencies apply to state agencies for approval of a program. When the application is approved, the federal government funds the programs. The programs receiving Title 1 funding vary from state to state. Reauthorization of ESEA in 2001, called No Child Left Behind (NCLB), promotes the use of Title I, Part A funds for pre-school programs recognizing the importance of preparing children for entering school with language development and cognitive and early readiness skills.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to children with disabilities. It addresses the educational needs of children with disabilities, from birth to age 21, in cases that involve 13 specified categories of disability. IDEA has been reauthorized and amended a number of times since it was signed into law in June 1997, replacing the earlier version of Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

Some additional early childhood federal programs are:

- Early Head Start: Program beginning prenatally and covering children to age 3 and their families who qualify for Head Start competitive grants.
- Early Reading First: Language/literacy grants for schools and pre-school programs for low-income families.
- Even Start: Integrates early childhood education, adult education and family literacy programs for low-income parents with children ages birth through age 7.
- IDEA: Special Education Preschool Grants and State Grants program (ages 3-5).
- IDEA: Special Education Grants for Infants and Families – Part C of IDEA (disabled children, birth to 2).

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) made available \$5 billion to states, territories, and tribes in fiscal year 2010. This program, authorized by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act, and Section 418 of the Social Security Act, assists low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance, and those transitioning from public assistance in obtaining child care so they can work or attend training/education.

* **Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting** *

Funding and Equity Issues

By Jean Pierce

History of Federal Efforts Related to Equity in Public Schooling

In the 1896 case, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court determined that the equal protection clause of the United States Constitution permitted racially separate schools as long as they had equal facilities. Separate but “equal” schools were sanctioned for close to 70 years.

Prior to the 1950s, federal involvement in education was almost nonexistent. Even the ambitious legislation of the New Deal had little to do with elementary and secondary education. However, with the 1954 United State Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, the attention

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Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting Funding and Equity Issues, continued

changed to discussions and decisions dealing with equal opportunity. The ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* reversed the 1896 decision and declared that state laws were unconstitutional if they supported establishing separate public schools for black and white students.

In the 1960s, the focus of federal policies moved away from redistribution of funds, which lay at the heart of the New Deal, and attempted to place equality of opportunity at the center of the nation's social welfare policies. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed racial discrimination. This was followed by President Lyndon B. Johnson introducing his education plan (which became the Elementary and Secondary School Act {ESEA}) in 1965. Title VI of ESEA outlawed the allocation of federal funds to segregated programs.

However, there was still intense discussion about the meaning of "equal." For some, equal opportunity meant that people with different potential were given relatively the same chances to advance to the best of their individual abilities. That could mean giving more difficult tasks to gifted students, so that they would be challenged as much as non-gifted students. For others, equal opportunity meant to treat all students in the same way – leading to a leveling of performance.

* Introduction of Issue Paper for November 15 Consensus Meeting *
Common Core Standards and Assessments
By Janelle L. Rivers, PhD

Introduction

The need for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has fostered interest in questions like these:

- What are the current sources of information about academic standards and student achievement in the United States?
- What attempts have been made to create common standards?
- What is the Common Core State Standards Initiative?
- What are the arguments for and against adopting common educational standards for grades K-12?
- How do content and rigor of state standards compare with the Common Core?
- Would rigorous standards improve achievement?
- How will the Common Core be assessed?
- How would scores from Common-Core assessments be used?
- What is the role of the federal government with respect to accountability?

In order to provide background information for the consensus process that has been undertaken by the League of Women Voters, this paper summarizes efforts to improve consistency in academic expectations, assessment procedures, achievement standards, evaluation practices and accountability systems across the nation.

All five of the background papers can be found at <http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=112&ContentID=16956>.

League Activities

Election Day	Tuesday, Nov. 8	6:30 am - 7:30 pm	
A Nation In Debt	Thursday, Nov. 10	6:30 pm	MetroColumbus Library
Consensus Meeting	Tuesday, Nov. 15	6:30 pm	Wesley Glen, Ravine Room
A Nation In Debt	Monday, Nov. 21	7:00 pm	Whetstone Public Library
Holiday Brunch	Sunday, Dec. 4	12:00 noon	Miranova
Clean Air Campaign Town Hall	Tuesday, Dec. 6	7:00 pm	Delaware Developmental Disabilities Center
A Nation In Debt	Thursday, Dec. 8	7:00 pm	Old Worthington Library
Land Use Meeting	Tuesday, Jan. 10	6:30 pm	Whetstone Public Library
Morning Unit	Thursday, Jan. 19	9:30 am	Wesley Glen

Any website information that was referred to can be sent out as a hard copy.

Contact Amy, 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org

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