

December 2007 / January 2008

Plan to Attend a February Unit Meeting

by Jean Byrd



Units are a vital part of LWVMC and the best way to keep abreast of current issues. Stay informed by attending a Unit.

Morning Unit: Wesley Glenn, (third Thursday) February 21, gather 9:15, meeting 9:30-11:00

Evening Unit: Grandview Library, (fourth Tuesday) February 26, gather 6:30, program 7:00-8:30

Dinner Unit: Wings Restaurant (fourth Wednesday) February 27, gather 5:30, enjoy a Chinese dinner or just come for the program starting around 6:00.

Stuart Wright thinks there may be some MC Leaguers who have access to a computer and are hooked up to the internet but still may feel a bit uneasy with using this tool to retrieve League information. Don't let this happen. If you have some anxiety with your computer skills contact Stuart, (614-263-4045) or Jean Byrd (614-261-0601). On a related note, one of our Beyond-the-Units tours might just encompass a meeting to explore the MC League website, the US League website, and other useful links. If you're interested in something like this, please let me know.

The Units are where it is happening. Plan to attend in February—and bring a friend.

Rejuvenating Local Advocacy

by Barb Hykes



Did you join the League because you wanted to be part of a group who could/would take a position on an issue and make its voice heard? Are there issues in your community that you'd like to see the League take a position on?

We're hoping the answer is YES. The LWVMC Local Advocacy Committee is in the process of reforming for 2008. Whether you're interested in a specific issue, or in issues affecting a specific community, we're interested in your participation.

Local advocacy includes identifying issues in the Columbus and suburban areas that are covered under US, Ohio, or LWVMC positions. These may encompass primary/secondary education; juvenile justice; regulation of assault weapons; water quality and standards to protect watersheds; provision and funding of metropolitan services such as mass transit; levy funded agencies serving children, the elderly, mentally ill and victims of addiction; and local government oversight issues.

It's a large order, and we would like to establish a foundation for small groups of members to study an issue and the League's positions on that issue in order to:

- Recommend action when an issue arises, whether lobbying local government agencies or studying an issue to recommend LWVMC action via media releases, letters to the editor, or endorsement of a ballot question.
- Establish the need for an in-depth local study of an issue that could result in additional local positions in the future.
- Provide support for studies or positions being debated at the state and national level such as the current study being conducted on immigration issues.

To get involved, please contact Amy Pulles at the League office to let her know you're in, or call Barb Hykes at 614-223-7763 to ask any questions you may have. An organizational meeting (or two) will be scheduled as we identify Leaguers with interest in this area. One question we'll be asking of you is "would you prefer to meet during the day (over lunch) or does the evening work better for you?" We look forward to hearing from you!

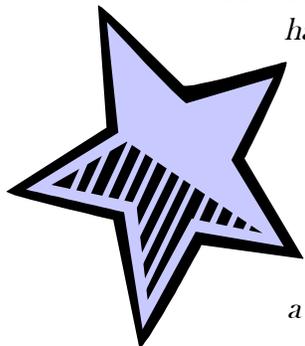
FROM THE PRESIDENT...

by Kitty Burcsu

In my November column, I noted the cynicism and apathy our League volunteers had encountered during their voter registration activities and how important it is for the League of Women Voters to be a dynamic force in countering this mindset. I recently came across an op-ed piece written by a League member from New York. I'd like to share excerpts from her article because it captures the essence of the benefits of active participation in LWV and offers a compelling message to share with friends and colleagues who may be disillusioned with our political process.



It seems that modern campaigns have turned off citizens. Long tedious campaigns that do not address the issues have taken their toll. Too many citizens feel it is futile to even try to make their voices heard. I felt the same ways just a few years ago. Then a friend of mine encouraged me to join the League of Women Voters and I discovered an entire network of committed, caring citizens accomplishing meaningful things. One of the best things I've done as a member is participate in programs and discussions that give unbiased information about various hot topics. This information really helped me decide which policy I think our lawmakers should follow and I was able to share this information with friends, and cast votes that are more meaningful. My volunteer work with the League has restored my faith in democracy. I have met great people who make me feel I can play a meaningful role in our political process. We may not be revolutionizing modern politics, but we are making a difference for this



community and setting a good example for our children. Being a citizen is about more than voting. It's about actively participating in our democracy and playing a meaningful role in making our system of government work... this system of government is not about the parties, it's about the citizens. Joining the League is a nonpartisan way for citizens to band together to work for the better government we all want and deserve.

- Marcia Merrins

LWV, Chautauqua County, New York

A powerful message to take to heart and to share with others as we begin a brand new year. Best wishes for 2008! May it be a year of happiness, hope, meaningful roles, active participation and making a difference!

Get Ready for National Program Planning

by Scott Britton

With the LWVUS Convention only six months away, it's time for Metro Columbus to have a voice in national program planning.

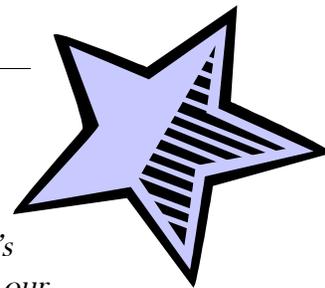
Is there a national position that should be reviewed and updated? Should we suggest a new issue for study?

Look for information to arrive this month in your e-mail in-box or in your mailbox.

We're doing something different this year—there is no meeting. We'll be conducting a survey instead.

Local and national program planning is done in even-numbered years (2008) while state program planning is conducted in odd-numbered years.

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ON THE ROAD TO CONSENSUS

November Meeting Provides Background Info

by Jean Byrd

During the November General Membership meeting, MC members were well instructed on the subject of immigration with great presentations given by Leaguers **Mary Kaul, Barb Hykes, Kitty Burcsu, Joan Lawrence, Amy Pulles, Carolyn Piper, Janyce Katz, and Nancy Brown**. These members did an impressive job transforming the LWVUS background papers into clear and comprehensible information. Kudos to these eight members and all the members who interacted with questions and comments during the meeting.

In preparation for the immigration consensus meeting that will convene on January 28 at 7:00 PM at Wesley Glen, information can be found on the MC website at www.lwvcols.org. Additionally, because the information is important (and was too lengthy to include with this newsletter), it will be mailed to League members.

The League's General Membership meeting on November 13, 2007, focused on immigration, with several League members leading the discussion. Leagues throughout the country are taking up the issue as part of the LWVUS Immigration Study. LWVMC will hold its consensus meeting on January 28.

PHOTO CREDIT JEAN BYRD



Consensus Meeting Set for January 28

by Nancy Brown

Leagues across the nation are in the process of reaching consensus on immigration. LWVMC will have our consensus meeting on January 28. It will be our opportunity to influence the LWVUS position on immigration. This is going to be a challenging meeting.

LWVUS has presented us with a lengthy series of questions to be addressed. If we are going to have a successful meeting in which we work our way through these important questions, it will be necessary (1) to keep in mind what we mean by consensus and (2) to prepare for the meeting by thinking about the questions in advance.

The League defines consensus as "...neither a simple majority nor unanimity; instead, it is an *overall sense of the group*." Inherent in this process is respect for others' opinions. It is critical to listen thoughtfully and keep an open mind. To permit all to be heard, it is important to keep comments short, to remain respectful of others League members opinions and to stay focused on the topic at hand.

Preparation will also be key. We are asking each of you to spend some time reviewing all of the questions and thinking about where you stand on the issues presented. In particular, focus on Question 1 and its various subparts. Please come to the meeting having decided how you rank the various criteria which Federal immigration law might consider and decide which three you believe are most important. Our hope is to get through Question 1 quickly so that we will have time to consider the other six questions, based in part on the consensus we reach on Question 1.

Participating in a consensus meeting is one of the most important activities of League members and we hope you will make every effort to attend.

Note: The consensus questions can be accessed online at the LWVUS and LWVMC websites. In addition, the questions will be mailed to all MC members. You may also call the League Office at 614-837-1089.



League Hosts Successful Holiday Party & Auction

by Amy Pulles

LWVMC's annual fundraising Holiday Party on Saturday, December 1, featured silent and live auctions, fun, a delicious array of foods, Mimosas, and good conversation. It was another great year for the party.

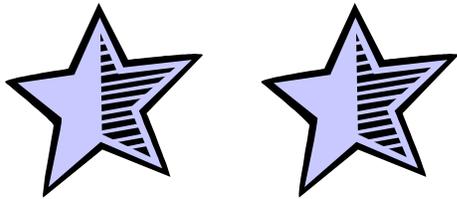
We want to thank **Nancy & Bob Brown** for hosting the party at their Miranova home. Also, a hearty thank you to all the League members that helped collect items for this year's auction: **Mary Kaul, Joy Rose, Esther Connors, Lea Madry, Janyce Katz, Ann Henkener, Jane Young, Phyllis Shwartz, and Kitty Burcsu**. We'd also like to thank all the members that supplied food for the event.

Brent Taggart, once again, did a terrific job as our "live" auctioneer. His PowerPoint presentation and humor are always entertaining. He helps to make the event fun and exciting to attend.

We would also like to thank all of the businesses and League members that made donations (*listed at right*).



Amore Pizza
Glass Axis
Anne Nelson
Cathy Elkins
Catco
Columbus Crew
Cosi
Figlio
Columbus Symphony Orchestra
David & Terry McCoy
Eleanor Pearlman
Northstar Café
Jane Young
Studio 33
Jennifer Armstrong
Judith Bird
Kathy Dougherty
Mike Stanley
Lea Madry
Louise Pence
Cachet
Mozarts
Nancy & Bob Brown
Nancy Wilkes
Opera Columbus
Ohio State University, Theatre Department
Pat Larson
Phyllis Shwartz
Roger's Jewelers
Refectory
Royal American
Valerie Rake
Polaris Grill



Save the Date

The MC League will be presenting another Town Hall Meeting in March. For those who attended the last Town Hall Meeting, they will remember a great experience in citizen engagement and the politics of elections.

This year, participants will look at election reform through expert information and citizen break-out sessions.

This not-to-miss meeting will take place on March 19 at 7:00 PM at the Jewish Cultural Center. Watch your *Voter* for details.

Presidential Candidate Voters' Guide Available Online

Thanks to the collaboration between LWVUS/EF and the Maryland, National Capitol Area, and Virginia Leagues, the 2008 Presidential Primary Voters' Guide is now available.

The Guide has an 83 percent response rate, which is a testament to the League.

Download a complete pdf of the Voters' Guide from www.VOTE411.org.

No Internet? No Problem

If you are not connected to the internet and see a link in the *Voter* to information that you have interest, please contact **Amy Pulles** at the LWVMC office, 614-837-1089, and she will mail you the information. All League members have access to the same materials.

National League Marks Bill of Rights Anniversary

In mid-December, League of Women Voters President Mary G. Wilson marked the 217th anniversary of the signing of the Bill of Rights with a call for the continued protection of civil liberties and constitutional protections at home and continued commitment to fostering democracy abroad.

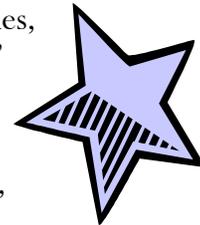
"We celebrate the Bill of Rights, a living reminder of our fundamental civil and human rights such as the freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion; protections against unreasonable searches; and the right to counsel and a jury trial," Wilson said. "For 87 years, the

League has defended these civil liberties, and we continue this emphasis today."

Wilson said League members work in their communities to protect the liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. "At the same time," she said, "the League works to promote democratic participation and respect for civil liberties across the globe."

The protection of the individual liberties laid out in the Bill of Rights has been central to the League's work throughout its history

"The Bill of Rights is not only an important part of our nation's history, but also a living document that will guide us into the future," she concluded.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF METROPOLITAN COLUMBUS

MEMBERSHIP FORM

- I am interested in joining the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus
- I am interested in receiving more information about LWVMC (if checked, please fill out the mailing address section below and return to the League office)

\$60 _____ for a year's individual membership
\$90 _____ for a year's household membership (*two members at one address*)
\$40 _____ for a year's membership for person on limited income
\$15 _____ for a year's student membership

Make check payable to LWVMC and mail to address below.

Member(s) Name(s) _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail _____

League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus
PO Box 130, Blacklick, Ohio 43004-0130
614.837.1089 * Fax 614.837.1263 * www.lwvcols.org * lwvcols@iwaynet.net



Mark Your Calendar...

- January 8 **LWVO Lobby Lunch (NEW LOCATION!)** Columbus Metropolitan Library-Main Branch, 96 S. Grant, Third Floor Board Room, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, All invited, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
- January 14 **LWVMC Board of Trustees Meeting**
- January 22 **LWVO Lobby Lunch (NEW LOCATION!)** Columbus Metropolitan Library-Main Branch, 96 S. Grant, Conference Room, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM
- January 28 **LWVMC Consensus Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Wesley Glen Retirement Center
- February 4 **LWVMC Board of Trustees Meeting**
- February 21 **LWVMC Morning Unit**
- February 26 **LWVMC Evening Unit**
- February 27 **LWVMC Dinner Unit**
- March 3 **LWVMC Board of Trustees Meeting**
- March 4 **Ohio Presidential Primary Election**, polls are open 6:30 AM-7:30 PM
- March 19 **LWVMC/ImpACT Town Hall Meeting**, 7:00 PM
- April 29 **LWVO Statehouse Day**



League of Women Voters
of Metropolitan Columbus
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Blacklick, Ohio 43004-0130
614-837-1089
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