

April 2008

Democracy in Action Approaches

by Sara Meyers

Joan Lawrence will act as a moderator for LWVMC Democracy in Action this year, introducing our “grassroots” democracy approach, and integrating the program honoring **Judy Brachman, Lou Briggs, and Peg Rosenfield**. This new position provides an addition to the ceremony of past years. In keeping with tradition, however, each honoree will be introduced by an honorary co-chair/presenter. Justice Thomas Moyer, Mary Lazarus, and Herb Asher, PhD, will introduce Judy Brachman, Lou Briggs, and Peg Rosenfield, respectively.

The Democracy in Action Award, given annually, recognizes outstanding participation in civic affairs. Honorees demonstrate a long-term commitment to—and zeal for—increasing citizen activism and knowledge within their community. Having dedicated their lives to furthering democracy in central Ohio, this year’s recipients exemplify active civic participation in conjunction with committed League membership and activities.

DIA 2008 promises to be a wonderful reception and ceremony. We welcome all League members to become involved, and we encourage all to attend the event from 5:00 until 7:00 PM on Thursday, May 8, at the Statehouse Atrium. Please note the change in time. The reception has been scheduled to begin and end one half-hour earlier than previously announced.

For further information or questions, call me at 614-204-0558 or Amy Pulles at the League office at 614-837-1089.

LWVMC Hosts Successful Town Hall Meeting

by Jean Byrd

Leaguers and non-Leaguers joined forces, March 12, to tackle the topic of Election Reform. Through a series of table discussions and a presentation by Dan Tokaji, an OSU Moritz Law professor, participants waded through the pros and cons of Ohio election laws.

The Town Hall, held at the Jewish Community Center, was funded by the Joyce Foundation and co-sponsored by AAUW, Aguadas Achim Sisterhood, Columbus Urban League, Common Cause Ohio, and Ohio Citizen Action. WCMH Channel 4 covered the event.

If you want more information about Dan Tokaji and election reform, or you were unable to attend this meeting, go to moritzlaw.osu.edu/blogs/tokaji/. Dan’s blog provides information and insight on the laws governing federal, state and local elections. He also pays special attention to the voting rights of people of color, non-English proficient citizens, and people with disabilities.



FROM THE PRESIDENT...

by Kitty Burcsu

With the month of April, in addition to the arrival of Spring and Administrative Professionals Day, we also celebrate National Volunteer Week. This year, National Volunteer Week is April 27-May 3. Events all over central Ohio will recognize the efforts of thousands of individuals who give their time and energy to a myriad of organizations and causes. I want to use my column this month to thank the hundreds of League members, who through their volunteer efforts, realize the mission of LWVMC. This column is not large enough to list each member by name so I will instead use groupings to hopefully capture and reflect the work of our many volunteers.

First, I want to thank the **Board**. Board members diligently oversee the work of LWVMC, chair committees and special projects and support the League financially and with their attendance at our many League activities. Our standing committees – **Advocacy, Educational Events/Units, Membership, PR, and Voter Service** – plan, implement and promote our events and activities. Our newest committee, **Technology**, has worked hard to integrate technology into our operations wherever appropriate and to ensure that our website conveys the work and vibrancy of LWVMC.

Special project and ad hoc committees, **Democracy in Action, Budget, and Nominating** support the operations, continuity and financial needs of the organization. I also want to recognize our LWVMC members who support LWVO as Board members and lobbyists and also those who deliver Meals on Wheels on behalf of League.

One member I will recognize by name... **VOTER Editor Cheryl Markino**, whose dedication, patience and good humor are always intact even as she awaits overdue VOTER articles!

Finally, I want to recognize you, our members, for what you have given to LWVMC. If you have responded to one of Amy's pleas for a few people to take on a short term task, or encouraged a friend to join League, registered voters or helped at a candidate's forum, thank you! Without the volunteer support of our members, LWVMC would simply cease to exist.

Voter Service News

by Janyce C. Katz

Probably on April 29 (date and place to be confirmed), the Franklin County Consortium for Good Government will start planning for 2008 election candidates forums. **Barbi Crabill**, the newest member of the LWVMC Board, will co-chair the Consortium this year. For more information about the date and time of this first meeting, contact Barbi at BGC2250@aol.com, (her home e-mail) or call the League office. Hopefully, both the LWVMC and Consortium websites will be updated with this information. Please consider helping. This will be an important year for voters to really assess for whom they would like to vote.

Along the same line, plan on helping with the *Voter Information Bulletin* this fall because we could use your editing and perhaps even typing skills. Let Amy know of your interest in the VIB.

We were going to announce an exciting meeting and possible new coalition effort in the voter registration/voter education area.

 There was this blizzard, however, and, for some reason, no one wanted to drive around to a meeting. More on this after we finally meet.

The Voter Service Committee meeting was rescheduled to Sunday, March 30 at 3:00 PM at my house. Same blizzard forced cancellation of the March 9 meeting. (I had to drink hot chocolate by myself.) The next meeting after that will be at my house, 2725 Floribunda Drive, in Berwick (43209), on May 4 at 3:00 PM.

We still could have an LWVMC radio show. Contact me at home 614-236-2022 if you might be interested in helping research issues, write, produce, or have any other role in said program. More on this later as well.

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Oh What A Night! And Evening and Morning!

by Jean Byrd

Units expanded horizons in February with the Evening Unit moving to Caribou Coffee in Grandview. It was a bit noisy but it was hip and happening. The hip part was coffee and pastries; the happening part



was **Peg Rosenfield** filling in members on the Everest Report and the League's response. There was also a wider discussion on what to expect for November elections. For those members who could not make it out for the Evening Unit (there was a bit of snow), Peg also spoke at the Morning Unit where the discussion was quite spirited.

These Morning Leaguers know elections and were eager to comprehend any changes made to the Ohio election system

David McCoy presided over the Dinner Unit with his usual stately manner. Over Chinese food and a glass of wine members discussed predatory lending practices and the housing market with **Karen Rainey**, a Delaware League member and a State League lobbyist.



PHOTO CREDIT JEAN BYRD

In May, units will be sprouting up again. May 15 will be the date for the Morning Unit at Wesley Glenn. The Grandview group will meet on May 27 at the Caribou

Coffee, and Wings will be the place for the Dinner Unit on May 28. Mark those on your calendar.



This month, members will receive a Survey Monkey about Units in their e-mail inbox. Try it. It will help the MC Board make decisions about the Units and Unit topics. If you are not connected to the internet you will receive a paper survey in the mail. Even if you are connected but prefer a paper ballot about the Units, please contact League Administrator Amy Pulles at 614-837-1089.

Speak Up and Connect at LWVO Statehouse Day

Education funding, election reform, healthcare access, Lake Erie issues, legislative updates, and more are among the agenda items at the LWVO Statehouse Day, April 29, 8:30 AM-3:30 PM at the Riffe Center in Columbus.

Also on the agenda are workshops with invited legislators from committees dealing with the topics listed above. That will be your chance to ask questions and be an active partner in educating legislators on League positions. Attendees will also receive training about communicating with legislators and there will be opportunities for hands-on instruction using web-based methods for contacting legislators.

Registration for the event is \$35 and includes all materials and lunch. To register or for more information, go to www.lwvohio.org.

Have You Made The Power Pledge?

Support the League of Women Voters of Ohio with your contribution today. Your gift is vital to helping the League:

- Repair the election process in Ohio through its landmark 2006 lawsuit against the Secretary of State.
- Support the state lobby corps in delivering expert testimony to the legislature.
- Push for a resolution to age-old school-funding problems.
- Educate a new generation of activists to address redistricting, election and judicial reform in Ohio.

Your pledge can be deducted automatically and securely from your credit card each month, allowing you to budget your gift over an entire year. A portion of your pledge is returned to the Metro Columbus League.

If you haven't had a chance to respond to the **Power Pledge** challenge, we will contact you in mid-April with additional information.

Record 503,601 Voters Cast Absentee Ballots

Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner said Ohio voters set a record in in the presidential primary when they cast 503,601 absentee ballots. In addition, nearly 13,000 voters requested or needed to use a paper ballot for the election, either by choice or due to problems with touch screen voting machines or lack of power.

Mark Your Calendar...

- April 7** **LWVMC Board of Trustees Meeting**
 - April 8** **LWVO Lobby Lunch** Columbus Metropolitan Library-Main Branch, 96 S. Grant, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, All invited, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
 - April 22** **LWVO Lobby Lunch** Columbus Metropolitan Library-Main Branch, 96 S. Grant, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, All invited, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
 - April 29** **LWVO Statehouse Day**
 - May 4** **LWVMC Voter Service Committee Meeting**
 - May 8** **LWVMC Democracy in Action Ceremony & Reception, 5:00-7:00 PM, Ohio Statehouse Atrium**
 - May 15** **LWVMC Morning Unit**
 - May 27** **LWVMC Evening Unit**
 - May 28** **LWVMC Dinner Unit**
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