

November 2008

League Endorses Columbus School Levy/Bond Package

The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus voted to support Issue 75, the Columbus City Schools levy and bond. While the nonpartisan organization never endorses candidates or political parties, it does take positions on ballot issues that come before voters.

“The League has a longstanding public policy position stating that individual school districts should be required to assume a reasonable share of the financial burden and should retain the option of increasing per-pupil expenditure beyond this level through local taxes,” said Scott Britton, the League’s vice president for advocacy.

Britton is aware that some Columbus residents – even those who traditionally support school levies – are leery of the levy/bond combination. “Our assessment of Issue 75 is that the pairing of the levy with the bond was strategic, and will go much further in improving public schools than either of the funding mechanisms standing alone,” Britton said. “The school district will be able to improve operations and infrastructure at the same time, for example, by replacing decade-old computers while building computer labs, and adding science teachers while updating obsolete lab space.”

The League was also persuaded by the fact that the district has honored its promise of not coming back to voters for a new levy until this year and has made significant strides with respect to graduation rates, daily attendance, state report card rating, building construction, and fiscal management. Also, because the bond program, which has been very well administered in Columbus, replaces a previous bond that is expiring, the tax on that side remains essentially the same.

The levy package will restore the shortened school day, restore the PEAK in-school suspension program for older students, and help the district meet new Ohio Core Curriculum requirements for lab sciences. The levy will allow the district to open four new magnet schools, similar to Columbus Alternative High School, that have the best record of success in Columbus. Moreover, in order to draw down 30 percent in matching funds from the state school facilities agency, Columbus must raise 70 percent through the bond.

Britton added the consequences of Issue 75 failing are dire. “Columbus schools will see immediate cuts of \$30 million from a \$700 million budget, with even higher cuts in the second year,” he said. “Just as important, it would signal a loss of confidence in the district at a time when academic and fiscal progress is being made, and the community at large would likely see a drop in housing values.”



**Volunteers
Needed!**



LWVMC - WBNS 10TV
PhoneBank
Election Day

Tuesday, November 4, 2008 • 6:30 AM - 7:00 PM • WBNS-10TV • 770 Twin Rivers Drive, Columbus

To volunteer, contact Mary Helen Hart
614-262-8461 (home), 614-256-3225 (cell), maheha57@gmail.com

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Janyce Katz

The multi-colored leaves of fall, continue to swirl around in 80 degree weather.

As I write this the election results are still weeks away and LWVMC continues our extremely active October: visiting Ukrainians, twelve candidates forums with the Franklin County Consortium for Good Government, more voter registrations than we have had in years, voter registrations held with *Alive* and NBC4, an unexpectedly high demand for the *Voter Information Bulletin*, our first cooperative efforts with Metropolitan Club, and our very active advocacy and membership efforts.

Whew! We have done a remarkable amount this fall.

We will continue to do more. We will be at 10TV on Election Day to answer questions and will join with the Columbus Metropolitan Club on the Friday after the election for an analysis of the results.

Don't forget to sign up to help with our fundraising. Frankly, this year, we need your help and we will need to work extremely hard.

Thanks everyone for all you have done and will be doing.

League Calls for Halt to Partisan Fear-Mongering

Mary G. Wilson, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States, urged Americans to vote, and to rise above partisan politics.

"It is time for politicians, advocates and the media to stop attacking our nation's election process and start encouraging people to go to the polls," Wilson said. "Our process may not be perfect, but people all over the country - election officials, grassroots political workers and ordinary citizens - are doing the best they can to ensure that all Americans can participate in a fair election this fall.

Read more of Wilson's statement online at www.lwvcols.org.

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LWVO Takes Stand on Statewide Ballot Issues

The League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) has issued its positions on five statewide ballot issues to voters.

ISSUE 1: SUPPORT

Earlier Filing Deadlines for Statewide Ballot Issues, Constitutional Amendment

ISSUE 2: SUPPORT

Bond Issue for the Clean Ohio Program, Constitutional Amendment

ISSUE 3: OPPOSE

Protect Private Property Water Rights, Constitutional Amendment

ISSUE 5: NEUTRAL

Payday Lending Legislation, Referendum

ISSUE 6: OPPOSE

Casino in Clinton County, Constitutional Amendment

The League's decision to remain neutral on Issue 5 was unanimous—and unavoidable. Although the board was sympathetic to the legislature's effort to reform payday-lending practices in order to reduce the number of people trapped in cycles of debt, the League has no state or national position under which to take action.

For more information about the positions, go to www.lwvohio.org.

Ohio Judicial Voter Guide Available Online

The *Ohio Judicial Voter Guide*, an online resource, will enable Ohio voters to educate themselves about judicial candidates running for the Ohio Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and Court of Common Pleas.

The League of Women Voters of Ohio was among the organizations to collaborate with Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner to develop the guide.

"Due to the rules for judicial candidates, campaigning can be difficult," Brunner said. "Many voters have no idea who these candidates are, what judicial seats they may occupy, and what principles are guiding their desire to be a judge."

For a link to the Guide and other details, see the news section at www.lwvcols.org.

Voter Service News By the Numbers

by Barbi Crabill

- 450,000 *Voter Information Bulletins* published and distributed
- 411 Vote 411.org – League’s election information website
- 100s New voter registrations or change of address forms processed and submitted to Franklin County Board of Elections
- 17 Events for the Civil Rule of Law Program
- 12 Meet the Candidate Forums held in Franklin County in conjunction with the Franklin County Consortium for Good Government
- 9 Voter registration activities
- 7 Phones at WBNS-10TV Election Day phone bank
- 6 Ukrainian visitors for Civil Rule of Law
- 3 Programs in partnership with Columbus Metropolitan Club

And **LOTS** of League volunteers who made all these projects happen. Thanks to everyone who participated in these events. We couldn’t do it without you! And special thanks to **Amy Pulles** and **JoAnne Grossman** who helped to pull all these events and activities together.

League Partners with CMC for Post-Election Forum

LWVMC is partnering with the Columbus Metropolitan Club to offer League members a significant discount to a *Post-Election Conversation featuring Ohio’s Party Leaders* on November 7, from 12:00 - 1:15 PM.

The lunch forum features Democratic State Chair Chris Redfern and Republican State Chair Bob Bennett and includes a Q&A with the audience.

The cost is \$17 and includes lunch. That price is discounted from the regular CMC price of \$35. Register by November 4 to League Administrator **Amy Pulles** at 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org.

For more details, see www.lwvcols.org.

Donate Items for the Annual Holiday Auction

by Lucy Buzzee



Our Annual Holiday Brunch featuring “silent” and “live” fund raising auctions is fast approaching. (It’s Sunday, December 7).

We invite you to be a contributor to this League activity by donating auction items.

For example...

- A week at your time share or vacation home.
- A unique skill (hosting a theme dinner party, providing a private airplane ride, dinner and a boat ride).
- Athletic event tickets (college or university or pro teams).
- Golf outing package at your club.
- Theatre tickets.
- Do you know an electrician or plumber who would donate an hour or two of their services?
- Do you know a computer technician who would donate “help” time?
- Do you know a professional photographer who would donate a sitting for a family portrait?

We are looking for items that **you** would be thrilled to bid on.

For questions or to donate items, please contact Holiday Party Committee Chair **Lucy Buzzee** at LBuzzee@ColumbusRealtors.com or lucybuzzee@yahoo.com or by phone at 614-498-1020 or cell phone 614-205-0433.

Member News

Congratulations to **Loann Crane**, a LWVMC member and Democracy In Action recipient, who was inducted into the Ohio Women’s Hall of Fame, September 18, 2008.

Election Day - November 4

Polls are open 6:30 AM - 7:30 PM

Take ID.

Ask for a paper ballot if the lines are long and you cannot wait.

If you have problems voting, call 1-866-OUR-VOTE

for free, confidential and nonpartisan advice.

Mark Your Calendar...

2nd & 4th Tues LWVO Lobby Lunch, All invited, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, Columbus Metropolitan Library-Main Branch (96 S. Grant Street)

November 4 Election Day / Election Day Phone Bank Polls are open 6:30 AM - 7:30 PM

November 7 LWVMC/Columbus Metropolitan Club Post-Election Wrap-Up, 12:00 Noon, Athletic Club of Columbus (136 E. Broad Street). \$17 includes lunch. Contact the League office to register, 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org. **Registration deadline November 4**

December 7 LWVMC Annual Holiday Brunch & Auction

LWVMC HAS A NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS
vote@lwvcols.org

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