

Summer 2008

League Honors Three Members with Democracy in Action Award

The 2008 Democracy in Action program was a celebration of the contributions of three members of the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus. Held in the Atrium of the Ohio Statehouse, May 8, the event honored **Judith Brachman, Lou Briggs, and Peg Rosenfield.**

Judy Brachman has been a devoted League member for over 20 years and served as a vice president and Board member for several of those years. However, her dedication to the League and its mission is only a small part of her commitment to democracy.

Judy began her career in 1961 when she received a BA from Radcliffe College (Harvard); she received a Master's degree in city and regional planning from The Ohio State University in 1977. Since then, Judy has served the citizens of Ohio as administrator of the State of Ohio Clearinghouse for Federal Funds/State Program Allocations; director of Housing and Urban Development; assistant secretary for Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity, US Department of Housing and Urban Development; director of the Ohio Department of Aging; and consumer member of the Ohio Board of Nursing.

She currently serves as a member of the Ohio State Crime Victims Assistance Advisory Board.

Judy's commitment to the community is also evident in many of her community activities. These include serving as president of the National Association of State Units on Aging, for all 50 states; producer and host of a weekly radio program on Ohio Public Radio covering issues facing older adults; adjunct professor at The Ohio State University Department of City and Regional Planning; member of the Ohio Women's Advisory Council of the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services; presidential member of the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board; president of the Board of

Trustees of Columbus School for Girls; and member of the State of Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management.

Judy has also served on boards of directors for such organizations as United Jewish Communities of North America, Columbus Jewish Federation, A Better Chance, Heritage Village Home for the Elderly, Friends of the Libraries of The Ohio State University, and the Education Foundation for Bexley Public Schools.

She has earned many honors throughout her career, including an Honorary Doctorate of Human Letters from Ohio Dominican College; Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Tiffin University; Distinguished Alumnus Award from The Ohio State University; and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development Award for Excellence.



Three LWVMC members (l-r) **Judith Brachman, Peg Rosenfield, and Lou Briggs,** received the 2008 Democracy in Action Award at a reception and program, May 8, 2008, at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium. The Award is bestowed annually in recognition of outstanding participation in civic affairs.

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

by Janyce Katz

The LWVMC gavel is now in a drawer, waiting for another meeting.

I thought about all of the women who had held the gavel before it came to my house to rest in a drawer.

Lucy Buzzee was president when I first came on the LWVMC Board. What a leader she is! And, she brought a sense of fun to the job, and summer camp to the leadership training sessions.

Nancy Brown brought a different perspective and a brilliant mind to her term as president. Somehow, she managed to juggle putting together international legal transactions for her job and a superb job of leading the LWVMC.

Then **Kitty Burcsu** brought her charm and leadership skills to the office. She, too, juggled a major job—hers with the State—and the LWVMC presidency. The “first man” under her term has been advising the “first man” in this household and has also told some pretty funny stories about life in Louisiana.

Other women, some I have known and others I have just heard about have lead this organization. Those women are dynamic and have set examples that I will try to live up to as president.

I can tell you that this will be an exciting year. Thanks to **Scott Britton** and committee, we have a new webpage coming, so be sure to stay tuned to the web as well as *The Voter* for all the details. Scott moves over to heading up Advocacy – so watch that committee for action.

Barbi Crabill, taking over the Voter Service VP slot, and a dynamic committee are already moving forward with a slew of activities for fall, from candidates forums, voter registration drives (say Asian Festival and thanks to **Mary Helen Hart** and **Jean Vike** plus the volunteers they coordinated at the lakeside tent) the VIB (big burden on our wonderful **Amy Pulles**) to lots of candidate forums.

Over a very tasty Indian food lunch, **Jean Byrd** and **Ann Henkener** promised to put together some exciting programs plus promised to mentor future program planners. In addition to what Ann and Jean have promised, we will have five Ukrainians plus

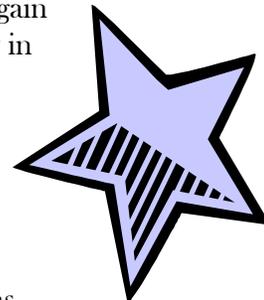
their facilitator visiting us in October so stay tuned for programs for that. If you have housing for a non English speaking person during that time, contact JoAnn Grossman to help plan the program.

Sara Meyers promises to once again do an excellent job with Democracy in Action. **Kitty Burcsu** is already looking at how she can help with our corporate fundraising this year. Sara could use your help putting the event together. Please consider assisting to make the 2009 DIA even more successful than it has been in the past.

Joy Rose continues to head our public relations effort. Between all the activities and all the publicity we will get from Joy’s efforts, our very creative, energetic new Vice President of Membership **Lea Madry** should be able to bring in lots of new members and retain the old ones.

There are people who I am leaving out, not deliberately, but because it is difficult to mention everyone. See, LWV has always been full of great women and now men (we have our first male VP and national has its first male board member). There have been presidents who have set the organization on a good path forward, and then there are the individuals who work hard, create ideas, plans and programs. Of course, without **Amy Pulles** as our staff person, we would not function quite as well as we do. We are a team.

I write this before we have had our first meeting as a new board. I think this will be an exciting year. Please plan to help us in 2008-2009. Join a committee or take on a project or find a member or write a letter. This is a great organization made great by the members working to advance democracy and help people appreciate how privileged they are to be part of such a democratic nation.



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Voter Service News

by Barbi Crabill

The election season is in high gear and it isn't even Labor Day! This is a really important election year and the members of the LWVMC Voter Services Committee are getting ready for a very busy fall.

The candidates' questions for the Voter Information Bulletin (*VIB*) will be decided at the Board Orientation. The *VIB* will be published in *The Columbus Dispatch* October 26 edition. Proofing of the *VIB* will be at **Amy Pulles'** home on September 29. Volunteers are welcome. Let Amy know if you are interested.

The Franklin County Consortium for Good Government has scheduled 11 Candidate Forums during October. At least one

more is being discussed to be held at The Ohio State University and co-sponsored by several student organizations. The Consortium is still

seeking sponsors and supporters. This year, the Consortium will hold training for site coordinators. Two sessions will be held

in August.

A voter registration booth was held at the Asian Festival in May. About 30 people were registered. Voter registration tables are being planned at the September Gallery Hop and the Westerville 4th Friday. We are hoping to have a presence at various colleges at their new student orientation/student activity days.

The Columbus League will host visitors from the Ukraine during October for the Civil Rule of Law program. The Ukrainians and their liaison will be in Columbus in late October. Joanne Grossman has been hired to coordinate this program, which may include visits to the Ohio Supreme Court, Moritz School of Law at The Ohio State University, a program at the Columbus Metropolitan Club and other venues. If you are interested in hosting a Ukrainian visitor or working on this very exciting program, please contact the LWVMC Office.

If you are interested in joining the Voter Service Committee, feel free to contact me at 614-231-2250 or bcrabill2250@wowway.com.

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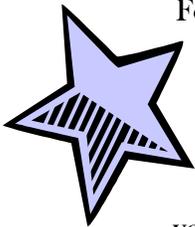
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Three League Members Receive Democracy in Action Award



Judith Brachman and Ohio Supreme Court Justice Thomas Moyer

Throughout Judy's distinguished career, she was also dedicated to her family. She has been married to Merom Brachman since 1957. They have three daughters and four grandchildren.

Like many of League members, **Lou Briggs** joined

the League when she had a baby to keep her home in Berkley, California, and wanted something stimulating and worthwhile to do with her time. She has been in Leagues in Indiana, California, Westerville, and Columbus. Lou has served on many committees and in leadership positions, including president of the Columbus Metro League from 1970-1974. She attributes all her other community opportunities—and there is a long list—to her work in the League.

Lou was one of the founders of the Columbus Metropolitan Club and served as its president. She established a funding drive that rescued it from financial ruin. Lou's daughter, Vicky Jaffe, preceded her as Metropolitan Club president. In fact, her three daughters have been active in their communities like their mom.

Lou has never looked for a job. Her many career opportunities have come to her as a result of her League experience. While serving as an observer of the Worthington City Council, Lou was offered the job of City Clerk since she was already there taking copious notes and knew the city's business. She then ran for Worthington City Council and has served for 31 years.

Lou had been the "go-to" member of Worthington City Council. She retired this year. Since 1995 Lou served as president pro tempore. She chaired numerous commissions and committees including Worthington's Bicentennial Committee; Municipal Planning Commission; Board of Zoning Appeals; and

Economic Development Steering Committee.

At Lou's retirement celebration, Bob Chosy called Briggs "a good person -- a living, breathing example of all of the characteristics promoted by the Partners for Citizenship and Character, an organization in which she has been a pivotal member."

"If every small town in America had two or three Lou Briggses, what a great country we would have," he said.

Outside of Worthington, Lou reviewed applications for grants for the Columbus

Foundation before she became a fund raiser. At Children's Hospital, Lou raised money to build the first research facility, the Wexner Institute for Pediatric Research.

At MORPC, Lou was president of the Citizen Advisory Committee and Board of Directors. The United Way Board of Directors benefited from Lou's fundraising expertise. She also served as president of Franklin County Children's Services.

Lou has served on the COTA Board of Directors. Last year she served as president of the Dublin-Worthington Rotary Club.

Peg Rosenfield's kids will tell you that government reform is her religion. The one and only year she taught high school American history and government in Iowa, she dragged all the juniors and seniors to the fire station to practice voting on a voting machine—and that was in 1954, when the voting age was still 21. Fifty-four years later she is still teaching people about voting and training new Leaguers to register voters.

Peg grew up in Iowa, a state whose residents she still considers the most virtuous in the



Lou Briggs and Mary Lazarus

country. After earning her BA from Iowa University and her MA from Oklahoma University (both in history), she served as assistant editor at Oklahoma University Press, then at Harvard University Press. In Boston, the small-town Iowa girl met her future husband, Al, an MIT graduate student whose subsequent career at Battelle brought them to central Ohio.

Peg claims the League saved her sanity while raising two small children. She served in voter service positions for the Columbus League from 1967 to 1970 but quickly grew tired of explaining Ohio's ridiculously restrictive voter registration laws. Her attention then turned to the state League, and she lobbied for LWVO on election law from 1971 to 1975. The lure of political campaigns was too strong, however, and she took a break from the League in the mid-seventies to be a partisan.

Her campaign work paid off in the form of a decade-long career in the field she loved most. From 1979 to 1990, Peg served the voters of Ohio—and two secretaries of state—by administering programs on voter education and outreach, registration, absentee voting, publications, the Ballot Board, and the Electoral College under the late Tony Celebrezze and now-Sen. Sherrod Brown.



Herb Asher and Peg Rosenfield

She credits her League experience with getting her the job. While at the secretary of state's office, she also wrote two books for high school government teachers and one for elementary school educators to use in teaching the elections process.

After retiring from state government in 1991, Peg was asked to return to her post as elections law lobbyist. She became a watchdog for her old office, noting more than once that it now takes a handful of people to do the job she once did by herself.

At the national level, Peg influenced the drafting of the National Voter Registration Act,

wrote three booklets for the Federal Elections Commission, and presented national workshops with the FEC on how to implement the NVRA.

Peg continues to lobby for LWVO on elections law as well as campaign finance reform. She can always be found at the Metro League's Election Day phone bank and at Grandview unit meetings, and she remains one of the fiercest editors and proofreaders in central Ohio.

Peg and Al take time out from League to visit their grandchildren in Toronto, where Peg's daughter once sighed, "You'll probably have a voter registration table at your funeral." Peg simply smiled and said, "Good idea - see to it!"

Previous DIA honoree **Joan Lawrence** served as emcee for the program. OSU professor and previous DIA



Democracy in Action emcee Joan Lawrence

honoree Herb Asher introduced Peg; previous DIA honoree **Mary Lazarus** introduced Lou; and Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Moyer introduced Judy.

Congratulations to **Sara Meyers** and her committee for a very successful Democracy in Action program.

League Holds Annual Meeting

About 50 League members and guests attended the LWVMC Annual Meeting, June 2, 2008, at the Columbus Board of Realtors. Members approved a budget for 2008-2009, elected a Board of Trustees, heard reports, and honored Member of the Year **Brent Taggart**.

President **Kitty Burcsu** presided over the meeting while **Joy Rose** served as recorder and **Terry McCoy** served as parliamentarian.

Prior to convening the business meeting, attendees enjoyed a buffet dinner and heard from guest speakers Michael S. Brown and Kathleen Murphy who outlined Mayor Michael B. Coleman's plans for a streetcar and regional transit system.

LWVUS Convention Summary



Three official LWVMC delegates, **Janyce Katz**, **Eleanor Pearlman**, and **Scott Britton**, attended the League of Women Voters of the United States Convention. Here are reports from the June 13-17, 2008, event.

Ohio Delegation Plays Key Role

by *Scott Britton*

Flying into Portland, Oregon, I understood immediately at least two reasons why the national board chose the theme “Reaching New Heights Together.” Mount Hood and Mount St. Helens dominate the landscape in that part of the Pacific Northwest, visible – at least on clear days – from many parts of the city.

And you’ll be glad to know that, while debate was often feisty and always passionate, all 684 delegates representing 49 states and the District of Columbia behaved more like Mount Hood than like Mount St. Helens. (In other words, nobody blew their top!)

The five-day conference approved a budget and a program, a new board that includes the first man ever elected to that office, and a series of resolutions and projects. Ohio was well represented, with more than two dozen delegates. In addition to the three official LWVMC delegates, **Anne Nelson** and **Terry McCoy** also attended.

In fact, Ohio’s delegation played a key role in defeating a proposed concurrence – the process of bypassing national study to adopt a state or local League’s position – on redistricting from the Oregon and Virginia Leagues. While the position was well-intentioned, it would have superseded Ohio’s own carefully studied position and interfered with LWVO’s efforts to effect meaningful, viable redistricting reform. (Credit goes to Metro members and LWVO lobbyists **Ann Henkener** and **Peg Rosenfield** for their persuasive critique that was circulated on national listservs prior to Convention.) The sponsors accepted changes from those states, like Ohio, concerned by the restrictive language, but in the end, a compromise with California – which is in the midst of a nasty redistricting reform ballot measure – made Ohio and some of our Midwest Democracy Network partners unable to support concurrence. Our arguments won over many delegates in the end: The concurrence proposal failed to win the two-thirds majority it needed to pass.

Other proposals and resolutions failed as well. It was fascinating to watch the combination of parliamentary procedure, poor timing, lack of specificity with regard to budget, or plain old delegate fatigue that sank these efforts. Yet other proposals – such as new national programs on health care and global climate change – gained the necessary momentum to succeed. I can think of no other national nonprofit that allows its grassroots to make such fundamental changes to its governance and programs. National Convention is the picture of representative democracy at work, and Metro Columbus was there to represent you!

Health Care Program Adopted

by *Eleanor Pearlman*



The goals of the LWVUS position on Health Care adopted in 1993: “The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all US residents. Other US healthcare policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable total national expenditure level for healthcare.”

Massachusetts presented a workshop on an evaluation of their newly-enacted law and how it compares with the LWVUS position. Their presentation was very critical and they offer warnings to other states about how various compromises will create additional barriers. Many questions arose that should be addressed. For example: What changes have occurred in private health insurance since 1993 (when our current position was developed)? What are market-based reforms like Health Savings Accounts? Who benefits? Who loses? How do private health insurance companies manage risk? What are the benefits and problems caused by the changes in Medicare? Who is covered by Medicaid? How does it vary by state? These are heady questions that affect us all.

Delegates voted overwhelmingly to adopt a Health Care program to educate members and communities to be better prepared to do healthcare advocacy as needed. There is an item in the national budget and a task force is to be convened.

Update Your Address Book

LWVMC has a new e-mail address

vote@lwvcols.org

WANTED: Host Families for 2008 Ukraine Civic Program

LWVMC is excited to host a delegation of six visitors from the Ukraine, October 17 - 25. A formal agenda of activities is in the works to acquaint our visitors with our judicial and election systems, our community, and our wonderful tradition of volunteerism and civic engagement.

Homestays are one of the most important elements of the eight-day experience. The time spent with host families allows delegates to see how an American family lives and interacts, and adds a degree of warmth and a personal touch lacking in a hotel stay.

Host families are asked to:

- Provide a private bedroom for the delegate, if possible;
- Spend time with the delegate, especially the weekend of their arrival, taking them shopping and including them in other activities as schedules permit;
- Offer typical family-style meals (breakfast and some dinners);
- Attend one meeting prior to October 17 to learn more about your guest and his/her schedule and gain helpful tips in providing a mutually enjoyable homestay; and
- If possible, attend the farewell dinner/party to be scheduled.

If you would be interested in opening your home to one of our Ukrainian visitors, we want to hear from you! Please contact LWVMC

Office Administrator Amy Pulles at 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org by

August 20. A fun and satisfying experience for you and your family is

guaranteed!

In Memoriam

by Janyce Katz

Ruth Rose Saenger, former LWV president, board member, lobbyist and advocacy trainer for LWV, died on June 1, 2008. She had a very distinguished civic service career above and beyond the League of Women Voters.

Kitty Burcsu and I represented the League at a memorial service, held June 5. We listened as Ruth's surviving daughter, son, and son-in-law spoke about her history. All of them mentioned LWV as the key organization in her life.

Daughter Anne Franklin, now living in Raleigh, North Carolina, said she grew up in a house where politics were discussed at the dinner table. As a young girl, she brought coloring books to LWV Board meetings where women who had fought to get the vote still presided and where her mother played a major role in moving the League forward. Anne credited her interest and actions in politics to her mother.

Son Fritz Saenger also spoke about the influence of his mother, her strength, and her leadership.

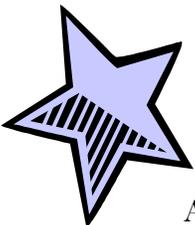
Barbara Carlisle, who died before her mother, was represented by her husband who read remarks Barbara had written while still alive.

Because the League's mission was so important to Ruth, all who mourn her were asked to donate to the LWV Educational Fund in lieu of sending flowers. It is a final tribute and legacy for a woman who will not be forgotten.

Health Forum Set for August

The League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) has joined the Ohio Voices for Healthcare -A Community Dialogue coalition. As part of this group, LWVO is hosting a community dialogue during Lobby Lunch on August 12 from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Columbus Metropolitan Library, Main Branch, Conference Room 1.

For details about joining this exciting community process, contact LWVMC Office Administrator Amy Pulles at 614-837-1089 or vote@lwvcols.org. Reservations are requested because information packets will be available at the event.





LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF METROPOLITAN COLUMBUS

- 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 _____

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League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus

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