

# THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS  
OF METROPOLITAN  
COLUMBUS

## LWVMC Committees Plan September Meeting

The Membership and Educational Events Committees present

**Fred Andrle**

OSU Humanities Institute

***The Importance of Civil Discourse***

**Thursday, September 13, 2012**

**Clintonville Woman's Club      3951 N. High St., Columbus**

**Social Hour - 6:00 p.m.      Dinner - 6:30 p.m.      Program - 7:15 p.m.**

Choice of Entree: Beef Short Ribs or Portobello Mushroom Lasagna

Please RSVP by noon September 5 with payment of \$25.

Please note new LWVMC address. The phone number and web address have remained the same.

Send payment with entree selection to  
LWVMC, 6500 Busch Blvd. #129, Columbus, OH 43229  
614/837-1089 or [vote@lwvcols.org](mailto:vote@lwvcols.org)

## Civil Discourse: An Antidote for Toxic Talk

Following the direction of the 4R Committee's initiative, the Civic Education and Engagement Committee begins a year-long focus on the belief and practice of civil discourse among all community members. The committee referenced an article written by Jane M. Prescott-Smith, National Institute for Civil Discourse, University of Arizona. This institute is a nonpartisan center for advocacy, research, and policy regarding civil discourse consistent with First Amendment principles. It features many prominent members on their National Board of Advisors including former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, Madeleine Albright, and Gabrielle Giffords. An excerpt from Jane Prescott-Smith's article assists in our understanding of civil discourse:

### Civil Discourse Defined

One of the ironies of this past year has been realizing the difficulty of defining civil discourse. The Institute's definition is "robust, honest, frank and constructive dialogue and deliberation that seeks to advance the public interest." During a forum at the United States Supreme Court in the fall of 2011, it was much easier for participants to articulate what was NOT civil discourse. For instance:

- Civil discourse has nothing to do with abridgment of the First Amendment or the silencing of certain views;
- Civil discourse does not imply any commitment to political moderation or consensus views;
- Civil discourse does not just mean being polite.

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# President's Message

## Amy Pulles

I've got so much to share with you I just don't know where to begin.



First, my initial experiences as President has been both successful and enjoyable, thanks to many of the Board members that have jumped right in and started their work. The Board Retreat was held in mid-June. We discussed in depth what actions we needed to take to be successful at focusing the League on its new vision. It was agreed that we needed to establish criteria that must be considered when deciding what activities the League should take part in. The criteria created is as follows:

1. Does the project fit the League's mission and/or our vision?
2. Do the objective(s) of the project address one of our prioritized goals? Which one and in what way?
3. What resources (staff, dollars, volunteers, and time) are available and can these resources overcome any barriers?
4. How will success be measured?
5. What are the benefits for the League, such as an increase in members, revenue, media, partnerships, and/or visibility, or does it provide a service to members?
6. Are there other reasons to get involved?

We then considered our committee structure and what changes in this structure were needed to best reach our goals. We determined that Advocacy and Educational Events would be working alongside one another and therefore, those committees should be merged. A Communications Committee should also be established in order to allow for a greater focus on communication efforts.

The following committee structure was created:

### Internal Committees

- ▶ **Membership, chaired by Mim Brierley**
- ▶ **Development, chaired by Kitty Burcsu**
- ▶ **Communications, chaired by Beth Taggart**

### Mission/Vision Related Committees

- ▶ **Civic Education & Engagement, chaired by Kay Skopin**
- ▶ **Voter Service, chaired by Lisa Freeman Wilson**

The committees have already begun pursuing our vision. As a matter of fact, our first Board meeting in August took three hours because there was so much to talk about (I'm going to have to put a stop to that. Three hours is a bit too long!). You can read all about their activities in this edition of the Voter and on our website.

We have a new staff person! I'm so excited and thankful. Elizabeth Grieser is our new Program Manager. Feel free to call her and introduce yourself. She's only been on the job for a few days but I can already tell she's going to be wonderful. Thank you to Scott Britton, Barbi Crabill, and Deb Peluso for finding Elizabeth.

The office move is complete. Our new address is 6500 Busch Blvd, Suite 129, Columbus, OH 43229. I was thrilled to find out that our phone number would remain the same, (614) 837-1089. The new space is beautiful and I'd like to say a special thank you to Lucy Buzzee and Mary Kaul for finding it for us and at such a wonderful price.

Through this column, I will keep you posted on our efforts and how we're staying true to our new vision.

### The Vision Statement of the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus

LWV of Metropolitan Columbus leads the creation of a Central Ohio community that has fair and open governments; has an engaged and informed electorate; values the votes of all its citizens; engages in civil discourse; and has citizens equipped to take action on issues they care about.

## New Member Orientation for All Members

**SAVE THIS DATE**

**Note: The Library is on Lane Road NOT Lane Avenue.**

**New Member Orientation**  
Saturday, September 29, 10 am to 12 noon  
Upper Arlington Lane Road Library  
Lower Level  
1945 Lane Road, Upper Arlington, 43220

All members are invited to come for brunch with other League members and get “up to speed” on the League. You’ve probably heard about “speed dating,” a fun and fast way of getting acquainted with new people. “Speed League” is Membership’s way to meet new members while sharing a muffin or bagel and coffee or tea.

You will also have an opportunity to meet our new office manager, Elizabeth Grieser, and put a face to the voice on the phone.

It promises to be fun -- satisfying the mind and the tummy -- and will conclude promptly at noon.

## Membership Committee Welcomes New Members

The Membership Committee welcomes recent new members, D. Norman, Matina Ross, Wanda Suber, Paul De Bell, Terry Wick, Kathy Van Tassell, Nancy Beja, Mildred Chavous, Lori J. Elmore, Carole Groselle and Ellen Glover. Watch for these new members at LWVMC events. The Membership Committee thanks new members and returning members for supporting the work of the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus.



## This Month's Civics Test

**Here are this month's questions from the the study materials for the civics test on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services webpage, with League extensions. Enjoy!**

1. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence? How about naming all the rights granted in the Declaration of Independence?
2. What is the “rule of law”?
3. Name two national U.S. holidays. How many national U.S. holidays are there?
4. Name one state that borders Canada. Is it too much to ask for all the states that border Canada?
5. Name one state that borders Mexico. Name them all. This is much easier than question 4.

Last month's answers can be found on page 6.

The questions for the monthly civics tests have been taken directly from the Naturalization Exam. Now the VOTER is asking for members to submit their favored questions from American history, geography, and/or civics. Send your questions to the Voter Editor, [jeanbyrd@scbglobal.net](mailto:jeanbyrd@scbglobal.net) or 614-261-0601. Please, no answers. The editor wants a challenge.

## Franklin County Consortium for Good Government

The Franklin County Consortium for Good Government today unveiled its Meet the Candidates plans for Election 2012. Since 1991, the Consortium has sponsored these events to give voters an opportunity to get to know the people and issues that will appear on the ballot.

Consortium co-chair Jeff Cabot noted that, in a presidential election year, state and local races tend to get lost in the onslaught of national advertising and campaigning. But, said Cabot, "[former House Speaker] Tip O'Neill got it right when he said, 'All politics is local.' People want to know where their candidates stand on issues that will affect them and their children on a day-in, day-out basis."

Cabot continued, "This gives voters a chance to hear from the candidates themselves, since only

the candidates are invited to participate. Equally important, the candidates and those who advocate or oppose issues on the ballot get a chance to hear from the people who will decide the election – the voters of Franklin County."

Sponsored by civic-minded organizations from religious congregations to social service groups, the Consortium accepts no support from political, governmental, or commercial interests, thus insuring that its tradition and reputation for scrupulous nonpartisanship will be maintained.

Co-chair Cabot concluded, "We invite the candidates to come meet their constituents and urge voters to hear from those who seek their support – in person and in an open forum that invites questions and looks for answers to the pressing issues of our time."

### CONSORTIUM ANNOUNCES MEET THE CANDIDATES EVENTS

September 27	Venue TBA; sponsor Northland Community Council
October 3	All Saints Academy; sponsor Black Catholic Ministries and Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Office of Social Concerns
October 10	Peace Lutheran Church; sponsor Peace Lutheran Church
October 11	First Unitarian Universalist Church; sponsors First Universalist Unitarian Church and the Council for Public Deliberation
October 15	Life Care Alliance; sponsors MODNA and Council for Public Deliberation
October 16	Reynoldsburg United Methodist Church; sponsors Reynoldsburg United Methodist Church and Temple Israel
October 17	Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hilliard; sponsor Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hilliard
October 23	McConnell Arts Center; sponsor Columbus Chapter of ORT America and American Association of University Women

All events begin with an informal "meet-and-greet" at 6:30pm, followed by the Candidates' Forum at 7:00pm, except for the October 15 Life Care Alliance meeting. Meet-and-greet is at 12:30pm, and the Forum begins at 1:00pm.

In addition to the sponsors of the above events, Consortium sponsors include Founding Sponsors Brookwood Presbyterian Church and the National Council of Jewish Women, along with the Federalist Society, the the Columbus Jewish Federation, Eastminster Presbyterian Church, Congregation Agudas Achim, the Columbus Jewish Center, and the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus.

Article submitted by Jaynce Katz

## Taking Action

The League MC offers numerous avenues of action and volunteerism.

✓ LWVMC Action Alerts are sent out in timely emails and can be found on the LWVMC webpage. The most recent Action Alert: The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus called on members to convert the new position on regional planning and land use into action by contacting city governments to encourage support for a central Ohio job-poaching agreement. Go to the MC webpage, [www.lwvcols.org](http://www.lwvcols.org) and click on 'taking action' for contacts and information.

✓ LWV Ohio Action Alerts are sent out by email and can be found on their webpage. The most recent Action Alert: The League of Women Voters of Ohio and local Leagues have been urging Secretary Husted and the Boards of Elections to provide evening and weekend hours for early voting in all Ohio counties. Go to the Ohio webpage, [www.lwvo.org](http://www.lwvo.org), for more information and contacts.

✓ Volunteer opportunities:

- Look on page 2 in the President's message for a list of committees yearning for help. The office has contacts for these committees.
- On page 4 is the list of 'Meet the Candidates Events'. These events always need a bit of assistance. Contact Janyce Katz, [mglazman@spynet.com](mailto:mglazman@spynet.com) if interested.

Watch for emails and check the webpage of LWVMC for more opportunities to support your League. If you do not have access to the internet contact Elizabeth at the MC office, 614-837-1089, for volunteer opportunities and contacts.

## Civil Discourse, continued from page 1

### League's General Meeting Begins our Venture into Civil Discourse

Under the cooperative efforts of the Membership and Civil Education and Engagement Committees, an exciting evening is planned for September 13, 2012 at the Clintonville Woman's Club. This event will begin with a social hour while listening to music performed by Ginger Haack. Dinner features a choice of two of the Woman's Club's favorite entrees. Our featured speaker, Fred Andrie, Institute Associate, OSU Humanities Institute, will begin our League focus on civil discourse. Following his presentation, Dave Patton will lead a question and answer period. This event is open to the public. There is no cost if you are interested in only attending Fred Andrie's presentation.

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Some other insightful comments included:

- Civil discourse implies a willingness to explain the reasons behind one's opinions and to listen carefully and try to understand the opposing side's reasons for its stance
- Civil discourse can exist - and is in fact especially important - during times of increased political polarization
- Civil discourse, like democracy itself, requires a basic level of trust, so challenging the basic legitimacy of the other side precludes civil discourse.

Institute Link: <http://nicd.arizona.edu/>

Look for future thought-provoking events planned by Education Committee members Dave Patton, Jane Young, Helena Schlam, Carole Rogers, Patty Cunningham, Karin O'Neil, Anne Hoke, and Kay Skopin.

## Last Month's Civic Test

Last issue's questions and answers:

1. Name one of the U.S. Territories. Just for Leaguers: name all the U.S. Territories. ▪ ▪ ▪ Puerto Rico ▪ U.S. Virgin Islands ▪ American Samoa ▪ Northern Mariana Islands ▪ Guam
2. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states? Leaguers should state five powers.
  - provide schooling and education
  - provide protection (police)
  - provide safety (fire departments)
  - give a driver's license
  - approve zoning and land use
3. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years? Two
4. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do? freed slaves in the Confederate states
5. Name the writers of the Federalist Papers.
  - James Madison
  - Alexander Hamilton
  - John Jay
  - Publius

## New Office Hours and New Office Address

New League MC Office Hours:  
Tuesday, Wednesday, and Fridays  
8:30 am - 5:00 pm

New LWVMC address  
6500 Busch Blvd. #129,  
Columbus, Ohio 43229

Phone and email address  
remain the same:  
614/837-1089 [vote@lwvcols.org](mailto:vote@lwvcols.org)



Don't wait, register to vote or update your voter registration today!

League of Women Voters of  
Metropolitan Columbus  
6500 Busch Blvd. #129  
Columbus, Ohio 43229  
614-837-1089  
614-837-1263 fax  
[www.lwvcols.org](http://www.lwvcols.org)

