



Making Democracy Work

The League of Women Voters of Oxford reaffirms our commitment to diversity and pluralism which means that there are and shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of League on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

The Oxford Voter

January, 2011

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Happy New Year!

We have a full calendar leading up to our local Annual Convention in April

- Program Planning: Saturday, January 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Marcum Center, Miami University
- Shaping Sustainable Communities: Monday, January 31, 4:30 p.m. at 115 Shideler Hall, Miami University
- Talawanda High School: New School—Green School: Wednesday, February 23, 7 p.m. at the LCNB Community Room
- Why Hamilton is the Greenest City in Ohio: Wednesday, March 23, 7 p.m. at the LCNB Community Room.
- Annual Convention: Tuesday, April 26, 7 p.m. at the LCNB Community Room



Opportunity to Help With Voter Service

It is time to prepare the League's 2011 Government Service Directory (GSD). Can you spend 30 - 60 minutes fact checking a portion of the GSD? Please call or email Karen DeLue this week to be assigned a portion to revise. 523-8852 or kdelue@yahoo.com. Many thanks!



A Most Special Event – Planning and Social – set for Saturday, January 22

Our 2011 planning session and annual League social is Saturday, January 22, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. at the Marcum Center.

Desiring both fellowship and work, the Board invites all League members, their guests, and interested public to participate and/or watch League grassroots in action.

Wishing this event to be an opportunity to recruit new members, individual Board members are telephoning prospective new members offering to pick up the guest and to cover the cost of the lunch. Other League members are asked to do the same or to call Steve Dana for his help. (513/523-6579).

Our event begins with coffee at 10:00 AM followed by group discussions of League positions in several areas: Representative Government, led by Prue Dana; Social Policy, led by Sue Jones and Tammy Wood; and Natural Resources, led by Gail Williamson and Linda Williams. For League members who wish to review state and local positions in advance, all local positions and new LWV of Ohio Finance and Taxation position are included in this Voter. The Ohio League's Agenda for Action is on the internet at the following address:

[http://www.lwvohio.org/assets/attachments/file/2009-2011%20Agenda%20for%20Action\(1\).pdf](http://www.lwvohio.org/assets/attachments/file/2009-2011%20Agenda%20for%20Action(1).pdf).

The goal of the January meeting is to review and assess for relevance and progress both local and state positions of the League. We will identify possible future studies of specific issues and will make recommendations to the League's Board of Directors.

Toasting our work to influence public policy, we will celebrate with wine. Non-alcoholic drink will be available.

Lunch prepared by Executive Chef Ginny Thiell and arranged by Marcum Event Planner Jane Gaitskill with Joanne McQueen – all Oxford League members, will be served at 1:00 pm. The cost of lunch is \$10.00. Vegetarian and other special diets are available with advance notice.

During lunch, Sondra Engel will discuss the LWV of Oxford's endowment and ways to leave a legacy for the future of this local chapter. Pledge cards will be at each place setting.

Invitations have been separately emailed (US mail, if no email). Board members will be telephoning to emphasize the invitation and encourage attendance. Reservations can be made until January 18; call Joanne McQueen at 513/523-6653 or email at jo.jim.oxford@gmail.com. As early as possible, checks made payable to Marcum Conference Center should be mailed to Joanne McQueen, 5388 Hillcrest Drive, Oxford, OH 45056. Checks may be given at the door.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OXFORD LOCAL PROGRAM POSITIONS

Revised 2010

GOVERNMENT

- Support of the HOME RULE CHARTER for the City of Oxford (1963).
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE: Support of sound fiscal policies and practices for the City of Oxford that: provide for the basic needs of the citizens; are based on a mix of progressive and regressive revenues and rational expenditures; allow revenue sources to be earmarked; promote user fees which are more consistent with actual cost; encourage the State of Ohio to reimburse the city for the actual cost of services provided to Miami University; allow for the use of incentives to entice business; and include the school district in the tax abatement process (1990).
- Support the use of PREFERENCE VOTING for Oxford City Council and Talawanda City School District elections (1997).

SOCIAL POLICY

- Support of AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL REMODELING AND BUILDING PROGRAM where educational goals can be maintained with teachers, parents and taxpayers involved in the planning (1985).
- Support of a HIGH DEGREE OF EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL EDUCATION BASED ON FLEXIBLE BLEND OF STATE AND LOCAL FUNDING, supplemented with federal funding. This means that:
 - Additional local, state and federal support for education means that citizens must support additional taxation;
 - Federal money for specific programs which meet local needs should be encouraged (1978); and
 - Revise the school funding formula according to the decisions of the Ohio Supreme Court (2005).
- Support LIBRARY FACILITIES AND SERVICE in the City of Oxford and the Talawanda School District (1970; amended 2005).
- Support of an effective RECREATION AND PARKS PROGRAM including:
 - Specific delineation of the duties and responsibilities of the Recreation Board;
 - Long-range recreation planning;
 - A capital improvements fund for recreation; and
 - Cooperation with groups involved with recreation in the Talawanda School District (1975).
- Support for the SENIOR CITIZENS AND COMMUNITY CENTER for the provision of services and activities to older citizens in the Oxford area financed by public and private funding (1979, amended 1982).
- Support of LOCAL TRANSPORTATION FOR THE ELDERLY OR PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED OR DISABLED in the Oxford area financed by public and private funding (1979; amended 2010)
- Support of HUMAN SERVICES, especially children's services, for Butler County and the Oxford community through both public and private agencies; support of services for children and their families, including: (a) professional diagnosis of social, learning, medical and psychological/psychiatric disabilities, and (b) innovation and coordination of quality programs for protection, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, including temporary care (1986).
- PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION: Support of environmentally responsible approaches in and around Oxford for self-supporting management of cars, creation of bicycle paths, improved sidewalk or pedestrian access, and public transportation. Such approaches would consider: the creation of a parking authority to operate and finance parking; a master bike plan – safe, designated and integrated with other systems, and cost of existing public transportation and alternative services for test populations (1997; amended 2005, 2010).
- Support of current & future CITY EFFORTS TO INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING for low & moderate households.
 - Increase housing options for: seniors, the disabled, first-time home buyers, residents who live in substandard housing, and households that earn their living in Oxford.
 - Promote a variety of housing styles and types for rent and for purchase that are integrated within the community.
 - Support strategies including: public and private partnerships and grants, development agreements, rehabilitation, fee waivers, density bonuses, and an affordable housing trust fund. (2005)

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Support of policies and practices that are the most environmentally sound and the most economically feasible, and support inter-jurisdictional solutions for growth management (amended 2005).
 - WATER
 - Promoting water conservation
 - Maintaining high quality water with any additional treatment being done only with public support
 - Improving the wastewater treatment plant and rehabilitating the sewer pipes using both federal & local government funds.

- SOLID WASTE
 - Promoting recycling using both private and public funds.
- LAND USE
 - Using the properly secured and closed landfill for recreational purposes
 - Requiring an impact study for all annexation requests and land use plans
 - Providing city services (water and waste water) to individual sites meeting criteria outside city limits and not to area developments
 - Annexing land that the city now provides with city services (1983).



Archiving the League of Women Voters of Oxford's History

Helen Gorman, Valerie Elliott, and Arianne Hartsell-Gundy have formed a sub-committee to review our policies and procedures for archiving the important documents of the League. We met in December to decide how to archive future documents. We agreed that it would be best to have two forms of back up to protect this information for the future. We will use a free file-sharing program called Dropbox. This program will allow members of the Board of Directors to share documents and files. We will also have an external hard drive to save the documents in a more permanent manner. We will soon be working on a formal policy in regards to what kinds of documents and information to save. We will also be reviewing how we are currently storing older papers from the League's history. If you have questions about this project, please let Arianne Hartsell-Gundy know at hartsea@muohio.edu.



You are cordially invited to the

**Shaping Sustainable Communities:
Implementing Conservation Development
in and around Oxford.**

Randall Arendt Landscape Planner, designer, author, lecturer

Conservation Development and New Urbanism

Monday, January 31, 2011

4:30 p.m. public speech

115 Shideler Hall

Randall Arendt, one of the nation's leading authorities on conservation development, is coming to Oxford to lead two workshops on Implementing Conservation Development in the Oxford Area. Arendt's January 31 visit will begin with a public speech at 4:30 PM explaining basic principles in conservation development.

He will return at the end of February to focus on implementing conservation development on the south side of Oxford, Oxford Township through finding consensus among the area's stakeholders.

This event is being sponsored by Miami's Harry T. Wilks Leadership Institute with support from: Butler County, City of Oxford, Oxford Township, Milford Township, Talawanda School District, Miami Department of Geography, and League of Women Voters of Oxford.

Randall Arendt describes himself on his web site as a landscape planner, site designer, author, lecturer, and an advocate of "conservation planning." His 1994 *Rural by Design* is considered one of the most influential

planning books of the past two decades. The heart of Arendt's argument is that subdivisions and other new developments that are designed to be sensitive to the environment can also be financially rewarding for developers and fiscally sound for local authorities.

This is a very exciting series and it is very important that the League is involved both financially and in the planning effort. If you have questions, contact Prue Dana pdana@bizwoh.rr.com



Highlights from Your State League: Mid-September – Mid-November, 2010

Pre-election time is always one of the busiest—and most energizing—times of the year for local Leagues. The same is true at the state level! Below are snapshots of just some of the things your state League has been working on.

In preparation for the November election, your state League...

- Hosted LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara for a 2-day visit involving a candidates' forum, an appearance on an NPR call-in radio show, a meeting with Secretary of State Brunner to discuss elections in Ohio, and dinner with a dozen central Ohio League members;
- Co-hosted a forum for Ohio supreme court candidates;
- Advocated for redistricting reform with candidates for secretary of state; and
- Published an on-line Voters' Guide of statewide candidates and had links to local Leagues' guides.

LWVOEF broadened our monitoring of the 2009 LWVO v. Brunner Lawsuit Settlement Agreement with two projects....

- 2010 Post-Election Audit Observation Pilot Project: Your state League held regional trainings for more than a dozen participating Leagues. Members were trained to assess county election boards' compliance with Secretary Brunner's requirements for the post-election audit of the November election. The pilot project is also intended to build local Leagues' relationship with their election boards and "test" the League training and observation processes in preparation for a more comprehensive audit-observation project in 2012, the next time an audit is required.
- Election Administration Plans: Your state League assessed 32 county boards' election administration plans (mandated by the settlement agreement), in conjunction with the Lawyers Committee on Civil Rights Under Law, and reviewed preliminary results with Secretary of State staff.

At our November board meeting, we...

- Approved a policy regarding the inclusion of candidates, including write-in candidates, in the statewide Voters' Guide.
- Approved a 15% thank-you rebate to local Leagues for their members' contributions to the 2011 fundraiser made prior to the May 2011 deadline.

Now it's time to start filling in your 2011 calendar! Dates to remember....

- Dec. 31, 2010: LWVO program planning materials were available to local Leagues.
- Feb. 26, 2011: Regional meetings focusing on idea exchanges will be offered.
- April 6, 2011: Statehouse Day 2011 will be at the Riffe Center, Columbus.
- May 13-15, 2011: LWVOhio Convention will be at Maumee Bay State Park.
- 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month: Lobby Lunches at the Columbus Metropolitan Library, 96 S. Grant Ave., Columbus, 43215. Everyone is welcome to join us for an update of legislative activity and the political scene.



Updated LWVOhio Positions on State Finance and Taxation (Approved December 2010)

Criteria (Adopted July 1989)

LWVO supports the following tax principles as criteria to be used in evaluating individual taxes and the tax mix in Ohio. Taxes should:

1. be fair and equitable;
2. provide adequate funds for government programs while allowing flexibility for financing future program changes;
3. be understandable to the taxpayer and encourage compliance; and
4. be easy to administer.

Taxes on Business (Adopted July 1989; revised December 2010)

LWVO supports taxes on business as a source of state revenue especially because businesses should help pay for services received.

Income Tax (Adopted July 1989)

LWVO supports a personal income tax as a source of state revenue because it meets the fair and equitable principles. The state income tax rates should be graduated.

Property Tax (Adopted March 1983):

1. LWVO supports real property tax relief, financed by the state in the form of the Homestead Exemption, based on age, income and disability income.
2. LWVO supports the elimination of the real property tax rollbacks, both across-the-board and for owner-occupied homes.

Sales Tax (Adopted March 1983; revised June 1989):

1. LWVO supports a change in the base rather than a change in the rate of the sales tax. We favor broadening the base by reducing the number of exemptions.
2. LWVO supports application of the sales tax to nonessential services, tickets for professional athletic and entertainment events, and prepared food purchased for on- or off- premise consumption.
3. LWVO supports exemptions for food, other than prepared food, sold for off-premise consumption, prescription drugs, prosthetic and surgical devices, and items for direct use (components in manufacturing and agricultural use).

Tax Mix (Adopted July 1989; revised December 2010)

If an increase in state taxes is needed, LWVO prefers the income tax as a source of revenue because it tends to be progressive rather than regressive. Applying means testing to state property tax-relief programs would increase the revenue generated by the tax and make the system more equitable by not unduly burdening low-income individuals and families. Taxes on alcohol and tobacco are another revenue source if needed. An increase in sales tax, although less desirable, is another possible revenue source

If a decrease in state taxes is called for, LWVO supports reducing the sales tax because it is regressive and less equitable. Tax relief for those at the lower end of the income scale should be considered if there is an increase in state taxes.