



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

March, 2012

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Save the Dates

- Thursday, March 22, 7:00 p.m. LCNB Community Room: Privatization of Government Services Study and Consensus
- Tuesday, April 10, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., Columbus: Statehouse Day/Council
- Tuesday, April 24, 7:00 p.m. LCNB Community Room: LWVOxford Annual Convention
- Friday-Tuesday, June 8-12, Washington, D.C.: LWVUS National Convention

Mary Jo Clark, Organization Vice President



Privatization Consensus Meeting

The LWVUS Privatization Study of Government Services will culminate in a consensus meeting Thursday, March 22 at 7:00 p.m. in the LCNB Community Room. The scope of the study is to identify parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state, or local government services, assets, and/or functions to the private sector. A panel of members from the local study committee will assess the community impact of such transfers of authority, and also identify ways to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good.

The study materials listed below have been sent to you electronically and can be found on the LWVOxford website members page <http://oxford-members.oh.lwvnet.org>. Please review them before the meeting. The committee realizes that there is a lot of information. Do the best you can. We will help you understand the issues during the meeting.

1. Privatization Consensus Questions
2. State Level Privatization 2011
3. Strategies for Best Practice
 - a. Tables 1 & 2: Potential Advantages & Disadvantages of Privatization
 - b. Appendix 1, 2, 3, 4, Strategies and Considerations For Best Practice
 - i. Pre-Privatization Checklist
 - ii. Contractor Selection Checklist
 - iii. Contract Negotiation Checklist
 - iv. Contract Management and Oversight Checklist
4. Privatization Examples to Learn From

We are looking forward to seeing you on the 22nd.

The Privatization Committee, Mary Jo Clark, Chair



Redistricting Update---Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission Still in Play

Following the Census in the Fall of 2011, the majority party in the Ohio General Assembly, the Republicans, drew Congressional and statewide district lines that overwhelmingly favored their party. In effect, they chose the voters. Furthermore, the League of Women Voters of Ohio rated the process by which these lines were drawn as a D minus for its level of transparency.

Throughout the Fall of 2011 LWVO, with funding from the Joyce Foundation, partnered with other groups to draft a constitutional amendment that would create an Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission. According to this body's procedures and criteria, redistricting would be taken out of the hands of incumbent politicians and placed in the hands of an impartial citizens commission.

However, the leaders of the General Assembly then stepped forward and declared the commission to be overly complex and fraught with constitutional issues. The General Assembly then passed and on 12/15/11 the Governor signed, HB 309, which creates the Redistricting Reform Task Force. This body, which consists of four Republicans and four Democrats, is charged with creating a redistricting reform proposal. Proponents of this task force say that its decisions will require bipartisan approval. Whatever maps this body might draw would not go into effect until 2021 following the next census in 2020.

But the League of Women Voters of Ohio is pressing ahead with the effort to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot to offer Ohio's citizens the opportunity to create a citizens commission. LWVOhio is the leading partner of this initiative, called *Voters First*, whose members point out that requiring bipartisan approval does not solve the problem of creating safe districts because "it provides an incentive for Democratic and Republican officials to negotiate a deal which creates safe districts for the favored incumbents of each party."

Now called the Ohio Citizens Independent Redistricting Commission, its criteria are:

- ~ Twelve citizens would create districts. Any member of the public can submit a plan for consideration
- ~ Openness and Transparency. All meetings, records, communications and draft plans of the commission must be open to the public
- ~ Represents Ohioans. The commission will include equal numbers of Republicans, Democrats and independents
- ~ Community Representation. Districts will be created that are geographically compact, and which minimize the division of counties, townships, municipalities and wards between different districts
- ~ Accountability. Politically balanced districts will be created.
- ~ Fairness. To the greatest extent possible, the share of districts leaning toward a party will reflect the political preferences of the voters of Ohio.

Ann Henkener, Redistricting Specialist at LWVOhio, says that the petition will be filed with the Attorney General's office during the week of March 12. Once the AG determines that the summary language of the petition is accurate, and once the Secretary of State determines that the signatures on the petition for the purpose

of filing it are valid, then the Ballot Board will decide if the issue will be placed on the ballot as one issue or several issues.

Then comes the big drive.... Over a half a million signatures are needed to ensure that the issue is placed on the ballot for the 2012 election. If the measure passes, then the Ohio Citizens Independent Redistricting Commission would go to work and employ the above criteria to draw district lines. These new districts would constitute the basis for Ohioans to vote in 2014.

At Statehouse Day in Columbus, April 10, there will be a presentation and discussion of redistricting. Please check LWVOhio's web site, www.lwvohio.org for details and information on registration.

Steve Dana, Government



LWVO Statehouse Day and Council

The League of Women Voters of Ohio Statehouse Day and Council will be held Tuesday, April 10 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Vern Riffe Center, 77 S. High Street, Columbus, OH. There will be engaging presentations on important issues such as redistricting reform, fracking, voter protection, human trafficking and good government.

Steve and Prue Dana, Jo McQueen and Sally Southard are planning to go. If you would like to join them please contact Steve (523-6579 or sdana@woh.rr.com) before April 5.

Mary Jo Clark, Organization Vice President



Annual Convention LWV Oxford

The Annual Convention of the Oxford League of Women Voters is Tuesday, April 24 at 7:00 p.m. in the LCNB Community Room. After a dessert party, we will make decisions for the 2012-13 League year that include electing board members, approving a budget and adopting the program positions. In addition, we will hear reports of activities from the 2011-2012 year.

You will be receiving the convention packet electronically or by U.S. Mail by March 26th.

Mary Jo Clark, Organization Vice President



Call to National Convention!

The LWVUS nation convention will be from June 8-12, 2012 in Washington D.C. There will be great speakers, interesting workshops and training, discussion of program and issues, election of leaders, networking and visiting DC area sites. There is money in the LWVOx budget to help pay for a member's expenses to attend. If you are interested contact Mary Jo Clark, 523-6515 or clarkmj1@muohio.edu.



The following is an excerpt from a report to us by our Liaison with LWVOhio, Sharon Harmer

Conference call on voter i.d.: Those of you who were part of the February conference call regarding voting rights probably learned a lot, as I did. Among the many things which caught my attention was the cost of required voter i.d. Iowa was looking at having a photo i.d. law and asked a group of their county auditors to check on the costs in Indiana. It was \$12.2 million over a 4 year period, not including the cost of training or lawsuits. There was no decrease over the years. As you are aware, our November election will be under the old rules; we will need to be sure voters are aware of what is required.

Action:

There are a number of *bills* we are following—and have testified on. Testimony has been primarily in the areas of environment and election law but also death penalty. We are following the Constitutional Modernization Commission (full membership has not been selected yet).

We are also following the potential petitions for *issues to be on the November ballot*. At the moment, the repeal of HB194 and the question as to whether we should have a Constitutional Convention are set to be on the ballot. There are proposed petitions for redistricting (a constitutional amendment), legalizing cannabis (const. amend.), personhood (const. amend.) right to work, “yes for Ohio’s energy future” (bonds—const. amend.) and “Freedom to marry”. Not all of these have made past the first step in getting on the ballot (1,000 signatures and approval of wording & explanation). We will keep you informed on the process.

EAPs (Election Assessment Plans) are being reviewed by a law firm to ascertain whether they are sufficient to address concerns on voting rights. This is a part of our continuing work with the lawsuit provisions. After that, we will meet with the Secretary of State on what was found. Results of the interviews with local Boards of Elections should be out this month.

If you have questions, please feel free to email (slharmer@aol.com) or call (937-434-8952) me.

Sharon Harmer, LWVOhio

Liaison to: Greater Dayton, Oxford, Delaware, Tiffin leagues



Welcome to new member, Rhonda Jackson!

Rhonda sent us a letter of introduction.

Dear Oxford League of Women Voters,

I've been employed by Miami University, Women's Center for the past 10 years. During my tenure in this position my engagement with women students, faculty, staff and community members has grown considerably. In the same time my dedication and passion for women and women's issues has also grown and expanded. As I look forward to a time when I can retire from Miami I wanted to connect with women who identified as passionate leaders and stakeholders in the political landscape of our country. From this interest came my desire to become a member of the Oxford League of Women Voters.

In the fall of 2011, the Oxford League of Women Voters collaborated with the Women's Center to provide voter registration to approximately 40 students, faculty and staff m at Miami. Because the event was scheduled for August 26, 2011 "Women's Equality Day" the LWV members volunteered to register voters and celebrate "Women's Equality Day" with the university. Many League members dressed in period costume to draw attention to the voting rights of women and to the political issues currently facing our country. I was personally moved by the dedication of the League members and to their commitment to registering students who where eligible to vote but had not registered.

From this event and interaction with the League members I knew I wanted to become a member of the League even though I tend to be a person who does not join groups.

In February, I attended my first League event which was the 2012 Annual Social and Planning Event. The meeting was well organized, held in a timely fashion and the issues discussed by the portfolio groups were lively, engaging and very productive. I heard one League member say "this is democracy at it's best" and I must say I agree with this statement. I look forward to future LWV meetings, as a new member who is excited to learn more about the League, the political advocacy work of the League and to get to know each member of the group personally and professionally.

Sincerely yours,

Rhonda Jackson