



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

May, 2011

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National Position on “The Federal Role in Public Education” Announced

Last August and September, LWVOx members participated in the consensus study of “The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education.” The Board of the LWVUS has announced the position that results from the thoughtful responses of our members and of those throughout the United States.

Space doesn’t allow reprinting the entire position statement, so here are some excerpts from that new position:

The League believes that the role of the federal government should include the following:

- Provide leadership and vision to promote a quality education for all children;
- Provide broad common standards developed by educational experts upon which states and local education agencies can build;
- Provide a suggested curricular structure or framework as a guide to state and local education agencies to develop their own curricula;
- Provide a national assessment that clearly informs teachers, parents and students about how well individual students have mastered criteria established at the national level;
- Provide a national assessment that informs districts how well their populations compare to other populations similar to theirs; and
- Provide a combination of competitive grants and non-competitive funding to states and local school districts to achieve equity among states and populations.

In accordance with the League of Women Voters’ position on Equal Rights, we continue to support equity in public education for all through:

- Broad guidelines for accountability, leaving implementation to the state and local education agencies;
- Adequate funding sources that support the broad goals of national standards; and
- Mechanisms for local and state funding with adequate federal support for mandates that require less burdensome, compliance-based reporting and regulations.

The League believes that the federal government should support the following:

- Early childhood education programs that include funding for parent education and involve child development, health, nutrition and access to other supportive services such as mental health care for all children and their families;
- Research that documents quality early childhood education programs; and
- Research that demonstrates the importance of linking state and local community partnerships with effective early childhood education programs and services.

You can access the entire position statement on the LWVUS website, <http://www.lwv.org>. Click on “Members” at the top; then click on “Advocacy, Projects and Studies” at the bottom of the page, then click “Education Study Position.”

Mary Jo Clark, Co-President



Privatization Consensus Meeting Report

The LWVUS Privatization Study of Government Services consensus meeting was held Thursday, March 22. The scope of the study was 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.

The results of the discussion were sent to national. They included our comments that the issue of privatizing government functions, services and assets should be the process not the amount of privatization. The process must be transparent and regulated no matter how much or how little privatization exists at all levels of government: local, state, national. The government must be involved as the regulatory agent in privatized services by representing the people rather than the for-profit business engaged in providing the service, and by insuring transparency in the for-profit transactions.

The Privatization Committee, Mary Jo Clark, Chair



LWVO Statehouse Day and Council

Steve and Prue Dana, and Jo McQueen represented the Oxford League at LWVO Statehouse Day and Council April 10 in Columbus. The agenda reflected the League’s focus on urgent issues facing Ohio, including election reform, redistricting, human trafficking, and fracking**. Starting off with a heartrending presentation by Theresa Flores on human trafficking, participants went to a more philosophical and detailed session on the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission. Those who did not attend the latter session were at a spirited presentation and discussion on voting in Ohio. There, provisional ballot and poll worker errors were discussed as well as the Dayton League’s project on voter service for the deaf. At lunch, Dr. Barbara Palmer showed how incumbency, redistricting, and demographics affect women candidates.

After lunch, the status of the redistricting reform efforts was detailed and petitions were available to attendees. Following that, a Council meeting was held in which the LWVO budget was presented, discussed and passed. The final session was on fracking and issues relating to the environment including legal issues and potential economic advantages that were shared by experts in those areas. Briefs on all of these issues were available as

well as what we have done in the advocacy area during the past year. We all left feeling more informed on a variety of topics!

** Fracking is a slang term for hydraulic fracturing. Fracking refers to the procedure of creating fractures in rocks and rock formations by injecting fluid into cracks to force them further open. The larger fissures allow more oil and gas to flow out of the formation and into the wellbore, from where it can be extracted.

Sharon Harmer
LWVO liaison

Mary Jo Clark
LWVOx Organization VP



The Progress of the Redistricting Petition *The League needs your help!*

The League of Women Voters of Ohio is one of the leading agencies in the effort to put on the 2012 ballot an amendment to the Ohio Constitution that would establish an Independent Citizens' Redistricting Commission.

Ohio is a closely divided state politically, yet because Republicans were in charge of drawing the districts in 2011, they control over 60% of the General Assembly and 70% of the Congressional seats. Democrats have created similarly lopsided margins when they have been in charge. To a significant degree the citizens of Ohio have very little voice and consequently very little choice. We are unable to hold our elected officials accountable.

The Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission will stop this self-serving practice. Politicians, lobbyists and political insiders will not be allowed to serve. They cannot appoint or remove commission members.

385,253 valid signatures are needed by July 3 to place this Commission on the ballot in 2012. In order to ensure that there will be enough valid signatures, 500,000 must be collected.

If this proposal is placed on the ballot and passes, the members of the Commission will be appointed, it will go to work and draw the maps, and these newly drawn maps will be the basis for the elections in 2014! We won't have to wait for the next census in 2020.

Please go to www.VotersFirstOhio.org for further information and for instructions on getting and circulating petitions. Here's an opportunity to make the values of the League a reality. It's an opportunity that unlikely to come around again soon.

Steve Dana Government



2012 Government Services Directory Update

The 2012 Government Services Directory has been updated and is posted on the League of Women Voters of Oxford Webpage. More of the information will change with the November 2012 election and so we will wait for the hard copy printing of the GSD until January 2013. Prue Dana will write a notice in the Oxford Press that informs citizens of the 2012 update available online.

Go to <http://oxford.oh.lwvnet.org/> and click on the 2012 Government Services Directory or go directly to <http://oxford.oh.lwvnet.org/GovernmentServicesDirectory.html>

Prue Dana, Voter Service V.P.



MU Master Circulation Plan

<http://www.pfd.muohio.edu/projects/2011CirculationMasterPlan.pdf>

Miami University has completed and shared with City Council and Planning Commission their Master Circulation Plan. The project team was hired by Miami University to develop a Circulation Master Plan to improve the transportation-related aspects of the physical campus's functionality while respecting its buildings and natural beauty. The Circulation Master Plan includes consideration of all forms of transportation, focusing mainly on non-passenger-vehicle traffic modes. Examination of campus transit and parking systems were added to the study in order to create an integrated Circulation Master Plan. This integrated approach provides:

- A holistic approach to campus mobility.
- Safer and more efficient bicycle and pedestrian travel.
- Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Potential reduced vehicle congestion.
- Better operational safety for all modes.
- Better coordination between modes of travel.
- An understanding of the ripple effect of change on different modes.
- The ability to optimize resources and prioritize funding.

Prue Dana, Voter Service



Welcome, Eva Rodríguez-González

Dear Oxford League of Women Voters,

My name is Eva Rodríguez-González. I am from a little village in northwestern Spain called *Monforte de Lemos* (Galicia). I have been employed by Miami University since 2006. Before moving to Ohio, I spent seven years in Kansas for my PhD studies in Linguistics.

Last year I became an American citizen and realized about all the multiple differences in the political system between the United States and Europe. Throughout these years in USA I was able to learn about and formulate some comparisons between the two political systems and their operations. However, it was not until last year since I felt the need to be better informed about the voting system. Now that I am eligible to vote, the importance about understanding how the system works and how decisions are made becomes crucial to me.

Thanks for a dear friend here in Oxford, Toni Saldivar, I was introduced to LWV from Oxford. I attended one of the Oxford meetings about redistricting Ohio and was fascinated by the organization, engagement of the participants and the detailed information that was provided at the meeting. After that meeting, I wanted to learn more and decided to join LWV of Ohio. I am particularly interested in projects related to education, especially those that address populations at risk and students with individual needs and talents such as bilinguals.

I look forward to attending future LWV meetings, learning more about LWV's political advocacy of the League and participating in discussions that are related to the League both at the local and national level.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of LWV!

Best,

Eva Rodríguez-González