

Toni Saldivar, "League Looks at... A History of LWV: Valentine's Day Marks Milestone for League." *The Oxford Press*. 15 February 2015

Valentine's Day has a special meaning for members of the League of Women Voters. On February 14, 1920, women from across the country gathered in Chicago to establish the non-partisan organization that remains dedicated to making democracy work for all citizens. This Valentine's Day, The League of Women Voters of Oxford joined nearly 800 local and state chapters to mark the anniversary of this milestone. Ninety-five years ago, the ratification of the US Constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote was still in process and resistance the 72 year struggle for that right was still strong in some areas.

According to Stephen Gordon, member of the League of Women Voters of Oxford and Administrator of the McGuffey Museum at Miami University, the US Congressman representing Oxford's southwestern corner of Ohio (the 8th district) had in 1919 voted against the 19th Amendment which, when ratified in August of 1920, finally gave the right to vote to women. Clearly, not all elected representatives wanted to see that happen. But it did. The League of Women Voters today is proud of the progress made over the last nine decades during which voting women have played significant roles in nationwide efforts, including the creation of the United Nations and, from the 1950s on, the protection of Americans' civil liberties. The League opened its membership to both women and men in 1973.

The League's historic commitment to register, educate and mobilize voters is stronger and more effective than ever. Its cutting-edge election information website, VOTE411.org, is being used by millions of voters each election cycle. Prue Dana, former City of Oxford mayor and current Co-Chair for Voter Service in the LWV of Oxford, finds that VOTE411.org can make the Voter Information Guide published by our League before every fall election even better and more comprehensive.

Like other chapters across the country, the League of Women Voters of Oxford is committed to ensuring that our elections--local, state and national--are fair, free, and accessible. This means continuing to work for more bi-partisan redistricting legislation in Ohio and to work against dark money funding elections. We continue to study the crucial issues of our time, including access to health care and promotion of a sustainable planet. Based on study and members' consensus, we establish positions on these issues and then we advocate politically for those positions. Our advocacy is not based on party politics but on knowledge, reason, compassion, and commitment to our democracy. We welcome new members.