



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

September, 2015

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Save the Dates

Monday, September 14, 6--7:30 p.m. Panel Discussion about Butler County's Elderly Services Program Levy

Tuesday, September 29, 2015, 7:30 p.m. Public Forum: "What Redistricting Means for Democracy"

Saturday, September 26, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Voter Registration at Kroger's

Wednesday, October 14, 7-9 p.m. Candidates' Forum

Tuesday, November 3, 7a.m. to 7 p.m. Election Day



From LWV Oxford Co-President, Steve Dana

With much pleasure I draw our attention to the outstanding work of four members of the Board of the League of Women Voters of Oxford. Toni Saldivar—Publicity, Sally Southard—Membership, Sandi Hazelton—Program and Prue Dana—Voter Service, have brought the activities of their respective domains to new heights.

Toni Saldivar has carefully researched a number of prominent issues, most recently, redistricting, and she has brought these issues to the public as well as to League members. She continues to highlight the work of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her connections with Miami University. Most notably, Toni has considerably expanded the reach of publicity by supporting and managing the work of **Jacque Rioja-Velarde**, who is posting notices on Facebook, and **Stacey Peterson**, who is building our League's website.

Sally Southard and the **Membership Committee** have exerted extraordinary means to reach current and past members and persuade them to remain on our League's roster. Sally and her colleagues are making the case as well as it ever has been made that the League does work that is essential to a vibrant democracy. Especially notable is Sally's support of and involvement in the program known as *Membership, Leadership and Development*, a national and state-wide program to strengthen local Leagues.

Owing to the work of **Sandi Hazelton**, the 2015-2016 year will be replete with programs on vital topics, including redistricting, immigration and alternative transportation. In order to reach the widest possible audience, two programs this year will be held at Noon at Patterson Place.

Prue Dana is working with a new system for producing the Voter Information Guide, called VOTE 411. It involves communication with LWVUS, which sponsors the program and provides tutoring for Prue so she can get this new system up and running. It enables candidates to input their information on a national website. Prue has been registering voters, and she is bringing together all the details that are necessary to mount the Candidates' Forum on October 14.

Among the Oxford League's dedicated Board members and Directors, these four render exemplary service.

Steve Dana, Co-President for Organization



Oxford Seniors

922 Tollgate Drive

Oxford, OH 45056

is hosting a

Panel Discussion about

Butler County's Elderly Services Program Levy

Monday, September 14, 2015

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Come learn about the services provided by this levy. Meet a recipient of the services and his family member. Hear from a provider of an ESP service. Learn what a care manager does. Gain a better understanding from a representative of the Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio about the distribution of levy dollars.

Come with open ears and questions

Refreshments will be served



League of Women Voters of Oxford urges renewal of the Senior Services Levy, Issue 13 this November.

This support is based on the 1972 and 1982 local positions on support for Senior Citizens and the Senior Center for the provision of services and activities to older citizens in the Oxford area finance by public and private funding. The 1979 position was amended in 2010 and 2013 to include local, consistent, transportation for the elderly and/or disabled in the Oxford Area also financed by public and private funding. The rationale is that citizens needing public transportation need it year round not just when school or the university is in session.

Butler County Elderly Services Program makes a big difference for thousands of families who are caring for older loved ones. It helps working families keep mom and dad at home. It helps long-married spouses care for each other and stay together. And for those seniors who have no family nearby, it makes a difference in quality of life. The services provided are Meals on Wheels, homemaking help, transportation; Assistance and care are only a phone call away.

The Levy is a flat renewal of the one and three tenths mills for each one dollar of valuation that was voted on in 2010. This (1.3) mills amounts to thirteen cents for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for a period of 5 years. This means that your taxes will not increase but will stay the same as they are now.

The tax levy provides 90% of the funding for the program. The program would not exist without support from the levy. According to its annual report, the Elderly Services Program served more than 3,800 Butler County Elderly Seniors in 2014.

Prue Dana, Voter Service



League of Women Voters of Oxford Public Forum: "What Redistricting Means for Democracy"

When: Tuesday, September 29, 2015, at 7:30 PM

Where: LCNB Community Room, Park Place, Oxford

Speaker: Ann E. Henkener, J.D., League of Women Voters of Ohio.

Ms. Henkener will lead a discussion on how drawing unfair boundaries for voting districts ("gerrymandering") undermines our democracy and how we as Ohio citizens can end this partisan manipulation of our votes, at least in state legislative districts, by voting for Ballot Issue No. 1 in the November 2015 election.

Ms. Henkener will explain Ballot Issue 1. If accepted by voters, the proposed law will establish a new bipartisan system of redistricting for state elections. Signed by the Governor, this ballot proposal was adopted by the Ohio House and Senate as HJR 12 in a bi-partisan vote last November.

Ballot Issue No. 1 has the support of many organizations, including the League of Women Voters of Ohio, The Ohio Republican Party, the Coalition of Democratic and Progressive Organizations of Central Ohio, the Ohio State Bar Association, and Common Cause.



Voter Registration: One more opportunity!

Voter Service is in full swing. Thanks to Rhonda Jackson, Miami University students and League members, more than 90 students were registered on Women's Equality Day in Anderson Center. Becky Quay set up the Voter Registration with the NAACP at the Pig Roast. More than 25 were registered. **There will still be another opportunity to volunteer September 26, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Kroger's. At this point Becky has only 1 volunteer for that critical day. Please call or email Becky if you can spare an hour or two. 523-5747.**

Prue Dana, Voter Service



Planning for the Candidate Forum is now underway. It is Wednesday, October 14, 7-9 p.m. at the Knolls of Oxford

The Candidates' Forum promises to be the most interesting. Following the LWV of Kent lead, we will host the candidates each at their own individual table. This will give the candidates more time to interact with those at their table. After a 10-minute period, the candidates will move to another table. We need a League Host at each table. We will be working with Miami University students and maybe high school students who want to participate at each table as well. There will be a procedure and questions for each host. Please call Prue Dana, 523-6579, if you can host a table.

Prue Dana, Voter Service



Voter Guide and Vote 411

As I write this article, I am not sure about how the Voter Guide and Vote 411 will come about. This is a new adventure for us. 17 candidates were contacted and so far 10 of them have used the 411 system to upload their information and answer our questions. This will be available on line at the end of September. At the end of this month we will be able to read their information on line as well as in a paper guide. The Candidates have been most understanding. I have used the consultant from the LWVUS in order to make this happen. This is a very local election with school board, city council, township trustees and township fiscal officers being the only ones running. It will give us a chance to see how the system works as we head toward 2016 Presidential election.

Prue Dana, Voter Service



From League of Women Voters of Ohio

League of Women Voters of Ohio recently released its study of Legislative Districts in Ohio: "They are rigged for Predictable Results."

On Women's Equality Day, August 26, 2015, the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) released "Predictable Results II", a follow-up to its earlier report that examines how Ohio's legislative districts were drawn to reach very specific results.

- Over two election cycles, in 2012 and 2014, the results have been, in a word, predictable.

- In the U.S. House, the results were 100% predicted by the maps. No districts were won by the political party not favored by the maps. Several races were won by large margins.
- There was also 100% accuracy in the Ohio Senate, with no districts won by the party not favored by the maps. It is noteworthy that, in addition to several districts being won by large margins, there were quite a few races where the disfavored party did not even field a candidate.
- Ohio House races overwhelmingly went to the party favored by the maps. In 2012, only 2 of 99 seats (2%) went to the opposing party not favored by the maps. The map's party index predicted 98% of the results.

In 2014, 5 seats changed parties. However, 2 of the 5 were the two 2012 seats flipping back to the party favored by the maps. Only 3 new seats went to the party not favored by the maps. This means the map's party index predicted 97% of the results.

“Our elections will continue to be entirely predictable until we change how maps are drawn,” said Ann Henkener, LWVO Redistricting Specialist. “The current winner-take-all district map drawing system has stymied Ohio voters for forty-plus years.”

Under Ohio's current redistricting system, whichever political party controls the map-drawing every ten years can almost guarantee how many seats each party will win, by packing party supporters and opponents into a set number of districts. This results in the majority party winning a larger proportion of seats relative to its strength in the electorate. For example, the party who drew Ohio's U.S. Congressional districts only received 57% of the total statewide votes in 2014 but won 75% of the districts.

“There is widespread agreement that Ohio's redistricting process needs to change,” added Henkener, “and it needs to happen now, without further delay.”

The League of Women Voters of Ohio endorses “Fair Districts for Ohio,” which will appear as Issue 1 on the November 2015 ballot. Issue 1 will change how Ohio draws state legislative districts. It will create a new bipartisan Ohio Redistricting Commission that will have to follow strict criteria designed to keep communities whole and better reflect voter preferences.

Passing Issue 1, however, is only half of the reform needed. LWV Ohio supports extending these same new rules to how Ohio's U.S. Congressional districts are drawn and urges the Ohio General Assembly to pass SJR 2, a proposal sponsored by Republican Senator Frank LaRose and Democratic Senator Tom Sawyer, to place an issue on the 2016 ballot asking voters to apply the “Fair Districts for Ohio” rules to Congressional redistricting.

Carrie Davis, LWV Ohio



From the Outgoing Executive Director of LWVUS



[As you may have heard, I am leaving this week after 15 years as the executive director of the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters Education Fund.](#) It has been an honor to serve with so many wonderful people to further the mission of our much respected organization.

I am incredibly proud of what we've accomplished together. When I accepted this role in 2000, it was just before the now infamous 2000 presidential election – the election that clarified just how important each single vote can be and shed light on some of the inadequacies of our election system. As I depart, I am confident that the League will continue to work to ensure that every eligible voter can and will participate in our democratic system, and that their voices are not minimized by burdensome laws, unfair redistricting or special interest money.

Over the last 15 years a lot has changed across the world and the country. We've seen tremendous expansion of the ways that people can interact with one another as well as with their government officials, particularly through the explosion of online communications channels. We've taken advantage of these digital communications platforms, expanding our reach, bringing in supporters and building a stronger League.

There are so many accomplishments that I am proud of, too many to list them all individually. VOTE411.org, the Public Advocacy for Voter Protection program, passage of federal reform legislation (Help America Vote Act, McCain-Feingold, the Affordable Care Act), and hard fought court victories at both the state and federal levels have made lasting contributions to the health of our democracy. Our work for a fair and independent judiciary, civil liberties, and open government is widely respected. And we can be proud that our international programs have directly benefited the citizens of many emerging democracies.

There were milestones and successes within the League as well, such as the launch of the Membership and Leadership Development program and hosting our first-ever Virtual Council meeting. And fortunately we have been able to manage our financial resources so that we survived the world financial meltdown in 2008-2009 and other challenges with minimal adjustments to LWVUS activities. None of this could have been accomplished without the LWVUS Boards and presidents I have worked for and the staff who have helped me in our national office.

During this last year, I have been thrilled to participate in our yearlong 95th anniversary celebration and to help plan the march towards our 100th anniversary in 2020. I hope to continue assisting with these plans. Throughout this important window of history, we are being mindful to recognize and celebrate our past successes while at the same time, planning for the future and making adaptations where necessary to ensure the League's continued success in Making Democracy Work®.

I am proud to have been part of this important chapter in League history, and I am confident that the League will continue its work to make American democracy as good as the ideals on which the country was founded.

I would like to thank each of you for your dedication and commitment to the work and mission of the League and for your support over the years. I am truly fortunate to have known and worked with so many wonderful people during my time as executive director. The League's credibility and strong network of supporters, like you, are positioning the League well for its 100th anniversary in 2020 – and beyond. And I'm looking forward to seeing where the League goes from here.

Sincerely,



Nancy E. Tate
Executive Director

P.S. [Wylecia Wiggs Harris will be joining the League as the incoming executive director in the coming weeks.](#)

