

The VOTER

Vol. 53, No. 4

The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Kent

August 2006

Ohio League Recognized as Among Top Two Leagues in Nation for Empowering Voters in Their State

Empowering voters. It has long been a hallmark of the Ohio League of Women Voters, and now its efforts have been recognized at a national level.

The Joyce Foundation of Chicago earlier this year identified the Ohio League as one of two organizations ranking highest among voters for offering solid information on most political questions. In response, the foundation awarded the Ohio League a \$250,000 two-year grant to help further citizens' understanding of government and to show how each person can have an effect in the political process.

To fulfill the grant's mandate, the Ohio League created *imPACT*, a comprehensive two-year program that includes "toolbox kits" containing a professional introduction to political reform. So far, the kit has information on five topic areas: election administration, judicial independence, redistricting, campaign finance and accountability. It also contains templates for news releases, invitations for other organizations to participate, an event poster and ways to involve the community.

Local Leagues are encouraged to host town hall meetings

as a way to honor long-time citizen activists who have made an impact through their civic involvement. The Kent League's board is discussing whether the League wants to honor someone—making sure the selections are made in a nonpartisan way.

Because "all politics is local," the local Leagues will play a vital role in this major effort to engage citizens who can, in the end, make a difference in political reform. A prepared presentation will kick off the local program

See imPACT, p. 3.

Hudson League to Host Public Forum on Privacy, Security Issues

Wonder who's watching you now? The Patriot Act allows government agencies to track many aspects of people's lives—in ways one wouldn't expect. Terrorism aside, what is happening to your private information?

Area Leagues have joined with the League of Women Voters of Hudson for an interactive public forum titled "Privacy, Security and Community Concerns," on Tuesday, September 19, from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at the Hudson Library and Historical Society, located at 96 Library Street in Hudson.

Panelists and community members will have an opportunity to view portions of a video produced by the Preview Forum about the

See PATRIOT, p. 6.



LWVK

Events

Alert . . .

Tuesday, September 19, 6:30 p.m.

Topic: Privacy, Security and Community Concerns; sponsored by Hudson League; Hudson Library and Historical Society, 96 Library Street, Hudson

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From the President's Desk:

'Smart Enough?' ... Thank-Yous ... New LWVK Slogan

A long-time friend met me for dinner recently, and she was happy to hear I would be co-president of the League of Women Voters in Kent for the next year with Vicki Kline. She seemed to hold back a little, and so I asked, "Why did you quit way back when?" She sighed, pursed her lips, and said, "I never felt I was smart enough to really join in"

Smart enough? What the heck! If the League is about getting **all** voters educated and excited about working the system, then we need this kind of former member. And we need to make sure we are helping them find a role in the organization.

Will **you** join us in that push? We're all "smart enough" to care about how our government is operating. We're all "smart enough" to see that it isn't transparent enough to make all Americans proud of government. We're all "smart enough" to know that it isn't this party or that party who is making it that way. Are we "smart enough" to know we can't do it individually?

Perhaps it's all of us not pushing ourselves and others to demand better. The League hopes this year to do just that: push each of us and all interested citizens to demand a better response from government.

The board met recently and we are excited about the Ohio League's key project this year: imPACT. (Political Accountability for Citizens

Today). Town hall meetings, a Web site for information and quality materials all add up to an informed electorate. You can read more about it elsewhere in this *VOTER*.

Thanks go out to Amie Cajka, our fearless president for the past few years, for getting a board lined up and ready to go. She's been the backbone of the League and promises to help with a study of immigration in the spring of next year—anytime **after** the fall Mental Health and Recovery Board levy! Thanks, too, to our *VOTER* editor, Audrey Kessler, for taking it on for another year with no increase in pay (she's volunteering.) And to the rest of the board, we will be asking for your help and looking for you to step forward when you can.

Key to our League this year is the new slogan, "Choose League, Not Sides." We feel it is especially important in what might be a contentious election year to continue to offer nonpartisan information to citizens. Can we do it? Sure! We've scheduled the usual candidates' nights and a Saturday morning event with the hopes of drawing a variety of voters. And, just after the election, we will host a town hall meeting on accountability and election administration.

Join us. And get others to do so as well. "Smart enough?" Let's not let that be the reason someone doesn't join—or vote!

- Barb

LWVK to Host 15th Annual Night at Northfield Park

September 9 at 7 p.m.

Reservations Deadline: September 4

Help the League raise money and have fun at the same time watching the races at Northfield Park. Cost is \$35 per person (for one admission and one set of 10 race tickets) or \$50 per couple (two admissions and one set of race tickets). The League's "private" patio area seats 100. It would be great to see it full. Make checks payable to LWV Kent, and mail to Pat Sattler, 718 Berkeley, Kent 44240. For questions or more information, call Jan Rusnack at 330/678-1261.

The *VOTER* is published eight to 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Kent. The newsletter is available both in print and online at the League's Web site: <http://www.kent.oh.lwvnet.org/>.

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Call the co-presidents to volunteer to help with program meetings or committees or to get information about the League's activities and policies.

Directors

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Finance

Kathy Hardy
Programs

Gayle Pytel
Programs

Stacy Yaniglos
Programs

Terrie Tarchinski Nielsen
Voter Service

Amie Cajka
Immediate Past President

Jan Rusnack
Past President/Adviser

Directors set policy and make financial decisions and are involved in programs, voter service and organizational activities of the League.

Off-Board Leaders

Nancy Adams
Land-Use Programs

Sylvia Armstrong, Barb Fox, Karen Fuller
Voter's Guide

Audrey Cielinski Kessler
Voter & Web Site

Jan Rusnack
Voter Registration

LEADER Institute Announces Fall, Winter Program Schedules

imPACT

Continued from p. 1

The Summit-Portage LEADER Institute has finalized program days and topics for its fall 2006 and winter 2007 programs, each session of which runs for six weeks. All sessions are held on Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The fall schedule begins on October 1 and concludes on November 5; the winter schedule begins on January 21 and ends on March 4. All program days are held at Tallmadge High School, 484 East Ave., Tallmadge.

Topics for both the fall and winter program days are styles and qualities of leadership, working with groups, planning projects, dealing with conflict, presenting yourself, and recognition.

The two-county leadership program was launched in Ohio in 1987 and came to Summit and Portage counties in the fall of 2000. The LEADER Institute provides an interactive workshop forum for high school women who are leaders or emerging leaders in school and community clubs and organizations.

The adults who work with the LEADER Institute are community volunteers and professionals with a range of career and volunteer experiences.

While the adult facilitators provide an introduction to concepts and serve as resources, most of the program time is spent in large- and small-group settings where participants discuss strategies and practice their leadership skills.

The LEADER Institute is sponsored by the League of Women Voters in Summit and Portage counties and by various community organizations and nonprofit and corporate foundations. For more information about the LEADER Institute, go to www.leaderspark.org.

night and will be followed by discussions at individual tables. Many resources on civic engagement will be provided to those who attend.

The imPACT project will continue with forums, debates, questionnaires, interactive e-mail programs and possibly blogs. The Joyce Foundation will cover the majority of the local Leagues' expenses for this exciting program.

The Kent League tentatively has set Thursday, November 16, as the date for its town hall meeting, capitalizing on the emotions of the election on November 7. More information will be provided as it becomes available. Call Barb Hipsman at 330/678-0681 if you have an urge to volunteer to host a table discussion and/or to take notes. Remember, the Kent League is built on little pieces of work.

Program Coordinator Position Available with LEADER Institute

The Summit-Portage LEADER Institute is seeking an individual to fill the position of program coordinator. Administrative duties include providing logistical support for the organization's leadership program (such as written communication with the various constituencies); maintaining a database of participants, volunteer and school liaisons; handling all program correspondence and communications (such as letters, news releases and grant reports); serving as program representative and spokesperson; preparing marketing materials; compiling program evaluation summaries; and attending all board meetings and facilitator training sessions.

Program-management duties include organizing and coordinating the logistics of the institute's program sessions; scheduling volunteer facilitators; assisting with ongoing training and recruitment; organizing annual in-service training with the institute's national director; and acting as a facilitator as needed.

Qualifications include problem-solving skills; proficiency in Microsoft Office; ability to work evenings and weekends as needed; access to reliable transportation; three to five years' experience in both program management and the management of people and groups; and excellent verbal and written communication skills.

To apply, send resume and references to Ms. Gerry Hall, Summit-Portage LEADER Institute, 4190 Alicia Trail, Stow, OH 44224. No phone calls, please. Application deadline is mid September.

Voter Registration Rules Changed

Rules for registering voters have changed. Here's how the changes affect the League:

Because the League is **not** a paid registration group, you do not have to sign the form of each person you register. Be sure to get potential voters to provide their Ohio driver's license number **or** the last four digits of their Social Security number.

If you have an event that you would like to have the League register voters, call Terrie Nielsen at 330/274-0864 or Jan Rusnack at 330/678-1261. They'll help find the right people for the job.



News from LWVUS

League to Partner with Overseas Voter Federation, Hispanic Voters Project for Voter Registration Efforts

The national League has partnered with the Overseas Voter Federation and the Hispanic Voters Project for voter-registration activities.

"The League will work with OVF [Overseas Voter Federation] to reach overseas and military voters with a voter-service message they can truly use," said LWVUS President Mary G. Wilson. "We are delighted to be able to run the VOTERTOOLS platform on our Web site for the 2006 election. This marks the first time the League will have an effective way to reach overseas voters who may need our voter services."

Through community events and a variety of nonpartisan public service announcements that will air on a number of Hispanic television stations, the League and its partners will underscore the importance of citizenship, provide information on registering to vote and encourage the public to vote on Election Days. The PSAs will feature community leaders, League representatives, Telemundo talent and celebrity spokespersons." The Hispanic population in the United States now exceeds 40 million, said Wilson, adding that U.S. Hispanics play "an important role" in the nation's political process.

"Voting is a key to being heard in the democratic process," said Wilson. "As part of this initiative, our Leagues nationwide will be giving voters a simple message: Get registered, get informed, and then get out and vote."

Board Announces Initiatives

The board of the national League has . . .

- Decided to post the minutes of all board meetings, after they have been approved, on the Web at www.lwv.org.
- Established a Net Neutrality Task Force to make recommendations to the board on the implementation of the Net Neutrality resolution adopted at Convention in early June.
- Begun forming an Immigration Study Committee. The committee will submit a project scope for the board's approval at the October board meeting. Initial resource materials are to be completed and submitted to the board at the January board meeting. Resource materials will be posted as soon as possible after that date for all Leagues to use.
- Made plans to establish a natural resources list.

In Memoriam: Elizabeth Johnson 'Betty' Marshall

The League of Women Voters of Kent is saddened to learn of the passing of Elizabeth Johnson "Betty" Marshall, 93, of Uperco, Maryland, formerly of Kent. Betty passed away in December 2005, but the League did not hear about the sad news until recently.

A landscape architect, Betty was the wife of the late Thomas E. Marshall, a longtime member of the English Department at Kent State University.



Betty was one of the early members of the Kent League, serving as its third president from 1959 to 1962. The League's *Directory of Public Officials* started under her watch. In addition, the Kent League hosted two town meetings in 1959. One was a debate between Mayor Redmond Greer and Robert Byrne; the second one focused on local levies. At the time, the Kent League was giving its support to a comprehensive master plan for the Kent area.

In retirement, Betty worked on Skyfield, her Uperco, Maryland, home where her perennial flower beds were well-known around town for their beauty, according to an obituary in the *Record-Courier*. Betty will be greatly missed. Surviving is a nephew, Raoul Tschebull, of Darien, Connecticut.

Dinner, Anyone?

Join fellow Kent League members for dinner before the Hudson League's program "Privacy, Security and Community," which starts at 6:30 p.m. on September 19.

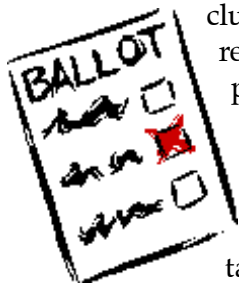
If you would like to come, the group will be gathering at 5 p.m. at San Francisco Oven, 60 Village Way (across the street from the Hudson library in the new Hudson Square). You can call the restaurant at 330/528-0621 for directions. Call Kent League member Jan Rusnack at 330/678-1261 to arrange for carpooling. Guests are welcome. For more information on the program, see the article on page 1.

Election Day Reminder

All voters are now required to provide proof of identity before casting a ballot.

The form of identification acceptable for voting purposes include your current and valid photo identification card (such as a driver's license), military identification, or a copy of a utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or government document showing your name and current address.

You cannot use as proof of identification a notice that the county board of elections mailed to you. If you do not have the proper identification or refuse to provide it, you may cast a provisional ballot.



National League Has Long History of Impact and Achievement

Since its founding, the national League of Women Voters—which evolved from the women's suffrage movement that secured women's right to vote through the 19th Amendment—has had at least one significant accomplishment in each decade, starting in the 1920s. Here's a sampling:

- **1920s** - Secured passage of the first federal maternal and infant health care program
- **1930s** - Helped shape the Social Security Act and fought for child labor laws
- **1940s** - Built public support for creation of the United Nations
- **1950s** - Sponsored the "Freedom Agenda," a nationwide program of community education and discussion on civil liberties
- **1960s** - Fought against discrimination in education, employment and housing
- **1970s** - Sponsored televised presidential debates; campaigned for the Equal Rights Amendment; built grass-roots support for the Clean Water Act
- **1980s** - Played a leading role in the push for fairer tax policies; worked to increase the availability of quality child care
- **1990s** - Led the successful campaign for passage and implementation of the Motor Voter law; advocated for campaign finance and health care reforms
- **2000s** - Offered the first "candidate debates" online through a nationwide, Internet-based voter education program; launched a vigorous campaign for election administration reform

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KENT

**Yes! I want to join the
League of Women Voters of Kent!**

\$50 Individual \$75 Household \$25 Student

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Areas of Interest _____

Return this form and your check payable to:
LWVK, 1440 Loop Road, Kent, OH 44240

PATRIOT

Continued from p. 1

USA PATRIOT Act and other privacy issues. The topic will then be discussed in small groups followed by panelists engaging in dialog with the entire audience.

Before the forum begins, Hudson Library and Historical Society patrons will be able to check out the DVD "What We Know About You" from the library's Audio Visual Department. The program also may be viewed on Hudson Cable TV.

Panelists include Doug Oplinger, an editor for the *Akron Beacon Journal*, Jeff French, director of the Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library, and Kent State University Journalism Professor Tim Smith.

Please plan on attending and participating actively in the forum. This is a Roundtable Project with national involvement from the League of Women Voters of the United States, the American Library Association, the National Civic League and the Society of Professional Journalists, among others. For more information, go to www.previewforum.com.



LWVK Calendar . . .

September

- 9** **15th Annual Night at Northfield Park**
Watch the races at this League fund-raiser; Northfield Park; 7 p.m.; for more information, see box on page 2.
- 13** **Kent League Board Meeting**
Pufferbelly restaurant, Franklin Avenue and West Main Street, Kent; 6:30 p.m.; members welcome.
- 19** **Hudson League Program**
Topic: Privacy, Security and Community Concerns; Hudson Library and Historical Society, 96 Library Street, Hudson; 6:30 p.m.

October

- 11** **Kent League Board Meeting**
Pufferbelly restaurant, Franklin Avenue and West Main Street, Kent; 6:30 p.m.; members welcome.
- 19** **Candidates Night**
Candidate presentations followed by audience questions; date is tentative; more information to come.

The VOTER

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