

The VOTER

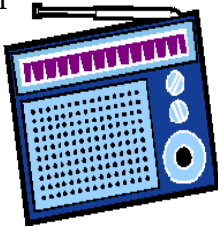
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The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Kent

February 2006

League to Host Drive-Through Potluck, Tour of WKSU

You hear them every day if you listen to public radio. But from where do those dulcet tones originate? To find out, join the Kent League of Women Voters for a no-work drive-through potluck tour of local public radio station WKSU (89.7 FM) on Wednesday, February 22, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.



WKSU Public Relations Director Bob Burford and Vincent Duffy, director of programming and operations for the station, promise a behind-the-scenes tour that may include a few words from one of their news persons.

And the station has some new ones, after recently snatch-

ing at least two anchors from WCPN to launch an early evening program that emphasizes northeast Ohio news.

So what's a no-work drive-through potluck? It's a new twist on an old idea. The League will provide a nice tablecloth, table settings and drinks. Tour participants are encouraged to go to their favorite drive-through and pick something up for just a few dollars that can serve two people. For example, a salad . . . a few baked potatoes . . . a few burgers . . . some sub sandwiches. Try to have the potluck dishes at the radio station by roughly 6:30 p.m. so that everything that should be hot will still be that way when it's time to eat.

Of course, if someone has the day off or is one of the League's

"retired" members, homemade food is always appreciated. But don't let the thought of whipping up something at home deter you from coming to have some fun.



Doors will be open at 6 p.m. The tour takes only a few minutes, so just like the program-planning get together in January, we will have plenty of time to meet new members and talk League politics.

If you would like to invite a guest, call 330/678-0681. Anyone who might be interested in WKSU or, better yet, the League, is more than welcome.

LVWO Launches Redesigned Web Site

The League of Women Voters of Ohio's redesigned Web site is up and ready for viewing at www.lwvohio.org.

Changes include a new look and improved search functions. A link to the "Latest News" has been added on the right side of the home page. A list of available topics scrolls continuously, and a selection can be made any time. Simply click on the item you want to read. Visitors now have an easy way to find up-to-date information on League activities and events. Archiving of past information continues.

If you are unable to find information that was previously available at the site or would like to share your comments about the site, contact Jerolyn Barbee at jbarbee@lwvohio.org.



LWVK Events Alert . . .

Wednesday, February 22, 6:30 p.m.
Drive-Through Potluck & Tour of WKSU;
1613 E. Summit Street, Kent (see article
this page for more details).

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From the President's Desk:

WKSU Tour... Thank You... Consensus Process... Convention

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at our February 22 membership event at WKSU. Thanks to Barb Hipsman for coordinating the details. This issue of *The VOTER* also contains an update on our finance drive, headed by Jackie Waltz. We want to thank her and our community advisory board (their names are listed on page 3) for their leadership.

Since the last newsletter, we've had several meetings with good attendance. Thanks to Kathy Hardy for organizing the annual December brunch at Twin Lakes Country Club. She had help from Nena Hankins and Audrey Kessler.

We had a great turnout of members and newly elected and reelected public officials, including Trustee Mark Beckwith, Clerk Sue Lucas and Trustee Keith Benjamin, from Franklin Township; Kent City Councilman Richard Hawksley; Kent School Board of Education members Ryan Ferrara and John Flynn; and Portage County Municipal Court Judge John Plough, who attended with his wife Lola.

Many of us had our first chance to hear Kent City Manager Dave Ruller talk about his vision for the city. It's ambitious and optimistic while valuing Kent's diversity.

We also gathered at the home of

Christine Bhargava for our Second Annual Fondue Festival and program planning meeting in January. Thanks to Christine and daughter, Tina, for hosting. Our guest speaker was Chris Ross, a lawyer with the Summit County Prosecutor's Office and husband of board member Tracy Deep-Ross. He helped us understand why the controversial aspects of eminent domain have pushed the topic into the running for a new national study. Thank you, Chris.

Speaking of studies, the national league has made it very clear that initiating updates of national positions, undertaking concurrences or launching new studies will cost us at the local level. New studies are \$3 per member for a two-year period; less per member for other initiatives. For new members, the program-planning process this year will impact the national league's agenda for 2007-2009.

The group decided post fondue that we wanted an update of the "Election Process of the Representative Government" position to include electronic voting and elections systems. We will lend our voice at convention to approving a concurrence based on the Illinois League's position for the abolition of the death penalty. As you may recall, we in Ohio

See *PRESIDENT*, p. 4.

LWVUS Outlines Six Benchmarks for Lobbying Reform at National Level

In the coming months, the U.S. House and Senate will consider reforms that address concerns about the lobbying scandals that have befallen the nation's capital.

According to a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll (January 10), for example, "corruption ranked among the concerns most often cited by those polled, with 43 percent saying it would be an 'extremely important' issue in 2006."

The League of Women Voters of the United States recognizes the need for changes and offers

the following six benchmarks for lobbying reform:

Break the nexus between lobbyists, money and lawmakers.

Cap contributions from lobbyists and lobbying firm PACs to federal candidates at \$200 per election and to national parties and leadership PACs at \$500 per election cycle. Prohibit lobbyists and lobbying firms from soliciting, arranging or delivering contributions and from serving as officials on candidate campaign commit-

See *REFORM*, p. 3.

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/>.

Board Members

Barb Hipsman-Springer
Co-President
330/678-0681

Amie Cajka
Co-President
330/688-9545

Dian Weir-McElroy
Secretary

Nena Hankins
Treasurer

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

Directors

Tracy A. Deep-Ross

Paulla Gates

Kathy Hardy

Terrie Tarchinski-Nielsen

Jackie Waltz

Stacy Yaniglos

Directors set policy and make financial decisions. They are involved in program, voter services and the 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

LWVK Member Finance Drive Starts

REFORM

Continued from p. 2

The Kent League of Women Voters' 2006 Finance Drive, a campaign to raise funds that help the organization maintain its programming, has so far (as of January 2006) received a total of \$1,255 from the community.

Credit for this accomplishment goes to Finance Committee Chair Jackie Waltz and the League's Community Advisory Committee. Serving on the committee this year are Dr. Janet Dix of Western Reserve Psychological Associates; Frank Hairston, director of marketing and EEO for PARTA; Kevin Lewis, president of Portage Community Bank; and Shannan Ritchie, vice president of business development for Robinson Memorial Hospital. The League extends a sincere thank-you to all of them for their input and hard work.

The following contributors have given their permission to list their names in League publications:

- Anthony Filomena
- Williams, Welser & Kratcoski, LLC

- Kent Lincoln Mercury - Mazda of Kent
- Doris M. Birkner
- Paul J. & Gwyndolyn M. Wallace
- Home Savings Bank
- Daniel & Joyce McCombs
- Jance Lentz-Hatch
- Germaine Williams

Fund-raising is critical to the League's ability to provide information and programming for members and the public. Annual membership dues support the state and national organizations and pay for the publications the local League receives from both.

Member contributions to the finance drive are critical to the League's work as a community organization. Please consider making a donation—in any amount! Complete the form below, and mail your contribution today to the address on the form. Be sure to check the line if you want your name listed in *The VOTER* as a contributor (always without the amount given).

tees and leadership PACs. Prohibit lobbyists, lobbying firms and lobbying organizations from paying or arranging payments for events "honoring" members of Congress and political parties and from contributing or arranging contributions to entities established or controlled by members of Congress, such as foundations.

Prevent private interests from financing trips and subsidizing travel for members of Congress and staff, executive branch officials, and federal judges. Corporations and others should be prohibited from making privately owned planes available for members to travel at the cost of a first-class plane ticket rather than the cost of a chartered plane.

Ban gifts to members of Congress and staff. The gift ban should close the existing loophole in the gift rules that allows lobbyists and others to pay for parties honoring or recognizing specific members, such as the parties held at national party conventions.

Oversee and enforce ethics rules and lobbying laws through an independent congressional Office of Public Integrity and increase penalties for violations. Establish such office and provide sufficient resources for effectively carrying out its responsibilities. The office should, for example, monitor financial disclosure and lobbying reports; advise members, staff and lobbyists on compliance with the rules; present cases of potential ethics violations to the congressional ethics committees; and refer potential lobbying law violations to the Justice Department for civil enforcement.

See REFORM, p. 4.

LWVK 2006 Member Finance Drive Contribution Form

Contribution Amount: \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$75 ___ \$100 ___ Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

— Yes. List my name as a contributor in the local VOTER (contribution amount will not be published). **For contributions to be tax deductible, the check must be made out to LWV Ohio Education Fund.** Donations go into a state account for use by the Kent League.

Please make your check, money order or cashier's check payable to League of Women Voters of Kent (unless made out to LWVO Education Fund for tax deduction), and mail to Jackie Waltz, 4564 Hattrick Road, Rootstown, OH 44272.

REFORM

Continued from p. 3

Slow the revolving door. Prohibit members of Congress and senior executive branch officials from making lobbying contacts or conducting lobbying activities for compensation in either branch for two years after leaving their positions. Prohibit senior congressional staff from making lobbying contacts for compensation with their former offices or committees for two years after leaving their positions.

Place sunshine restrictions on lobbying activities and financial disclosure reports. Require, for example, that lobbying reports and members' financial disclosure reports be filed electronically and be searchable on the Internet; lobbying reports be filed quarterly; lobbyists and lobbying firms disclose grass-roots lobbying activities; and reports be filed disclosing the financial backers of so-called stealth lobbying coalitions.

Other organizations supporting these reforms include the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, Public Campaign, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG (Public Interest Research Group). All have agreed to work to enact these important reforms.

The VOTER

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Kent, OH 44240-4449



LWVK Calendar . . .

February

22 Drive-Through Potluck & Tour of WKSU

LWVK membership meeting; WKSU, 1613 E. Summit Street, Kent; 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. (see also page 1).

March

15 Supper Meeting on Kent City Schools

Home of Nena Hankins, 1950 Kimberly Drive, Kent; 6:30 p.m.

30 Forum on Children's Issues

Cosponsored by the League of Women Voters of Ohio, the Children's Hunger Alliance and the Children's Defense Fund; gubernatorial candidate forum on children's issues; Moritz College of Law, Ohio State University campus; 3 p.m.-5 p.m.

PRESIDENT

Continued from p. 2

recently approved a similar state position. All told, it could cost the Kent League \$265 over the next two years. The members present thought the funds should come from our treasury rather than from a dues increase. Our planning efforts will be sent to the national office and will help set the agenda for National Convention in June in Minneapolis.

- *Annie*