

The VOTER

Vol. 51, No. 6

The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Kent

November 2004

Annual Holiday Brunch to Feature Newly Elected Public Officials, Bliss Institute Fellow Rick Farmer

Come join the League as it honors this year's newly elected public officials at a holiday brunch on Saturday, December 11, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.



The festivities will take place at The Bistro on Main, 1313 W. Main Street, in Kent.

Featured speaker is Rick Farmer, an associate professor of political science and a fellow of the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron. The Bliss Institute was founded in 1986 as a means of promoting the public's knowledge and participation in the political process. Farmer, whose specialty area is campaign management and political parties, will give a presentation titled "From Swifties to Fahrenheit 9/11: How the Temperature Was Raised for the 2004 Presidential Campaign."

Farmer received his doctorate from the University of Oklahoma in the fall of 1998. Subject areas of his extensive publications include state legislatures and term limits and campaigns

and parties. He is a member of the American Political Science Association and the Association of Economic and Political Science, and other professional organizations. Farmer also has made media appearances on networks such as NBC and CNN.

The brunch menu includes two types of crepes and a frittata, all of which are served with fresh fruit and beverages. For a description of menu selections, see the invitation inserted in this issue of *The Voter*. At the bottom of the invitation is a registration form. Reservations are required and are due by December 6. The cost is \$15 per person. Guests are welcome.

Local Consensus Meeting on LWVO Death Penalty Study Set for Nov. 9

League members are invited and encouraged to attend a consensus meeting on the state League's Death Penalty Study set for Tuesday, November 9, at 7:30 p.m. at Coleman Professional Services, 5982 Rhodes Road in Kent. Summary information about the study's findings was printed in the October *Voter*. Additional information can be found in the Summer 2004 issue of the *Ohio VOTER* and on the

Ohio League's Web site, www.lwvohio.org.

Participants will first answer this question: "Should Ohio retain the death penalty for defendants who have been convicted of capital murder?" The response to this question, determines the next question.

If the response to the first question is *no*, then the second

See *CONSENSUS*, p. 2.



LWVK Events Alert . . .

Tuesday, November 9, 7:30 p.m.
Death Penalty Consensus Meeting, Coleman Professional Services, 5982 Rhodes Road, Kent.

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From the VP's Desk:

Voter Service . . . Emergency Management . . . Advisory Board

Voting issues are certainly kicking into high gear now. The provisional ballot has been redeemed by the courts and hopefully with conscientious poll workers and observers, everyone will have a chance to cast their ballot. I will be volunteering at the Board of Elections on Monday and Tuesday of election week, working with absentee votes. I know that many of you will be volunteering in various capacities on Election Day to make voting easier and smoother for many voters in our community. If you haven't volunteered yet, it's not too late.

Thanks to Barb Hipsman-Springer for moderating Candidates Night activities-and to Paulla Gates, Vicki Kline, Nena Hankins, Tracy Deep-Ross and all who helped make it a big success.

Our kick-off event for the year was very interesting, but I was disappointed that more members did not take advantage of the opportunity to hear local experts discuss the safety of our community in times of emergency. Our special thanks goes to Coleman Professional Services for providing such a beautiful facility for our use.

CONSENSUS

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question is, "Would you support a moratorium on executions in Ohio until the state abolishes the death penalty?"

If the response to the first question is *yes*, then the second question is, "Would you support a moratorium on executions in

The *Voter's Guide* was included in the October 27 issue of the *Record-Courier*. Karen Fuller, Sylvia Armstrong and Barb Fox worked long and diligently on this major project and deserve our hardest praise and thanks. The *Voter's Guide* is a trademark of the League and is so important to our most basic mission of informing voters. Also thanks to all who helped proofread and edit. It's a huge job, and we all appreciate the combined efforts of everyone who worked on it this year.

We are very fortunate to have a great community advisory board for the League's annual fund drive. Board members are Rick Coe, Marlene Dorsey, Mark Frisone, Karen Hilgert, Pam Mackintosh and Robin Patton who have lent their time and advice to us for our finance drive. Thanks also to Kerry Macomber and Jackie Waltz for their leadership of the Finance Drive Committee. According to tradition, it is up to us as members to lead the way with our own contributions. I hope you will put this at the top of your to-do list.

See you at the polls!

— *Christine*

Ohio while a comprehensive study of the death penalty is conducted by the government?" In both instances, participants will be asked to explain the consensus answer.

A big turnout is hoped for, and there should be some lively discussion about a topic that can draw strong opinions both pro and con.

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

Christine Bhargava, Co-Vice Pres.
330/678-3135

Amie Cajka, Co-Vice Pres.
330/688-9545

Jeanne Schmidlin, Secretary

Nena Hankins, Treasurer

Call the vice 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

Vicki Kline

Kerry Macomber

Linda Martell

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

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Voter's Guide

Amie Cajka

Public Relations

Audrey Cielinski Kessler
Voter & Web Site

Gail Pytel

Death Penalty Study

Jan Rusnack

Voter Registration

League Hosts Leader Institute Meeting

The Kent League is once again involved in the planning—along with other local League sponsors—of the fall and spring Leader Institute course, which provides high school girls with leadership-skills training.

One girl from each Summit and Portage county high school is chosen for participation. The program includes six Sunday afternoon sessions from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Tallmadge High School.

Kent was the League in charge of providing the lunch and break snack for 26 to 32 girls and volunteers for the first fall session on October 3.

Thanks are extended to all who helped plan the session and to those who provided refreshments: Nena Hankins, Tracy Deep-Ross, Dian McElroy, Anne Andrews, Christine Bhargava, Kathy Hardy and Kathleen Downing Pownall.

League Member Reviews Meeting on Challenged Voter Registrations

As a League of Women Voters observer, I attended a 7 a.m. special hearing of the Portage County Board of Elections to consider the registration status of 73 prospective county electors whose registration forms were being challenged on the basis that acknowledgement of registration verification cards had been returned to the board as undeliverable.

One Kent State University student was present to verify to board members that his address of residence is the same as the one on the registration form. Sixteen other prospective electors had responded in writing, by fax or by telephone to a letter from the board notifying them that their registration forms had been challenged. The challengers, who also were present, officially withdrew their objections to these electors.

Board member Paul Jones asked Board of Elections Director Lois Enlow to describe the process the staff would propose be used with the remaining 56 challenged registrants. According to Enlow, their names would be included on the registration rolls for the November election but designated as needing verification of the voter's address of residence. If the verification showed that the voter came to the correct precinct, the person would be allowed to cast a regular ballot. Otherwise, the person could ask for a provisional ballot at the precinct where he or she lives or go to the provisional-ballot polling station at the Board of Elections office in Ravenna. No one would be removed from the registration rolls unless he or she failed to either vote or contact the board before the 2008 election. The board then voted unanimously to reject the 56 remaining challenges.

I feel privileged to have witnessed the democratic election process working to protect the registration rights of new voters, because every vote is so important. I was impressed with the careful and meticulous way in which the challenged registration forms were handled. Copies of all relevant documents were made available not only to board members but to all observers and challengers. The process was thoroughly explained to all present. It was clear that the board works to represent both political parties and that its competent, hard-working staff seeks to include all prospective voters who registered.

— Nancy Adams

thank you . . .

Voter's Guide Volunteers

The coordinators of the *Voter's Guide* Committee—Barb Fox, Karen Fuller and Sylvia Armstrong—extend a sincere thank you to all of the League members who helped with the publication this year, including those who called local officials to get clarifying information on upcoming issues. Accolades go to Nena Hankins, Edith Chase, Kathy Hardy, Ann Andrews, Jan Rusnack, Gayle Pytel, Ann Bolek and Pat Sattler from the Kent League and to Sally Hubeny from the Northern Portage County League.

Members who came out on a Monday night with red pens and clean eyeglasses did their part by proofreading the guide in its rough-draft stage before publication. Those participants were Nena Hankins, Edith Zais, Pat Sattler, Shirley Ohles, Anne Andrews and Sally Hubeny.

Special thanks goes to Marilyn Byrne, who diligently collected all of the candidate responses and made sure they complied with the response format. Pat Sattler willingly took on the role of *Voter's Guide* mentor. She lovingly taught and encouraged everyone working on the project so it would be completed accurately.

Candidates Night Volunteers

More than 100 interested citizens joined candidates from nearly every election race in the county at the annual Kent-Northern Portage County League of Women Voters Candidates Night on October 19.

Thanks to all who helped, including Nena Hankins, who coordinated the letters to the candidates and fielded phone calls from dozens of RSVPs; Pam McIntosh, Tracy Deep-Ross, Anne Bolek, Audrey Kessler, Paulla Gates, Amie Cajka, Stacy Yaniglos and countless others, including Northern Portage members who made many delicious cookies and provided one of the three question screeners and lots of good cheer. The candidates and the audience loved the "auditeria" at Stanton Middle School. Future forums may be held there as well. Thanks to the Kent City Schools, the maintenance crew and all of the "helper" spouses.

Let's Give Ourselves a Hand!

It's almost Election Day—and League members are tired! We have been busy with voter-service activities for many, many weeks.

So what do we have to show for it? Plenty! We registered more than 300 voters, answered numerous questions for people stopping by our voter-registration sites, including Kent State University, Ravenna's Balloon-A-Fair, several Kent Schools open houses, a day-care center and area grocery stores. Anywhere there were people wandering around, we were there! On top of all that, we had a well-attended and successful Candidates Night that gave the audience a chance to see and hear local candidates in person.

But we didn't stop there. We completed a *Voter's Guide* that was included in the *Record-Courier* as an insert, allowing readers to become informed voters. The final product looked great.

So let's give ourselves a hand for having an active role in the 2004 general election!

The VOTER
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LWVK Calendar . . .

November-December

- **Finance Drive**
Community and member campaigns.

November

- 9 **Death Penalty Study Consensus Meeting**
Coleman Professional Services, 5982 Rhodes Road, Kent;
7:30 p.m.

December

- 11 **Holiday Brunch for Newly Elected Public Officials**
The Bistro on Main, 1313 W. Main Street, Kent;
9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; speaker: Rick Farmer, associate professor of political science and fellow of the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron; reservations required by December 6; guests welcome; see insert for reservation form.

January

- **Program Planning**
Details to come.

February

- **Membership Drive**
Details to come.