

The VOTER

Vol. 54, No. 4

The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Kent

November 2007

LWVK Plans Consensus Meeting on Immigration Issue

Mark your calendar for a stimulating discussion—and possibly some controversy and most likely some disagreement—as the Kent League of Women Voters discusses the issue on December 4 in hopes of reaching a consensus on the issue. It could be better than a night of reality television!

The evening will start with a salad supper at 6:30 p.m. The location is the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County, 155 E. Main Street, Kent. Each member is asked to bring a salad to share. The committee will provide tableware, beverages and dessert.

Please RSVP to Amie Cajka at 330/688-9545 or send an e-mail to pcajka@neo.rr.com by November 29.

The Immigration Study Committee has been working on this project for the past two years. The most recent program was in October at the Kent Free Library. The committee hosted a showing of the national

League's panel presentation from 2007, which is now on line. The committee also shared copies of the consensus questions with members.

It is important that you make

yourself familiar with the questions before the meeting. To review these study questions, see page 4 of *The VOTER*. A review of the consensus process can be found on page 3. You also can go to the na-

tional League's Web site at www.lwv.org to download a copy or call Nena Hankins at 330/673-0128 for a paper copy.

Expect the meeting to last three hours. When you review your copy of the questions, you will see some have several sections. The committee is anticipating that there will be very interesting conversations taking place to get the participants to the point of consensus on the issue. The Kent League's consensus position will be forwarded to the national League, which will review the consensus opinions from each local League.

As many of you are aware, background papers are available

on the national League's Web site. They are a helpful foundation for the conversation.

There also will be several local presentations on November 13 at Kent State University and on November 15 at the Hudson Library, the latter event is co-sponsored by the Kent and Hudson Leagues of Women Voters. See the calendar on page 6 of *The VOTER* for details.

If you have any questions or need a ride to the consensus meeting or to any of the presentations, please call Cajka at 330/688-9545

Resources for LWVK Immigration Consensus Meeting December 4

- The VOTER, pages 3 and 4, or from Nena Hankins by calling 330/673-0128
- National League 2007 presentation, online at www.lwv.org
- Local presentation at Kent State University on November 13
- Local presentation at the Hudson Library on November 15
- Background papers on the National League's Web site at www.lwv.org



LWVK Events Alert . . .

Tuesday, December 4, 6:30 p.m.

Immigration consensus meeting ; Mental Health & Recovery Board, 155 E. Main Street, Kent.

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From the President's Desk:

*Program Planning... Elections ...
Consensus Meeting... Brunch*

Dear League members—We approach the end of the calendar year knowing that for most League members, it's the busiest time of the year! Do we ever get away from a "school calendar" in a college town? Don't we yearn for the summer break where driving across town takes a mere three or four minutes?

But springtime brings another cycle as well: program planning to direct the national staff on our preferences for some federal issues and of course, the perennial spring primary.

Come spring, it's another general election cycle, with the election of the president and many state and national officials. The League has always championed the right to information, presented in the simplest form. We encourage citizens to become involved, even if it's just attending a city council meeting every now and then. For it is in those local meetings that decisions about day-to-day life are made. Will there be a new stoplight? Can we afford more police officers? Will we inspect rental housing?

And at the national level, issues such as the war and the economy

drive our discussions. Again, Ohio will take an important spot in the national debate. We used to think our primary was "early," but with some states putting theirs in early January, the horse race could be reaching a crescendo come March.

For the time being, the Kent League will turn its attention to immigration, aiming for a consensus among our members before the holidays. Join us and the hard-working Immigration Study Committee on December 4 at the Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County at 6:30 p.m. It's a salad night for members, so bring your favorite salad to serve a few, and we'll share. Drinks and dessert will be provided. Only members will be able to vote, but friends of the League are always welcome.

Join us, too, for a wonderful brunch on December 8 at 9:30 a.m. at Twin Lakes Country Club. We'll hear Roger DiPaolo give a quick history of Portage County, and we will welcome a possible surprise guest. Reservations (\$15) are due by the December 4 meeting. RSVP to Nena Hankins at 673-0128. No-shows have to be billed!

- Barb & VICKI

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.

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330/678-1261

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
330/673-6548

Nena Hankins, Voter's Guide
330/673-0128

Jackie Waltz, Finance Drive
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330/677-8598

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330/678-1261

Voters' Guide Team Thanked

The League's *Voters' Guide* for the November 6 general election was certainly a team effort this time. Sue Griffey and other members of the Northern Portage League of Women Voters assisted the Kent League in mailing questionnaires to 170 candidates, getting information on the 32 issues and proofreading the copy before it was sent to Heather Rainone at the *Record-Courier*.

This was Griffey's first time working on the *Voters' Guide*, and she was extremely helpful. Thanks to Marilyn Byrne who again edited the questionnaires for length (not grammar or spelling) and to Vicki Kline, Terrie Nielsen, Leona Brown and Edith Chase who helped with the mailing, issues and/or proofreading. The guide was published by the *Record-Courier* on October 31.

LWVUS 2007 Immigration Study and Consensus-Process Overview

Be a Part of History

We have now reached the member agreement phase of the LWVUS Immigration Study, the time when Leagues prepare to take consensus. Grassroots agreement on positions is one of the League's greatest strengths. Preparing for and taking consensus is hard work, but worthwhile. The resulting position will allow the organization to affect national policy for years to come, just as we have been doing in other areas for 87 years—it's part of the organization's history.

LWVUS Immigration Study Committee

The LWVUS Immigration Study Committee was selected from many excellent applications. Biographies are available on the LWVUS Web site. Committee members are as follows:

- Chris Carson, LWV of Glendale-Burbank, CA
- Katherine Fennelly, LWV of Minneapolis, MN
- Patricia Hatch, LWV of Howard County, MD
- Dorrit Marks, LWV of Miami-Dade County, FL
- Deborah Macmillan, LWV of East Windsor-Hightstown, NJ
- Barbara Margerum, LWV of Santa Barbara, CA, adjutant member
- Chair, Carolie Mullan, LWV of Lubbock County, TX and LWVUS board member

Scope of the Immigration Study

The scope of the Immigration Study includes the following:

- Underlying values and principles regarding immigration
- Reasons for migration from other countries (including but not limited to the effects of global interdependence on migration, motivation of refugees and asylees, motivation of other immigrants)
- Current federal immigration policy (including but not limited to overview, effectiveness in uniting families, effectiveness in meeting the needs of businesses and effectiveness of enforcement)
- Impact of immigration (including but not limited to economic effects of authorized and unauthorized immigration, diversity and inclusion of immigrants in American society)

Consensus Time Line

The consensus process has the following time line:

- September 2007- January 2008: Local leagues and ILO's take consensus
- February 1, 2008: Deadline for the LWVUS to receive consensus response forms
- February 1, 2008-March 20, 2008: Immigration Study Committee formulates position
- Late March/Early April 2008: LWVUS Board adopts position

Educating Members

Local Leagues should use LWVUS Immigration Study Committee materials to help members and their communities learn about immigration issues. Take advantage of this opportunity to recruit new members and invigorate longtime members. The materials listed below are all available to members and nonmembers on the LWVUS Web site, www.lwv.org. They should be copied and printed for distribution as needed.

- Background Papers: *Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration, Effects of Global Interdependence on Migration, Immigration and the Economy, Immigrants: Diversity and Inclusion, Overview: Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms, What*

Motivates Immigration to America?, U.S. Immigration Policy: Family Reunification, Federal Immigration Policy: Enforcement Issues

- Preview Consensus Questions
- Brief background information for consensus questions along with suggested questions to facilitate discussion during consensus meetings
- *How to Do the LWVUS Immigration Study at the Local Level*. Detailed guidelines for the study/consensus process; because the last national study was the Health Care Study, 15 years ago, many members have never participated in a national study
- *U.S. Immigration: A Historical Perspective*. An article written by a committee member that appeared in the February 2007 issue of *The National Voter*
- One-page Immigration Study Briefs based on longer background articles listed above which were written by committee members. These shorter summary articles can be distributed as handouts at public meetings as well as at consensus meetings; the first two appeared in the June 2007 issue of *The National Voter*; the last two are included in the October 2007 issue of *The National Voter*; all four articles are also available on the LWVUS Web site, www.lwv.org, and are titled *Global Interdependence and Migration, Immigration: Impact on U.S. Economy, Border Enforcement, and Family Reunification and Diversity Policies*

Discussion List

The Immigration Study Discussion List is open to all League members and allows participants to share information about resources, how to effectively educate League members on immigration and share ideas about preparing for and holding consensus meetings.

Tips for Taking Consensus

Consensus is the process the League uses to reach member agreement on study issues. It is neither a simple majority nor unanimity. It is an overall sense of the group. In other words, consensus results from answers to questions on which members can find common ground and agreement. Group discussion that allows an exchange of ideas and opinions is the preferred way to achieve consensus.

Consensus Meeting

Select a consensus meeting date, time and place that will encourage attendance, such as a member's home or a private room in a public facility. Make it fun. Nonmembers may attend, but only League members may participate in the consensus process.

Moderator

The moderator does not necessarily need expertise on immigration issues but should be as objective as possible about the subject. The moderator communicates discussion norms, keeps the discussion focused, gives everyone a chance to speak, and recognizes member agreement and moves on, maintaining the recommended schedule.

Member Experts

The League members who have become experts on background information for the consensus questions should be present to provide factual answers to questions as needed.

Recorder

Appoint a League member to record participants' responses to questions and take notes of comments. The recorder will submit the local League's responses electronically at www.lwv.org.

LWVUS 2007 Immigration Study Discussion Questions

Instructions: For Question 1A, label each statement with one of the following ratings: High Priority, Lower Priority, Disagree or No Consensus.

Question 1A: Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as the following (not listed in any particular order or hierarchy)

- a. Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- b. Economic, Business and Service Employment Needs
- c. Environmental Impact/Sustainability
- d. Family Reunification of Authorized Immigrants and Citizens with Spouses and Minor Children
- e. History of Criminal Activity
- f. Humanitarian Crises/ Political Persecution in Home Countries
- g. Immigrant Characteristics (health and age)
- h. Rights of All Workers to Safe Working Conditions and Liveable Wage
- i. Rights of Families to Remain Together
- j. Rights of all Individuals in U.S. to Fair Treatment Under the Law (Fair Hearing, Right to Counsel, Right of Appeal, and Humane Treatment)
- k. Education and Training

Instructions: For each statement in Question 1 that you labeled as High Priority, list the three most important criteria, in order, with 1 being the most important.

Question 1B: What are my three most important criteria for labeling a statement as High Priority?

Criterion 1:

Criterion 2:

Criterion 3:

Instructions: For Question 2, label each statement with one of the following ratings: High Priority, Lower Priority, Disagree or No Consensus.

Question 2: Unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. should be treated as follows (rate each one)

- a. Deport Unauthorized Immigrants
- b. Some Deported/Some Allowed To Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Length of Residence in U.S.
- c. Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Needs of US Employers
- d. All Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status by Doing Things Such as Paying Taxes, Learning English, Studying Civics, Etc.
- e. If Deported, Assess Fines Before Possible Re-Entry
- f. Assess Fines Before Allowed To Earn Legal Adjustment Of Status

Instructions: For Question 3, label each statement with one of the following ratings: High Priority, Lower Priority, Disagree or No Consensus.

Question 3: Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants who are (rate each one)

- a. Immediate Family Members Joining Family Member Already Admitted for Legal Permanent Residence in the U.S.

- b. Entering the U.S. to Meet Labor Needs
- c. Entering the U.S. as Students
- d. Entering the U.S. because of Persecution in Home Country

Instructions: For Question 4A, label the following statement with one of the following ratings: High Priority, Lower Priority, Disagree or No Consensus.

Question 4A: In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include:

Social Security Card or Other National Identification Card with Secure Identifiers for All Persons Residing in the U.S.

Instructions: For Question 4B, label each statement with one of the following ratings: High Priority, Lower Priority, Disagree or No Consensus.

Question 4B: Federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including (rate each one)

- a. Physical Barriers (such as Fences) and Surveillance at Borders
- b. Increased Personnel at Land, Air, and Sea Entry Points
- c. More Effective Tracking of Persons with Non-Immigrant Visas Until They Leave the Country
- d. Verification Documents, such as Green Cards and Work Permits with Secure Identifiers
- e. Improved Technology to Facilitate Employer Verification of Employee Visa Status
- f. Improved Technology for Sharing Information Among Federal Agencies
- g. A Program to Allow Immigrant Workers to Go in and Out of the U.S. to Meet Seasonal and Sporadic Labor Needs
- h. Significant Fines Proportionate to Revenue for Employers Who Fail to Take Adequate Steps to Verify Work Authorization of Employees

Instructions: For Question 5, label as either Consensus or No Consensus.

Question 5: Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term federal financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Instructions: For Question 6, label as either Consensus or No Consensus.

Question 6: Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to pro-actively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.

Instructions: For Question 7, list your comments about the immigration issues being studied.

Question 7: My comments

Comment 1:

Comment 2:

Comment 3:

Candidates' Event Draws Large Crowd

The candidates' event held October 27 and hosted by the Kent League of Women Voters for the November 6 general election drew a capacity crowd at the Kent Free Library meeting room.

The event highlighted the candidates for Kent City Council wards 1 and 2 and trustees for Franklin Township.

Candidates for Kent City Council Ward 2 spoke first. Incumbent Carrie Gavriloff and opponent Jack Amrhein addressed such issues at economic development, renters versus home owners and conflicts of interest. Franklin Township trustee candidate Gary Falstad spoke next. Clarence Cobb was invited and confirmed that he would be present, but he did not appear.

Falstad introduced himself and told the audience about the trustees' accomplishments and what he plans to do as a township trustee.

The last group of candidates were those for Kent City Council Ward 1, incumbent Garret Ferrara and opponent Lloyd Atkinson. Atkinson and Ferrara differed on some key issues, such as economic development and rental houses in the city of Kent.

Students from Kent State University's TV-2 and the *Daily Kent Stater* were present and interviewed a couple of voters to get their perspective on what the candidates discussed.

Thanks to all of the League members who helped make this important event a big success.

LWVK Financial Donors Sought

The Kent League of Women Voters Finance Committee needs your help by providing names of persons likely to support the League. The names can be those of elected officials, business people, close personal friends and others. To help, contact Jackie Waltz at 330/325-2207 or willjackwaltz@aol.com.

New Book Embraces 'Ethic of Connectedness'

Citizen responsibility doesn't end when we cast our vote. In his new book, *The New American Story*, Bill Bradley says that now, more than ever, we need to embrace an "ethic of connectedness," a combination of collective action and individual responsibility, to solve our nation's most pressing problems. We are, after all, what makes our country a democracy.

It is up to us to let our representatives know how they can represent us best! To let them know what you think, go to www.ohioimpact.org and click on the SPEAK UP! link to find the e-mail addresses of your representatives. You also can find contact information for the president, other members of Congress, governors, state legislators, local officials and more. You have two main search options: by ZIP code or by last name.

LWVK Gives Financial Support to League Lobbyists, LEADER Institute

The board of the Kent League of Women Voters approved a \$100 donation to the Ohio League to support the work done by the LWVO lobbyists. The \$100 will be used to help pay for the *Rotunda Collection* subscription fee.

The *Rotunda Collection* (also known as the *Hannah Report*) consists of legislative databases and publications that are used by the lobbyists to research bills. It also provides daily updates on the status of legislation, hearings and committee meetings. The Metro Columbus League agreed

to contribute up to \$1,500 of the \$4,000 annual subscription fee.

The board also approved a \$100 increase in the amount of support it provides to the LEADER Institute. The League contributed \$350 from the League's Education Fund this year to support the institute's program. The League also provides lunch and refreshments for two of the sessions. If you are interested in additional information about this program, contact Anne Andrews at 330/678-0858 or Kady Pownall at 330/923-2037.



REMEMBER . . . Immigration Consensus Meeting December 4, 6:30 p.m., Mental Health & Recovery Board, 155 E. Main Street, Kent; bring a salad to share; drinks and dessert provided

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

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization for citizens who want transparency in their democracy. Women and men of all ages are encouraged to join our ranks or help us financially so we can continue to provide needed information about democracy.



LWVK
Coming
Attractions . . .

November

- 13 National Issue Forum on Immigration**
“The New Challenge of American Immigration: What Should We Do?”; Kent State University Student Center, Room 306; the facilitated discussion will examine three approaches to resolving the issues related to immigration; 2 p.m.
- 15 Panel on Immigration**
Presentation cosponsored by the Kent and Hudson Leagues of Women Voters; Hudson Library, 96 Library Street, Hudson; 7 p.m.

December

- 4 Consensus Meeting on Immigration Position**
Mental Health & Recovery Board, 155 E. Main Street, Kent; 6:30 p.m.; bring your favorite salad to share; drinks and dessert provided.
- 8 Holiday Brunch**
Twin Lakes Country Club, 1519 Overlook Drive, Kent; 9:30 a.m.; Roger DiPaolo to give a quick history of Portage County; possible surprise guest; cost is \$15 per person; RSVP by December 4 to 330/673-0128.

The VOTER
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