

# The VOTER

Vol. 56, No. 1

The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Kent

September 2009

## LWVK Going Green to Kick Off 2009-2010 Program Year

The Kent League of Women Voters is going green—salad greens, that is, to usher in the 2009-2010 program year.

Members will gather for a salad supper and a preview of exciting programs planned for the next several months.



Drive-through, deli or down home, the bounty of summer will be on display for an informal salad supper

on Thursday, September 24, at 6 p.m. at the home of board member Christine Bhargava.

Members can reconnect after the summer break at Bhargava's home at 630 Rustic Knoll Drive in Kent. The event is the perfect time to bring prospective members so they can get a "flavor" of League hospitality and the informative programming that makes the organization vital and unique.

Board members will present information about the activities that are planned for the program year and updates on local, state and national studies that are in the news because of current political events, such as the debate about health care reform and immigration policy.

Members who are able should bring a salad or other light fare to share. In the spirit of "make it easy on yourself," members can choose to whip up a favorite recipe or grab a salad from a favorite eatery. Desserts also will be most welcome.

Call Vice Presidents Jane Rose (330-678-9127) or Debby Newberry (330-678-1816) to RSVP.

If you have a friend or co-worker who would find the League interesting, please bring her or him or them to the party. Call our Membership Committee members Stacy Yaniglos (330-678-5664) or Chris Schjeldahl (330-673-8358) with the names of your guests.

## A Long Journey: Celebrating Women's Right to Vote in U.S.

It was a long journey to August 26, 1920, the day that women were granted the right to vote. The first hint of such a momentous event came in 1776 when the Continental Congress was meeting in Philadelphia.

That small spark came when Abigail Adams wrote to her husband, John Adams, encouraging him to "remember the ladies" as they worked on the Declaration of Independence, which stated

See *RIGHT*, p. 4.



### LWVK Events Alert . . .

**Thursday, September 24, Kick-Off Meeting & Salad Supper**  
630 Rustic Knoll Drive, Kent; 6 p.m.

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#### Coming Soon to an E-Mail Box Near You . . .

Watch your e-mail in box for the LWVK E-Page updates. In addition to the three newsletters you will receive this program year, you also will receive seven e-mail news pages. If you don't want to receive the E-Page, contact one of the League officers shown on page 2. See inside for more information on the E-Page.



## From the President's Desk:

### *Thank You... Board Orientation... Goals... Estate Planning*

Welcome to another year in the League of Women Voters of Kent! We have many thought-provoking and fun events planned for 2009 and 2010.

Before we look forward, I would like to take a moment to thank all of the board members who helped to make 2008 and 2009 a success, especially Leona Brown and Paulla Gates who went off board. I also want to thank those in the general membership for their tireless support of the LWVK. We also are well represented at the state level with Gail Pytel, Nena Hankins and myself working

with the state League in various capacities.

At the board-orientation meeting, we set several goals for the upcoming program year. Among them are increasing membership, improving communication with members and increasing LWVK's monetary resources. One of the ways that we can increase our monetary resources is for people to remember the LWVK in their estate planning (see article on this topic, page 3). Get ready for an exciting year!

*- Terrie Nielsen*

The **VOTER** is published 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 president and vice presidents to help with program meetings or committees or to get information about the League's activities and policies.

#### **Directors**

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

#### **Off-Board Leaders**

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## LWVK Communications Changing to Better Serve Members' Needs

Three yearly *VOTERS* (your choice of hardcopy or electronic delivery), concise monthly E-Page updates and links to the League Web site are all coming to you soon.

We know that many members count on *The VOTER* to keep track of League activities and local issues. After more than 50 years of publication, *The VOTER* is not going away, but it will be undergoing some enhancements. You can blame or bless technology! The Kent League board also acknowledges that expenses associated with *The VOTER* and downturns in fund-raising have made it important to initiate change using new tools.

We will be publishing three issues of *The VOTER* this program year: September-October, December-February and March-May. Each issue will provide you with details about the calendar for those months. Members with e-mail addresses will continue to receive the newsletter electronically; those who receive a paper version will find it in their postal mailboxes. To let us know the format you prefer, please call Vice President Jane Rose at 330-678-9127.

To make sure we keep you up-to-date on local League happenings, we will be sending a leaner version of *The VOTER* in the alternate months. Those of you with e-mail will receive a news page (an E-Page) with links to more information on our Web site. A paper version of the same news page will be mailed to members who prefer not to read the information on a computer screen.

See *COMMUNICATION*, p. 4.

## League Not Just About Voting

Ohio Leagues of Women Voters are in the middle of guiding public policy and state-wide progress. If you have not joined in yet, we encourage you to do so.

One way is to attend the Ohio League's state convention. Three Kent League members—Terrie Nielsen, Nena Hankins and Gail Pytel—attended the 58th Convention in May in Dublin, Ohio. The three took part in various workshops and caucuses and the plenary sessions.

Dianne Wheatley-Gilotti from the U.S. League's board and Kelly McFarland Stratman of the U.S. League's office also attended. Wheatley-Gilotti led a workshop on dynamic League Leadership that focused on keeping Leagues visible year-round and developing relationships with key community partners. Stratman, a former executive director of the Ohio League, presented a workshop on the U.S. League's new membership recruitment initiative. Attendees left with tips and techniques on building League membership.

Nielson took part in the regionalism caucus. The Cuyahoga League spearheaded this discussion, which focused on criteria for a range of intermunicipal collaborations and criteria for supporting future Northeast Ohio tax-base revenue sharing.

A regionalism workshop was led by Lavea Brachman, codirector of Greater Ohio. This group is continuing to meet. If you are interested in joining in on the discussion, contact Nielson or log onto the LWVO Web site at <http://www.lwvohio.org/>.

Hankins served as Budget

Committee chair and was available to answer questions at two different question-and-answer sessions. Pytel also attended these sessions, where there was lively discussion about the proposed per-member payment (PMP) increase of 75 cents for the 2009-2010 program year and an additional 75-cent increase for the 2010-2011 program year. The convention delegates, representing 21 local Leagues, passed the PMP increase.

Delegates adopted an update of the Ohio League's position on education finance. The League of Greater Youngstown will be the core of this committee. Any member who wants to serve on the committee should contact the state League office. The taxation and finance update is ongoing and will continue during the 2009-2011 program year. This committee also welcomes interested members.

Dr. Joan McLean, a professor of politics and government at Ohio Wesleyan University was the keynote speaker on Saturday evening. She spoke on what influences political behavior. As part of her presentation, she noted that belief in an afterlife has a different influence on political behavior than non-belief.

How voters become informed about politics and elections was the topic for Dr. Paul Beck, a professor in both the Department of Political Science and the School of Communication at The Ohio State University. He focused on where different groups get their information and how they make their voting choices.

See *CONVENTION*, p. 4.

## Planned Giving Can Benefit LWVK

The U.S. League of Women Voters encourages members to consider planned giving when they make their estate plans. The major types of such plans include bequests specified in your will, gifts of life insurance or retirement plan, pooled income funds, gifts of stock, and charitable gift annuities.

The Kent League was a recipient of a bequest from the estate of Betty Mitchell in March 2004. Betty and her husband John had moved away from Kent and were residing in Centerville, Ohio, at the time of her death. The League was honored to be the recipient of the bequest.

The Mitchell bequest allowed the Kent League to sponsor Newspapers in Education in the fall of 2004 and support a project of the Portage County Literacy Coalition in 2005. The bequest also provided the seed money for the Gracia Hillman presentation on September 29, 2005. Hillman was the chair of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. In the fall of 2006, the Kent League was able to present an imPACT townhall meeting. Most of the Kent League's expenses for the townhall meeting were reimbursed by imPACT (League of Women Voters of Ohio Education Fund). The bequest has provided the cushion needed until dues, contributions, cosponsor fees and other income were received.

For more information about planned giving, go to the national League's Web site at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

## RIGHT

*Continued from p. 1*

that “all *men* [emphasis added] are created equal.” John apparently didn’t listen well.

It wasn’t until 1920 that the suffrage battle was won, granting women the right to vote. Some events leading to that victory are worth noting. Here is a timeline:

1833 - Oberlin College became the first coeducational college and awarded academic degrees to three women in 1841.

1837 - More colleges for women (e.g., Mt. Holyoke, Vassar, Wellesley) were established.



Women’s suffrage parade.

1848 - Votes for women were proposed seriously for the first time at a women’s rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. After that convention, women’s rights’ meetings were held on a regular basis.

1850 - Amelia Jenks Bloomer launched a change in women’s clothing. The bloomer costume that bears her name was later abandoned by the suffragettes who feared it diverted attention from other rights issues.

1861-1865 - The American Civil War disrupted suffrage activities, but this time served as a training ground as women gained effective organizational

and occupational skills used later.

1912 - Theodore Roosevelt’s Progressive Party became the first national political party to adopt a women’s suffrage plank.

1913-1915 - Large suffragette marches brought the cause to the center of the nation’s attention.

1915 - Mabel Vernon and Sarah B. Field and others drove across the country with 500,000 petition signatures for Congress.

1916 - A unified push for a rights amendment was made in Congress.

1918-1920 - World War I slowed the movement, and women took factory jobs. After the war, Congress and the president were reminded of the women’s work and believed they should be rewarded with political equality. Within a year, both the houses of Congress endorsed an amendment to the Constitution stating that “the rights of Citizens of

the U.S. to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S. or State on account of sex.”

1919 - The amendment was sent to the states to be ratified. Well organized anti-suffrage forces descended on the states. When 35 of the 36 states needed to approve the amendment had done so, the battle came to Nashville, Tennessee. Legislator Harry Burn, had been voting with the anti-suffragettes until he remembered the words of his mother, who had urged him to vote for women’s rights. He did as his mother had asked, and his was the deciding vote.

August 26, 1920 - The 19th Amendment became law.

## COMMUNICATION

*Continued from p. 2*

Audrey Kessler has been writing and designing our newsletter for a number of years while also maintaining our local Web site. We appreciate her continued dedication. New this year is *The VOTER* “staff.” Jo Eshler and Amie Cajka will be gathering news and writing for the three issues of *The VOTER* and the E-Page page, which will have an impact on the Web site as well. Vice President Debby Newbury will be assisting Audrey and the staff in making the Web site a dynamic part of our communication.

Change can be good. Change will be good. And you’ll let us know how we can improve. Your input can be sent to Amie at [pcajka@neo.rr.com](mailto:pcajka@neo.rr.com), or call her at 330-688-9545.

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## CONVENTION

*Continued from p. 3*

A fair and impartial judiciary as it pertains to elections, selections, projections and expectations was the topic for a distinguished panel of experts on Saturday afternoon. The discussion focused on the skyrocketing cost of running a judicial campaign and the perceived influence of campaign contributions on judicial decisions.

The next state Convention is set for 2011 in Toledo.

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**VISIT US ON THE WEB AT**

<http://www.kent.oh.lwvnet.org/>

## LWVK Events Roundup

### Candidate Night Set for October 14 in Kent

The Kent League of Women Voters is hosting a candidate night on Wednesday, October 14, at 7 p.m. at Stanton Middle School, 1175 Hudson Road, Kent.

Candidate contests include Kent mayor and city council seats and two municipal judgeships. With the League's format, candidates answer questions from the audience and are given time to make brief statements. Information will be available on the countywide Children's Services renewal levy and the additional levies for the Portage County Health District and the Portage Library District. Both districts encompass municipal areas of Portage County except for the cities of Kent and Ravenna.

The Voter Service Committee, headed by board member Christine Bhargava, is looking for volunteers to help with moderating, setting up, contacting candidates, logistics and hospitality. To participate in this fun and worthwhile service project, call Bhargava at 330-678-3135 or send an e-mail to [chrisbhar@gmail.com](mailto:chrisbhar@gmail.com).

### Voter's Guides Coming in September, October

The Kent League is preparing two voter's guides for the November election. The guide with candidate responses for Kent mayor and council-at-large; Ravenna council-at-large, council Ward 1 and Ward 2; and municipal court judge (two positions) will be available on our Web site on or about Tuesday, September 15. It also will be sent to the libraries in Portage County at that time. The remaining candidates and issues will be posted to our Web site around Thursday, October 15 and also made available to the libraries at that time.

Look for news in your monthly updates as to whether the *Record-Courier* will continue to publish the voter's guide. If members want a copy mailed to them, contact Nena Hankins at [nhankins@att.net](mailto:nhankins@att.net) or 330-673-0128.

### Leagues Studying Regionalism

Several northeast Ohio Leagues are studying regionalism in Northeast Ohio. Traditionally, communities have competed with each other to attract new businesses and the new jobs and the economic development that comes with those new businesses. Proponents argue that by joining forces, a region may be more attractive to investors. Many issues (and debates) have surfaced about regionalism. In November, the Kent League will hold a general meeting to educate League members and the community before deciding whether the Kent League wants to take future action. The proposed date is Thursday, November 12. More information will come later, so stay tuned.

### League's Annual Holiday Brunch Scheduled

The Kent League's annual Holiday Brunch is set for Saturday, December 5. No details yet, but mark your calendar!



## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KENT

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

\$60 Individual    \$90 Household    \$30 Student

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the League of Women Voters of Kent. Mail it and this form to LWVK, 1950 Kimberly Drive, Kent, OH 44240. A League member will contact you about upcoming meetings and your interest in League activities. Annual dues for the League of Women Voters are not tax-deductible because of the political nature of the League's work.

I am unable to join the League at this time, but I would like to support your work with this donation in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_. A contribution directly to the Kent League is not tax deductible. A donation made payable to the LWV Ohio Education Fund for the Kent League is used for educational purposes and is tax deductible. Both donations should be sent to LWVK, 1950 Kimberly Drive, Kent, OH 44240. For more information, call Treasurer Roberta O'Keefe at 330-673-2058 or email her at rlokeefe@sbcglobal.net.

## LWVK Coming Attractions

### September

- 21 League Board Meeting**  
Mental Health & Recovery Board, 155 E. Main Street, Kent; 6:30 p.m.
- 24 Kick-Off Meeting & Salad Supper**  
630 Rustic Knoll Drive, Kent (see page 1 for more details)

### October

- 14 Candidate Night**  
Stanton Middle School,, 1175 Hudson Road, Kent, 7 p.m.; open to the public
- 19 League Board Meeting**  
Mental Health & Recovery Board, 155 E. Main Street, Kent; 6:30 p.m.

### November

- 12 Meeting on Regionalism**  
Location and time to be announced; open to the public
- 16 League Board Meeting**  
Mental Health & Recovery Board, 155 E. Main Street, Kent; 6:30 p.m.

### December

- 5 Holiday Brunch**  
Location and time to be announced;

### The VOTER

Audrey Cielinski Kessler, Editor

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The Kent League of Women Voters is open to women and men in the general area of Kent who believe in the transparency of our democratic system. We invite anyone with an interest in joining to contact any board member. You can become a full Kent League member by sending a check for \$60, which covers national and state dues, to Nena Hankins, 1950 Kimberly Drive, Kent, 44240. Make an impact! Join the League!