



The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a member.

**League of Women Voters of the Cleveland Area and
League of Women Voters of Cleveland Educational Fund**

THE CLEVELAND AREA VOTER

**SERVING THE CITIES OF CLEVELAND, BEREA, BRATENAHL, BROOK PARK,
EUCLID, INDEPENDENCE, MIDDLEBURG HEIGHTS, OLMS TED FALLS,
OLMS TED TOWNSHIP AND STRONGSVILLE**

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DOES MONEY BUY ELECTIONS?

At the City Club Forum in early April, John Rauh, founder and president of the nonpartisan Americans for Campaign Reform (ACR), addressed the question of whether money buys elections. His organization, with support from the LWV of the United States, hopes to mobilize citizens and lobby Congress to enact voluntary public funding of all federal elections.

The facts he offered are all too familiar: “Since 1992, spending on congressional elections has more than doubled to \$1.3 billion, with winning House candidates spending on average \$1.4 million in 2006. Nine times out of ten, the higher-spending candidate won.” (From the ACR Policy Paper, “Does Money Buy Elections?” by Daniel Weeks) The system, he asserts, is broken: the pool of qualified, dedicated candidates is low due to the challenge of raising enormous amounts of money, Americans more and more are saying their vote doesn’t count and, finally, special interests exercise undue influence on political races.

But voluntary public funding offers a solution, Rauh argues, and it’s relatively inexpensive: All U.S. federal races—President, Senate and House—could be funded by the government for just \$6 per citizen per year. The key is that candidates require an “adequate” spending threshold in order to compete for public office, depending on the district and candidate name recognition. According to ACR analyses, so long as otherwise qualified candidates obtain sufficient resources for voters to learn who they are, additional spending does not measurably impact the chances of their success. As for those candidates who lack access to sufficient funding, they are all but guaranteed to fail.

As Rauh said to ImpactWire.com, “When the ability to finance a campaign isn’t such a daunting obstacle, there’s no doubt that more of our most able leaders would run for federal office. And once in office, our leaders will spend their time and energy attending to the nation’s business rather than financing their next campaign.”

Arizona and Maine are already model states on public funding and in 2010 Connecticut will join their ranks. For more information, visit ACR’s aptly named Web site www.just6dollars.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(League office 216-781-8375 for more information)

Saturday, May 10: Membership meeting on “**Important Bird Area of the Rocky River Watershed**” with speaker **Tom Romito, President, Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society** and member of the Rocky River Watershed Council, at the Renaissance, 26376 John Road, Olmsted Township, 10-noon.

For more information, call Elva Edger at 440-826-0157.



MONDAY, May 19: LWVCEF Annual Meeting/Luncheon at the City Club, 2nd floor. Noon, \$13.

SATURDAY, MAY 31: PLEASE COME to the LWVC annual meeting and potluck brunch at the Euclid Public Library, Shore Room, 631 E. 222 St., 9:30 a.m. brunch followed by the business meeting. Join other members as we elect officers and review/vote on the program and budget. Membership dues can be paid at the time.

Please also invite any interested persons to what is surely our most popular meeting and one that gives a great overview of League “business.” A separate mailing will follow.

Directions: From I-90 take the E. 222 St. EXIT and GO NORTH approximately one (1) mile. Euclid Public Library is located on the east side of the street, with parking adjacent to the building.

June 13-17: LWV National Convention, Portland, Oregon.

SAVE THE DATE: Tuesday, September 16—Belle Sherwin Democracy in Action Awards luncheon, Windows on the River, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you want to help make your community a better place to live? Opportunities are available through the League if you have the interest and a little time to take advantage of them. Share in the pride and excitement of new citizens at the naturalization ceremonies at the Federal Court House in downtown Cleveland the first and third Friday of the month, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Assist in registering new citizens to vote after their formal swearing-in.

Or you can help uphold accountability in our representative government by joining the monthly Observer Corps of Leagues in Cuyahoga County. Members observe monthly meetings of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, the Cuyahoga County Commissioners and the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority and file a short report for later distribution.

Please call the LWVC office at 216-781-8375 for further information. Training will be provided, if necessary.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

One of the realities of budgeting for League of Women Voters groups everywhere is Per Member Payment (PMP). PMPs, established by the 1972 LWVUS Convention at \$4, ensure that each member of a local league is also a member of the National and State Leagues. The current LWVUS PMP is \$26.80 but on the agenda for the LWVUS convention in June is a proposed rate of \$28 (a 4.5% cost of living increase), then \$29.20 for 2009-2010. The PMP for LWVOhio for 2008-2009 will be \$23.50.

LWV Cleveland Area currently has a basic membership fee of \$50, household membership (for 2 people sharing an address) at \$75 and sustaining membership at \$100. State and National League increases in PMPs mean we would be paying a total of \$51.50 per member. Our Board discussed these increases and voted not to raise our dues. We realize that \$50 is a challenging amount for many people and we want to encourage membership, not price it out of reach of otherwise interested individuals in this area.

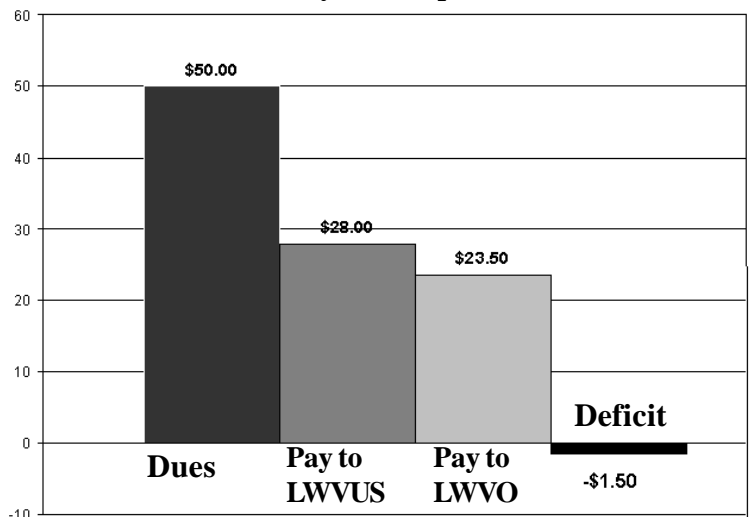
We will continue to subsidize membership costs, but we have a favor to ask: If you are able to add a bit to your membership payment for 2008-2009, it would help cover costs. If you are not able to spend over \$50, we certainly understand. You are important to us as a member and we want to not only retain members but also grow.

Thank you for all you do for the League and for your continued support.

In League,

Penny Jeffrey, President

Per Member Payment Expenses 2008-2009



PORT AUTHORITY'S PROPOSED MOVE AND EXPANSION

From the Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee report, March 11, 2008

submitted by Barbara A. Martin, LWVC Director for Dike 14

The Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee is very concerned about the potential impact of the proposed move of the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority from downtown Cleveland to a new 200-acre fill site to be built in Lake Erie at East 55th Street.

First, we are concerned about the possible direct impact on the Dike 14 Nature Preserve of this proposed vast industrial site, potentially with 24 hour per day, 7 days a week, activity with its noise, lights and environmental effects, that could be built as close as 1/4 mile west of the Dike 14 Nature Preserve. The construction alone of this site could extend more than 20-30 years.

Second, we are concerned that the City's very recent Lakefront Plan is being threatened already with a radical alteration that would forever block access for the people of the City to their lakefront, especially on the City's East Side.

Third, we are concerned about the potential for the crowding of public lakefront amenities in the area between East 72 Street and Dike 14, with the prospect of the lakefront losing the Cleveland Lakefront State Park East 55th Street Marina—a 335-boat public marina with 1,200 lineal feet of fishing piers.

We are trying to research and understand the Port Authority's vision and proposal, even though very little documented support and detailed description of the Port's plans have been issued publicly to date. We will keep you informed of our findings. Contact information: Barbara A. Martin, 440-243-9070, barbaramartin2001@juno.com

LWV Voter Services for Cuyahoga County

A county-wide voter services committee composed of representatives from all three League serving Cuyahoga County is working to develop a plan to ensure voters are prepared for the important November election. The group is trying to secure support for publication of a printed Voters Guide for the fall election. Unfortunately, foundation grants and donations for printing the Guide have all but vanished.

Still, public demand for the Voters Guide remains high. During the busy primary season, the #1 topic of callers to the League's Voter Information Center was a request for a Voters Guide.

The **2008 Public Officials Directory** for Cuyahoga and surrounding counties is available for purchase. To order your copy, please send check payable to LWV Cleveland Educational Fund for \$10 plus \$2.25 shipping and handling to

LWV Cleveland Educational Fund
850 Euclid Avenue, Suite 1010
Cleveland, Ohio 44114.

Congratulations, Shaker Heights Leaguer Kurt Miller

Kurt was recently appointed to the newly established LWVUS TaskForce on Election Audits, which will focus on what the features of an election auditing process should be in order to best protect the voters and provide confidence in the voting process itself.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
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LWVC's Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of the Cleveland Area is committed to achieve a membership representative of the multicultural composition of our city. Membership is open to all persons, age 18 or older, regardless of color, creed, national origin, race or sex. League welcomes the diversity of thought, opinion and ideas reflective of all citizens in our democracy.

Dates to Remember in 2008

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Saturday, May 31 | LWVC annual meeting and potluck brunch at Euclid Public Library, 9:30 am |
| Tuesday, September 16 | Belle Sherwin Democracy in Action Award luncheon, Windows on the River, 11 am |
| Tuesday, November 4th | General Election polls are open for voting from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm |

Not a member? Join today!

I want to join the League of Women Voters Cleveland Area

Please check one or more:

- one-year individual membership \$50
- one-year household membership \$75 (two sharing an address)
- my/our dues plus something extra _____
- sustaining member \$100
- I am unable to join now but enclose a donation of _____

Please make checks payable to the League of Women Voters

Return to: **Membership**
League of Women Voters Cleveland Area
850 Euclid Avenue, Suite 1010
Cleveland, OH 44114

Membership dues are not tax deductible. Donations to the Ed Fund are tax deductible as allowed by law.