



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CLEVELAND AREA

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Serving the cities of Berea, Bratenahl, Brook Park, Cleveland, Euclid, Independence, Middleburg Heights, Olmsted Falls, Olmsted Township, and Strongsville

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

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THE BATTLE TO UPGRADE COUNTY ETHICS

Lynda Mayer, Chair, LWV County Government Committee and
Charter Transition Advisory Group's Code of Ethics Workgroup

By the time you read this, you probably will know the final shape of Cuyahoga County's new ethics laws and enforcement mechanisms. It may have passed as planned on April 5 or may have tarried a bit longer. The Plain Dealer will have told the main story but here you can read the inside story of LWV involvement.

Last year a Transition Ethics Workgroup made up of nine LWV members (including LWVC's Roslyn Talerico, Barb Sones and Deb Talley) researched and produced a proposed Ethics Code based on the best ideas from around the U.S. and from local thinkers. We expected the new County Council to use a substantial portion of it, but the Council's Rules Committee chose to go its own way, combining many of our ideas with verbatim Ohio statutes and elements of their own invention, thus presenting a less tidy and coherent ordinance to Council for adoption in early spring.

League workgroup members lobbied hard behind the scenes and at all Rules Committee and Council sessions to inform, correct and improve upon their several drafts. You perhaps saw Leagues' prominent guest editorial in the Plain Dealer on January 30. Also officially, the workgroup testified both orally and in writing before County Council on March 8, followed by the League on March 22. Both presentations proposed detailed revisions and urged Council to take its time to get it right.

The issue which proved the most intractable was the lack of clear provisions to enforce the new mandates: What should the Human Resources Commission (HRC) do--the Charter says the HRC, not a new Ethics Board, must do the job--and what should the new Inspector General do? Most important still: Where is that written? And why was it, as of mid-March, still NOT written?

This article must end without answers to those big questions. Just know, please, that your League colleagues persevered both sotto voce and at the microphones to get the best ethics ordinance, WITH TEETH, that we could get. Personal lobbying by Janice Patterson, Barbara Barlow, Susan Gray, Carrie Buchanan, Susan Jankite, Marcia Goldberg, myself and others is responsible for much that is good in Cuyahoga County's new ethics law. Check it out!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear League Members,
 Being your president is never dull! We celebrated our 90th birthday on 14 February with a party befitting the occasion. In addition to socializing, raffling prizes and bidding on donations, we had a brief look at the suffrage movement. Members participated (some in costume) by reciting statements from Susan B Anthony, Sojourner Truth and other leaders for women's rights. VP Roslyn Talerico and her committee deserve another round of applause for their efforts. A retired drama teacher who saw the performance thinks it would be a good way to introduce women's history to students, and so we are investigating that possibility. Photos from the event are available at our website, www.lwvcef.org.

There are some exciting developments with our sister Leagues in Cuyahoga County. We have jointly agreed to sponsor the LWV Ohio Convention in May 2013. This will be an opportunity to show off the riches of Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. It will also be an opportunity for members to become involved in League activity. We will be contacting you as these plans develop and look forward to your input, suggestions and opinions as we proceed. The three Leagues have also agreed to discuss merging into one League, as Columbus and Cincinnati and several other metropolitan areas have done. Our first attempt at this, nearly ten years ago, was not successful, but the leaders of all three Leagues see the advantages and are willing to seriously investigate how we can accomplish it.

If you have Internet access, we would like to be your Facebook friend. If you are already a Facebook member, search "League of Women Voters of the Cleveland Area" and "like" us. You will then receive our latest news automatically. If you like what you see, let us know *and* "share" our news with your other Facebook friends. The more they know about LWV, the more likely they are to join us.

The 2011 PUBLIC OFFICIALS DIRECTORY will be available soon. LWV Cleveland Area is the only local organization providing a communications guide to local political office holders and heads of agencies. We include access to city, county, school board and national offices and services. It's a bargain at \$10 + shipping and handling. Contact the LWV Cleveland Area office at (216)781-8375 to reserve your copy.

I look forward to seeing you at our annual meeting and pot luck brunch on Sat 21 May 2011, 10 a.m. to noon, at Euclid Public Library, 631 E 222nd St, Euclid OH 44123, 216.261.5300, www.euclidlibrary.org.

Penny Jeffrey, President

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2011

(For more info, call the office at 216-781-8375)

Sunday, April 17: EarthFest at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, 10-5. Visit the Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee's information display table as we petition the Port Authority, City and State to open Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14) to the public NOW!

Wednesday, April 20: Spring Lake Erie Basin Committee Meeting at Environmental Interpretive Center, University of Michigan, Dearborn, Michigan. For more information contact Peg Smith at phullsmith@bex.net

Friday, April 22: 41st anniversary of Earth Day, with this year's theme "A Billion Acts of Green," a campaign to encourage individual green acts--to total one billion-- before the 2012 global Earth Summit in Rio.

Saturday, April 30: Deadline for Vote by Mail ballot application request.

Sunday, May 1: Law Day, established in 1958 by President Eisenhower, who declared: "In a very real sense, the world no longer has a choice between force and law. If civilization is to survive it must choose the rule of law."

Tuesday, May 3: Primary Election Day in LWVC's communities of Berea, Euclid, Olmsted Falls and Strongsville, 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. (See elsewhere in this issue for more info.)

Friday-Sunday, May 13-15: LWVO Convention at Maumee Bay State Park.

Saturday, May 21: LWV Cleveland Area's Annual Meeting, 10:00-noon at Euclid Public Library, 631 222 Street. Brunch will be followed by the business meeting with election of officers and voting on the program and budget. (Look for more information in a separate mailing.)

Saturday, May 21: Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14) Spring Event, 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m., at Gordon State Park. For more information go to www.dike14.org

Friday, August 26: Women's Equality Day, celebrating passage of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MAY 3 PRIMARY ELECTION

Primary elections for the LWVC communities of Berea, Euclid, Olmsted Falls and Strongsville:

* Democratic voters in Berea will vote for candidates for municipal offices. Strongsville will hold a nonpartisan election for council members in Wards 2, 3, and 4.

* School districts in Euclid, Olmsted Falls and Strongsville will have issues on the ballot.

* Voters in Olmsted Falls will also be asked to consider municipal issues.

Voting, including Vote by Mail and In-house Voting (which began March 20):

* Vote by Mail ballot applications are available on the Board of Elections website --boe.cuyahogacounty.us--at public libraries or by calling 216-443-3298. The Board must receive applications on or before noon on April 30.

* In-house Voting is available at the Board of Elections, 2925 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, through May 2.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS VOTER INFORMATION
HOTLINE: 216-443-3298

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
VOTER INFORMATION CENTER: 216-781-8376

The Cost of Voter ID Laws: What the Courts Say Brennan Center for Justice [From March 2011 LWV-Ohio imPACT Newsletter]

Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted's announcement in early March outlining his priorities for election administration reform seems to indicate he is working toward more stringent identification requirements for voting. He would require a full Social Security number or Ohio driver's license number for absentee or provisional voters. This raises major concerns about identity theft and decreased voter access, all in pursuit of phantom fraud.

As recently as 2004, Ohio voters needed to present only their signature as identification at the polling place. Since then, Ohio has increased the requirements but currently allows voters to use any of a number of documents as proof of identity when voting, from a photo ID to military identification to utility bills and bank statements. LWV-Ohio continues to advocate for using the voter's signature as proof of identity when at the polls.

A number of other states are giving serious consideration to passing more stringent voter ID laws, including Wisconsin, North Carolina, Missouri, South Carolina, Kansas, Texas, Montana and Minnesota. According to the Brennan Center for Justice's recent study, "The Cost of Voter ID Laws: What the Courts Say," while details vary, these bills would deny the right to vote to some or all citizens who are unable to produce a photo ID. Further, as many as 11% of U.S. citizens--mostly older, low-income and minority citizens—do not have government-issued IDs. Yet under the federal and state Constitutions, states must ensure an accessible and reasonable way for all citizens to vote, including the estimated 33 million citizens who do not have photo IDs.

The Brennan Center study is based on a comprehensive review of every court case in which a photo ID law has been challenged and examines the costs if states decide to implement photo ID requirements. States must be prepared to incur appreciable costs if they do move forward, including all the administrative costs of changing election procedures, such as the costs of materials and training for election officials and poll workers across the state. In Missouri, for example, it was estimated that a proposed photo ID law would cost \$6 million for the first year of implementation, followed by approximately \$4 million per year thereafter.

Estimates from other states differ, but in a difficult fiscal environment, citizens may reasonably question whether there are more pressing needs on which to spend their tax dollars, and state legislators should seriously consider whether photo ID laws are worth their increased costs. In doing so, legislators should take into account the many other measures already in place that have been very effective in deterring voter fraud, as well as less expensive measures to increase the security of elections.

A copy of the Brennan Center study is available at www.brennancenter.org

League News.....

LWV-OHIO: THE BUDGET AND ADVOCATES FOR OHIO'S FUTURE

The LWV-Ohio is a coalition member of "Advocates for Ohio's Future," which represents the health, human services and early care and education service agencies that provide the safety net for the state's most vulnerable citizens. Recently, a press release from the group stated: "A statewide coalition of health, human services, and early care and education groups today applauded many facets of Governor John Kasich's executive budget that protect Ohioans and those struggling with the recession. But Advocates for Ohio's Future cautioned that cuts in other key areas will take their toll on the state's most vulnerable populations."

Many tough decisions lie ahead for our legislators, so please take the time to share with your friends, family and legislators why health and human service funding in Ohio is important, how it has impacted your life, and your ideas for the future. [If you would like to learn more about the coalition, please visit Advocates for Ohio's Future.]

LWV-US:

LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2011

The Board adopted the following priorities for 2011: Clean Air Defense; Health Care Defense; Money in Elections (campaign finance reform); and Voter Registration and Election Administration. The Legislative Watch List* is as follows: CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women); Climate Change; Ethics; Immigration; and Safe Drilling and Mining ("Fracking"). *The Watch List means that if an opportunity arises on these issues and does not interfere with action on an advocacy priority, the LWVUS may take action if it appears we can make an impact.

Public Education Study Update

The LWVUS study on the "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" is well underway. The target schedule is for Leagues to have materials in May, and papers will be posted on the LWVUS website as they are completed. Local Leagues will have from May through November to conduct their local study and take consensus.

"Privatization of Government Services" Study Committee

Committee members have been selected for this study, including Ann Henkener from Columbus. Janis McMillen, LWVUS Board, is the chair. Over the next months, the committee will be doing research and defining the scope of the study, with scope finalization anticipated by June 2011.

CAMPAIGN TO OPEN CLEVELAND LAKEFRONT NATURE PRESERVE (AT DIKE 14)

By Barbara A. Martin, LWVC

The campaign to *Open Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14)* is a grassroots effort by Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee to petition the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, City of Cleveland and Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) to take action now to allow public access at Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14), a wildlife area that adjoins Gordon State Park.

In 2007 the Ohio EPA completed risk assessment of Dike 14 – a former Army Corps dredge disposal site – and found “no risk to human health.”

In September 2007 Cleveland Planning Director Bob Brown initiated monthly stakeholder meetings to coordinate decision making for the transfer of Dike 14 to a public access nature preserve. Turmoil at the Port Authority disrupted the effort in October 2008. The following year, Dike 14 Environmental Education Collaborative (EEC) took the lead in holding stakeholder meetings with the Port Authority, Cleveland Planning Department, and ODNR, which yielded support for an EEC-proposed *Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14) Plan* that was adopted by Cleveland City Planning Commission in April 2010.

Change of leadership at the Port Authority has delayed implementation of the *Plan*; and the hoped-for May 2010 opening of a public-access trail at the Nature Preserve has yet to be realized.

The Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee’s initiative seeks to inform and enlist citizen support in petitioning the Port Authority, City of Cleveland, and ODNR to take the action needed to open Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14) to the public on a regular, hopefully daily, basis.

Your help in getting signatures on the petition will be greatly appreciated. The Petition and the Informational Timeline are provided with this newsletter. Please copy and circulate to your friends and family throughout Ohio. Return signed petitions to the address given at the bottom of the petition. Thank you in advance!

For more information, contact Barbara A. Martin, Chair, Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee, 440-243-9070, barbaramartin2001@juno.com and Bill Gruber, Vice Chair, Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee, 216-371-3570, gruberwl@aol.com.

HELP WANTED!

Are you an E-Bay expert? We need to get rid of some old equipment and could make use of your skills. If you could assist, please contact the office at 216-781-8375.

OPEN CLEVELAND LAKEFRONT NATURE PRESERVE (AT DIKE 14)

A campaign initiated by the Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee, March 2011

PETITION

We, the undersigned, urge the • **Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority,**
• **City of Cleveland** and
• **Ohio Department of Natural Resources**
to open Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14) to the public **NOW!**

NAME (Please PRINT & SIGN) ADDRESS (Number, Street, City, State, Zip)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

**PLEASE RETURN SIGNED SHEETS TO: DIKE14 NATURE PRESERVE COMMITTEE
P.O.BOX 81031, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44181**

MARCH 2011

OPEN CLEVELAND LAKEFRONT NATURE PRESERVE

(AT DIKE 14) A campaign initiated by the Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee, March 2011

TIMELINE OF THE DIKE 14 PROPERTY

1977 to 1999 ▪ The confined disposal facility (CDF) known as Dike 14 was constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers in Lake Erie, just north of and adjacent to Gordon State Park, and federally filled for 20 years with dredged material from Cleveland's Harbor and the Cuyahoga River. There were assurances from all levels of government and the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority that, upon completion, the 88-acre landmass at Dike 14 would be used as a park for public access. In 1999 Army Corps completed CDF Dike 14 and began disposal at CDF Dike 10B, north of Burke Airport.

2000 to 2010 ▪ The public, through several planning processes, along with several studies, concluded that a NATURE PRESERVE WITH PUBLIC ACCESS is safe, viable, and the most popular and preferred use for the 88-acre Dike 14 landmass.

Aug 2000 ▪ Cleveland Waterfront Coalition called upon community groups to form a grassroots Dike 14 Committee to discuss public park use of the Dike 14 property.

Oct 2000 ▪ Ohio Audubon identified Dike 14 as Ohio's first *Important Bird Area (IBA)*.

Dec 2000 - Jan 2001 ▪ Port Authority breached the federally completed project at Dike 14 with disposal of dredged sediments & construction debris, and threatened continued dredge disposal.

Jan 2001 ▪ Dike 14 Committee began monthly meetings, launched opposition to Port Authority actions at Dike 14, and petitioned the State of Ohio to intervene.

Feb - Nov 2002 ▪ Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) held a 10-month public planning process that determined the public's preference for a public access, 88-acre nature preserve at Dike 14.

Nov 2002 ▪ As part of the ODNR process, Dike 14 Committee submitted a comprehensive *Concept Plan for Dike 14 Nature Preserve* depicting habitat management and public access.

2003 ▪ Institutions of environmental education form the Dike 14 Environmental Education Collaborative (EEC), began monthly meetings, and through a legal agreement with the Port Authority achieved limited public access to Dike 14, i.e. half-day openings in the spring and fall.

Dec 2004 ▪ Cleveland City Planning Commission received and unanimously adopted the *Cleveland Waterfront District Plan*, which identified the Dike 14 property as "nature preserve".

July 2007 ▪ Planning Commission received but did not adopt a Biohabitats' plan for Dike 14.

Sep 2007 - Oct 2008 ▪ Cleveland Planning Director Brown held monthly meetings of stakeholders to coordinate transition of Dike 14 to a nature preserve, but turmoil at the Port Authority disrupted the effort.

Nov 2007 ▪ Ohio EPA completed risk assessment at Dike 14 and found "no risk to human health".

Apr 2010 ▪ Cleveland City Planning Commission received and unanimously adopted the EEC's plan for Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14).

May 2010 - Mar 2011 ▪ Turmoil at the Port Authority delayed implementation of the EEC's plan to open Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14) to the public.

Mar 2011 ▪ Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee launched a campaign to *Open Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14)* with a PETITION stating: We, the undersigned, urge the • Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, • City of Cleveland and • Ohio Department of Natural Resources to open Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (at Dike 14) to the public NOW!

For more information contact Barbara A. Martin, Chair, Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee, barbaramartin2001@juno.com and Bill Gruber, Vice Chair, Dike 14 Nature Preserve Committee, GruberWL@aol.com

LWVC MEMBERSHIP
2011-2012

I/We want to (re)join the League. Please check one or more:

- _____ one-year individual membership \$60
_____ one-year household membership \$90
(two sharing an address)
_____ my/our dues plus something extra _____
_____ sustaining member \$100

Please make checks payable to the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Name _____
Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____ Email _____

_____ Yes, I would you like to receive the "Voter" and other League updates online.
(Your mailing information is NOT sold/leased to organizations outside LWV.)

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



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
CLEVELAND AREA &
CLEVELAND EDUCATIONAL FUND

Making Democracy Work for Over 90 Years

850 Euclid Avenue, Suite 1010
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Contact Information

Phone: 216-781-8375
Fax: 216-619-5026
Website: www.lwvcef.org

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.

Member of Community Shares