

LWVO League Leaders Update
August 11, 2010

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ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

****NEW** Midwest Democracy Network Summer 2010 Meeting**

Representatives from LWVO Ed Fund attended the meeting of the Midwest Democracy Network (MDN) in Madison, WI in July. Members of the MDN include not only Leagues, but also other good government groups, such as Common Cause and Citizen Action, in the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

Experts from entities such as the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University offered insight into recent Supreme Court decisions and how best to structure new initiatives on public financing of elections to avoid running afoul of the prohibitions on certain kinds of matching funds. It is probably not permissible to attempt to "level the playing field" by providing more money to candidates who face well funded opponents, but public financing that is a multiple of small contributions is expected to survive judicial review. There was discussion on efforts in the various states to address the politicization of the judiciary.

Much of the focus of the meeting was on redistricting. As in Ohio, efforts to achieve major reform of how redistricting takes place have had disappointing results. However, there was discussion of the role that MDN organizations can play in the redistricting process going forward, including discussion of how to develop messages that will help citizens understand redistricting and how it affects them. Dr. Michael McDonald of George Mason University shared

the prototype software which he and others are developing to enable citizens to participate in the redistricting process in their states.

****NEW** Press Release on Redistricting**

On August 5, 2010, LWVO issued a press release on the status of redistricting in Ohio. See the release below:

(Columbus, Ohio)

So what do we do now? The Ohio General Assembly dithered and dallied and avoided approving a redistricting reform amendment to our constitution in time for the November ballot. All is not lost, however – yet!

When the Apportionment Board and the General Assembly redraw the state's legislative and congressional district lines, respectively, in 2011, the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWV-Ohio) urges them to voluntarily use the redistricting principles and procedures proposed and tested by the League a year ago. We must move away from the hyper-partisan redistricting models that produce districts that don't reflect Ohio voters' preferences, that permit protection of incumbents, and that encourage unnaturally high numbers of safe seats.

LWV-Ohio also urges voters to encourage the use of a fair, nonpartisan and transparent process to draw legislative and congressional districts by asking that all candidates for governor, secretary of state, and state auditor--and for state senator and state representative--support a transparent, public competition for redistricting plans.

The plans should be judged on four objective, measurable factors:

- Representational fairness measures whether the proportion of districts drawn to favor a political party reflect the proportion of votes that party generally receives statewide. Since Ohio tends to be a 50/50 state, districts should be drawn to favor both major political parties evenly.
- Compactness encourages districts that do not wander around in bizarre shapes to favor one party or another in the classic gerrymander fashion.
- Competitiveness encourages more districts that might be won by either political party. This would encourage electing legislators who are willing to solve problems in a bipartisan way.
- Communities of interest encourages plans that minimize splitting up municipalities.

Finally, LWV-Ohio encourages Ohioans to request that all meetings and discussions of the Apportionment Board and General Assembly committees judging the plans be public, that they include opportunities for public comment, and that their final choices be explained.

What is not to like about a fair and transparent process that puts voters' interests foremost? What excuse is there not to try it?

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MEMBERSHIP

****Update** It's Not Too Late to Take Advantage of Training Opportunities**

The Membership Development and Engagement Committee (MEDC) has put together leader training opportunities to help make your jobs easier. The MEDC encourages leaders and those interested in learning more about the League to sign up for one of the sessions below. We strongly urge all officers and board members to sign up for one. **Thank you** to those local Leagues that have participated in the trainings thus far.

The remaining training dates scheduled are:

August 12th at 7:00 p.m. Please [RSVP](#) ASAP so that you can receive the confirmation and dial-in information.

September 7th at 7:00 p.m. Please [RSVP](#) no later than September 5, 2010

September 18th at 10:00 a.m. Please [RSVP](#) no later September 16, 2010

Please RSVP via email to the state office at lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org and provide your name, contact information, the date of the training you will join, and your local League. Once you sign up, a confirmation and dial-in information will be sent to you.

ADMINISTRATION

****NEW** LLEF Fourth Quarter Statements**

Fourth Quarter Local League Education Fund Statements have been delivered. Please be certain to check the reports and contact the office if there are discrepancies in the report. Once you have verified the accuracy of the report and made any necessary adjustments, please complete and return the attached form entitled LLEF Quarterly Report Reply Form August 2010 to leg@lwvohio.org, via fax to 614-469-1505 or U.S. Mail to 17 South High Street, Suite 650 Columbus, Ohio.

****NEW** Drop-In Donation/Membership Ad for Voter Guides and Instructions re: Funding**

Attached to this League Leader Update is a suggested template entitled "8.2.10 - VG Donor - Membership Form - FINAL.doc" for inclusion in your local Voters' Guide. This form was reviewed by LWVUS / EF. Presidents should have received a direct communication regarding this drop in ad previously so this serves as a reminder to forward this information to your Voter Service Chair if you have not already done so.

Also, please note on the attached:

- Your League will need to "personalize" the form, i.e., name / address, etc., where indicated.
- Not all Leagues have education funds, so options for that are included, as indicated.
- Not all Leagues have a phone number, so that is included as an option. However, be sure to include contact information, whether it is a phone number or email address.

Finally, following is LWVEF guidance to local Leagues regarding paying for a donation form and/or membership ad in their Voters' Guide (see www.lwv.org):

Education Fund monies may be used to underwrite the costs of most, if not all, of your Voters' Guide. You are encouraged to use general League operating funds to cover the specific cost of including a League membership "ad" and donation form in your Voters' Guide. For example, if your Voters' Guide is 10 pages long and you include a half-page membership ad, then 5% of the total cost of producing your Voters' Guide (printing and distribution) should be paid for with general League funds. Be sure legal constraints on giving and receiving money for election-related activities are fully understood, especially tax-deductible contributions.

****NEW** PMP Invoices Delivered and Early Pay Discount Reminder**

PMP Invoices for the 2010-2011 Year were mailed to local treasurers and carbon copied to local presidents on today August 11, 2010. The invoices were sent to the treasurers on the file with the state office. Please make certain we have the most up-to date information on local League officers on file.

Leagues paying the entire amount ***by October 1 qualify for a 5 percent discount as long as it is postmarked by October 1, 2010.*** According to LWVO bylaws, a local League must meet its state PMP responsibilities through the quarter immediately preceding the State Convention to be entitled to voting delegates. This means that three-quarters of your PMP must be remitted by April 1, 2011 in order for your League to send voting delegates to May 2011 State Convention.

PMP should be paid quarterly if the early pay option is not exercised. Quarterly due dates are October 1, January 1, April 1 & July 1.

If you have any questions or need more information regarding PMP, please feel free to contact the state office at 1-877-598-6446 or 1-877-LWV-OHIO.

****Reminder** Program Planning Note**

It is great to hear from so many local Leagues that you are creating your program planning calendar. The League will be forwarding you Program Planning Information in February as is our custom. Some of you have specifically asked about when we plan to hold State House Day in 2011. Please know that we are awaiting the calendar from the General Assembly so that we will plan a day that coincides when there are full Legislative Sessions Planned. We want to avoid picking a date when they will not be present.

We continue to monitor for the release of the calendar so please bear with us as we patiently await that information from the Leaders of the Ohio General Assembly. As soon as we have that information we will secure a date and location and forward it to you.

****Reminder** Welcome Chuck Wolfe, ImPACT Project Manager**

Please extend your welcome to Chuck Wolfe who recently became the Project Manager, fully funded by a grant from the Joyce Foundation, for the imPACT Program. Chuck is a long time civic activist who brings a wealth of energy and experience to his new role with LWVOEF. Chuck has been reaching out to local Leagues to set up meetings to discuss exciting new aspects of the imPACT Program.

We are delighted to have him as part of the team and look forward to him becoming better acquainted with League members across the state. Chuck can be reached at TWolfe53@aol.com or at democracy@lwvohio.org . You can also leave a message for Chuck at the state office 614-469-1505.

Mark your calendars now--Dates to Remember

State Board Meeting	September 10-11, 2010
State Board Meeting	November 12-13, 2010
LWVO Convention 2011-Maumee Bay State Park	May 13-15, 2011
LWVO Lobby Lunches	2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, 11:30 am

Anyone is Welcome to Attend

*Columbus Metropolitan Library
96 S. Grant Ave., Columbus,*

*Call 877-598-6446 for more
information*

If you have local League Leaders or other League members who would like to receive the Leaders Update, please send their email information to leg@lwvohio.org