

LWVO League Leaders Update
September 8, 2010

Today's Topics:

ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

- **NEW** League Will Not Pursue Database Claim in Election Administration Lawsuit Settlement Agreement**
- **NEW** LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara Coming to Ohio in October**
- **Reminder** Voter Guide Available**
- **Reminder** Luncheon on Women and Political Power**
- **Reminder** LWVOEF to Cosponsor Debate for Supreme Court Candidates with ONN**
- **Reminder** Taxation and Finance Consensus Process**

MEMBERSHIP

- **Update** Training Opportunities**

ADMINISTRATION

- **NEW** Longtime League Lobby Corps Member Joan Platz Moving**
- **Reminder** PLEASE UPDATE YOUR OFFICERS INFORMATION ASAP**
- **Reminder** Local League Education Funds Transfer**
- **Reminder** LWVOEF Now a Kroger's Rewards Program Participant**
- **Reminder** PMP Invoices Delivered and Early Pay Discount Reminder**

ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

****NEW** League Will Not Pursue Database Claim in Election Administration Lawsuit Settlement Agreement**

The League issued the press release below on September 1, 2010.

League Will Not Pursue Database Claim in Election Administration Lawsuit Settlement Agreement

Columbus, Ohio -- The League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWV-Ohio) resolved the final item in its historic lawsuit seeking to fix defects in the way Ohio conducts its elections.

The federal lawsuit, filed in 2005, alleged that for over 30 years, the offices of the Ohio Secretary of State and Governor had failed to protect the fundamental rights of eligible Ohio voters to cast a meaningful ballot, as required by the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. The settlement agreement reached in June 2009 required that the state provide uniformity and consistency in Ohio election procedures so that the opportunity to vote can be enjoyed equally by all Ohio citizens. See the details of the agreement [here](#).

However, the settlement agreement did not resolve plaintiffs' claim relating to the accuracy of Ohio's statewide voter registration database, implemented in 2005-2006 by then-Secretary of State Blackwell. When the settlement agreement was reached in 2009, Secretary Brunner was still refining the processes to be used to compare voter information contained in the statewide voter registration database with information contained in Bureau of Motor Vehicle and Social Security Administration databases, and with information maintained by local boards of elections. The Secretary filed reports on the status of voter registration database issues on December 31, 2009, and June 30, 2010.

The reports outlined the matching process and detailed the requirements placed on local boards of elections to achieve uniform criteria for handling voters' records. The reports also detailed the constraints the Secretary faced in verifying records due to limited access to the Social Security Administration's database to check existing records.

After careful review of the reports and a meeting between Secretary of State administrators and League leadership and election specialists, LWV-Ohio concluded that the Secretary has made sufficient progress in improving the accuracy of the database and in ensuring procedures are in place to address inaccuracies that arise in the future to warrant dismissal of the remaining claim. It is recognized that there will always be errors, but a uniform statewide process to resolve them is now in place.

LWV-Ohio elections specialist Peg Rosenfield notes, "The Secretary of State recognized the problems with the database and has made significant progress addressing them. Many types of errors, inconsistencies and incomplete data have been reduced to a small fraction of those existing three years ago. More importantly, there are best practice guidelines and uniform standards statewide to address and resolve inconsistencies on an ongoing basis as they arise."

On August 31, 2010, the League filed a notice with the court indicating it did not intend to pursue this claim, thus resolving the final issue of the lawsuit.

The terms of the agreement will remain in effect until January 11, 2015. The League of Women Voters of Ohio will continue to monitor the election-administration efforts to ensure compliance with the terms of the settlement agreement and the accuracy of the voter registration database.

Meg G. Flack, president of LWV-Ohio, said, "Our goal in filing the 2005 lawsuit was to ensure that all eligible Ohio voters could vote and that all valid votes were counted. Ohioans must have confidence in the electoral process – and we believe the procedures the Secretary of State has put in place to address inaccuracies in the voter registration database is another significant step towards those goals."

The League of Women Voters of Ohio is located in Columbus, Ohio and has 33 local affiliate organizations around the state. The mission of the League of Women Voters is to encourage informed and active participation in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. For more information, go to www.lwvohio.org

****NEW** LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara Coming to Ohio in Early October.**

We are delighted to announce that Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS president, will visit Ohio from October 4-6, where she will make several stops around the state and hopes to meet with LWV-Ohio members from local Leagues. We are still in the planning stages for her event but more information will be forthcoming. If you are interested in serving as a guide or host to Elisabeth, please let the office know ASAP so that we can try to include you in the plans.

We know that Ohio League members will show her a true Buckeye Good Time.

****Reminder** Voter Guide Available.**

The 2010 LWVOEF Voter Guide was delivered to local Leagues on September 2, 2010. The Voter Guide is posted on the League website at www.lwvohio.org.

The Voter Guide includes all responses received from statewide candidates. Please note that there are a few candidates that did not respond despite repeated efforts.

Be reminded that the state League will forward responses from the State Board of Education candidates by September 24, 2010.

If you need a copy of the Voter Guide in word format, please contact the office and we will make it available to you. Remember that you must maintain the integrity of the candidate's responses as you cut and paste into your voter guides.

If you will produce an electronic copy of your Voter Guide or Voter Information Bulletin, please make that available to the state office so that we can post it on the League website. Please contact Michele Martin at lwvinfo@lwvohio.org if you would like for us to put a direct link to your Voter Guide on the state website.

****Reminder** League Web Page- Election Focus and Revamped imPACT site.**

Please take time to check out the League website at www.lwvohio.org as there are many changes. We have shifted the primary focus of the site to Voter Service and Information. You can find information on registration deadlines, registration forms, ways to contact your county board of elections and more.

An exciting feature is the 411 Vote site that you can access directly from our front page. Keep watching for more information and feel free to direct people with questions to the League website.

We are excited to announce that we have revamped the imPACT website. You can click on the imPACT Logo from the front page or go to <http://www.ohioimpact.org/site.cfm/imPACT-Home.cfm> to access the site. If you haven't been to the site for a while, we urge you to check it out and provide us with your feedback on the site.

****Reminder** Luncheon on Women and Political Power**

The League of Women Voters of Ohio is one of the Co-Sponsors of the Public Policy Luncheon entitled: *Women and Political Power: Have We Moved Forward?*, featuring Ann Fisher, Host of WOSU's "All Sides with Ann Fisher".

This event will take place from Noon until 1:30 P.M. on Friday October 1, 2010 at the Fawcett Center located at 2400 Olentangy River Road in Columbus.

The Luncheon is \$30 per person and you must RSVP by September 22. [Click here to download more information.](#) Or see the attached flyer. We hope that you can join us for this exciting event.

****Reminder** LWVOEF to Co-sponsor Debate for Supreme Court Candidates with ONN**

The LWVOEF, in partnership with the Ohio News Network (ONN) will host a debate for the candidates for the Ohio Supreme Court. In early October, ONN will record the debate that will then be televised on ONN stations across the state.

The debate will include one session with the candidates for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Eric Brown and Justice Maureen O'Connor and an additional session with candidates for Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Judith Lanzinger and Judge Mary Jane Trapp.

Since Justice Pfeifer is running in an uncontested race, there will be no debate for that contest.

We will keep Local Leagues and members informed as the dates and times for the broadcast of the debates become available.

****Reminder** LWVOEF Now a Kroger's Rewards Program Participant**

Are there programs you wish the League could do, but know that we need more resources to implement them? The League wants to be able to do more in our local and state community and we are always looking for ways to generate funds for programs. The LWVOEF has a new way to generate revenue to support program; The Kroger Community Rewards Program.

Kroger will contribute thousands of dollars to local Non-Profit Organizations in Ohio through the use of the Kroger Plus Card and LWVOEF could share in that if we all participate.

If you link your Kroger Plus card to the League, you will still accumulate your points and receive your discounts, **and** Kroger's will donate funds to the League based upon our accumulated shopping throughout the state. The more of us that link our cards and use them when we shop at Kroger's, the greater the amount of revenue we will receive quarterly from Kroger.

To enroll go to www.krogercommunityrewards.com . Have your Kroger Plus Card handy and follow the instructions.

The LWVO Non Profit Organization Number (NPO) is 80480.

Once you are signed up, make sure you swipe your card for every purchase made a Kroger's so that we can raise funds in an easy way. You can also input an alternative ID if you forget your card as long as it is linked to the League NPO.

We can encourage others to connect their Kroger Plus card to the League as well. Tell your friends, neighbors, club members etc... Ask any people you now to join in this effort and give them our NPO number 80480.

DO NOT TRY TO RECRUIT PEOPLE AT ANY KROGER STORE AS THAT IS A VIOLATION OF THE RULES.

****Reminder** Taxation and Finance Consensus Process**

During State Convention 2007, the membership decided that we needed to update our policies on Taxation and Finance. (Criteria, Corporate Franchise Tax, Income Tax, Property Tax, Sales Tax and Tax Mix).

The Members Only Section of the Website contains the information you need to complete the Consensus Process by **November 30, 2010**, including the Study Committee materials, consensus guidelines, consensus questions and the report form. **You do NOT need a password to access the Members Only Section.**

If you need any further information about this process, please feel free to contact the state office.

MEMBERSHIP

****NEW Final 2010 Leader Training Opportunity on September 18th**

The final Leader Training Opportunity of summer will take place on Saturday, September 18, 2010 at 10 a.m. So if you have not already participated in one of the trainings, this summer do not miss out on your last chance.

The Membership Development and Engagement Committee (MEDC) put together a great training to help current and future leaders. The training was designed to make your job easier and help you learn more about the League. As always, the MEDC strongly urges all officers and board members to participate in the training. The remaining training dates scheduled are:

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, and your local League. Once you sign up, a confirmation and dial-in information will be sent to you.

ADMINISTRATION

****NEW** Longtime League Lobby Corps Member Joan Platz Moving**

With bittersweet emotion, the League says goodbye to Joan Platz, who has been the Education Specialist on the Lobby Corps for many years. Joan and her husband Matt are moving to the Alexandria, Virginia Area at the end of September 2010. Joan was the author of the Education Update that has provided a wealth of information on Education Policy happenings in the state.

While we will certainly miss Joan, we are happy for her new opportunities. She promises to join the local League in the area and continue to monitor education in Ohio for the League.

****Reminder **PLEASE UPDATE YOUR OFFICERS INFORMATION ASAP**

If your League has not already done so, PLEASE update your Local League Contact Information and submit it to the state office. We have discovered that there are local Leagues that have not updated their information which prevents the state office from being able to deliver needed information in a timely manner. Some of the information that we have sent lately that may have been sent to previous officers include: PMP invoices, Presidents Packets, Voter Guide Instructions, and LLEF Statements.

As you can see, these are **important** pieces that need to be delivered to the appropriate leaders. We need your help to keep the records up to date. Make certain that your League has completed and submitted the [Local League Contact Form](#) to Michele Martin at lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org as soon as possible as we are well past the reporting deadline.

Thank you for your cooperation.

****Reminder** Local League Education Funds Transfer**

Faced with decreasing resources and increasing administrative costs, the LWV-Ohio EF Board of Trustees recently voted to discontinue administration of local League education funds (LLEFs) at the end of this fiscal year—next June 30, 2011—rather than start charging fees of participating Leagues. **To continue to ensure the LLEFs' ability to easily maintain its education funds, we are committed to ensuring a smooth transition of fund oversight to a program that will continue to provide your League with effective, timely and no-charge**

administration of your League's education fund. To that end, the board investigated a number of options for transferring administration of your League's education fund to another entity and has shared those options with the presidents and treasurers of the Local Leagues that have their LLEF with the State Education Fund.

The option we recommend is that those LLEFs move their funds to a similar program run by the national League (LWVEF). The LWVEF is the administrator of nearly half the local Leagues' education funds in the country. Their system is provided at no cost and is efficient!

- The LWVUS website has the form and procedure to be used to transfer your League's account.
- LWV-Ohio EF could do it for you, but this requires your League's written consent.

Leagues also have the option to establish their own education fund, as some local Leagues have done. However, it is then the responsibility of your local League to comply with all IRS and state filing requirements.

The LLEFs currently administered by the state Education Fund, may transfer its fund from LWV-Ohio Education Fund any time before the deadline of June 30, 2011.

Please know that we are committed to providing assistance to your League to make this transfer successful.

For further information about transferring your League's education fund by June 30, 2011, please contact Deidra Reese at the LWVOEF office: at leg@lwvohio.org or toll free at 1-877-LWVO-OHIO or 1(877) 598-6446.

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

Thank you to those local Leagues that have already submitted their PMP payments for this fiscal year. Please remember that you are asked to submit your payment in **TWO SEPARATE CHECKS** that correspond to the **TWO INVOICES** you received. If you are paying in full before October 5, 2010, you are entitled to a 5% discount so please calculate that discount if you submit your full year's PMP and it is postmarked by October 1, 2010.

If you have not received your invoice it is because the office does not have **current contact information** on your League's president or treasurer. All invoices were sent to the president and treasurer that we have on file. You can update that information by submitting the [Local League Board Contact Form](#) which is attached to this League Leader Update.

Remember that 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.

Mark your calendars now--Dates to Remember

