

Member Handbook



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
of Licking County, Ohio

The League of Women Voters of Licking County

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Welcome to the League of Women Voters of Licking County!

Thank you for joining us! We created this booklet to share more about who we are, what we do, and a brief history of the League. If you have any questions about the League's work, please reach out to us. Thank you again for supporting our work empowering voters and defending democracy.

About Us

The League of Women Voters of Licking County (LWVLC), a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The LWVLC is a nonpartisan political membership organization that:

- Acts after study and member agreement to achieve solutions in the public interest on key community issues at all government levels.
- Builds citizen participation in the democratic process.
- Engages communities in promoting positive solutions to public policy issues through education and advocacy.



Membership

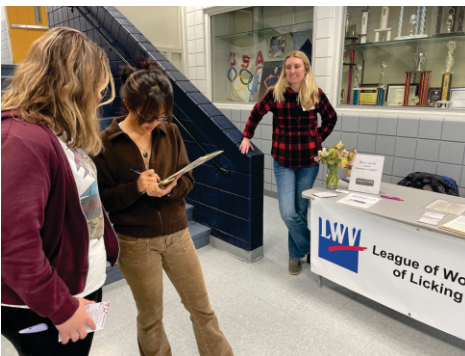
Membership parameters are set at the LWVUS level. LWVLC has further defined the memberships for operating and budgetary purposes. Dues are set or confirmed at the Annual Meeting. Annual memberships are renewed on an individual, rolling basis.


Individual Members. Persons at least 16 years of age who pay annual dues to the LWVLC are voting members. When joining LWVLC, they automatically join the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) and the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS).

Household Memberships. When two or more persons reside at the same address in a common household, they may join as a unit and pay dues in common. Within the household, one member is designated as primary and the second as additional. Supplementary members (over the primary and additional) pay a reduced membership fee. Each household member, whether primary or additional, enjoys voting rights and also belongs to LWVO and LWVUS.

Student Members. Students, defined as 16-25-year olds enrolled full or part time in accredited schools, pay annual dues at a reduced level and enjoy voting rights.

Life Members. Members of the LWVLC for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues.






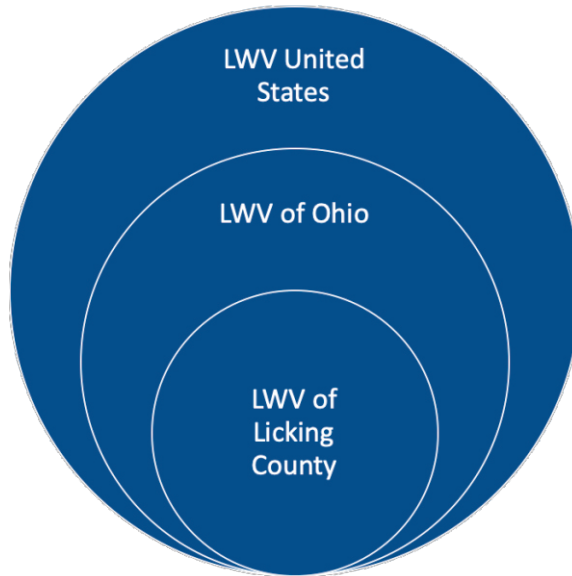
“I joined the League of Women Voters for my three daughters' futures and for my family's past. My Great Aunt Mabel Cory Costigan was an active member of the National League of Women Voters in 1920 and I feel honored to continue our family's legacy. I most appreciate the League's Observer Corps that empowers local citizens to monitor local governmental meetings and report back to the community. But mostly, I love the friendship and comradery with other members.”

Bryn Bird, Granville

The League Organization

The League of Women Voters is a multi-level organization. When you join locally, you are also a member of the State and US League. Each level plays a role in **Making Democracy Work**.

- LWVUS: Establishes positions on key issues based on state consensus. Lobbies federal office holders on behalf of those issue. Advocates for and defends democratic principles. Maintains support tools, such as Vote411. Supports state leagues in education, advocacy, and legal action.
 - LWVO: Establishes positions on state issues based on consensus across Ohio Local Leagues. Lobbies state office holders on behalf of those issues. Advocates for and defends democratic principles. Manages media communication on state actions. Facilitates annual Statehouse Day and other informational initiatives. Supports local leagues in education, advocacy, and legal action.
 - LWVLC: Seeks to educate our community on local issues and candidates. Organizes voter registration drives. Manages local Vote411 information. Facilitates candidate forums.
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At each level, the League is governed by volunteer officers and boards of directors. LWVLC is required to:

- Maintain bylaws, the first three articles are mandated by LWVUS.
- Maintain a nonpartisan policy.
- Conduct an annual meeting.
- Hold regular Board meetings.
- Meet financial obligations.

The LWVLC Leadership

The Leadership of the LWVLC consists of the elected offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The officers work with an active Board of Directors, many of whom also serve as committee chairs.

Current officers and board members are listed on our website:

<http://lwvlickingcounty.org/about>

Our History

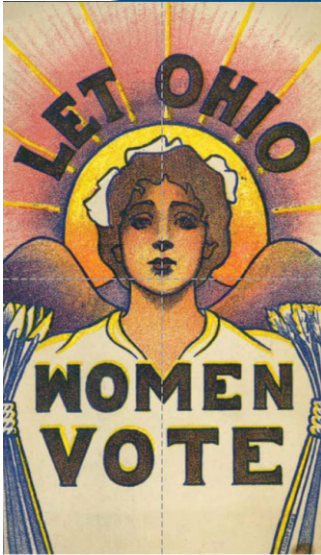


Photo provided courtesy of the Ohio History Connection (AL01124)

The National League of Women Voters (LWVUS) was officially founded in Chicago on February 14, 1920 by Carrie Chapman Catt, just six months before the 19th amendment was ratified, and women won the vote. Formed by the suffragists of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, the League began as a "mighty political experiment" designed to help 20 million women carry out their new responsibilities as voters.

After it passed in the House and Senate, the final hurdle for the 19th Amendment was ratification by the states. As anti-suffrage groups still fought to oppose ratification, suffrage leaders mobilized to continue their pressure campaign in the states. Ohio ratified the Amendment on June 16, 1919. Finally, the Amendment was ratified in Tennessee and officially made law on August 26, 1920.

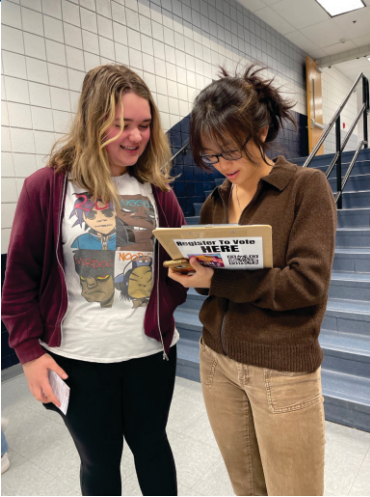
It was then, and is now, a nonpartisan organization. LWVUS founders believed that maintaining a nonpartisan stance would protect the fledgling organization from becoming mired in the party politics of the day. However, members were encouraged to be political themselves, by educating citizens about, and lobbying for, government and social reform legislation.

Over the last century, we've fought for election protection, democratic reforms, and equal access to the ballot—all while maintaining our commitment to nonpartisanship and fostering an informed electorate. As we look into our next hundred years, we aim to build power for the next generation of women leaders and voting rights activists.

The League of Women Voters of Licking County sprang to life in August 2017 at a general meeting in Newark, Ohio attended by about 40 women and men. It welcomes anyone in the county who wants to learn about political issues and support the democratic process through civic discourse, voter registration, and voter education.

The League is not entirely new in Licking County. Previously, it thrived for decades as the Licking County League of Women Voters (compare the wording to our current name) but disbanded in the 1990s. Now after more than 20 years it reappears to address the challenges and opportunities of a new political era.

Find out more: LWVO.org; LWVUS.org



“The League has always been a critical “connector” for me. Through the League I learn about important local, state, and national issues, develop my leadership skills, take positive action in my community—and make good friends in the process.”

Carol Apacki, Granville

LWVLC Principles

The League of Women Voters of Licking County believes:

- in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States;
- that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible;
- that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination;
- that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among its different agencies and levels;
- that responsible government is responsive to the will of the people;
- that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems; and
- that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of an international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

Our Program of Action

Making Democracy Work is the theme of our League program at the local, state, and national levels. As the theme makes clear, our core program is to advance the practice of democracy through study and action. We advocate a free, fair, and accessible electoral system through our focus on voting rights, improving elections, campaign finance/money in politics, and redistricting. We advocate these practices at the local level through a number of activities and projects outlined below.

Voter Registration

The League is perhaps best known for voter registration and encouraging citizen participation in elections and local government. We help to register voters at local high schools, college activity fairs and many local community festivals and events.

Educational Events & Candidate Forums

The League organizes panel discussions and speakers on a variety of topics of community interest. We also co-sponsor nonpartisan candidate forums and meet-the-candidate nights so voters can learn more about local candidates and their positions. The League has hosted in-person and on-line forums for candidates seeking election to Granville Village Council, Newark City Council and the Boards of Education for many local school districts.

VOTE411

Created by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF), VOTE411.org is a “one-stop-shop” for election-related information. VOTE411.org includes information on absentee ballots, early voting options, ID requirements, polling place locations and information on candidates. Our local League collects information from local candidates to create the VOTE411 Voter Guide which allows candidates to share where they stand on issues that are important to our community.



Observer Corps

Throughout its history, the League of Women Voters has been a strong advocate for government openness and transparency. Observer Corps volunteers monitor local government bodies to ensure they follow Ohio Sunshine Laws. This important law protects citizens' right to know and requires adequate public notice of any proposed actions, open meetings and accessible public records.

Advocacy

League leaders and members meet with elected officials, share action alerts, coordinate postcard campaigns and author letters to the editor on issues that are important to our community. The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any political party or candidate for elective office, but we do advocate on ballot issues and local, state and national legislation related to issues on which the League has taken a formal position.

Community Service

League leaders and members are active and engaged in our community. The League partners with other local charities and organizations to mobilize volunteers and participate in clothing, book & food drives, MLK Day events Habitat for Humanity builds and many other community events.



Committees and Other Projects

The committees listed below are responsible for planning and organizing a variety of League projects and activities each year. To get involved in any of these activities, please contact us at: lwvlickingcounty@gmail.com

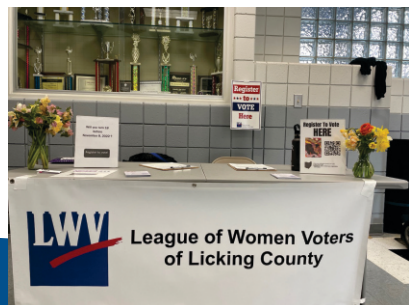
Voter Services
Member Services
Communication
Good Government
Budget & Finance
Nominating

The Annual Meeting

Each Local League must hold an annual meeting to elect officers and adopt the Program for the next year. LWVLC holds its annual meeting in April of each year. All members are encouraged to attend. A quorum must be present to conduct business.

"I have long been impressed with the efforts of the League to educate voters and help ensure free and fair elections. I joined the League to further this work as we all must fight for these freedoms if they are to stay in place. League work is also enjoyable and fun"

Tom Hall, Newark





League Lingo

ACTION: Promoting the League's positions on local, state and national public policy issues to government officials, the media and the public.

ACTION ALERT: Action alerts are how we inform and mobilize people on critical and timely policy issues. These may be activated by a request from the LWVUS or LWVO to take action in support of a League position.

ANNUAL MEETING: Local year-end business meeting to elect officers and directors, vote on bylaw changes and adopt a budget and program of work for the next year.

CONSENSUS: Collective opinion of a substantial number of League members, representative of the membership as a whole, after objective study of an issue.

CONCURRENCE: Agreement by League members with a position on an issue reached by a small group of members or by another League.


CONVENTION: A state or national League meeting held every other year at which delegates elect officers and directors for the biennium, adopt program, make bylaw changes and adopt a budget, usually for one year. Local Leagues send delegates to state convention; local and state Leagues send delegates to national convention.

COUNCIL: An assembly of delegates held in alternate years to adopt a budget and assess program developments. Local Leagues send delegates to state council, state Leagues send 6 delegates to national council.

EDUCATION FUND: The tax-deductible arm of national, state and large local Leagues, handling funds to be used only for educational purposes, not for action on issues.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBER: A person who has been a member for 50 years or more. Life members are excused from dues payment and their Leagues pay no per member payment (PMP) for them.

ILO: Acronym for an Inter-League Organization, formed by local Leagues within a county, metropolitan area or region to act on issues that are beyond the local League area in scope.



LOBBY CORPS: The LWV of Ohio Lobby Corps consists of member volunteers across the state who work to track and influence state-level policy. Their dedication and hard work have allowed the League to be active and effective in improving the lives of Ohioans for almost 100 years.

MAL: Acronym for Member-At-Large, a member who resides outside the area of, and is not enrolled in, a local League.

MAL UNIT: A state-recognized group of Members-At-Large, in an area where there is no local League

PMP: Acronym for Per Member Payment, the amount of money paid to the LWVUS and the state League on behalf of each member.

POSITION: A statement of the League's point of view on an issue, arrived at through member study and agreement (consensus or concurrence), approved by the appropriate board and used as a basis for League action.

PRINCIPLES: Governmental standards and policies supported by the League as a whole. They constitute the authorization for adoption of program at all levels.

PROGRAM: Selected governmental issues chosen by members at the local, state and national levels for study and action.

PROGRAMS: Plans for speakers, discussion or other activities for League meetings.

UNIT: Groupings of members within large local Leagues to provide more opportunity for discussion. Units may be time-oriented (day, evening, lunch hour), geographically oriented, or both.

VOTE411.ORG: Our online voter guide (<https://www.vote411.org>).

VOTERS' GUIDE: Nonpartisan publication giving candidates' qualifications and positions on selected issues.

VOTER SERVICES: Year-round activity to help citizens be politically effective and to encourage their participation in the political process. Registering voters and presenting factual, nonpartisan information on candidates and election issues are basic voter services activities.





