



The Voter

February 2018

League of Women Voters of the Perrysburg Area

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Perrysburg City Administrator Bridgette Kabat Will Speak at the February 13 Topical Tuesday

Perrysburg City Administrator Bridgette Kabat will be the guest speaker at our Tuesday, February 13 meeting.

The Perrysburg League, in conjunction with Way Library, will host the Topical Tuesday meeting at the library at **2 p.m.**

Ms. Kabat will give a State of the City presentation. She plans to touch on such topics as the proposed new fire station and the transportation levy.

The Perrysburg Transit Levy will be on the May primary ballot. It is a renewal levy and will cost taxpayers \$4 per month for a \$200,000 home.

The League has voted to support the levy. It is important because it offers a transportation alternative to citizens in our community with handicaps, as well as our senior citizens.

If you have questions or thoughts you would like to share with our city administrator, please be sure to attend this meeting. There will be a question and answer time.



Bridgette Kabat

Ms. Kabat has worked as administrator since July 2012. She plans, coordinates and

Please note that this meeting will take place in the afternoon.

directs the overall operations of the city. She also ensures that each department, division and office is providing adequate service to the citizens of Perrysburg. She serves as the director of Public Safety as well.

Before joining the city of Perrysburg, Ms. Kabat was the chief of Staff and Assistant County Administrator for the Board of Lucas County Commissioners.

She holds a bachelor of business administration degree from the University of Toledo.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend this topical and informative meeting — please ask a neighbor or a friend to join you. Refreshments will be served.

New E-mail Addresses

Please make the following email address changes in your membership directories:

Carol Russell —
carol.russell41@gmail.com

Carol Stocking —
cmstocking@gmail.com

Chuck Stocking —
cstocking@pbenet.com



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Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Web Site

www.perrysburg.oh.lwvnet.org

President's Letter

Dear League Members,

This will be a short letter, as I hope all of you will read the two excellent articles on **Fair Districts=Fair Elections: Making your Vote Count which appear elsewhere in the Voter.**

Other news that should be noted is that the LWVUS will continue their main focus on the Campaign for Making Democracy Work (MDW) with special emphasis on protecting voter rights. Other topics may pop up such as the Dream Act and immigration reform, climate change and health care defense. As members of the League we should pay attention to these topics and read and share with our friends our thoughts and concerns.

I am happy to be a member of the League of Women Voters of Perrysburg,

Nancy Kelley

Finance Drive Report

Thank you to all who contributed to a very successful Finance Drive this year!

The Finance Drive Committee recently sent out letters to LWVPA members and non-members who have been supporters in the past asking for donations to our League.

To date, we have received \$2,615 from members and \$1,180 from non-members for a total of \$3,795.

Treasurer Sara Weisenburger reports that this is a 36% increase from last year. We owe a round of applause to the members who worked on the campaign and all of our generous contributors.

If you have not made a donation there is still time. Please send your checks to LWVPA, P.O. Box 712, Perrysburg, OH 43552.



Upcoming Meetings

Tuesday, Feb. 13 —
2 p.m. *State of the City of Perrysburg*, Bridgette Kabat, Perrysburg City Administrator

Tuesday, March 13 —
7 p.m. *Voter Participation*, Wood County Board of Elections Representative

Tuesday, April 24, —
7 p.m. *Regional Water Authority*, a panel discussion

Tuesday, May 22 — 11 a.m. *Annual Meeting*. Noon *Luncheon*, Sheila Otto, Storyteller, Carranor Club

** All programs will be at Way Library, unless otherwise noted.*

Natural Resources

Ten Easy Ways to Conserve Water

By Sue Hoffman Natural Resources Chair

Just a quick reminder this month of ways each of us can conserve and protect groundwater.

First, dispose of chemicals properly, so they do not affect our water supplies.

Second, take used motor oil to recycling centers.

Third, limit the amount of fertilizers you use or learn to compost and make your own rich soil.

Fourth, take shorter showers. A low flow shower head saves 15 gallons of water during a ten minute shower (National Geographic).

Fifth, shut water off while you are brushing your teeth.

Sixth, run full loads of laundry and dishes.

Seventh, check for leaky faucets and fix them.

Eighth, buy recycled goods and buy only what you need. According to National Geographic, it takes about 100 gallons of water to grow and process one pound of cotton, and the average American goes through about 35 pounds of new cotton material each year.

Ninth, recycle paper, because one pound of paper saves about 3.5 gallons of water.

Last, be careful of how much water you use in lawn and garden use.

Even if each of us did two of these things, we would be helping to conserve water.

Fair Districts=Fair Elections: Making Your Vote Count

What do the League of Women Voters of Ohio, Common Cause Ohio, AAUW of Ohio, Ohio Education Association, Ohio Environmental Council and Ohio Farmers Union have in common? They are among the nearly 40 organizations of the Fair Districts=Fair Elections coalition, which is collecting signatures to put a congressional redistricting amendment on the November 2018 ballot.

If the group is successful and collects the required 305,000 signatures, voters can end the practice of partisan gerrymandering in Ohio.

Legislative response

Noting this citizen group's effort, the Ohio legislature began considering a redistricting plan of its own for the primary ballot. Initial drafts did not meet Fair Districts=Fair Election goals of an open, bipartisan process that allows for citizen input and minimizes the division of cities and counties.

After two days of testimony from people urging legislators to do the right thing and not just tweak the current process, the Ohio Senate announced on January 25 that it would not pursue a May Ballot proposal if Fair Districts=Fair Elections did not support it.

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Fair Districts=Fair Elections: Making Your Vote Count

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Redistricting occurs every 10 years, after the new census, to rebalance the districts based on population shifts. When left to the legislature, partisan politics take over.

Drawing districts to favor one party or candidate has been practiced since the 1780s, but the gerrymandering name was not coined until 1812 when Massachusetts Governor Eldridge Gerry signed a bill for a redrawn map that benefitted his party. One contorted district north of Boston was said to resemble a salamander, and the descriptive term "gerrymander" was born. A cartoonist of the time depicted a dragon-like creature with wings and claws.

According to Pamela Karlan, professor of Public Interest Law at Stanford, "It used to be that the ... voters elected their representatives, and now ... every 10 years the representatives choose their constituents."

How is it accomplished?

While it is illegal to draw districts that disenfranchise racial minorities, partisan gerrymandering is common practice, and both political parties are guilty. Using today's technology and available data, cities and counties can be sliced and diced to carve out a district that favors any candidate or party. It's called "cracking" and "packing."

Cracking involves breaking apart groups and spreading them into different districts, where they will be in the minority. Packing results when groups are consolidated into a single district so their strength and influence are contained – Ohio's infamous "snake on the lake."

Comedian and political commentator John Oliver likens cracking and packing to the decision of where to seat your embarrassing relatives at a wedding dinner. Do you want to put them all at one table and contain them, or do you spread them around at different tables to lessen their impact?

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Fair Districts = Fair Elections Update

By Joyce Quinlivan

The Ohio legislature and Fair Districts=Fair Elections have reached a compromise to place a redistricting amendment on the May 2018 ballot. The bipartisan amendment unanimously passed the Ohio senate on February 5 and passed the house by an 83-10 vote on February 6.

The Ohio League of Women Voters/Fair Districts=Fair Elections coalition supports and will campaign for passage of the amendment on the May ballot. However, we will **NOT** stop collecting signatures. By continuing to collect signatures and interacting with the public, we can: 1) indicate our support for the amendment on the May ballot; 2) urge voters to vote for it; and 3) educate voters regarding the amendment and what it does accomplish.

Why are we continuing? 1) We have worked too hard to risk not achieving our goal, should the amendment not pass in May (if we complete our work, we would still have the option of the November ballot). 2) It was our signature collecting success that forced the legislature to respond and compromise in the first place, so let's keep up the pressure should any opposition emerge. 3) We want to demonstrate our success and power!

Information on the specific content of the approved redistricting amendment will be published in future issues of the Voter and is available at www.fairdistricts.com and at www.lwvohio.org.

Special thanks to the following LWVPA members who have been successful in collecting hundreds of signatures at several locations and events: Tulle Campbell, Debra Gorman, Carol Hall, Nancy Kelley, Joyce Quinlivan, Judy Reitzel, Carol Russell, and Jan Samples. The statewide count through December for validated signatures is over 193,000.

LWVPA members and friends who would like to obtain petitions and collect signatures can contact Debra Gorman (debra.greenleygorman@gmail.com) or Joyce Quinlivan (jquinli@yahoo.com).

Fair Districts=Fair Elections: Making Your Vote Count

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Why should voters care?

Brian Carso, J.D., Ph.D., an associate professor of history and government at Misericordia University, says: "The creation of highly partisan, gerrymandered congressional districts may well be the most pernicious problem plaguing our nation's democracy today. You can trace nearly every legislative dysfunction to it – from unfixed problems to partisan gridlock to government shutdowns."

If you are a minority voter in a gerrymandered district, your vote, quite literally, does not count. The district's designed majority will always win.

Gerrymandering also increases extremism in politics. When a candidate is assured of re-election, he/she does not have to be responsive to constituents and does not have to negotiate or compromise.

Why drawing districts should be taken out of the legislature?

The drawing of districts will never be nonpartisan until the legislature no longer controls the process. The Fair Districts=Fair Elections amendment takes the process out of the legislature and transfers it to a bipartisan commission.

Ohio voters in 2015, by a 71 percent margin, created a bipartisan commission to draw general assembly (state house) districts. The Fair Districts=Fair Elections amendment proposes using the same bipartisan commission already approved by voters to draw the U.S. congressional districts.

Voters and minority parties in several states have resorted to the courts for remedy, and those cases are pending in state supreme courts as well as the U.S. Supreme Court. The Pennsylvania Supreme court just last week declared partisan gerrymandering unconstitutional.

Keep the pressure on the Ohio legislature to do the right thing. Sign the Fair Districts=Fair Elections petition to ensure that if the legislature does not act, voters will have the opportunity to vote on the amendment to end gerrymandering in November.

*Judy Kehrle
Redistricting Coordinator
League of Women Voters Toledo-Lucas County*

** This article first appeared the the February 6, 2018 issue of the Sylvania Advantage.*