



The Voter

League of Women Voters of Clermont County www.LWVClermont.com November 2005

CLERMONT COUNTY NEWS:

Orpha Gatch Citizenship Award Acceptance Speech

By Mia Elliott Supe

I cannot begin to tell you what an honor it is to have stood with such incredible ladies at the Orpha Gatch Citizenship Award Banquet. Winning the award is something I will always cherish. Truly in my heart, I believe it was a night for the soldiers and our Military to be recognized and remembered. It was a night I will never forget. Unfortunately I did not take the opportunity to share a few words at the event. I feel silly not have completely read over our directions for the evening. In all honesty I never expected in a million years to be the one chosen out of all of those incredible women. Those that do know me well, know I would never miss an opportunity to speak about our incredible Military. So if it is ok with you, I would like to share a few things now.

The time I spend each day raising attention and support for our Military is truly my calling from God. In the very early days of the war, I felt like there was something I was supposed to be doing. My brother SFC Bobby Elliott, helped me find out just what that was. I have 4 brothers who have all served during wartime. Three during the Vietnam era and my brother Bobby was there at the onset of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I never really understood much when my older brother's were away. I was very young. It wasn't until Bobby went to war and left his family behind that I truly saw and began to understand the sacrifices of these heroes and their families.

9/11 changed our world forever. We will never go back to the contentment American once knew. It will be our Military and their families who will pay the highest price to at least try to give us some level of security and peace of mind. Their day-to-day sacrifices are unlike any we can possibly understand. The danger and separation these soldiers and their families deal with every day are truly a way of life. These wives and husbands, mothers and fathers are asked to understand that their loved ones may not return or may return maimed or even come home as a person they barely know.

As citizens of the greatest country God ever made, it is the very least we can do to show our support for these troops. It is so important to let them know that Cincinnati, Miami, Austin, Helena and all across this nation we are here for them. We know they are sacrificing for us and we are thinking about them and praying for them. I have heard many times that some soldiers feel like no one even knows they are there. We should never let that happen. With our grassroots movement of

support, we are reaching soldiers all over the world fighting terrorism, not just Iraq. It seems like almost every day I am blessed by helping a new group of people give support to our troops. Whether it be a ladies auxiliary group in Batavia or Boy Scout group in Boston, folks are reaching out and I have the incredible honor of helping them.

In the next year I am working with my Lead Clermont project team in putting together an incredible event for Armed Service Support Day in May of 2006. Operation Spotlight Military. It will be a day of educating, supporting and celebrating our Military and their families. I hope you will join us in this very important event. I will share the details as they are developed. Again I would like to thank the community for the wonderful honor of receiving the Orpha Gatch Citizenship Award.

Clermont Counts Voter Services

By Cyndy Wright

The Voter Services committee supported 5 Candidates' nights in 4 different communities in the pre-election fervor of October. Fifteen League members volunteered about 3 hours each night as moderators, timekeepers, and screeners. During the forum frenzy between October 17-October 24, 2005, more than 40 candidates were given the chance in a non-partisan environment to voice their views on various issues raised by members of the audience. They were allowed opening statements to introduce themselves and outline their qualifications and one-minute closings to ask for the vote. Our Moderators did a superb job of asking the questions and maintaining the integrity of the evening. The Timekeepers worked well as team keeping us on pace and allowing the specified time for each response. The Screeners handled the questions from the audience. They checked for appropriateness and repetition and made sure the question was phrased properly. A **big thank you** to everyone who volunteered!

The Candidate's nights were hosted by the Milford Miami Township Chamber of Commerce, The New Richmond Business Association and the Goshen Chamber of Commerce respectively. Each group did a terrific job of pulling the events together.

Please remember that you can be a Candidate's night volunteer and member of the Voter Services committee. We have an active election year ahead in 2006. The jobs are not hard, but they are extremely important. If your community did not have an opportunity to meet the candidates this way, remind them that this is a free service the CCLWV provides. To schedule future forums please contact Cyndy Wright at 513-576-0600 x239.

Membership Committee Report

The membership committee has much to be thankful for:

- Thanks to all of you who have already paid your 2005-2006 dues!
- Thanks to those who returned the yellow interest sheet with your dues! This has provided valuable information for the committees and officers to enable them to better match volunteers with their interests.
- Thanks to those of you who provided names of perspective new members at the September meeting!

Reminder notices for those who have not yet paid their dues will be going out in the next few weeks. Please don't hesitate to contact Carol Glotfelter (943-9429, glotfelter@fuse.net) if you know of someone who would like to join or would like additional information on the league.

Now You're 18 Program

The "Now You're 18" Program is sponsored by the Clermont County League of Women Voters and is made possible through a grant from the Clermont County Bar Association. It explains the need for eighteen year olds to be aware of their status as an adult and of their legal requirements and rights. Each high school in Clermont County was mailed a letter about the program which also indicated the availability of the program this year.

A booklet is supplied to each senior and an attorney or person with legal knowledge discusses the legal issues they are now facing. A league representative will introduce information about the League of Women Voters and introduce the speakers. **We need volunteers for this task.** The presentations will take place in the spring of 2006 and they are usually in the mornings at the schools. It can be interesting and rewarding to hear the students' comments and questions and the attorney's responses. There is still plenty of time to consider this project as a volunteer activity. If you would like to help with contacting schools or volunteering for the project, please contact Mary Sue Roberts at 513-831-6144.

Clermont County League of Women Voters November Meeting:

The November General Meeting for CCLWV will be on November 29, at 7:00 at the Receptions East in Eastgate. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. and the Speaker will begin at 7:00 p.m. The November speaker will be Major Jeff LeRoy.

Major LeRoy, a graduate of West Point, has served in Army units in the United States and Europe. He has been deployed to Bosnia, Kosovo and most recently, to Hurricane Katrina relief. Major LeRoy is a Clermont County resident who works at Proctor and Gamble as a manager in Baby Care, and currently serves as a member of the Ohio National Guard's 2nd Squadron, 107th Cavalry. Last year, his National Guard unit was mobilized for the global war on terrorism and Jeff spent ten months away from home, deploying in Kosovo in Eastern Europe.

Major LeRoy will talk about his experiences from his service in Kosovo where he served as the deputy commander for 350 soldiers that patrolled a rugged area of the province. There, he oversaw strategic planning, intelligence analysis and hosted a weekly radio show. Jeff will also share some details about the soldiers he has met during his 14 years of active and reserve duty, including those now serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

UPCOMING LEAGUE MEETINGS:

November 29 – Major Jeffrey LeRoy (recently returned from Iraq)

December 4th – Holiday Part at Sondra Katkins

January 24th – Education Funding – Jane Sonenshein

February 28th – Public Libraries – Leslie Massey and Liz Fiene

March 28th – Land Use (Ohio Voter)

April 25th – Valley View – Joy Dorsey

May 23rd – “Annual Meeting”

HOLIDAY PARTY - DECEMBER 4TH AT 5:00 PM

Sondra Katkins
662 Hobby Horse Lane
Milford, Ohio

Everyone bring a covered dish.

OHIO LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NEWS:

Excerpts from the Co-Presidents’ Desk: Advocacy that Packs a Punch

Carol Gibson and Linda D. Lalley

Legislators want to hear directly from their constituents. Does that mean League’s effort to speak out as one voice is less important? No, of course not. All fund raisers know that it’s a bad idea to rely on a single message. The same thing is true when approaching our government officials.

We suspect that the League is heard by politicians as though it is an old fashioned dad: rational, informed, stern. Legislators don’t always act like they are listening, but our message seeps in. Individual voters get a more noticeable response because legislators directly see potential future votes.

As League members and individual voters, we can deliver a “one-two” punch. Nothing is more effective than a rational, informed voter communicating directly with legislators. We combine good information and individual voters. How we do this decade after decade is due in large part to the structure of the League. Good government groups abound that advocate for the same issues we support. Unlike the others though, our strength comes from our grassroots organization. Our members are involved and paying attention.

When we all pull together, we can be an especially powerful voice on issues affecting each of us every day. Join our Action Alert list. The next time a call for action comes, respond and bring the full force of the league to bear – individuals across the state advocating for policies on which we all agree. The League is the place to engage, grow and speak out.

LEAGUE WITHDRAWS SUPPORT FROM HB234

Deploing the plan to require identification from absentee voters in a hastily amended bill, the League of Women Voters of Ohio announced that it is withdrawing its support from House Bill 234 (Wolpert).

The original bill, which would allow 17-year-old high school seniors to be hired as poll workers, passed the House in June. A substitute bill is to be introduced in the Senate committee on October 11 and voted out on October 12. Sub HB 234 adds no-excuse absentee voting, but also adds identification requirements for all absentee voters. The League objects both to the irresponsible haste of the process and to the unnecessary and voting-suppression effect of requiring ID.

Pointing out that the ID requirement could fall particularly heavily on voters such as those confined to nursing homes and in the military, LWVO co-president Carol Gibson remarked, "They seem to be giving absentee voting with one hand and taking it away with the other."

Co-president Linda Lalley added, "Why are they adding more ID requirements instead of enforcing the current requirement to compare the signature to the voter registration signature?"

Because of the haste to rush this flawed bill into law and because its effect could be to suppress the vote, the League is withdrawing its support from Sub HB 234.

NATIONAL NEWS AND EVENTS:

The Truth About the LWVUS and Member Email Addresses

We know Leagues are working to update and add member email addresses into the database, and we thank you for that. A few reminders about the LWVUS and email:

- The LWVUS *never* sells or exchanges member or donor email addresses.
- The LWVUS *never* uses member email addresses to renew local League members or solicit Nationally Recruited Members (NRMs). LWVUS only acquires NRMs through lists from other groups OR from lapsed local members (only after a two-year lapsed period). This process helps all Leagues find new prospects, and we strongly encourage local Leagues to reach out, involve and renew NRMs locally.
- The LWVUS *never* spam members. Most members receive only one email each month – the LeaguE-Voice newsletter – unless they have specifically [signed up](#) to receive LWVUS Action Alerts or to be part of a discussion list.

Thank you again for updating member email addresses via the online database

Oppose Restrictions on Voter Registration: Action Needed on HR 1461

On October 26, the House of Representatives passed the Federal Housing Reform Act, H.R. 1461, with an amendment that limits the ability of American citizens to

engage in our democratic process. The League of Women Voters opposed the amendment, which was introduced by Representative Oxley and passed 210-205.

Alarming, HR 1461 passed with an amendment introduced by Representative Oxley that restricts non-profit organizations from participating in non-partisan political activities. It blocks non-profits from engaging in non-partisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote activities in the 12 months prior to applying for grants through the Affordable Housing Fund. The bill further prohibits non-profits that receive grant funds from subsequently engaging in these very important activities.

The provision is very broad, prohibiting non-partisan voter registration at any time, not just prior to an election, and barring non-profit organizations from receiving a housing grant if it is merely "affiliated" with a group that engages in any prohibited political activity.

Let your Representative in the U.S. House know that you opposed the Oxley amendment to H.R. 1461. Thank those who voted no on the amendment. Express your disappointment to those who voted yes on this undemocratic amendment that restricts voter registration activities by non-profit organizations. Phone calls can be made through the Capitol Hill switchboard at 202-224-3121 or 202-225-3121. Or, simply enter your zip code above to send an email to your Representative now!

League of Women Voters Joins Host of Other Agencies in a Respond to Post-Hurricane Attacks on Social Programs

The League has been concerned by the many attempts to use the aftermath of the hurricanes as a pretext for rolling back important social protections. The following is an Excerpt from Letter to Senator and/or Representative October 6, 2005

Dear Senator or Representative:

As have all Americans, we have witnessed with grief and frustration the loss of life, homes, and livelihood in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. We are part of the human needs community. Many of us are providing people and resources to help those so harshly affected, especially low-income individuals and families. We write concerning the ways Congress should address the nation's needs at this time.

The current outpouring of assistance by individuals, religious groups and other organizations, while critical to peoples' needs, cannot substitute for the necessary role of government to help people meet their basic needs and to help families and communities rebuild their lives. We urge your leadership to ensure that the federal government fulfills its essential role to enable people across this nation to secure the basics: jobs, income when work is not available, health care, food, education, child care, and housing. Leadership requires making the right choices – protecting and expanding the capacity of the federal government to respond by preserving and increasing funding for vital services and not sapping revenues through misdirected tax cuts.

Congress has taken important first steps. It has enacted some relief measures and has postponed both additional costly tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans and cuts in basic services such as Medicaid and Food Stamps. In a time when hundreds

of thousands of people have lost loved ones, homes, jobs, cars, health insurance, and every other security, it is essential that Congress turn decisively to offering help.

*For this reason, we feel most strongly that **Congress must not just delay such service cuts and tax cuts – it must abandon them.** The need for expanded help is layered on top of already urgent needs that would not be met if the cuts occurred. For the children, families, elders and people with disabilities we serve, we urge you to oppose cuts in Medicaid, Food Stamps, and other vital assistance that would lead to reduced help for low-income people, and to focus instead on policies that will help people move out of poverty. We also urge you to oppose tax cuts that would reduce the revenues that enable this nation to meet its urgent needs – both immediately and over the long term.*

As you consider legislation and appropriations to respond to this disaster, please apply these principles:

- **Increased need requires increased funding.** *Additional housing, jobs, income supports and other services require additional funding and must not be paid for by cutting already scarce resources utilized by other low-income people.*
- **We are one nation and must share the responsibility of rebuilding.** *Just as Congress must reject cuts in services that vulnerable people now need more than ever, it must reject tax cuts for those who already have the most that deprive the nation of the resources needed to save people and rebuild communities.*
- **Survivors of disaster need simple, streamlined access to essential services.** *Having been through so much, people must be able to secure Medicaid, nutrition assistance, unemployment compensation, education, Head Start, child care, housing, energy aid, and other services subject to as little red tape as possible.*
- **All of Katrina's victims, as all of America's needy people, deserve to be assisted with dignity.** *Some of Katrina's victims may be ineligible for cash assistance and services under current federal law, because they are not caring for children, are immigrants, or were homeless before the storm. These individuals must also be helped because it would be unconscionable to ignore their desperate situations.*

We look forward to working with you in the difficult weeks and months ahead.

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