



THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

THE VOTER

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March, 2014

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This Month

AGRICULTURE UPDATE STUDY

March is upon us, bringing both the beginning of Spring and the eagerly anticipated **LWVUS Agriculture Position Update Study**. As we saw in the last edition of the *Voter*, there are over four dozen questions, which puts a premium on the time we have for discussion at our unit meetings. The Natural Resources Committee is offering two steps that can make the process a bit easier and, thus, make our meetings more productive.



First is to truly know what consensus is. While the thesaurus offers comforting synonyms like "agreement, harmony, unity" and more, the LWV website offers more concrete advice...

Within the League, consensus means agreement among members or "sense of the meeting." It does not denote a simple majority, nor does it require unanimity, yet it reflects what League members in general think on a given subject. Consensus is the goal of League studies and all League action is based on the consensus reached. For the League to arrive at meaningful consensus, each member must keep abreast of the issues, attend consensus meetings, and express ideas freely.

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The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to all women and men over 18. For information call 513-281-8683, or write to the LWVCA office at 103 Wm H Taft Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45219, or email at info@lwvcincinnati.org

As we discuss these important issues, we should try to focus on the "sense of the meeting" to answer the questions. Don't get bogged down in long arguments to change the opinions of one or two members. There will be room on the question sheets for comments and a strong minority dissent should be noted. If consensus cannot be reached, no problem. One aspect of a study is to determine what issues are either so complex or controversial that we do not have a single opinion.



Second, decide what subjects are important to you. Know what you want to spend time discussing and research the materials provided by the Agriculture Update Study Committee. These can be found within this *Voter*, or online at www.lwvca.org (click on "study guide" under "Right Now"). Let your fellow unit members know if something is important so they can do their reading as well. Chances are, they have certain subjects important to them as well that they would like you to learn more about.

Finally, take a look at our March Calendar, and pick a Unit Meeting that fits your schedule. (Find the calendar on the last page of this *Voter*, or online at www.lwvca.org.) We really want your thoughts.

If you only attend one unit meeting this year, make it this meeting. Invite unit members that have not attended recently. Invite new members too. This is the one subject that we have discussed in recent history that everyone should have strong, well-informed opinions about. Support the grassroots nature of your league.

LWV DIVERSITY POLICY

The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making.

The LWVCA affirms its commitment to actively seek diversity in its membership, leadership and programs.



LWVCA Education Fund is a member of Community Shares

CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER

We hope you all felt the energy we experienced in the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Hall of Mirrors at the Susan B. Anthony Luncheon on February 8. If you missed the event, you missed hearing a stimulating speaker who told us how to connect with the public, especially the younger generation. In attendance were many of our Act One members who are already participating in League activities, and our plan is to continue to encourage them all to help us make a difference in the Cincinnati area.



Many thanks go to those who helped to make this event a success: Phyllis Nesselroad, our Administration Manager, took care of many details, keeping track of activities the rest of us were doing; Sandra Mowell, April Piatt and Sara Johnson coordinated the raffle tables, donations, and program ads; Jená Bradley and Margaret Standriff helped Sandra with the raffle itself. Pinky Kocoshis and Bridgett Pincus took care of the table decorations with the help of Dee Shaffer and Piepmeier the Florist; Kit Berger did the invitations and programs; Jay Nesselroad assisted in many ways, including photography; Burt Roehr, Pinky Kocoshis, Linda Burton and Joan Honeck manned the registration table; and all members who attended were very gracious to all our guests.

Our Board has been busy in the background. Recently, we sent a letter to the Editor of *The Enquirer* asking that the Board of Elections not move the early voting operations out of the downtown area. After seeing our letter, the ACLU of Ohio asked to join us in a joint press conference to urge that, even if the BOE decides to move the bulk of its operations to Mt. Airy, they keep a site open downtown for early voting and filings by candidates and issue groups. The coverage of our press conference was upstaged by the restaurant barge breaking loose that morning, but WCPO did post a report of our conference on its website. We were able to make other contacts with the media, as well, for future needs.

Melissa Currence is working with her Nominating committee to fill Board positions for next year, but don't even wait for her to ask! Volunteer!!! We are open to new ways to fulfill our mission of educating voters, and there is a place for everyone to help. We've had a wonderful Board this year and look forward to another.

Thanks again for your active interest and support.

In League,

Helen and Don Rhoad

2013-15 Co-Presidents

Save the Date!

ANNUAL MEETING MAY 20, 2014

Mark your calendars *now* for Tuesday, May 20 for Annual Meeting! We will gather once again in the Geier Room of Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church. Plan to attend for good food, great conversation, be proud of our accomplishments this past year, and conduct the business of our local League.

Anyone interested in helping plan this year's event, please contact Pinky Kocoshis.

NOW AVAILABLE ON THE LWVUS WEBSITE

* Study Guide - Agriculture
Consensus Questions. [www.lwv.org/
content/discussion-guide-consensus-
questions](http://www.lwv.org/content/discussion-guide-consensus-questions)

This is a good primer for the agricultural issues behind each question.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: IT MAKES NO SENSE TO MOVE VOTING

The following is the text of the "Letter-to-the-Editor" sent by our Co-Presidents published by the Cincinnati Enquirer on Jan. 28, 2014:

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in government. Ensuring that all citizens have equal access to vote is our highest priority. For that reason the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area strongly urges the Hamilton County Board of Elections to maintain an office and early voting site in the Downtown area to enable and encourage more residents to vote in each election.

Moving the office from Downtown to the neighborhood of Mount Airy, about 9 miles northwest of the city center, will make it more difficult for many voters to reach the Board of Elections. About 14 percent of Hamilton County citizens do not have cars. The Metro bus system routes require people to take a bus Downtown, wait for another bus to Mount Airy, then take an hour bus ride to the new BOE. The return trip would be equally arduous. This seems unnecessary, when the current location is already Downtown, eliminating two additional legs of the journey.

The proposed new site is not easy to find nor is it along major highways. Many citizens with cars will find a longer commute to the new location than the current one.

Just last week, the Presidential Commission on Election Administration submitted its report to President Barack Obama after six months of examining voter administration processes. This report refers to the importance of considering populations that must use public transportation to reach their voting locations. To do so will prevent a decline in voter participation caused by voting locations becoming less accessible.

In November 2012, approximately 24,000 people voted at the Board of Elections Downtown. We believe that it makes no sense to require these voters to go to a less accessible location.

By Don and Helen Rhoad, Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area



VOTE411 IS COMING!

By Melissa Currence, LWVCA VOTE411 Coordinator

LWVCA will soon be using Vote411.org as our election information website starting with the May 6 primary. It will take the place of SmartVoter.

Launched by the League of Women Voters of the United States Education Fund in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides nonpartisan information to the public with both general and state-specific information on the following aspects of the election process:

- Absentee ballot information
- Ballot measure information (where applicable)
- Early voting options (where applicable)
- Election dates
- Factual data on candidates in various federal, state and local races
- General information on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye
- ID requirements
- Polling place locations
- Registration deadlines
- Voter qualifications
- Voter registration forms
- Voting machines

An important component of VOTE411.org is the polling place locator, which enables users to type in their address and retrieve the poll location for the voting precinct in which that address is located. The League has found that this is among the most sought after information in the immediate days leading up to, and on, Election Day.

27th Annual Susan B. Anthony Luncheon

Feb. 8, 2014 - Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza

QUOTE of the SUSAN B. ANTHONY DAY

“The entire 2012 presidential election came down to four or five states. Unfortunately for many, they were the states of confusion, dismay, anxiety and despair, so nourishing the next generation of voters is very important. We all have that responsibility, and the work you do everyday in the LWV is of great value.”

Santa Ono, President, University of Cincinnati, Keynote Speech of the 27th Annual Susan B. Anthony Luncheon



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

LWVCA appreciates the generous donations of items and services for our Raffle from these businesses and individuals:

Appearance Plus Cleaners
As You Like It Hair Design
Café Mediterranean, Fahri Ozdil –owner
Cincinnati Art Museum
Cincinnati Ballet
Cincinnati Bengals
Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park
Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati
Ferrari's Little Italy
Frameworks, Rick Granick – CPF
Graeter's
Half Price Books - Montgomery Road
Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, Orchids at Palm Court
King's Island – KI Cares
The Kroger Company
The Loving Hut
LWVCA Units – Anderson, Warren/Butler Counties
Ernest and Sandra Mowell
Pomodori's
Red Dog Pet Resort & Spa
Don and Helen Rhoad
Neil Schapera, Alexander Technique of Cincinnati
Dee Shaffer
Wild Birds Unlimited - Montgomery Store



**WOMAN’S CITY CLUB PRESENTS
CANDY CROWLEY**

“The White House vs. Capitol Hill”

Co-Sponsored by LWVCA

Thursday, March 13 at 7:30 pm

**SPECIAL DEAL THROUGH THE LEAGUE—
SEE PAGE 22.**



Candy Crowley

LWVCA HOSTS VISITORS FROM COLOMBIA

By Burt Roehr, LWVCA Board Secretary

On February 11, five of our local League members had a wonderful opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with three politically active citizens from Colombia, South America through a visit arranged by the Greater Cincinnati World Affairs Council. Our visitors included Ms. Aura Aguilar Moreno, Advisor, Ethnic Affairs, Colombian Liberal Party; Mr. Luis Hurtado Montoya, Deputy, Cauca Departmental Assembly; and Mr. Angel Mosquera Martinez, Regional Coordinator, Electoral Observation Mission and Advisor, Afro-Colombian Communities. Ms. Natasha Bonilla was the translator, and what a terrific job she did! Janice’s husband, Roberto, joined us as well and joined in the discussion in both English and Spanish!

Our conversation began with our describing the League of Women Voters and our activities connected with voting and educating voters about candidates and issues. Our visitors described their elections, how candidates reach the ballot, and some of the difficulties voters face in order to cast their votes. We even shared some frustration about campaign finance issues. The session lasted only an hour, which sped by. It was fun and provided a perspective that could never be found elsewhere.

The League receives several invitations to host visitors for the World Affairs Council. When the opportunity to meet with visitors like this arises again, Leaguers should take advantage of it and volunteer to participate!



Pictured are Angel Daniel Mosquera Martinez, Luis Gabriel Hurtado Montoya and Vanessa Aguilar Moreno, all from Colombia; and Janice Alvarado, Carolyn Miller, Burt Roehr, Christina Brown and Janet Smith from the League.

HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACE IS OPEN UNTIL MARCH 31, 2014

Enroll now in a plan that covers essential benefits, pre-existing conditions, and more. Plus, see if you qualify for lower costs. Even if you *think* you cannot afford health insurance, apply anyway. You can search for options that meet your medical needs and budget; and you *may* qualify for tax credits to assist with payments. **Help is available however you apply!**

Here are several ways to apply:

1. Enroll online at Healthcare.gov. The site will walk you step by step through the enrollment process. Chat is available for questions.
2. Enroll by phone. Individuals and families can call to start or finish an application, enroll or ask a question at [1-800-318-2596](tel:1-800-318-2596); TTY: [1-855-889-4325](tel:1-855-889-4325)- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
3. You can find in-person assisters who give free, unbiased help at <https://localhelp.healthcare.gov>. Enter your City, State, or zip code and a list of local organizations providing free enrollment aid will be provided. Contact one and make an appointment.

OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR 2014 ENDS ON MARCH 31. BEGIN NOW, SO YOU HAVE TIME TO MAKE A CONSIDERED CHOICE.

Special Note: Medicaid & CHIP are open enrollment year round. To enroll in Ohio Medicaid, you must go to the Ohio Medicaid website at medicaid.ohio.gov.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OBAMACARE: AN UPDATE ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND MEDICAID EXPANSION IN OHIO

By AIR, Inc

With all the information and misinformation swirling about the Affordable Care Act, even the most knowledgeable citizens need factual updates concerning the implementation of this law. Review a presentation prepared by Trey Daly, Ohio State Director of Enroll America on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the expansion of Medicaid in Ohio. Find this presentation from the January 30 Christ Church Forum at airinc.org.



Beyond Civility: Communication for Effective Governance **Side-by-Side: Chris Monzel & Wendell Young**

Wednesday, March 12 - 6:30-8:00pm

Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Merck Auditorium
620 Oak St (Corner of Oak & Reading), 45206

Our next Side-by-Side event will feature Hamilton County Commissioner Chris Monzel and Cincinnati City Councilman Wendell Young.

From our previous Side-by-Sides, we saw the power of stories to build connections between people. After our Side-by-Side presenters described their families and the people and events that shaped them from childhood, audiences reported in overwhelming percentages that their

most negative assumptions and attitudes about the presenting individuals were softened or even changed.

Doors will open at 5:30 pm for a reception with light refreshments. The program will begin at 6:30 pm and conclude at 8:00 pm. Parking is located on site.

The Side-by-Side series is being co-sponsored by the Hamilton County Republican Party, the Hamilton County Democratic Party, the Charter Committee of Cincinnati, The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, the YWCA and the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area. WCET and WVXU are media partners.

2014 TRU IS NOW AVAILABLE!

By *Melissa Currence, Voter
Service Committee*

LWVCA's 2014 edition of *They Represent Us: A Public Officials Guide for Hamilton County*, also known as TRU, is now available. Copies can be ordered through the LWVCA Office at 513-281-8683, and the online version is available at lwcincinnati.org/publicofficialsguide.html.

This year, we were able to print 8,000 copies. Printing was made possible through the generosity of The Murray and Agnes Seasongood Good Government Foundation, Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati and OneTouchPoint-Berman.



PUBLIC ALLIES, COMMUNITY SHARES HOSTING SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY SEMINARS

By *Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati*

On March 7, April 4, and May 2 at 2:00-4:00pm, Public Allies is hosting a series of Social Justice Advocacy Seminars in partnership with Community Shares at the Mt Auburn Pres. Church 103 W. H. Taft Road Cincinnati. Each seminar will generally build upon the previous session.

Is there room for advocacy or community action in your organization? If you think so,

but are not so sure of how it may fit in, or if you could use some ideas on how to strengthen the advocacy work that already exists at your organization, this might be what you are looking for!



Anyone and everyone from your organization and/or individuals may attend. Please RSVP to Community Shares at 513-475.0475.

If you have any questions/comments/concerns, please feel free to contact Jeniece Jones at Community Shares at 513-475.0475.

CHANGING CO₂URSE SERIES: LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO A GLOBAL CRISIS

By *Nancy Dawley, Natural Resources Committee Chair*

Changing CO₂urse Series continues:

“Revisiting Al Gore's Inconvenient Truth: New Realities and Local Impacts”

This month only—on the *fifth* Sunday! (due to speaker availability)

March 30 7–9 pm

St. Johns UU Church, 302 Resor Ave., Clifton.

In 2007, Al Gore's documentary about climate change, *An Inconvenient Truth*, earned many awards including two Oscars. Al Gore's work was recognized with a Nobel Prize. A lot has happened since 2007. The threat of future climate change has turned into a reality whose effects we see almost every day. How has Al Gore's message changed since 2007? What does climate change mean for Cincinnati?

Larry Falkin, the City of Cincinnati's Director of Environment and Sustainability director, will give the updated Al Gore Climate Reality presentation and discuss what it means locally. In the summer of 2013, Larry spent three days with Al Gore and the Climate Reality Project receiving intensive training for this presentation.

Cosponsors of the series: St. John's Green Sanctuary Partners, Woman's City Club, LWVCA, The Sierra Club, and The Environmental Community Organization (ECO).



DINE & DISH WITH PROF. VERNELLIA RANDALL

By LWV of Greater Dayton

Discover how race, gender and class multiply the effects of discrimination with the LWV of Greater Dayton Area's Dine and Dish with Professor Vernellia Randall on Tuesday March 18, 11:30 a.m.

Professor Randall will speak on Intersectionality: A Look at How Race, Gender and Class Multiply the Effects of Discrimination. Our renowned speaker is Professor Emeritus of the School of Law at the University of Dayton, where she retired in April 2013.

The event will be held at the Dayton Women's Club, 225 N. Ludlow, Dayton, Ohio. Ticket price for lunch is \$35. RSVP to the LWV of Greater Dayton Area's office at 937-228-4041 or purchase your ticket at www.lwvdayton.org.



ACLU ON VOTING RIGHTS

By LWV of Greater Dayton

Adrienne Gavula, from the Columbus office of the Ohio American Civil Liberties Union, will be making a presentation on Voting Rights on Thursday, March 20, 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at the Grace United Methodist Church, 1001 Harvard Blvd. in Dayton.

The ACLU Ohio has been engaged in a statewide effort to educate local communities about the legal rights of persons previously incarcerated, including their right to vote.

Adrienne will also be available to address any recent legislative changes that have occurred or are pending regarding voting rights in Ohio. Many of these are considered controversial and the League of Women Voters Ohio has recently been testifying on several of them in Columbus.

Find out more information at lwvdayton.org or contact the LWV of Greater Dayton Area's office at 937-228-4041.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR LWVO STATEHOUSE DAY AND COUNCIL 2014

By LWV Ohio

Plan to join other League members from around Ohio at this year's Statehouse Day and Council on Wednesday, April 9, 2014. This will be a dynamic, informative day filled with workshops on important public policy issues.

All attendees will have the option of requesting a meeting with their legislator through the LWVO office.

Statehouse Day will be held at Sheraton Hotel at Capitol Square, 75 E. State St., Columbus, OH 43215. The rates are Member \$40, Non-member \$45, Student \$25.

Register online at lwvohio.org or call LWV Ohio at [\(614\) 469-1505](tel:6144691505).

Please note the **registration deadline is Monday, March 24**. After that date, online registration will not be available and a late fee will be charged.



NATIONAL NEWS

PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON ELECTION ADMINISTRATION ISSUES SOLID RECOMMENDATIONS

By LWV United States

Washington, D.C. (01/22/2014) – Today, the Presidential Commission on Election Administration (PCEA) released their report to President Obama outlining how to improve the administration of America’s elections. The League submitted testimony to PCEA in September 2013 that urged the Commission to consider a five-point reform agenda as part of its recommendations.

“Our initial reaction is that there are many good recommendations in the PCEA report and others that we will need to look at more closely to examine the real impact on American voters,” said Elisabeth MacNamara, President of the League of Women Voters of the U.S. “For example, the recommendation for all states to provide for in-person early voting is an important and very positive step,” she said.

“We are pleased to see that the bipartisan Commission was able to roll up their sleeves and get to work on some of the endemic troubles plaguing our nation’s polling places,” added MacNamara. “PCEA’s prescription for what to do about lack of resources, inadequate compliance with federal laws, the need for professionalization of the election workforce, and creating a benchmark of no one waiting to vote longer than 30 minutes, are badly needed fixes for election administrators and voters.”



Elisabeth MacNamara

“The Commission’s report was right to recommend that our nation’s elections professionals should regularly partner with experts in the field of emerging technology,” said MacNamara. “A great example of this is the Commission’s recommendation endorsing Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) transmissions of voter information to elections officials. The League believes electronic transmission should be extended to social service agencies that register voters as well,” MacNamara said. “By adopting such electronic practices, officials can eliminate costly and time consuming steps in election administration, reduce errors and increase the ease and convenience of the elections process for both their workers and for voters.”

“While the League is enthusiastic about online voter registration, the accessibility of these systems continues to be a major concern” noted MacNamara. “The League’s testimony urged the Commission to recommend online voter registration systems designed for all eligible

citizens,” said MacNamara. “But a weakness of the report is the endorsement of online registration systems that many eligible voters can’t use,” MacNamara said. “Of the systems in the Commission’s report, voters must have a driver’s license or a non-driver’s ID in order to register to vote online. This limitation is unnecessary, will substantially reduce the effectiveness of online registration and also raises concerns about the discriminatory effect,” added MacNamara.

“We look forward to working with Commission to implement the best of these recommendations and improve how elections are run across this nation,” concluded MacNamara.

GET YOUR REGISTRATION IN FOR LWVUS CONVENTION 2014 IN DALLAS

By LWVUS

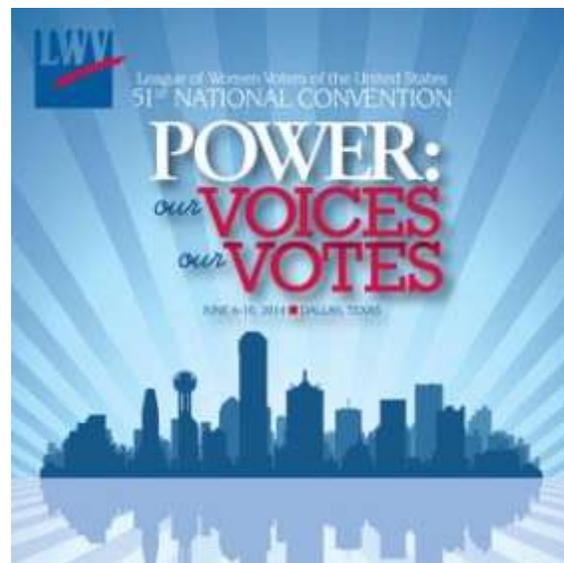
Convention Registrations Are Coming In! Make your plans to attend National Convention today! It will be held in Dallas on June 6-10. The fee is \$335 per person.

When you attend convention, you join national, state and local League leaders from around the country for this lively biennial event - to hear nationally known speakers, learn more about the issues important to the organization and the nation, participate in training sessions and join in the discussion and networking that make the League a strong and vital force in our democracy.

To get started, visit Your Guide to LWVUS Convention 2014 at lww.org/content/your-guide-lwwus-convention-2014

Registration is now open. The \$335 fee includes participation in all trainings, briefings, caucuses, general sessions, and national networking events, and includes the LWVUS-hosted banquet and program on Monday evening. The online registration deadline is May 23, 2014. Registrations after that date will be charged at \$50 late fee. Online registration will remain open until May 31.

Questions? Contact LWVUS staffer Kelly McFarland Stratman at kmcfarland@lww.org



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SERVING AS AN LWVCA DELEGATE AT NATIONAL CONVENTION?

If you are interested in attending the National Convention as a delegate of LWVCA, contact Co-Presidents Helen and Don Rhoad.

KEYSTONE XL REPORT DEEPLY DISAPPOINTING, MISGUIDED

By LWV United States

Statement from Elisabeth MacNamara, President of the League of Women Voters

Washington, DC (January 31, 2014) – “We are deeply disappointed by the Environmental Impact Statement report released today by the U.S. State Department on the Keystone XL (KXL) Pipeline project. We strongly believe that if this project is approved it will have a negative impact on the delicate ecosystem of America’s breadbasket, contribute harmful greenhouse gasses that contribute to climate change, and increase America’s dependence on foreign oil.

“By assuming that Canada will exploit its dirty tar sands no matter what, the report reaches the misguided conclusion that the pipeline will not have a terrible effect on the climate.

“We need international action on climate change, not irresponsible action by Canada, spurred on by the U.S.

“The League urges Secretary Kerry and President Obama to put the health and safety of Americans, and of the world, ahead of blind reliance on fossil fuels and support for development of Canada’s tar sands.

“Granting a permit for the pipeline would be inconsistent with meaningful action on climate change, one of the most serious threats to the environment of our nation and our world. The life-cycle of greenhouse gas emissions from gasoline produced by Canadian tar sands are significantly greater than those of gasoline produced by conventional sources.

“We also hope that the State Department and President Obama will consider the safety of our drinking water and groundwater resources. These resources could affect thousands of Americans in the heartland and threaten the safety of our food supply.

“We urge President Obama to protect people, not polluters, as he makes the final decision on this dangerous pipeline project.”

Agriculture Update Consensus Study Pages

with consensus questions keyed to research papers

There are 11 categories of consensus questions with sub-parts underneath. To help you find information on the issues more easily, we have added links to related LWVUS study papers. It is suggested that you review 1 question at a time, then click on the links and read the background information. Consider what you now understand and what more you need to make a decision. Jot down your thoughts and questions to bring with you to a Unit meeting. At the Unit meeting we will discuss each question and try to reach consensus (Yes, No, or No Consensus).

Please Note: Each question provides an opportunity to comment. Each comment section has a 250 word limit. Please include the letter(s) from each question that is relevant to the comment(s). For example: In question 1, if you wanted to make a comments about Disaster assistance and crop insurance, you would include the letter ‘b’ before your comments on Disaster assistance and ‘c’ before your comments on crop insurance.

Comments:

a: Your comments on disaster assistance would go here.

b: Your comments on crop insurance would go here.

Economic Health of the Agricultural Sector

To answer the first four questions members should be familiar with the pros and cons of current and past agricultural subsidy programs which are described briefly in [United States Department of Agriculture](#) on the USDA, in [Overview of Agricultural Subsidy](#) which describes different types of agricultural subsidies, and in [Overview of Crop Insurance](#) which describes the crop insurance program. Some of the areas of current or potential government support listed in the questions are not covered or only briefly mentioned in the overview materials (e.g., dairy program, livestock program, specialty crops, and best management practices). Members are asked to consider these questions from the perspective of their local and state agricultural interests and knowledge they have obtained from farmers in their area. For cases where there is some relevant discussion for one of the sub-question topics, we have noted the resource paper and section of relevance below.

<i>1. Should government financial support for agriculture be directed to:</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Subsidized agricultural credit (loans) Overview of Agricultural Subsidy page 6 has link to recommended reading that describes 10 agricultural loan programs.			
b) Disaster assistance Overview of Agricultural Subsidy page 3			
c) Crop insurance Overview of Crop Insurance			
d) Farms that supply local and regional markets Overview of Farm Management , pages 1-2 on Farm Characteristics and Consolidation, page 4 on Vertical Integration, and pages 6-7 on Small Farms, Urban Farms, and Local Food Systems; Overview of Animal Management , page 3 on AFO/local farm issues and pages 4-5 on issues of vertical integrations and consolidation.			

<p>e) Subsidized implementation of best management practices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overview of Soil Management, page 2 on Incentives for good soil management; 2. Overview of Water Management, several mentions of incentives to encourage good water management practices throughout the document; 3. Overview of Farm Management, page 5 on Influence of Government Policies provides an illustration of negative incentives for BMP 			
<p>f) Commodity crop programs, e.g., corn, soybeans, sugar, cotton, wheat</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overview of Animal Management, page 5 illustrates how commodity crop subsidies affect animal production choices; 2. United States Department of Agriculture, page 3 mentions current issues concerning commodity crop subsidies; 3. Overview of Agricultural Subsidy, pages 1-3 on descriptions of different types of current subsidies and many of the recommended readings 			
<p>g) Commodity livestock program</p> <p>Not mentioned specifically in any document but indirect subsidies affecting AFO production decisions are mentioned in Overview of Animal Management, page 5</p>			
<p>h) Commodity dairy program</p> <p>Not specifically mentioned in any document but a brief description of current price support program for milk producers is available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk_Income_Loss_Contract_Payments</p>			
<p>i) Specialty crops, e.g. fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc.</p> <p>Not specifically mentioned in terms of support programs but Overview of Farm Management, pages 1-2 on Farm Characteristics and page 5 on Influence of Government Policies is of some relevance</p>			
<p>j) Other production methods, e.g. organic, hydroponic, urban, etc. farms</p> <p>Not specifically mentioned in terms of government support but Overview of Farm Management, page 5 describes Organic Agriculture, and page 6 mentions a variety of other production techniques used by Small Farms/Urban Farms/Local Food Systems</p>			
<p>Comments for discussion:</p>			

<p>2. <i>What changes should government make regarding direct payment programs to farm operators?</i> Note: Farm operators can be anything between family farms to huge corporations. All of the Overview of Agricultural Subsidy paper should be read.</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
<p>a) <i>Eliminate</i> direct payments to farm operators</p>			
<p>b) <i>Update</i> the rules for direct payments to farm operators to support sustainability Definition: A sustainable agriculture must be ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially responsible.</p>			
<p>c) <i>Broaden</i> the types of farms that are eligible</p>			
<p>d) <i>Broaden</i> the types of crops that are eligible Note: Mainly now only commodity crops – not fruits and vegetables.</p>			
<p>e) Effectively <i>enforce</i> existing rules</p>			
<p>Comments for discussion:</p>			

<p>3. <i>What changes to current crop insurance programs should government make?</i> All of the Overview of Crop Insurance should be read.</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
<p>a) Extend to more types of crops</p>			
<p>b) Link to the use of conservation practices</p>			
<p>c) Limit insurance for the cultivation of marginal and environmentally sensitive land</p>			
<p>d) Cap amount of premium subsidy to a single farm operator (see note in question 2)</p>			
<p>Comments for discussion:</p>			

<p>4. <i>Should government act on any of the following?</i> All of the Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), Antitrust Enforcement Agencies and Legislation, Overview of Farm Management papers should be read. Overview of Animal Management – for consideration of <i>local butchering</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No Consensus</p>
<p>a) Revise anti-trust legislation to ensure competitive agricultural markets</p>			
<p>b) Enforce anti-trust laws as they relate to agriculture</p>			
<p>c) Promote alternative marketing systems, including regional hub markets, farmer cooperatives, farm markets, etc.</p>			
<p>Comments for discussion:</p>			

Animal Management

We recommend that you read the entire [Overview of Animal Management](#) paper for helpful background for questions 5 and 6.

Question 5:

- Look in particular at the section on Consolidation (pp. 1-5)
- EPA Regulation of CAFOs (p. 6)
- Right to Farm Laws (p. 7)
- Animal Health and Welfare (p. 7)
- Aquaculture (pp. 11-12)

Question 6:

- Read Consolidation (pp. 1-5)
- Indirect and Direct Subsidy of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (p. 5)
- EPA Regulation of CAFOs (p. 6)
- Right to Farm Laws, (p. 7)
- Aquaculture (pp. 11-12)
- Climate Change (p. 13)

See also [Overview of Soil Management](#) paper, section on Nutrient Management, page 2

<p>5. <i>Which of the following approaches to animal management should government achieve?</i> http://www.lwv.org/content/overview-animal-management</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No Consensus</p>
<p>a) Transparently collect and disclose data about regulated animal feeding operations (AFOs) or aquaculture operations and about the health of animals in such regulated operations</p>			

b) Apply and enforce existing clean air and clean water regulations to animal or seafood management facilities			
Comments for discussion:			

6. Which of the following approaches to animal waste management should government require or bring about?	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies for all regulated AFOs			
b) Prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges (such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program, cost share, loans, etc.) rather than construction of new facilities			
Comments for discussion:			

Research and Development

Research and development (R&D) uses science and engineering to gain a basic understanding of processes and structures of organisms, to create new products or processes for agriculture, to determine health and safety of a product, to determine the environmental impact of a product or process, to develop conservation methods, and to improve efficiency, among other things. R&D utilizes scientific methods and statistical testing to achieve valid repeatable results.

Private corporations, universities, consulting organizations and laboratories, and government agencies perform agricultural R&D. Agricultural research by public universities began in 1862 when the Morrill Act established land grant universities across the United States; much of the basic research on agriculture was developed through these universities. Private R&D is generally more applied than basic and is motivated by the desire to produce a profitable product. Government agencies review this private research when regulatory approval for a product or process is required. And many government agencies conduct their own research.

To learn more about required research and development for agricultural *products and processes*, we recommend you review the study papers addressing

- [Overview of Key Agencies Supporting and Regulating Food and Agriculture](#)
- [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)
- [United States Department of Agriculture](#)
- [USDA's Role in American Nutrition](#)

For an *overview* of public and private R&D funding, see [Overview of Agricultural Subsidy](#).

[Patent and Trademark Office \(USPTO\)](#) discussion of the Bayh-Dole Act is particularly relevant as a driver of agricultural *R&D policy*.

Review the papers [Overview of Plant Breeding, Seed Industry, and Biodiversity](#), [Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System](#), [Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies](#), and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health](#) for information on *specific types of R&D*.

The papers on [Overview of Farm Management](#), [Overview of Pesticide Management](#), [Overview of Water Management](#), [Overview of Animal Management](#) and [Overview of Soil Management](#) provide links to R&D on *agricultural processes*.

In evaluating the materials and suggested references and links, please consider the sources. Blogs, newspaper articles, and information pieces from sources with an identified bias may not necessary reflect all information on the topic and should be treated accordingly. The validity of scientific information increases as hypotheses are repeatedly tested. Thus a *single* paper reporting a research result should not be considered as the final truth.

<p>7. Which of the following approaches to research and development (R&D) should government fund or accomplish?</p> <p>Note: For the purpose of these questions and some questions below, “developed using any new technology” or “new technologies” refer to any of many scientific processes for developing new crops or animals with genetic engineering, nanotechnology or other new techniques, which are not the traditional breeding or hybridization techniques.</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Basic research			
b) Independent third-party (such as an academic institution) risk assessment of products <i>developed using any new technology</i>			
c) Research to assess the impacts of <i>new technologies</i> on human health and the environment, prior to their widespread adoption			
d) Research that advances the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems			
e) Seed banking, research, and other means that promote and preserve genetic diversity			
f) Both transparency in the reporting of research studies related to approval of new products and respect for intellectual property rights of private enterprises engaged in research			
g) Research on long-term effects of new crops, products and processes			

h) Development of new practices and technologies to promote conservation for all types of farms			
Comments for discussion:			

Food Safety

The United States has a complex food system. Risks to food safety can occur during the development of new plant and animal hybrids, during the growing of foods, during the harvest and processing of foods and during shipment and storage. Additional risk may accompany imported foods. Risk includes contamination with chemicals used in production, contamination with bacteria, fungi or viruses from multiple sources, nutrient loss due to processing or production techniques, introduction of allergens or other cross contamination.

To increase food safety, federal agencies have developed a variety of standards, and guidelines. Testing to meet these standards is performed by private groups and governmental agencies. To learn more about safety requirements we recommend you review the paper on [Overview of Key Agencies Supporting and Regulating Food and Agriculture](#). Learn more about the role of the USDA [United States Department of Agriculture](#), the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#), the [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health](#) and the [Interaction of Federal Agencies with Food Safety Missions](#). Please note that in some instances testing and reporting is mandatory and in other instances guidelines are provided with the onus placed on the producer to meet standards. For specific examples of requirements and approaches read the papers on [Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System](#), [Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies](#), [Overview of Pesticide Management](#) and [Overview of Animal Management](#).

Sections of the above papers that are directly relevant to each of the Food Safety consensus questions are listed below, with page references and section names.

8. Which of the following approaches to food safety should government perform or fund?	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for new foods and food additives <i>developed using any new technology</i> (see note below question 7) 8(a) to 8(c) Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System , pages 2-3 (Ht and Bt crops) and pages 4-6 (Regulatory Framework for GE Crops) Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies , pages 3-4 (Safety and Regulation of Nanotechnology) Food Labeling: FDA and USDA , page 4 (Bioengineered Foods) and page 9 (Future of Food Labeling)			

<p>b) Require developers to monitor all food products <i>developed using any new technology</i> after releasing to the market</p>			
<p>c) Withdraw marketing approval if products are shown to be unsafe</p>			
<p>d) Require post-market monitoring of approved pharmaceutical applications in animal production for human health and environmental impacts 8(d) & 8(f) Overview of Animal Management, pages 8-10 (Pharmaceuticals in Animal Feed) Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System, pages 7-8 (GE Animals)</p>			
<p>e) Require developers of new products to provide data and other materials to independent third-parties (such as academic institutions) for pre- and post-market safety assessment as appropriate 8(e) and 8(g) Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System, page 5 (Deregulation paragraphs) Overview of Agricultural Subsidy, pages 4-5 (Indirect Agricultural Subsidies for Research and Development)</p>			
<p>f) Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to treat and control disease</p>			
<p>g) Fund independent third-party (such as academic institutions) risk assessment of long-term and multiple exposures from foods on human health and the environment</p>			
<p>h) Promote crop management practices that decrease dependency on added chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers) 8(h) Overview of Farm Management, pages 4-6 (Sustainable Agriculture and Organic Agriculture) United States Department of Agriculture, pages 3-4 (Current Issues) Overview of Agricultural Subsidy, entire document provides insights on incentives provided by current programs</p>			
<p>i) Fund, train and add personnel for assessment and compliance functions of regulatory agencies 8(i) Interaction of Federal Agencies with Food Safety Missions, page 4 (Current Issues) United States Department of Agriculture, pages 2-3 (Farm Bill and Budget Authorizations)</p>			

Food Labeling: FDA and USDA , page 2 (FDA Funding Concern) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) , page 3 (Federal and State Appropriations)			
Comments for discussion:			

Food Labeling

9. <i>How sufficient are the following regarding current food labeling?</i> We recommend you read all of USDA's Role in American Nutrition and Food Labeling: FDA and USDA .	Insufficient	Sufficient	Too much	No Consensus
a) Nutrition Facts on food labels				
b) Nutrition Facts on food labels as a means of consumer education				
c) Common allergen labeling				
d) Health and ingredient claims that consumers can understand				
Comments for discussion:				

10. <i>Which of the following should government achieve regarding marketing and ingredient claims on food labels?</i> We recommend you read all on Food Labeling: FDA and USDA .	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Define (and approve for use) health and safety marketing terms (e.g. immunity support, humane, pasture-raised, natural, etc.)			
b) Regulate the use of images or other sensory advertising			
c) Require that ingredient marketing claims accurately represent what is in the required ingredient list			
Comments for discussion:			

11. Recognizing that each food developed using any new technology can be unique, and assuming that required food labeling should be useful to consumers, should the following generalized information relating to how products or components are developed be presented on food labels?

See note below question 7. All these questions also assume some percentage threshold of new technology ingredients, such as the 0.9% used in the European Union.

We recommend you read all of [Food Labeling: FDA and USDA](#), [Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System](#) and [Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies](#).

	Not Recommended	Voluntary	Mandatory	No consensus
a) Contains ingredients developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved				
b) Does not contain ingredients developed using any new technology				
c) If meat, fish, eggs, or dairy products are from animals that have consumed feed developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved				
Comments for discussion:				

ALL of the LWVUS research papers, including a glossary of terms, and acronyms can be found on the [LWVUS Agriculture Update Site](#). They include:

- [Leaders' Guide for the Agriculture Update Consensus](#)
- [Overview of Key Agencies Supporting and Regulating Food and Agriculture](#)
- [United States Department of Agriculture](#)
- [USDA's Role in American Nutrition](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)
- [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#)
- [Food Labeling: FDA and USDA](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health](#)
- [Interaction of Federal Agencies with Food Safety Missions](#)
- [Patent and Trademark Office \(USPTO\)](#)
- [Antitrust Enforcement Agencies and Legislation](#)

- [Introduction to Agriculture Technology](#)
- [Overview of Farm Management](#)
- [Overview of Plant Breeding, Seed Industry, and Biodiversity](#)
- [Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food System](#)
- [Overview of Pesticide Management](#)
- [Overview of Soil Management](#)
- [Overview of Water Management](#)
- [Overview of Animal Management](#)
- [Overview of Nanotechnology and Other Technologies](#)
- [Overview of Agricultural Subsidy](#)
- [Overview of Crop Insurance](#)
- [Agriculture Update Acronyms](#)
- [Agriculture Update Glossary](#)

The Voter **Collating Schedule*** **2013 – 2014**

August 22
September *Voter*
LWVCA Board

September 19
October *Voter*
Warren/Butler

October 24
November/December *Voter*
Central Evening

December 19
January *Voter*
Anderson

January 23, 2014
February *Voter*
Eastern Day and Office Volunteers

February 20
March *Voter*
Hilltop North

March 20
April *Voter*
Metro Day

April 17
May/June *Voter*
Northeast Evening

June 19
July/August *Voter*
Hilltop North

**All dates are subject to change. Call Pinky Kocoshis
when your Unit's time is coming up!*

Join the League of Women Voters

Because Democracy is not a spectator sport!

All citizens, male and female, 18 years and older, are welcome. Take the opportunity now to support our work promoting democracy and civic engagement.

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The Voter is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area (LWVCA).

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Melissa Currence and Marty Harrington

Layout/Design:

Marty Harrington and Phyllis Nesselroad

Please submit articles to:

newsletter@lwcincinnati.org

Next deadline: Friday 03/07/2014
for the ***April 2014*** issue



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

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MARCH 2014 - LEAGUE ACTIVITIES: All meetings are open to the public and are held at the League Office, 103 Wm. Howard Taft, *unless otherwise noted*. Bring a friend! (All meeting dates/times subject to change. Please be sure to check the calendar on our website www.lwvcincinnati.org for the most up-to-date meeting and activity information)

Saturday	Mar 1	1 pm	Discussion Leader Briefing for March (<i>Note change in start time</i>)
Tuesday	Mar 4	2 pm	LWVCA Board Meeting
Wednesday	Mar 5	6:30 pm	Communications Committee
Friday	Mar 7		Deadline for submissions for April "Voter"
Monday	Mar 10	Noon	Housing Committee
Monday	Mar 10	7 pm	Northeast Evening Unit Discussion - Madeira Public Library, Miami & Euclid Rds
Tuesday	Mar 11	Noon	Hilltop North Unit Discussion - Friendship UMC, Springfield Pike & Fleming Rd
Tuesday	Mar 11	6:30 pm	Act One Meeting - 2nd Floor conference room, Mt Auburn Pres. Church
Tuesday	Mar 11	7 pm	Anderson Unit Discussion - Anderson Twp Gov't Ctr, 7850 Five Mile Rd
Tuesday	Mar 11	7:30 pm	Warren/Butler Counties Unit Discussion - Mason UMC, 773 Mason-Montgomery Rd
Wednesday	Mar 12	7:15 pm	Central Evening Unit Discussion
Thursday	Mar 13	7 pm	Woman's City Club National Speaker - Candy Crowley - Hyde Park UMC
Monday	Mar 17		Voter Service project - Geier Room - start time tbd
Monday	Mar 17	10 am	Membership Committee
Monday	Mar 17	7 pm	Voter Service Committee
Tuesday	Mar 18	7 pm	County Government Committee
Wednesday	Mar 19	Noon	Eastern Day Unit Discussion - Marjorie P Lee Retirement Community
Wednesday	Mar 19	Noon	Metro Day Unit Discussion
Thursday	Mar 20	7 pm	Natural Resources Committee
Wednesday	Mar 26	5:30 pm	Program Development Committee
Wednesday	Mar 26	7 pm	Discussion Leader Briefing for April
Saturday	Mar 29	10 am	Discussion Leader Briefing for April