

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE AKRON AREA
THE AKRON VOTER
Newsletter for LWVAA Members and Supporters

August, 2020

[Click here to register to vote or request an absentee ballot](#)

Wanted: Poll Workers for November 3

Covid-19 is forcing many experienced poll workers who are overwhelmingly seniors to back out of their poll worker service due to the risk of exposure. Eighty-five percent of Ohioans traditionally vote in person and since a high turnout is expected this fall, we can expect many people will be voting at the polls despite the push for absentee voting.

If you are not in a risk category, please consider signing up to be a poll worker (aka, a precinct election official) [online](#) or [by mail](#) and encourage your healthy young friends and family members to do so as well. Poll workers are paid for all hours on the job and during advance training. Most importantly, in working the polls you'll be performing an important service to your community.



LWVAA

A Message From the President

Dear Members,

In July, we began a new biennium with a new Board of Directors, a bevy of new members, new priorities, and new emphasis on continuing priorities. Even before the annual meeting on July 9th, it was evident that this biennium is front-loaded with challenges and opportunities.

Upcoming Events

Because of COVID-19, all LWVAA in-person events are postponed until new guidelines are issued

Respond today to the U.S. Census

You should have received an invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census, and some households will also receive paper questionnaires.

For more information and to complete the census online in 5 minutes, go to 2020census.gov

Thank you to Liz King for all of your efforts as the LWVAA liaison for the Summit County census. **As of August 1, the current national self-response rate is 62.4%, Ohio is 66.8%, Summit County is 70.9 and Akron is 61.1%.**

Our challenges include registering, educating, and informing voters in preparation for an election that will be contentious due to civil unrest, the spread of misinformation, and the threats to our postal service, and possibly dangerous due to the coronavirus.



The opportunities lie with our membership to work alongside board members charged with ensuring safe and secure access to the ballot for every citizen in the Akron Area and the greater Northeast Ohio region.

This is too big a task for any League to “go it alone.” Thus, the League of Women Voters of the Akron Area is partnering with Leagues and civic organizations throughout Northeast Ohio as well as our Board of Elections to get the job done.

Continue reading about all the programs and opportunities available. Find your niche! You have a wealth of knowledge and skills that we need. Make a call! Join the mission!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Rosanne L. Winter, Ph.D.

[Click here to renew your LWVAA Membership!](#)

**August 11,
2020**

**Shine a Light on
Dark Money**

7:00-8:30p.m.
Virtual Panel Event

Speakers:

- Catherine Turcer,
Common Cause Ohio
- Ian Vandewalker,
Brennan Center for
Justice at NYU
- Heather Taylor-
Miesle, the Ohio
Environmental
Council

[Register here](#) for this
free event hosted by
LWV Greater
Cleveland, Common
Cause Ohio, Brennan
Center for Justice

**August 13,
2020**

**Health Equity Study
- Invitation to
Participate**

6:00-8:15p.m.

LWVAA members
have the opportunity
to contribute to seven
questions in a guided
discussion about
health inequities.

[Register here](#) for this
virtual event for
LWVAA members
only

When you renew your membership, let us know your
area of interest in defending Democracy.

Real Talk!

**LWV Akron Area joins LWV OHIO, LWV Hudson, LWV
Greater Cleveland, LWV Kent, LWV Canton, LWV
Oberlin for REAL TALK!**

Real Talk is a multi-League Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
program designed to fully examine, dissect, and dismantle
systemic and institutional discrimination and oppression
based on **race, sexual orientation and gender identity,
mental and physical ability, socioeconomic status,
gender, and age.**

The program will examine each form of discrimination in a
monthly series that will dissect the specific institutions,
systems, and pathologies that reinforce inequities,
disparities, and oppression. Each series will feature an
expert panel discussion, topical webinars/workshops,
action items, and resources to affect change.

Watch your email for more information on this important
program!

Monthly Series to address, but not limited to:

- Racism
- Homophobia
- Ableism
- Classism
- Sexism
- Ageism

Series 1: Race Matters

**August 18,
2020**

**100 Years of
Women's Social
Movement Activism
by Heather Hurwitz**

7:00-8:30p.m.

From the 19th
Amendment to the
Occupy Movement:
Women's Social
Movement Activism

Speaker: Heather
Hurwitz, Lecturer,
Sociology, CWRU

[Register here](#) for this
free event hosted by
LWV Cleveland

Topic 1	Intersection of Racism & Barriers to Voting	September 2020	LWV Hudson
Topic 2	Criminal Justice	January 2021	LWV Akron Area
Topic 3	Education	February 2021	LWV Cleveland
Topic 4	Public Health	March 2021	TBD
Topic 5	Housing/Employment	April 2021	TBD

**September 22,
2020**

**National Voter
Registration Day**

[Click here](#) for more
information!



October 5, 2020

**Deadline to register
to vote in the
November 3, 2020
General Election**

[Click here](#) to register
to vote or update your
registration in the
State of Ohio

Akron Votes 2020

LWVAA is partnering with numerous area organizations providing resources and hours, informing and educating citizens about the 2020 election. Our kickoff for this program was a web event on JUNETEENTH!

You can find out more about this work at AKRONVOTES2020.COM or, you can also sign up to join the effort!

**November 3,
2020**

General Election

[Click here](#) to register to vote or update your registration by October 5

LWVAA Board Meetings

**September 3
October 1
November 5
December 3**

6:30-8:00p.m.

Online meetings will be held until further notice due to COVID-19

Dark Money in Ohio Politics

Submitted by Jackie Derrow, LWVAA Advocacy

On July 21 Ohioans tuned into a bombshell news conference: Ohio House Speaker, Republican Larry Householder, was being charged by federal prosecutors - along with the former Chair of the Ohio Republican party, a close aide and two lobbyists - of organizing a corrupt \$61 million bribery scheme to amass power and sell legislation to the highest bidder.

Common Cause Ohio is LWVO's partner on the issue of money in politics. As Executive Director Catherine Turcer shared:

The scheme began with Householder's quest for power to become Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives and revolves around the passage House Bill 6, a taxpayer bailout of the nuclear power and coal fired plants of a FirstEnergy subsidiary, FirstEnergy Solutions (now Energy Harbor).

Householder allegedly took millions of dollars at the same time he pushed legislation to bail out non-competitive coal and nuclear plants with more than \$1 billion in public money, gut subsidies for renewable energy, and roll back clean energy standards.

"Dark money" groups -- which don't have to disclose their donors -- were behind the campaign to pass this giveaway to FirstEnergy Solutions as well as the misleading, xenophobic campaign [warning that China is taking over our Ohio power grid] to block a statewide referendum overturning it.

Here in Summit County the Republican party has been implicated in Householder's alleged money laundering as detailed in [this July 31 story](#) in the Beacon Journal.

It was only two years ago that Ohio House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger resigned his position amid allegations of extortion and bribery involving payday lenders. Dark money is a continuing taint on Ohio politics.

What can we do? **It is time to shine a light on dark money.** Disclosure is essential to rooting out corruption. Attend this session to learn what we can do in Ohio to gain greater transparency for political contributions.

When: Tuesday, August 11th at 7:00 PM EDT, Virtual panel event

Speakers:

- Catherine Turcer, Common Cause Ohio
- Ian Vandewalker, Brennan Center for Justice at NYU

- Heather Taylor-Miesle, the Ohio Environmental Council

RSVP for Shine a Light on Dark Money, a virtual panel event with Common Cause Ohio, the League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland, and the Brennan Center for Justice.

The LWVUS Position on Money in Politics

LWVUS supports campaign finance/MIP regulations that enhances political equality for all citizens, ensures transparency, protects representative democracy from distortion by undisclosed contributions and big money, and combats corruption and undue influenced in government.

The League supports campaign spending that is restricted but not banned. LWVUS supports public financing, full disclosure, abolishing SuperPACs, and creating an effective enforcement agency.

Save the Post Office!

More voters are being encouraged to vote by mail this fall due to the potential health risks of in-person voting. The U.S. Post Office is a critical cog for an election that depends on multiple mailings all within a very tight timeframe: 1) absentee ballot requests; 2) ballot deliveries; and 3) ballot returns.

And yet, the administration has chosen this time to reduce mail deliveries. Already we're hearing reports of delayed mail. Keep in mind that for the 2020 Primary in Summit County where only 21% of eligible voters cast ballots (77,459 cast vs. 363,612 eligible), **525 absentee ballots were not counted due to late postmarks**, as reported by the Hudson LWV based on their June meeting with the Board of Elections.

You can take action by contacting U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown at [\(202\) 224-2315](tel:(202)224-2315) and Rob Portman at [\(202\) 224-3353](tel:(202)224-3353). Let them know it's important to include funding to shore up the U.S. Post Office and to assure a safe, secure election in any future pandemic relief package legislation.

Updates from 2020 Annual Meeting

LWVAA hosted the first virtual annual meeting on July 9, 2020, for members and supporters. It was wonderful to see over 30 attendees, even if we couldn't be together in person.

The new LWVAA President Rosanne Winter was voted in, along with the Board Members with expired terms, and two important topics were discussed: Education Fund and the By-laws.

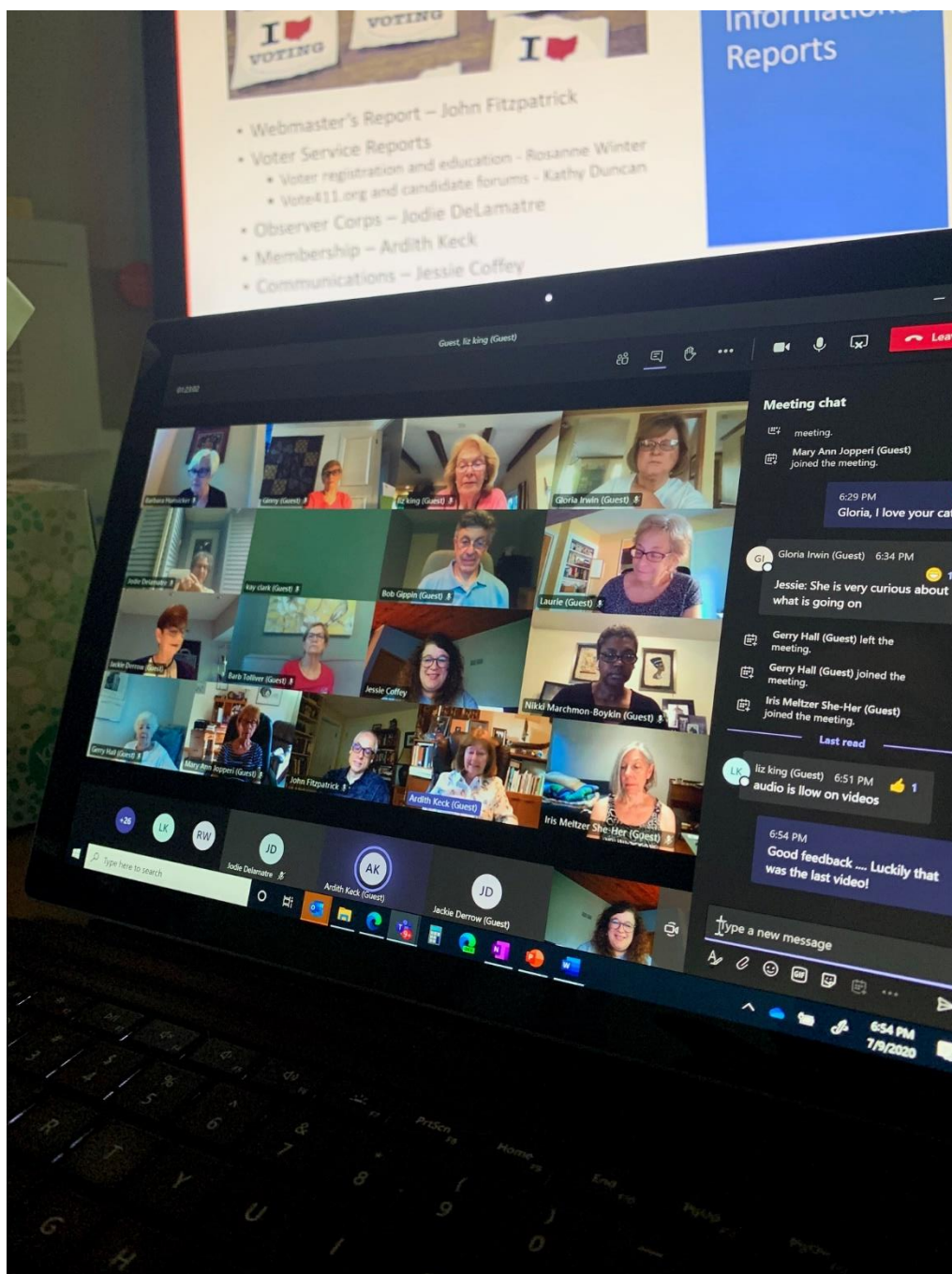
Barbara Hunsicker reviewed the Ed Fund's purpose and mission over the last 35 years. She shared that LWVUS had provided guidance to member leagues about League's and companion Ed Fund's merging into a single 501(c)(3) as opposed to maintaining their separate statuses.

A subcommittee made up of members of both boards and with the council of Attorney Robert Gippen (also a League member) was formed to explore this option for LWVAA. The committee ultimately recommended not to pursue the merger.

The Ed Fund Board voted June 25, 2020, to merge the boards as one common board. The LWVAA Board and Ed Fund Board will be a common board, however, meetings will be held separately. The result will be simplification of administrative processes and increased communication between the two boards.

Also, at the annual meeting, Barbara Hunsicker, Chair of the By-laws committee along with members Liz King and Roberta Aber, reported that our current By-Laws were out-of-date and did not include provisions contained in contemporary bylaws.

Attorney Gippen, who served as a consultant to the merger discussion, drafted modified bylaws, that going forward will be called the Code of Regulations. The new Code of Regulations is compliant with LWVO and LWVUS and has been approved by the LWVAA Board and membership.



LWVO is Lead Plaintiff in Lawsuit

Submitted by Jackie Darrow, LWVAA Advocacy

On July 31 The American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU of Ohio, and Lawyers' Committee filed a federal lawsuit challenging Ohio's flawed system of matching voter signatures on absentee ballots and absentee ballot applications. The case was filed on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Ohio, the A. Philip Randolph Institute of Ohio, and an individual.

"Record numbers of Ohioans will vote by mail in the November 2020 election. But the patchwork of signature-matching processes across our state is incredibly subjective and fraught with error. On top of this, voters don't get adequate notice or opportunity to fix their supposed mismatches. This will disenfranchise tremendous numbers of people," said Freda Levenson, legal director of the ACLU of Ohio.

"Ohio's confusing, inconsistent signature-match process too often results in eligible Ohio voters incorrectly having their absentee applications or ballots rejected," **said Jen Miller, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio.** "Without clear notification or an efficient way to address questions about their signatures, too many voters are disenfranchised by this process, especially those with disabilities, senior citizens, young people, and naturalized citizens. Especially during a global pandemic, Ohio voters must be able to efficiently secure absentee ballots and have assurance that their votes will count."

Election officials — who have no handwriting-analysis expertise — are currently allowed to reject an absentee ballot or ballot application, sometimes without notifying the voter, if they think there is a signature mismatch on the voter's paperwork.

Counties also differ as to the standards they use to analyze signature matching, the procedures they follow to reject perceived mismatches, the notice they provide to voters whose applications are rejected, the opportunity they give to cure absentee ballot applications that have been rejected on the basis of signature mismatch, and the record-keeping they do to document this activity.

The lawsuit, *League of Women Voters of Ohio v Frank LaRose*, was filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio. Watch for more updates on the lawsuit from LWVO.

LWVAA Board Updates

Voter Service Programs and Information

The first meeting of VOTE411 representatives from the Hudson, Kent, Canton, Geauga and Akron leagues was held on July 28. This marks the beginning of preparations for the VOTE411 online voter guide.

Once again, the Akron and Hudson leagues are partnering with the Akron Beacon Journal to publish an abbreviated voter guide in the print newspaper and all candidate responses on the website beaconjournal.com.

In addition, the LWVAA will produce a print voter guide for distribution to people who may be unable to access the online version or may have mobility problems. It will be distributed before early voting begins on October 6, so those voting by mail have access to candidate information.

Invitations to candidates will be sent the last week of August, and they will be encouraged to

respond to questions posed by the LWVAA and Hudson leagues. Due to the pandemic, in-person candidate forums will not be scheduled, making it more important to communicate with voters by multiple avenues. In the coming weeks, we will meet with co-sponsors to discuss options and formats for virtual forums.

Barbara Hunsicker, VP Voter Service
Ginny Melver, Team member
Kathy Duncan, Chair Emeritus

CENSUS COUNTS 2020

the census **s**
isn't complete
without **u**

**When you're missing from the census,
you're missing from the conversation.**

2020 Census Update

The 2020 Census schedule has been revised to allow more time due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Currently, there will be a continuing media and internet information campaign to encourage individuals to answer the census online, by telephone or mail through Oct. 31, 2020. There will be a non-response follow up by census takers from Aug. 11- Oct. 31, 2020.

NOTE: THIS ending date has JUST been moved back to Sept. 30th after pressure from the Commerce Dept. Presently, the apportionment counts will be delivered to the President by April 30, 2021 with delivery of the re-districting counts to the States by July 31, 2021.

There will be pressure from the Administration to change these dates to an earlier time frame making it more difficult to assure a full count. We will continue monitoring these efforts and advocate for a thorough Census Count. The current national self-response rate is 62.4%, Ohio is 66.8%, Summit County is 70.9 and Akron is 61.1%.

The President recently issued an Executive Order which would exclude “illegal aliens from the apportionment base following the 2020 census”. There is no question on the 2020 census that would provide information of legal or illegal status. The courts struck down the inclusion of a citizenship question on this census.

This Executive Order directs executive departments and agencies to share information that would allow accurate data on the number of citizens, non-citizens and illegal aliens which they would then use for the purpose of conducting the apportionment. This has been taken to court by a number of groups.

Currently, the Executive Branch would not receive any apportionment information until April 2021. The census enumeration collects no such information and releases no individual information. Title 13 of the US Code states that any such release would be a federal crime with jail and fine.

Liz King, Director

Centennial

The League of Women Voters of the Akron Area is working with the Sojourner Truth Statue Committee in an effort to make the statue a reality. As we’re recognizing the impact of images on the collective psyche and at the same time wanting to honor the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment, the time is now to create a statue honoring one of the suffrage movement’s avid supporters.

Fundraising will require \$200k - \$250k. Akron Community Foundation will act as fiscal agent, i.e., establishing a fund that will receive contributions and distribute as needed for the creation of the artwork.

Jackie Derrow, Sojourner Truth Statue Committee Member



Voter Services Registration and Education

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally reshaped how the League and other organizations

interact with voters. The Voter Services committee, led by Gloria Irwin and Cathy Hunt, adopted an approach tailored to our new normalcy.

We created a spreadsheet of community organizations that have supported us in the past and initiated efforts to reach voters through those partners.

A summary of our activities:

- We contacted 35 community organizations.
- We provided voter education materials to:
 - Parents/guardians of those attending LeBron James Boys & Girls Club;
 - Posters and voting summary to all 12 AMHA senior citizen locations;
 - Voting summary for 3,500 wellness bags distributed by Direction Home/Area Agency on Aging to Summit County clients
 - Summit County Historical Society visitors;
 - Voting summary posting for Sierra Club website;
 - Materials for Family Promise facility;
 - Voter information for Battered Women's Shelter newsletter and email distribution;
 - Outside bulletin board posting at Patterson Park Community Center; copies made available for distribution at other centers when they reopen.
- In-person voter registration
 - Cathy Hunt, first four Mondays in August at Salvation Army
 - Gloria Irwin, July 31, Good Samaritan food distribution, Patterson Park
 - Gloria Irwin, Aug. 15 and 29, Sand Run Metro Park trailhead, volunteers needed.
- Door-to-door canvassing on Aug. 9
 - Will use MaptheVote tool showing unregistered voters in 9 Akron neighborhoods; 10 volunteers have signed up; will collect VR forms or leave door hangers (designed by Sherry McMillen) where we get no response.
 - Would appreciate more volunteers
- Outreach to high schoolers turning 18
 - Web site posting designed by Bailey Jursik will be distributed to county school districts beginning in early August
- Postcard outreach campaign for September
 - 15 volunteers agreed to help address cards

Gloria Irwin, VP, Voter Services, Registration and Education
Cathy Hunt, Co-chair, Voter Registration and Education



Observer Corps

We had a very successful Observer Corps Training in July with 17 participants. Thanks to Jodie DeLamatre, Observer Corps Chair and Pat Simons from the LWV Hudson, for a very well organized and informative program. Watch for this Zoom delivered program to be posted to our

League Website.

Also watch for future development in this important program as the Hudson and Akron Leagues join forces to protect citizens' rights by ensuring compliance with Sunshine Laws at public meetings through public awareness and understanding.

Advocacy

Jackie Derrow, Advocacy Chair, attended the LWV Ohio Lobby Corp meeting and can confirm that the major area of focus is a safe and secure 2020 general election. You will find Jackie's report in a separate article in this newsletter. We are VERY fortunate to have Jackie working in this area. Her passion and know-how make her a formidable advocate for voter rights!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE AKRON AREA		
2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS		
TITLE	AREA OF EMPHASIS	NAME
PRESIDENT	ADMINISTRATION/LEADERSHIP/PRIORITY ACTION PLAN	ROSANNE WINTER
VICE PRESIDENT	ORGANIZATION	ROBERTA ABER
VICE PRESIDENT	VOTER SERVICES, PROGRAMS & INFORMATION	BARBARA HUNSICKER
VICE PRESIDENT	VOTER SERVICES, REGISTRATION & EDUCATION	GLORIA IRWIN
SECRETARY	MINUTES/ PRIORITY ACTION PLAN	LAURIE CURFMAN
TREASURER	FINANCIALS, WEBSITE, MEMBERSHIP ROSTER	JOHN FITZPATRICK
DIRECTOR	MEMBERSHIP	ARDITH KECK
DIRECTOR	NATURAL RESOURCES	ARRYE ROSSER
DIRECTOR	VOTER SERVICES, INFORMATION	GINNY MELVER
DIRECTOR	COMMUNICATIONS, CHAIR	JESSIE COFFEY
DIRECTOR	MEMBER, OBSERVER CORPS- PUBLIC EDUCATION	MARY ANN JOPPERI
DIRECTOR	VOTER SERVICES, ADVOCACY CO-CHAIR	JACKIE DERROW
DIRECTOR	VOTER SERVICES, ADVOCACY & CENSUS	LIZ KING
DIRECTOR	VOTER SERVICES, ADVOCACY CO-CHAIR	CYNTHIA CHRISTMAN

Acme Cash Back = \$\$\$ for LWVAA

Submitted by Janice Jacobs

Our Cash Back check for 2019-2020, in the amount of \$157.08, has been received. This was very similar to the amount we earned last year.

A special Ed Fund thank you to newsletter editor Jessie Coffey is in order. The newsletter communicates to League members, reminding our members and friends to save their tapes. It also provides the annual specifics about dates included and products in the program.

Over the years, competition for Acme tapes has become fierce among non-profits! Thank you to all our contributors:

Anonymous Lois Arnold Linda Blake Jill Cabe Jessie Coffey (Team Coffey)
Laurie Curfman Jodie Delamatre Jackie Derrow Lucy Downs Kathy Duncan
Karen Fritschel Nicole Gandee Sharon Gandee Mary Lou Gault Gerry Hall
Rayeann Helms Bonnie Horovitz Barbara Hunsicker Cathy Hunt Janice Jacobs
Ardith Keck Ros Mather Judy Nicely Jean Questel Sandra Smith Paula Warner

Also, many thanks to the fine folks at Acme. Throughout the inception of this program contributions of more than \$1.6 million have been made to various non-profit Akron area community organizations.

The next Cash Back period will begin on, 08-06-20, and end on, 12-26-20. Indications are the

program items and other details will remain the same as for 2019. Just remember to look for the little “Acme Cash Back” printout at the end of your register receipt.

This will be my last report as the League's Cash Back coordinator. My resignation as LWVAA Education Fund Project Director will be effective August 31, 2020. Many thanks to all who participated over the years. It has been a pleasure to work with so many smart, committed people.



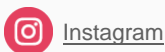
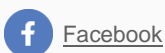
[Join us today](#) to support democracy, nonpartisan political action, and voter rights in your community.

Stay up-to-date with LWV Ohio

[Website](#)
[The Ohio Voter](#)

Stay up-to-date with LWVUS

[Website](#)
[The National Voter](#)



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