



History of the Tallmadge League of Women Voters

The Tallmadge League of Women Voters emerged out of a backdrop of social and political turmoil that characterized the early 1970's. The Pentagon Papers were published in 1971 and the voting age was lowered to 18. George Wallace was shot at a political rally in 1972 and in that same year 11 Israeli athletes were killed at the Munich Olympic Village by an Arab terrorist group. The U.S. was immersed in the Vietnam War which ended on January 27, 1973 with the signing of the peace accords. The 1973 ruling of the Supreme Court in Roe v Wade made abortion legal in the country. In 1974 the House Judiciary Committee adopted three articles of impeachment against President Nixon and on July 30, 1974 he announced his resignation.

It was the era of many stay-at-home moms who had time to volunteer and were looking for significant ways to become involved and impact the social and political structure. For many, the League of Women Voters (LWV), a non-partisan organization whose purpose is to encourage the informed and active participation of all citizens in government and politics, met this need. LWV is organized to function on the three levels of government - national, state and local. Local membership includes the state and national LWV. Through its Voter Service, the League provides non-partisan factual information on government, political parties, voting procedures, election issues and candidates. League positions are taken on issues but never on candidates and are the result of membership consensus based on study and discussion. Action is initiated after a position is reached.

There were four local Leagues in Summit County in the early 70's - Akron, Stow, Cuyahoga Falls and Hudson. Six Tallmadge women belonged to the Stow League and became interested in forming a Tallmadge League as a vehicle to study local governmental issues. In order to become recognized as a League, a new group had to meet strict established standards regarding membership, organization, fundraising and the completion and publication of a study of the local community. This process took about two years to complete during which provisional status was granted and progress was monitored by a member of the state LWV Board of Directors.

The first organizational meeting of the new group took place on November 29, 1973. Those attending were Elinor Moles, Judy Turner, Nancy Burgess, Karen Morgan, Ardis Smith, Shirley Smith, Esther Diamond, Marie Zonko, Holly Keel, Julie Lythgoe, Dorothy Burnette, Jackie Tefft, Betty Bauer, Suzanne Smith, Jeanne Blackwell, Jane Huth, Helen Lundy, Margaret Watral, Connie Leonard, Nancy Treichler, Lora Perren, Lois Maio and Lois La Dow from "The Tallmadge Circle".

The first officers of the Provisional Tallmadge League were: President- Nancy Treichler, 1st Vice President - Karen Morgan, 2nd Vice President - Judy Turner, Secretary - Julie Lythgoe, Treasurer - Lois Maio. Board Members were: Shirley Smith, Elinor Moles, Nancy Burgess and Beverly McCreanor. Holly Keel was the first Voter Service Chair.

Annual dues in the Tallmadge Provisional League were \$15.00 out of which \$7.50 went to the state LWV and \$4.25 went to the national LWV leaving \$3.25 to be used locally. The annual budget included income and expenditures of \$1200.00. Additional money was raised in the community through a Finance Drive which was supported by members and the local business community.



In May 1974 members included: Betty Bauer, Eileen Bluhm, Barbara Bray, Nancy Burgess, Dorothy Burnette, Marion Chappellear, Leslie Christovich, June Doverspike, Virginia Emigh, Suzanne Hetrick, Vera Heinen, Jane Huth, Holly Keel, Sue Knapp, Connie Leonard, Joan Lewandowski, Helen Lundy, Julie Lythgoe, Lois Maio, Elinor Moles, Karen Morgan, Beverly McCreanor, Velma Neumeister, Tomi Olex, Mary O'Shanick, Lora Perren, Barbara Pohelia, Jennifer Proudfoot, Fran Ripley, Cathy Schnurr, Marty Smith, Shirley Smith, Suzanne Smith, Kay Suchan, Jackie Tefft, Nancy Treichler, Judy Turner, Julie Whalen, Marie Zonko

In May 1976, Ruth Clusen, President of the national LWV, officially welcomed the Tallmadge League of Women Voters to their roster of fully recognized local leagues saying *"your recognition report was well organized and gives us a clear picture of your achievements during your provisional period. It is obvious that you have worked hard during the past two years and that you have reached the goals which you have set for yourselves."* Joan Lawrence, President of the state LWV, was guest speaker at the Annual Meeting and added her welcome.

The first local item for study adopted by the Tallmadge League in 1976 was a study of the planning and zoning in Tallmadge with particular emphasis on a master plan for land use; structure and functions of the planning and zoning commission; the revision and updating of zoning ordinance #67; future housing needs and preservation of open-space - green areas in the city. Since that time the Tallmadge League has adopted local positions on public education, housing, land use and planning, and charter government. Regional positions, in conjunction with the other local leagues in the county, include land use, environment, mass transit, county government and social policy.

Through the years the Tallmadge League of Women Voters has enjoyed strong support from the local government, the schools and the business community. Candidates Nights have been held regularly. Monthly meetings include topics on the environment, government, education, natural resources, juvenile justice etc. Membership is open to every voting age citizen. Members receive a monthly local newsletter as well as publications from the state and national LWV's.

Presidents of the Tallmadge League:

Nancy Treichler- 1974-76

Jackie Tefft - 1977-78

Joyce Parker - 1979-80

Suzanne Hetrick- 1981-85

Catherine Bond - 1987-89

Sandra Beckett - 1991-95

Jimelle Collins - 1997-1999

Susan Schunk - 2001-03

Megan Raber – 2005-08

Nancy Treichler – 2011-2013

Tammy Hardgrove-Shomo 2014-2015

Judy Turner - 1976-77

Virginia Carter - 1978-79

Kay Hill-Jenny Millin - 1980-81

Sally Keatts - 1985-87

Sally Keatts - 1989-1991

Susan Glaser - Jimelle Collins - 1995 - 1997

Leslie Zaynor - 1999-2001

Rose Strebler - 2003-05

Tammy Hardgrove-Shomo – 2008-2011

Susan Yatsu -2013-2014

Helen Fire – 2015-2017

Written by Nancy Treichler
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