Local Election Reform

The League of Women Voters of the Tiffin Area believes that Seneca County should provide adequate funding for election systems, poll workers and voter education.

Position:

Funding: Election funding should be a priority in the Seneca County budget;
Funding must at least meet state mandates.

Election System: Election systems should include, but not be limited to, new machines that meet federal technology standards for error rates, undervote/overvote, access and audit trails. Storage and maintenance should be provided for all voting equipment.

Education: Additional communication and publicity should be provided to inform the public about the various election systems that are available for persons with disabilities.

Voter information activities, including sample ballots, notification of polling places, and instructions for use of voting systems should be provided to the public.

Poll Workers: Innovative ways to recruit and train poll workers and their alternates should be provided.

Background of Position:

A study on the Election Systems was adopted at the Annual Meeting in May 2001. The 2000 closely contested election created national, state, and local concerns about our voting procedures and the counting of votes. It was decided to study methods used in Ohio and, specifically, Seneca County. The scope of the study included: 1) An examination of present voting methods and comparison of the punch card ballot with other voting methods. 2) Proposing recommendations that could be considered for consensus and action.

On March 19, 2002, an information meeting entitled: "All You Ever Wanted to Know About 'Chads' . . . And More" was held. Local voting procedures and state mandates as they are followed in Seneca County were discussed and the Director and Deputy Director of the Seneca County Board of Elections were present to answer questions and show examples of the given. This contained instructions from the Secretary of State and created an Elections System Study Committee. The findings of that committee were discussed. Most counties in Ohio use the punch card ballot but 12 counties use the optical scan method and 3 counties use the DRE method.

On September 26, 2002, League members met to try out a new electronic voting system. Discussion was held, and consensus reached, regarding the election system in Seneca County. The resulting position will allow us to take action in future elections.

The Board of Directors approved the Position on October 14, 2002.In January 2004 letters discussing concerns about Diebold DRE's were sent to the Board of Election.

On April 19th, 2005, Marguerite Bernard facilitated a program about local elections. Marge Brickner and Wayne Hoover representing the Seneca County Election Board presented information and updates for our members.