

Letters to the Editor

Wright Library a valuable resource Issue 2 not a good amendment

The letter (Sept. 29, 2009) by seven-year-old Richard Roediger describing what the Wright Library has meant to him reminded me of how much my local library meant to me as a seven-year-old in the Great Depression. At that time "enrichments" like summer camp, automobile trips, toys, movies, etc. were beyond the means of many families. In the summer especially, the library became the source of all our entertainment, and librarian was our guide, teacher, and dispenser of glorious treats like the daily story hour and the books for which her recommendations were thoughtfully tailored to each child.

During the thirty-two years in which we've lived in Oakwood, my pleasure in the Wright Library has not diminished. I love the way the building looks from the outside and the way it feels on the inside. I love those heavy golden oak tables. The

Great Books group which I attended for years was hosted by the library. Its staff has always responded with alacrity, courtesy, and professional competence to anyone's need for information or guidance. I recall the evening when a ferocious windstorm crippled the city by bringing down an overwhelming number of trees and power lines. The library generously kept its doors open and its lights on all through that dark night. What better symbol could there be for the relationship between the library and the community?

In this letter young Richard Roediger comments, "If our library was no longer here, I'd be pretty sad." If so fine a community resource as our library is forced to curtail it's staff and services, I'll be pretty sad too.

Sincerely yours,
Lora Heller

Dear Oakwood voters,

How can you not be enthusiastic about the candidacy of Anne Shank Hilton for City Council? She has served on the City of Oakwood Budget Review Committee for almost a decade, she has been an Assistant Coach in the Oakwood Youth Sports Program, she is a life-time resident of Oakwood, has been trained as a Conflict Management Facilitator with the Dayton Mediation Center, is a graduate of the Oakwood school system and a successful lawyer, mother, and community volunteer. For more than a decade she has been

a Trustee of the Wilson Charitable Trust for the development of Junior Tennis and will have a son enter the Oakwood school system in 2010. She represents the best Oakwood has to offer! Rarely do voters get the opportunity to elect a natural-born sister of the City she seeks to represent. Let's do the right thing on Nov. 3 elect Anne for all she has done and promises to do for Oakwood.

Larry Greger,
Oakwood

Dear Oakwood voters,

I write this letter in support of Anne Shank Hilton for Oakwood City Council. Anne and I grew up together and have been friends throughout our lives. As a friend and school mate I knew Anne as a serious student with a sense of personal responsibility. As a tennis teammate, she demonstrated her ability to be a true team player. She will bring these fine attributes to the work of City Council.

More important is the person Anne Shank Hilton is today. Anne is one of the smartest people I know. She approaches challenges in a calm, thoughtful and measured manner. She is always willing to listen to

all points of view. She cares deeply about Oakwood and *all* of its constituents and has a great interest in continuing to ensure Oakwood remains the wonderful community we all enjoy.

Her professional background as an attorney and team leader at LexisNexis, as well as her ongoing service as a member of the city's Budget Review Committee, require Anne to demonstrate daily the skills necessary to be an effective member of the Oakwood City Council. I urge you to vote for Anne Shank Hilton. I know she will serve our city well.

Constance Gardner
Oakwood

An endorsement for Ann Hilton

After many years of valuable service to our community, Mayor Judy Cook has chosen not to seek re-election and will not be a member of Oakwood City council after 2009.

Fortunately, Ann Hilton is running for Council. Anne will carry on Mayor Cook's dedication to the detailed work of the Council and her

contributions to the best interests of the community, communication with residents, and availability to and concern for all.

Join me in voting for Ann Hilton for Oakwood City Council.

Jane C. Rininger
Lifelong resident of Oakwood

By, now you've heard about Ohio Constitution Issue 2. You've gotten the robo calls, received the glossy postcard, and heard the radio ads, all telling you that Issue 2 is about "safe, local food." On the surface, Issue 2 sounds great—creating a Livestock Care Standards Board that will oversee and livestock care in Ohio and protect local foods.

However, Issue 2 will have the opposite effect. Here are the real facts:

Issue 2 AMENDS the state constitution to create a Livestock Care Standards Board, stacked with Big Ag and factory farm supporters, which would have sweeping authority to make decisions related to farms and food in Ohio that would have the force of law. The Board would have largely unchecked power to override any act by the Ohio Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Assembly.

While Issue 2 requires the membership of several "family farmers" on the Board, this is not a safeguard to prevent the panel from being overtaken by corporate agribusiness and factory farming interests. While there is no legal definition for a family farmer in the U.S., the United States Department of Agriculture has stated that 98% of all factory farms are operated through what would be considered "family farms."

Issue 2 serves the economic interests of factory farms, opening the door for the proliferation of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in Ohio. Issue 2 will create a Livestock Care Standards Board with no accountability to voters. Their decisions will be final. There is no further review or evaluation of the standard, no established forum for public comment, and no ability to appeal their decisions. Issue 2 emphasizes the need of the livestock industry to provide "affordable food," yet ignores its hidden costs, including environmental contamination, human health impacts, and the loss of rural communities.

This is an abuse of Ohio's constitution and our liberty. The issue is backed by major agri-business

interests seeking protection from national animal welfare groups seeking to phase out problematic animal production practices like battery cages for chickens.

The newly proposed board would give 13 political appointees broad and unchecked power to decide rules on animal welfare, potentially reshaping regulations on how animals are raised, tracked and traced. Currently, animal agriculture is regulated by the Ohio Dept of Agriculture, which makes rules through a formal process that requires public input. This new board would make decisions independent of public input, with no review or evaluation, no forum for public comment, and no ability to appeal the decision. The board's decision is final!! They will be the ones to determine proper and "humane" animal care – I do not want a board that supports CAFOs being able to dictate their version of animal care (confinement, hormones, antibiotics, genetically modified feed, expensive animal ID systems) to the ethical local farmers I know and trust.

The business practices of industrialized corporate farms, agribusinesses, are under more and more public scrutiny, especially regarding the adverse impact on the environment, as well as animal and ultimately human health. Many center on confinement facilities where thousands of animals are confined and crowded into small cages. An example is the use of cramped battery cages which do not provide hens with sufficient space to stand, walk, flap their wings, etc. In November of 2008, Californians ("WE THE PEOPLE" not a board) passed Proposition 2, the Standards for Confining Farm Animals, which requires by January 2015 that certain farm animals be confined only in ways that allow them to lie down, stand up, fully extend their limbs and turn around freely. Florida, Arizona, Oregon and Colorado have passed similar legislation.

Issue 2 supporters are using passage of California's Proposition 2 as a scare tactic, claiming that if Ohio doesn't pass Issue 2, the Humane Society of the United States will "come in here

and attempt to outlaw meat production and make everyone vegans." Seems extreme to me, and something that the people of Ohio would not tolerate. Ohio already has an alarming number of factory farms—and that number could increase if an industry-led Board decides to ease regulations on animal production. According to the Ohio EPA, the state has close to 200 factory farms, including four beef operations with more than 3000 animals, 29 dairy operations with more than 1000 animals, and a staggering 98 poultry and egg-laying operations with more than 100,000 birds each, including 9 with more than a million birds. The message is clear....the consumer is discovering the real costs of cheap food (Time Magazine Aug 31, 2009) and it is dangerous to use government to silence "WE THE PEOPLE." If you cast a vote to silence the people you too one day will surely be silenced!

Abusing the Ohio Constitution to include the board would set a dangerous precedent by creating a permanent place for special interests in the constitution. The board would have unchecked power over all Ohio policies related to animals in agriculture and could shift livestock standards in any direction. Agricultural policy should be determined through an open, democratic process, not through a politically appointed board heavily influenced by big industry. The editorial boards of Ohio's major newspapers—including the Columbus Dispatch, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Akron Beacon Journal, and Dayton Daily News—all oppose this effort to enshrine the agribusiness lobby's favored oversight system in the state's constitution. Ohioans should reject this proposal to safeguard Ohio's constitution and keep Agri-business accountable. If we abuse the Constitution, we become part of our nation's problem, not the solution. For more info www.ohioact.org (Ohio Against Constitutional Takeover) and <http://www.oeffa.org/alerts.php> (Ohio Ecological Farm and Food Association).

Linda Woods
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Hilton excellent council candidate

We heartily endorse for Oakwood City Counsel Ann Shank Hilton. We think it's important to have a woman on the Oakwood City Counsel. Ann Shank Hilton is an excellent candidate. She was born

and raised in Oakwood. She lives in Oakwood with her husband and son. Ann is a professional woman. She's an attorney and serves on the Oakwood Budget Review Committee, so she knows Oakwood's financ-

es and knows how the city operates. Again, we heartily endorse Ann Shank Hilton for Oakwood City Counsel.

Thank you,
Ann & Charles V. Simms