

**LIGHTING THE FIRE
LEADING THE WAY
SINCE 1915**

OUR MISSION

to educate, empower, and engage the citizens of Greater Cincinnati to act together to promote the common good.

OUR VISION

is a just, inclusive, thriving, and sustainable community where all are informed and engaged in shaping our shared future.

OUR VALUES

Civic Literacy | Citizen Empowerment | Collaboration | Equity and Justice | Support for Children and Youth



JOIN US

RESERVE YOUR SEAT NOW!

BETTER WAYS TO VOTE?

**FORUM ON ALTERNATIVES TO
RANKED-CHOICE VOTING**

THURSDAY, MAY 14 | 6:30 PM

Cincinnati Public Radio
2117 Dana Avenue



On Thursday, May 14, Woman's City Club will present a program on alternative ways to vote with the aim of achieving results that are more reflective of the voters. This in-person forum will be held at Cincinnati Public Radio's studio at 2117 Dana Avenue in Evanston. Co-sponsored by the Cincinnati Association, Greater Cincinnati Voter Collaborative, and League of Women Voters-Cincinnati Area, the event is free but reservations are required. The event begins with light refreshments at 6:30 pm, followed by the presentation at 7 pm. Register by using the QR code below or at womanscityclub.org.

Now that Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV) has been banned by the Ohio legislature, we continue the conversation about alternatives to partisan primaries and winner-takes-all plurality voting. The program will include an explanation and real-time demonstration of four different voting methods: Ranked-Choice Voting, Plurality, Condorcet and Approval Voting so that participants can quickly see how these different methods affect results.

Our speakers will be Ohio Senator **Louis Blessing, III**, who has introduced SB 395, which enables a top-three primary, consensus general election system (aka the Condorcet method), and **Matt Koesters**, Founder and President of



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SPRING IS BUSTING OUT ALL OVER

Spring is busting out all over, and the school year is coming to an end. On May 2 we celebrated the six outstanding young women high school seniors who received WCC's **Marian A. Spencer Education Awards** at our **Agnes B. Seasongood Luncheon**. This year's luncheon was especially poignant as we presented an unprecedented six--cash awards to assist their higher education. Our speaker, Yvonne DiCristoforo, retired special agent with the U.S. Secret Service, was absolutely riveting! (See page 9.)

As our program year comes to a close on May 31, we can look back with satisfaction and pride at all the things we did together. Our **National Speaker Forum** with Gina Belafonte was very inspiring as she showed us how she uses arts and activism to achieve social justice and carries out the legacy of her famous father. Despite the suppression of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policies at the federal and state levels, Belafonte continues to advocate for those who have been oppressed, and so does WCC. (See page 4.)

In April, 26 members and guests enjoyed a light lunch and a compelling tour of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House given by Anne Buening, our VP for Programs. (See page 13.) Our online forum on April 21 celebrated Earth Day with a discussion led by Bob Gedert based on his book, *Untangling Plastics*. This is such an apt title for a book about a man-made material that is poisoning our bodies, strangling our environment and contributing to climate change. You can read a recap of the event on page 5 and watch a recording via our website. Both reference things you can do to be part of the solution.

Clearly we have lots to talk about. We hope you will join us at one or more of our events.

We are very excited about our upcoming May in-person forum, which will focus on alternative voting methods, one of WCC's top issues. The state ban on Ranked-Choice Voting, which we used for 32 years (1925 to 1957) in Cincinnati, where it was known as Proportional Representation, has squashed a revival of the method that some Ohio communities were considering. But there are other ways (besides fair districts) that we can learn about to promote fairness in voting and to moderate the extremism exacerbated by partisan primaries. (See page 1.)

All members are cordially invited to our **Annual Meeting** on June 16 at the Walnut Hills Branch Library, when we celebrate a year of accomplishments and look ahead, embracing the theme of *Turning Purpose into Progress*. This yearly gathering gives us the opportunity to get better acquainted over a splendid potluck supper, introduce our new board members and thank those who have completed their terms. We will also hear a presentation by Eric Russo, longtime executive director of the Hillside Trust, about the Trust's fifty-year history and the role that WCC played in the founding of this important local environmental organization. (See page 3.) We hope to see you there!

BETH SULLEBARGER
PRESIDENT



FOCUSES ON TURNING PURPOSE INTO PROGRESS

REGISTER TODAY

Woman’s City Club of Greater Cincinnati (WCC) invites you to our **Annual Meeting** on Tuesday, June 16, from 6 pm to 8 pm. Held at the Walnut Hills Branch Library, 2533 Kemper Lane, the event will begin at 6 pm with a potluck supper provided by the board of trustees. Join fellow members and friends for an inspiring program that highlights where we’ve been, where we’re going, and how each of us plays a role in moving important work forward.

With a long-standing commitment to education, engagement, and advocacy, WCC continues to translate meaningful conversations into real-world impact. **Turning Purpose into Progress** reflects our belief that informed individuals, working together, can drive lasting change. Our featured speaker will be **Eric Russo**, Executive Director of the Hillside Trust, an organization marking 50 years of preserving and protecting the natural landscape of our region. With early support from the Woman’s City Club, Hillside Trust embodies what it means to turn purpose into sustained progress.

WCC had a role in founding the Hillside Trust in 1976, holding a series of workshops on the need to manage preservation and development of Cincinnati’s hillsides. In 1991, WCC published *A Hillside Protection Strategy for Greater Cincinnati*, which later became codified into Cincinnati’s zoning code in the form of Environmental Quality districts. The Hillside Trust is a compelling example of how commitment and collaboration can lead to meaningful, long-term impact.

JUNE 16 | 6-8 PM
WALNUT HILLS BRANCH LIBRARY

**FREE AND
OPEN TO
ALL!**

To RSVP use this QR code, visit womanscityclub.org or call (513) 751-0100



The meeting will include presentation of the club’s accomplishments of the past year, welcoming new members, swearing in of trustees, amending the bylaws, and discussing issues our members would like WCC to address through our programs and advocacy. Attendance is free and open to all, but an RSVP is requested.



Eric Russo, Hillside Trust



COMING TOGETHER AS COMMUNITY, RAISING FUNDS AND AWARENESS

JANET BUENING
PHOTOS BY HARRIET KAUFMAN

Woman's City Club's 32nd **Annual National Speaker Forum** with Gina Belafonte on March 10 at Memorial Hall—*Arts and Activism: the Belafonte Legacy*—was outstanding in every way: entertaining, informative, and inspiring. WCC President Beth Sullebarger warmly welcomed everyone and thanked our presenting sponsors—Cincinnati Museum Center/National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and Jeannette Rankin Foundation, our reception sponsors—Hamilton County Sheriff's Office and Park National Bank, our community builder sponsors—A Picture's Worth and Greater Cincinnati Foundation, media sponsors —CET, Enquirer, and WXU, as well as nonprofit community partners, members and friends. Kathy Wade, internationally known jazz vocalist and founder/director of Learning Through Art, Inc., then introduced Gina Belafonte, noting all her accomplishments as an actress and producer but highlighting her work as co-founder and Executive Director of Sankofa, saying, "She has continued the Belafonte tradition of using the arts **as a vehicle for truth, healing, and change.**"

Gina, like her father Harry Belafonte, is a commanding presence onstage. She was practiced and professional in her presentation, but also very personal and engaging in her connection with the audience. She began by thanking "the ancestors" who paved the way, and saying it was an honor to be here "in community with people who know we build democracy together." With a nod to the Forum title, *Arts and Activism*, she acknowledged she had come to talk about the power of art but stressed that "throughout history art has never been separated from movements for justice."

She spoke about joining with her father to establish Sankofa, describing the things they have accomplished and the work the organization is currently doing. The first of three videos



she showed was about the founding of Sankofa and its mission to use art as a tool for justice. In this video, an artist asked, "What can I do?" and Harry Belafonte responded, "What are you willing to do, to sacrifice?" He believed art could educate about an issue, such as homelessness or violence, and make a difference. Gina said proudly, "My father understood a song could go where a speech could not." And then added her own thoughts: "Art has not been an accessory to justice—it has been its engine... Facts rarely change people. Data informs—art transforms. Once the heart is open, the mind can follow."

Sankofa is about the intersection of art and activism. The second video focused on using visual arts and role-playing to help incarcerated persons successfully reenter society—to reintegrate to a life of choices and decisions after being in prison where all things are decided for you. Sankofa programs use dramatized scenarios to teach about using public transportation and QR codes, grocery shopping with scanners and self-checkout, ordering at fast-food restaurants, and other changing aspects of daily life. "Art is a safe place to fall forward," Gina said. Sankofa also uses virtual reality, game simulations,

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UNTANGLING PLASTICS

CHRISTY BACKLEY

MORE COMPLICATED
THAN YOU THINK

On April 21, author and recycling expert Bob Gedert presented an eye-opening forum. In his book, *Untangling Plastics: The Missing Link in Mitigating Climate Change*, he talks about how plastics are derived from fossil fuel, affect human health, the environment, and climate change. Bob retired from a 45-year recycling career, guiding communities towards sustainable materials management and bridging recycling best practices with operational efficiency and sustainability. He has served as a national leader and advisor in promoting waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. His book offers direct actions readers can take to eliminate the harms of plastic and to slow climate change. He shared his knowledge, fears, and hopes with an attentive and appreciative audience.

We know recycling plastics is good, right? Maybe not. When we conscientiously separate our no. 1 clamshells from our no. 5 takeout containers, our large no numbers from our small, our toothbrushes from our prescription bottles, we aren't making the difference we may think we are.

One reason is that there are 300 different types of plastics divided into 7 categories. No recycling companies were consulted in the creation of these categories, so there is no consistency in coding. Recyclers set their own descriptions, leading to consumer confusion. And only 15% of plastics are recycled anyway. The rest end up in landfills, incinerators, and illegal dumping sites –and in our oceans.

We know fossil fuel production and use have a huge negative impact on the climate, the environment, and human health. The earth is warming too fast, passing certain tipping points that need our

BOB GEDERT'S BOOK *UNTANGLING PLASTICS: THE MISSING LINK IN MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE*

Available through Amazon or Barnes and Noble. He welcomes questions "because they give me ideas for my next book," which he is currently writing. You can reach him at robert.gedert@gmail.com.

attention. We must stop producing and using coal, gas, and oil products that create CO2 emissions.

Plastics lie at the root of our impending climate disaster.

All plastics are made from fossil fuels. From the creation of plastics through their lifespan, there are continuous unmitigated environmental and human impacts. Plastics are made from fracked gas or drilled oil, and emissions from these processes can cause respiratory and neurological problems, cardiovascular damage, cancer, and premature mortality. Sixteen thousand different chemical additives go into making plastic; 4,400 of them are proven toxic. This can lead to nervous system disorders, reproductive impairments, and developmental problems. (Bob suggests watching the film *Dark Waters*.)

Plastics are ingested through food and drink. The addition of PFAs and PFOs to plastic straws, packaging, food storage containers, and cookware can lead to thyroid disorders and chronic liver disease. Black plastics are especially dangerous. Because they are sourced from electronic scrap such as TVs and computers, they can contain unregulated

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painting, and drawing to help incarcerated persons practice situations.

Another focus of Sankofa is the power of story—who gets to tell their story about who belongs and what is possible. Art programs at Sankofa help young people learn to recognize their creative processes. Gina’s third media piece included three videos made by young people—one about gerrymandering and voting; Are You OK? about mental health issues; and one about access to safe and clean water. “Stories are infrastructure,” Gina explained. “They change what people believe is normal and possible.”

Gina closed her rousing presentation on a positive note. “I am hopeful that you agree art changes hearts.” She noted that WCC has always understood that democracy is participatory, and said “activism” is “participatory democracy with imagination.” Her final call to action: “History tells us art can change the world. Will we be brave enough to use art for change?”

In the lively question and answer session that followed the presentation, moderated by Cheri Rekow, WCC’s Vice President for Civic Engagement, Gina focused on ways we can be engaged in activism. She shared some very dear stories and memories about her loving relationship with her father and the joy of working with him to found and promote Sankofa, “to institutionalize what he had done with his life.”

When asked what Sankofa means and why that name was chosen, Gina said it came from the time that her father spent in Africa. It is a Ghanaian term that means “Go back and get it”—to retrieve what you have left behind, to learn from the past to build a better future. That word, and all that Gina shared in this stirring National Speaker Forum, is a call to action that aligns very closely with WCC’s mission to

educate, empower, and engage. May we, individually and as an organization dedicated to activism, continue to use art and every other means to shape our community’s shared future. As Harry said to Gina, “Never go a day without doing something to undermine injustice.”



More than 300 listened and participated in the 2026 NSF.



Belafonte shares a pose with the NSF committee members.



More than 100 join Belafonte for the event’s VIP reception.

For more photos, visit womanscityclub.org



amounts of toxic chemicals. And they're all over your house in the form of utensils, toys, sports equipment, and more.

The Precautionary Principle

The principle of **Do No Harm** is a precautionary principle that applies to public health and safety as well as to individuals, and it requires eliminating plastics from our lives.

Some people claim that the circular economy model—reduce, reuse, recycle—works for plastics. Not so. The circular economy model requires eliminating waste and pollution, circulating products and materials at the highest value, and regenerating nature. This works for glass and cardboard, but not for plastics. In our current economy, we take materials from the Earth, make products from them, and eventually throw them away as waste—the process is linear. In a circular economy we stop waste from being produced in the first place. Since most plastics cannot be recycled more than once, they fail the circular economy principles.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change, whose 184 member nations meet every November. One hundred eighty nations are planning zero fossil fuel production by 2040–2050. The obvious step to achieving this goal is to stop using plastics. While it is hard to imagine all countries would agree to ban plastic, there is precedent. From 1986–2021 all nations banned lead-based fuel and from 1987–2000 the world got together to ban the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which were proven to cause a hole in the ozone layer.

How we remove plastics from the environment

Bob offered a six-phase approach to removing plastics from our environment.

1: Ban new plastic production - There are currently three plastic production plants operating in Ohio with 27 new plants proposed. These facilities cause harm to workers and the environment. Canada has already classified plastics as hazardous waste.

2: Reduce consumption - Stop using plastics. Start with single use plastics such as grocery bags. Then begin to reduce unnecessary plastics such as plastic utensils in kitchen. Once you've done this, begin to reduce use of all plastics.

3: Reuse - When you dine at a restaurant, take along your own carry out containers, made of something other than plastic. Stop buying bottled water. Repair rather than buying new whenever possible.

4. Recycle - Rumpke for curbside pickup and the Cincinnati Reuse and Recycling Hub for drop-off. See the organizations' websites for details. A word of caution: Avoid "wish recycling." Many of us, in our well-meaning but misguided effort to recycle everything, ignore the directions we are given. We toss an unrecyclable item into the bin because we think it should be recycled and that the recycler will find a place for it. Not so. What happens is that the system shuts down while the offending item is located and removed. If there are too many such items, everything may be rejected.

5: Support the use and development of plastic substitutes - Substitutes for plastic that are safe for the environment and human health exist. Buy your milk in a cardboard carton, for example.

6: Phase out all existing production of plastics - There is a choice: Do no harm OR continue to use plastics.

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ALTERNATIVE VOTING METHODS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Fortify Democracy, a nonprofit organization promoting Approval Voting.

Lucy May, host of *Cincinnati Edition* on WVXU, will moderate.

Senator Louis W. Blessing, III, currently represents Ohio's 8th Senate District, which encompasses a portion of Hamilton County. He began his career in the legislature serving as a member of the Ohio House of Representatives, representing the 29th Ohio House District. Senator Blessing has had an extensive career in electrical engineering, is a University of Cincinnati graduate and a resident of Colerain Township.



Louis W. Blessing, III

Matt Koesters is a Cincinnati-based, former award-winning journalist covering politics, government, economic development and transportation for daily newspapers. As a reporter, Koesters witnessed the effects of the structural flaws in the plurality voting system used in the vast majority of American elections, so he founded Fortify Democracy in 2025 to change the system and mitigate disenfranchisement.



Matt Koesters

Senate Bill 395, akin to the Condorcet method, would implement a top-three primary and consensus general election system in Ohio. This bill aims to address concerns about political extremism and money in politics by capturing the benefits of Ranked-Choice Voting with none of its flaws. The bill starts with a top-three primary, where all candidates run in the same primary irrespective of party, with the top three advancing to the November general. This system is designed to ensure that candidates speak to all voters, rather than just their base, and to reduce the influence of moneyed interests in elections.



Lucy May

RCV, also known as Proportional Representation, was effectively banned by our state legislature after Lakewood and Cleveland Heights expressed interest in using it. Under the state law signed by Governor DeWine on March 16, 2026, the Secretary of State would deem local governments ineligible to receive any general funding from the state if ranked-choice voting were to be adopted.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
OUR CO-SPONSORS, VISIT
THEIR WEBSITES

cincinnatusassoc.org
my.lwv.org/ohio/cincinnati-area
cincyvotes.org



Presented at the Agnes B. Seasongood Luncheon

MARIAN A. SPENCER EDUCATION AWARDS

SEASONGOOD COMMITTEE
CHAIR, SUSAN NOONAN

Thank you to everyone who joined us on May 2 at the Kennedy Heights Arts Center Lindner Annex for the **2026 Agnes B. Seasongood Luncheon**. It was a truly special afternoon celebrating women’s leadership, civic engagement, and the transformative power of education in our community.

We are grateful to our members, guests, sponsors, donors, and volunteers whose support made this signature event such a success. A special thank you to our featured speaker, **Yvonne DiCristoforo**, recently retired Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service Field Office in Cincinnati, for sharing her remarkable journey and insights—an inspiring reminder of the impact of service and leadership.

We are especially proud to congratulate this year’s six Marian A. Spencer Education Award recipients. These outstanding young women exemplify academic achievement, leadership, and a deep commitment to their communities. A group of 12, chaired by Chalet Jules read all 55 applications and acknowledged that the quality of submissions made it extremely difficult to choose only six.

Each recipient was awarded \$1,500 to support their continued education, and we look forward to following their bright futures. **Take a minute to read through these recipient’s inspirational essays.**

Our committee outdid themselves and made 18 beautiful themed raffle baskets, making the decision of which to take a chance on very difficult. All funds raised will help fund next year’s education awards.

Ava Dattilo William Mason High School	
Martha Garcia Hamilton High School	
Emori Witmer-Gautsch William Mason High School	
Grace Phillips Colerain High School	
Tazara Prophett Walnut Hills High School	
Isabella Sammut Madeira High School	

Thank you again to everyone for being a part of this meaningful celebration and for helping us continue the legacies of both Agnes B. Seasongood and Marian A. Spencer.

A special thank you to the WCC Seasongood Committee, those who took the time to review education award applications, and those who donated baskets.



A Message from the VP for Civic Engagement

DEMOCRACY THRIVES ON ACTIVE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

CHERI REKOW

WCC understands that democracy thrives on active citizen participation, and over the past 111 years has fulfilled its civic engagement mission to educate the membership on important local and state initiatives, particularly those that impact voters' rights. Most recently, WCC campaigned in favor of fair districting with a rally on Fountain Square.

Disenfranchisement tactics successfully discourage many eligible voters who are busy managing daily life challenges. Last month, Ohio became one of over two dozen states which have banned or are in the process of banning Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV) because Ohio elected officials voted on a state-wide RCV ban, under the radar for most. The ban applies to all Ohio jurisdictions regardless of what communities believe is in their best interest.

At a time when elected officials at all levels are working to privatize public resources, and roll back rights that we took for granted, the stakes have never been higher. So, it is imperative that we not only pay attention to what is intentionally being done to suppress votes, we also need to focus on why voter turnout is so low—even in presidential election years and worse in between. Persistent low turnout risks weakening the legitimacy of elected officials and undermining public confidence in the democratic system.

Why is voter turnout embarrassingly low? [The Society for Personality and Social Psychology](#) attributes several factors as causes of low participation:

- **Perceived lack of impact:** Many voters believe their vote won't make a difference, especially if they feel disconnected from political issues.

- **Civic hope deficit:** Without belief that the system can be improved, engagement declines.
- **Structural barriers:** Voter ID laws, restrictive registration, and limited access to polling places can deter participation.
- **Two-party dominance:** In areas where one party controls politics, voters may feel disillusioned and less motivated to participate.

More and more, citizens feel that their vote doesn't matter or that they are not being heard.

Gerrymandering, by design, has reduced the voices of targeted citizens. The strong two-party system has limited the ability of independent candidates, in large part due to campaign costs and negative ads. That leaves us with fewer options and when "forced" to vote, it is often to pick "the lesser of two evils", so voters are even more discouraged.

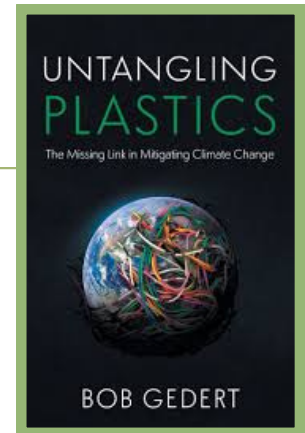
As with previous programs, the WCC May Forum seeks to inspire higher turnout by encouraging civic hope through education, media, and community engagement to make voting feel authentic and impactful. The distinguished forum speakers will be followed by a mock election to engage and better comprehend the subtle differences between various voting methods. Watch for the WCC May 2026 Forum event notices on social media and help us get the word out about our interactive forum by liking and sharing.

Beyond the May hands-on educational forum, the WCC will continue to

- **Protect and expand access to voting** (e.g., early voting, mail-in ballots, same-day registration).

- **Inform our membership** and speak out on systemic barriers and voter suppression tactics.
- **Mobilize voters around issues** that resonate with diverse communities, such as climate change, tax levies and social justice.

In short, sustained low turnout not only distorts representation but also erodes the public's faith in democracy. Restoring higher participation is essential to preserving the legitimacy and vitality of the political system.



What you can do **right now**

In response to questions from the audience, Bob listed some actions individuals can take:

- **Eliminate** straws and single use plastic bags.
- **Take your own containers** for leftovers to restaurants.
- **Shop smart** - look for plastic-free alternatives.
- **Do a room-by-room assessment** starting with kitchen. Replace plastics whenever possible. This can be an overwhelming process. Take it slowly—one green step at a time.
- **Avoid wish recycling** and work to educate your community about its dangers
- **Visit these websites:** <https://oceanplasticsrecovery.com>; <https://earth911.com>; <https://www.plasticfreejuly.org>.
- **Encourage local health departments** to follow the AMA report that calls climate change a public health crisis.
- **Write to packaging and brand companies** asking them to change their packaging to recyclable materials. For example, some egg cartons are recyclable, some are not. To improve your chances of a response, write a letter, rather than an email or social media post.
- **Write to companies in which you are a shareholder**, expressing your concerns about their position.
- **Petition to reinstate the ban on single-use plastic** in all Federally owned properties (ie, parks), which was in place until a year ago.
- **Write to your elected officials**, both state and federal. Tell them to end national fossil fuel tax subsidies (which help fracking companies).

Finally, commit to walking lightly on the earth.



GET TO KNOW SUSAN NOONAN

JO-ANN HUFF ALBERS

Susan B. Noonan is WCC's Energizer Bunny. She calls herself a fulltime volunteer.

Currently she is a three-term board member, WCC Foundation trustee, chair of the Agnes B. Seasongood Luncheon, and member of the National Speaker Forum and communications committees and the book club. She always brings food to WCC events in the Geier Room.

"I've been an 'overactive member' since I joined," she said. A member since 1988 when WCC had luncheons every Friday at Longworth Hall, she was invited to join by Louise Spiegel, "one of my heroes."

Susan was three-year WCC president in 2013-2015 and chaired the centennial celebration that culminated in the March 8, 2015 dinner at what's now the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza. She has served on many other WCC committees, including the one that advocated and raised funds for the Marian A. Spencer statue, the first statue in Cincinnati honoring a named woman.

She grew up in Swampscott and Lyon, Massachusetts. "For the first eight years of my life, I lived in a third-floor, two-bedroom apartment, with my mother, sister, aunt, dog—all women—and lots of love!" She added, "Some may know I was born in Salem, Massachusetts, and am a 'good witch,' sending whammies when needed."

Susan earned a BS in psychology and MS in criminal justice from the University of Cincinnati and continued post graduate work in sociology. During that time, she worked as a coordinator on a National Institute of Corrections project and co-authored the "Impact of Technology in Corrections" report.

She worked with the Cincinnati Human Relations Commission (CHRC) as police-community relations coordinator from 1988 to 1998 and then as its acting executive director until February 2000. She then started SBN Consulting, providing criminal justice consulting, fund development, and human and government relations. During two election cycles, she was finance/fundraising director for Hamilton County Commissioner Todd Portune.

In the three years before COVID, Susan cochaired the Mayor's Gender Equality Task Force after cochairing the previous three-year process to pass CEDAW (Cities to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women) Ordinances in the City of Cincinnati. She met the FBI special agent in charge of the Southwestern Ohio field office while working on a hate crime policy for the City of Cincinnati and founding the Interethnic Council of Greater Cincinnati. At the time, FBI offices were being encouraged to implement Citizens Academies, so in 2000 Susan and Ruth Cronenberg (a former WCC president and founder of Feist Tea) started the Southwest Ohio Citizens Academy. ("FBI" was not allowed to be in the name!)

Susan has been involved in some capacity with the Citizens Academy since its start. She has been cochair, chair, and program chair. Starting in 2019 she was a three-year president of the FBI Cincinnati Citizens Academy Alumni Association. All that led to her becoming an anonymous FBI informant and helping the FBI and US Attorney with evidence in a white-collar crime case that helped bring a legislator to justice.

(Continued on page 14)



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SIP. SHARE. CONNECT. EVENT

SARAH GIDEONSE AND LAURIE FRANK

MAY BOOK CLUB

Georgia, a Novel of Georgia O'Keeffe

(2016, 336 pages)

by Dawn Trapp

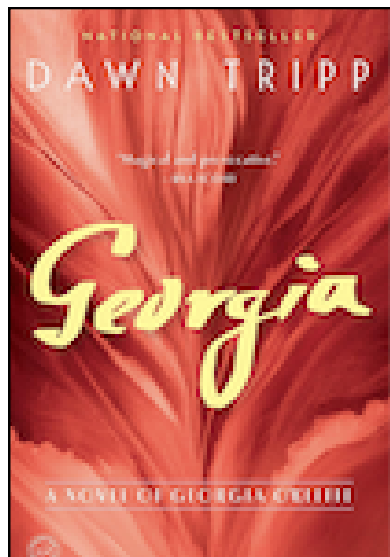
Saturday, May 16

10-11:30 am via Zoom

To receive a Zoom link to the discussion, RSVP to sarah.gideonse@fuse.net. WCC members are cordially invited to join the discussions, as they have time or interest.

In this work of historical fiction, Dawn Tripp brings to life Georgia O'Keeffe, her love affair with photographer Alfred Stieglitz, and her quest to become an independent artist. It's written in the first person, with O'Keeffe stating early on, "This is not a love story. If it were, we would have the same story. But he has his, and I have mine." Best not take her word for it, as this is a sizzling romance (alert to reader), as well as her artistic, often controversial journey.

"A breathtaking work of the imagination, Georgia is the story of a passionate young woman, her search for love and artistic freedom, the sacrifices she will face, and the bold vision that will make her a legend."
(from Amazon)



On Sunday, April 12, 26 people gathered at the Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Walnut Hills for a Sip.Share.Connect program. This members-only event gave us the opportunity to visit with friends over a light lunch, with members old and new (four new) telling the group why they joined WCC and what they enjoy most about their membership.

After lunch, WCC VP of Programs and Stowe House docent Anne Buening conducted a detailed tour of the historic home. Although most of us know Harriet Beecher Stowe as the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Anne's tour provided little-known and interesting tidbits about the neighborhood, the family and their occupations, the restoration of the house, and more.

The event quickly sold out. The membership committee is investigating ideas for quarterly Sip.Share.Connect. events. **The next will be the Party in the Park in September.**



GETTING TO KNOW SUSAN NOONAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

A longtime advocate for justice, inclusion, and public safety, Susan has held influential roles across numerous organizations. She has been on the boards of the Cincinnati Association, Ohio Crime Prevention Association, Cincinnati Citizens Police Association, Hamilton County Sheriff's Advisers, Ohio Crime Prevention Association, and Chair of the CincyUSA Sports Commission. She is a member of the West Chester Citizens Police Academy Alumni.

Last May she received the Citizen Cincinnati Award, recognizing her "exceptional commitment to civic leadership and community service in Greater Cincinnati."

She was a 2020 Lion of the Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio. The award honors those who have made a lasting impact on the Greater Cincinnati community through their selfless dedication, commitment, and service to others. Her other awards include the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award, Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Service Award, Great Rivers Girl Scout Council's Women of Distinction Award, Mary K. Amer Service Award of the Ohio Brain Injury Association, Ohio Crime Prevention Association's President's Award of Merit three times, Alpha Sigma Kappa Honor Society Award, Cincinnati Women's Political Caucus annual award, University of Cincinnati Distinguished Alumna Award, Hamilton County Sheriff's Citizen of the Year and community Hero of ArtWorks.

Describing WCC as "completely inclusive," she believes WCC can keep making a difference in Cincinnati life "by continuing to educate, inform and advocate for all residents in our region. WCC presents informative, interesting and relevant programs which I love. We invite anyone to attend."

Susan and her husband, David, of 50 years this coming September, live on a lake in West Chester Township. They have two sons, Rob and Tim, and two stepdaughters, Kaley and Holly. "We raised two granddaughters. Katie, 40, and Jessie, 38, she said.



Celebrating 50 years in September

Of activities she most enjoys, she said, "Actually, serving on boards, committees, and volunteering could be called my main hobby. I love being outside on our back deck and in our yard, love my dog, Oscar, and those two crazy great granddaughters, Lacey and Molly."

