



AIR TIME

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Applied Information Resources is a non-profit, public policy research and community information organization dedicated to:

- Citizen education on public issues.
- Assisting human service organizations in evaluating their programs, and
- Providing the best possible information to decision makers responding to changing human and urban needs.

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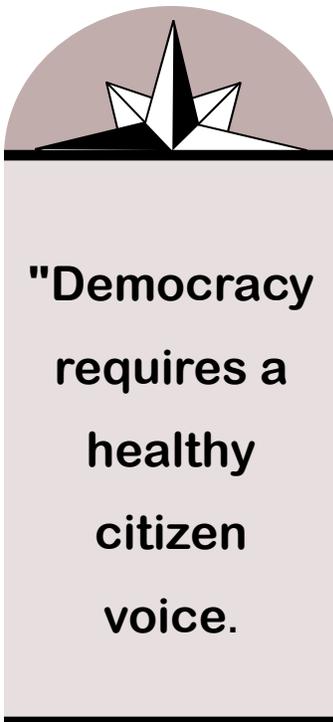
William K. Woods
 Edward Burdell
 Alice B. Schneider

THE CITIZENS' VOICE - TRANSFORMING DIVERSE CITIZEN VOICES INTO ONE CIVIC CHOIR

Applied Information Resources currently staffs an initiative to strengthen the voice of citizens in the public/community life of Cincinnati. It is a process that AIR is calling "The Citizens' Voice." The initial phase of this initiative included bringing together involved citizens to discuss their views about citizen participation and how diverse citizens can come together to have a stronger role in public decision making

Some comments from attendees of these discussions are instructive. "Democracy requires a healthy citizen voice. We have to get to a point where average citizens aren't just shunted aside. Citizens need to know the process at least as well as

the bureaucrats." **George Getty**, Executive Director of the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless.



Ron Miller, former Director of the Hamilton County Planning Department, adds: Every time a public initiative gets underway, citizen engagement needs to be part of

the process. That's the essence of democracy." "Any initiative called 'The Citizens' Voice' should be flexible, open, broad-based, inquisitive, and persistent." **Josh Kreckler**, President of the Green Party.

"How do we get people to start thinking that - 'your issue is my issue.'" **Bonnie Neumeier**, civic activist and Over-the-Rhine leader.

This September, Citizens' Voice participants took the next step. They convened at the Peaslee Neighborhood Center to hear about a proposed City ordinance designed to protect low-income neighborhoods from new environmental

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COMMUNITY ISSUES FORUM KICKS OFF NEW SEASON

A new season of Community Issues Forums kicked off this fall with a series that focused on candidates and issues to be decided on November 4th. The proposed City Charter Amendments on Proportional Representation and banning red light cameras received attention on September 18th, while the five state initiatives were reviewed on October 30th.

Other Forums in October included presentations by candidates for Congress in the First and Second Districts and candidates for the Ohio House of Representatives.

Since 1982, AIR has planned and facilitated these every other Thursday luncheon forums that feature presentations by local leaders on critical community issues. Sponsored by Christ Church Cathedral, the

forums take place in the Cathedral's Undercroft at 12:00 Noon. Forums are free and open to the public, and lunch can be purchased for \$5.

A new innovation for people who cannot attend a particular forum can be found on AIR's web-site (www.airinc.org). Highlights of the last Forum can be seen and heard on-line, as AIR is recording the presentations with a video camera. Forums for 2009 are currently being planned, and suggestions of topics and speakers are welcome. Call 381-4994 or e-mail airinc@juno.com with your ideas.



Kathy Helmbock and Mary Wells attending a Community Forum.

PARKING FOR THE COMMUNITY FORUMS

The old garage is gone! You can park at Western & Southern for \$1.00 during the "lunch special" between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The rate is \$1.00 per hour as opposed to the normal rate of \$2.00 per 20 minutes. Entering the garage at **10:59 or leaving at 2:01 p.m. negates** this discounted rate. W&S is on Broadway and 3rd and you can enter on 3rd.

The Citizen's Voice, Continued from page 1)
health hazards. David Altman, co-chair of the Environmental Justice Working Group, briefed them about the contents of the proposal, and he explained how concerned citizens could have an impact

on City Council's legislative process. This meeting sparked a number of attendees to attend a Council hearing on the proposed Environmental Justice Ordinance.

In the months ahead, AIR will continue to facilitate the Citizens' Voice as it evolves as an informal

network for sharing issues and concerns and for taking collective action when a consensus can be achieved.

COMMUNITY FORUMS INFORMED CITIZENS ABOUT ELECTION 2008

<u>FORUM TOPIC</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>	<u>DATE</u>
<p><i>“Pros and Cons of Proportional Representation and the Red Light Camera Ban”</i></p>  <p>Vice Mayor David Crowley</p>	<p>Vice Mayor David Crowley (against the red light ban), Justin Jeffre, (pro the red light ban), Anthony Lorenzo, a lead organizer for the pro-PR initiative and Jeff Berding, Cincinnati City Councilman</p>	<p>September 18, 2008</p> <p>Video available at www.airinc.org</p>
<p><i>“Election 2008: Candidates for Congress in the First and Second Districts Make Their Case”</i></p> 	<p>State Rep. Steve Driehaus</p>	<p>October 2, 2008</p> <p>Video available at www.airinc.org</p>
<p><i>“Election 2008: Candidates for the Ohio General Assembly Make Their Case”</i></p>	<p>Denise Driehaus, Steve Johnson (31st District), Peter Stautberg, Jeff Sinnard (34th District), and Virgil Lovett, and Connie Pillich (28th District).</p>	<p>October 16, 2008</p> <p>Video available at www.airinc.org</p>
<p><i>“Election 2008: The State-wide Ballot Issues and Election Protection Concerns”</i></p>	<p>Marjorie Davies, President of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area, and Nick Dinardo, Attorney with the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati</p>	<p>October 30, 2008</p>

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AIR, INC.

Public Policy and Research

**CONTRIBUTIONS HELP AIR, INC. WITH
COMMUNITY WORK**

AIR depends on individual contributions to support our work. We are a charitable 501(c)(3) organization and your contributions help fund such projects as campaign finance reform, and studies in racism and homelessness in Cincinnati. We invite you to assist us as AIR takes on community issues and challenges.

\$500 \$100 \$50 \$25

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