



THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

P. O. Box 158369, Nashville TN 37215, (615) 297-7134,

www.LWVnashville.org.

Volume 63, No. 3

October, 2009

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Time	Place	Description
Monday Oct 5	5:15	Vanderbilt Inst For Global Health	Board Meeting. 2525 West End Ave. Bldg., 6 th floor, above Borders and PF Chang. Parking in front of building or in garage behind building off 25 th . The Board meets monthly, first Monday, guests welcome.
Thursday Oct 15	12:00	First Amendment Center	“Third Thursday” Lunch. Discussion of the Census , facilitated by Jo Singer and Lynn Williams. 1207 18 th Ave. S. To order box lunch for \$8.00, contact Jo Singer, gjosinger@aol.com or 794-2781 by Oct. 12.
Oct 24- Oct 25	1:00 - noon	Johnson City, TN	LWV Tennessee Fall Conference. Focus on Health Care, Immigration, TN state funding, Action and more. www.LWV-TN.org .
Thursday Oct 15	12:00	Conexion Americas	“Third Thursday” Lunch. Discussion of DREAM Act , higher ed. for undocumented young people. 800 18 th Ave., S. 37203. Box lunch for \$8.00, contact Jo Singer, gjosinger@aol.com or 794-2781 by Nov 16.
Wed Dec 9	5:30- 7:30	Kay Simmons	LWV Holiday Party. Bring your friends and colleagues and join the merriment. 3814 Richland Ave., 27215.

THIRD THURSDAY LUNCH—ENSURING A COMPLETE CENSUS

Our lunch on **October 15 at 12:00** will focus on the 2010 census, a vital civic count of all Americans. The LWVUS is partnering with other groups in emphasizing the importance of every single resident being counted in the community where they live. The data is used as a basis for most federal funding to states and communities as well as for determining the number of Congressional representatives and state legislators. “Our goal is to work with others to eliminate the ‘undercount’ that occurs, particularly within low income and minority populations,” says national League President Mary G. Wilson. Neal Darby, senior Tennessee Partnership Specialist of the local Census Committee, will speak on both the impact in the community and Tennessee and the mechanics of the local Census. Let’s find out how we can help. League members Jo Singer and Lynn Williams will facilitate the discussion. For additional resources on an inclusive Census, see www.LWV.org and search for Census.

We will gather at 12:00 at the First Amendment Center, 1207 18th Ave. S. for lunch and discussion. If you wish to order a box lunch for \$8.00, please contact Jo Singer at 794-2781 or gjosinger@aol.com by October 12 or carry your own brown bag. Bring a friend and enjoy another lively League lunch!

KEEPING UP WITH HEALTH CARE ACTION

Changing America’s system of health care may be the most important policy debate of the decade. It’s hard to keep up with the changing dynamics of the debate and Congressional action. At our September Third Thursday lunch, League member Pat Post provided us with an insightful guide through the legislative thicket, captured in her concise two-page “Key Elements of Proposed Health Care Reform Legislation.”

On Sunday, September 27, LWVN members met with Congressmen Jim Cooper at the home of Barbara Gay, for a special members-only discussion of health care legislation. Cooper's talk was thoughtful, encyclopedic and often humorous and he fielded sound, probing questions by League members. Our members care a lot about this issue, as do most Americans. In preparation for the meeting, attendees were sent a copy of Pat Post's fine summary of key elements as well as the Kaiser Family Foundation's new side-by-side comparison of the two Senate bills and House bill 3200. Both are posted under Publications at www.lwvnashville.org.

Many folks are worried about what our children may face because of increasing deficits, but what they do not yet fully understand is how much the cost of health care will increase in ten years if Congress does nothing. Pat Post relayed the rather startling data indicated by the Milliman Medical Index on total health spending by or for a typical American family of four with private health insurance. The index totals the family's out-of-pocket spending for health care plus the contributions made by employers and employees to the family's job-related health insurance coverage. In 2001 the index stood at \$8,414. It had risen to \$16,700 by 2009 and is likely to rise to \$18,000 next year. Since 2005, the index has grown at an average annual compound rate of 8.4 percent. Assuming it grows 8 percent for the coming decade, then today's \$16,700 will have grown to slightly over \$36,000 by 2019. The data underscore the need for health care reform to contain costs, as well as to extend access and improve the quality of care.

League members need to continue to contact their Congressional representatives and Senators Alexander and Corker. While phone calls and e-mails are helpful, the best way to get your representative's attention is by meeting with them personally, or by faxing or sending a snail mail letter to their local office, thereby avoiding the delay of mail going through the security check in D.C.

Tell them that you expect them to vote for health care reform that includes:

- Coverage for all without regard to pre-existing conditions
- A robust, public plan to compete with private insurers
- Promotion of prevention, wellness, patient safety and quality care
- Development of effective care based on best practice
- Change in reimbursements to promote primary health care using a proven team approach to provide physical and mental health care.

Additional resources about the importance of health care reform are available at www.LWV.org and www.lwvnashville.org –click on Publications.

MARGIE PARSLEY RECEIVES MOLLY TODD AWARD

At the League's Annual Meeting, Margie Parsley was presented the Molly Todd Award and described as "an understated miracle worker, one whom Molly Todd would have been proud to claim as a protégé." As action chair, she has worked diligently advocating on behalf of League issues, helping legislators understand the importance of clean water, good schools, voting rights, open government, and an equitable system of taxation.

She has worked to ensure the rights of every citizen to vote and have their vote counted, an area of special interest to Molly Todd, one of the plaintiffs in *Baker v. Carr*, the landmark decision of the U.S. Supreme Court striking down the old imbalanced voting districts and affirming the principle, one-person, one-vote. Margie has also served as the Nashville League's president. In fact, she served twice, first in 1998-2000 and later in 2006-08. She is currently serving as Co-President of LWV Tennessee with Nancy Stewart of Knoxville. You can check out a complete list and stories of Molly Todd awardees at www.lwvnashville.org under "About LWV".

FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

Reminder: It's not too late to renew your League membership for 2009-10. Please scan your checkbook to see if you are up to date with your League dues. You can download a renewal form at www.lwvnashville.org.

LWV Board: President, Lucy Chism; 1st VP, Jo Singer; 2nd VP, Barbara Gay; Secretary, Carolyn Harris; Treasurer, Marian Ott; Education, Debby Gould; Health Care, Sue Bredenstener; Human Needs, Reba Holmes; Membership, Margie Parsley and Judy Raines; Metro Government, Mary Beth Ikard; Publicity, Jackie Crumley; Voter Editor, Karen Weeks; and Voter Services, Lynn Williams. Finance Drive, Kay Simmons (off-Board). Office Administrator, September Landers.