



THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

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www.LWVnashville.org.

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Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Place	Description
Thursday August 20	12:00	Edgehill Library, 1409 12 th Ave, S.	“Third Thursday” Lunch. Discussion of the 287-G Program , which empowers local law enforcement officers to enforce immigration law . Box lunches will be provided for \$8.00 if reserved by August 17; RSVP to Jo Singer at gjosinger@aol.com or 794-2781. Or just come and bring your own brown bag.
Monday Sept. 14	5:15 p.m.	TBA	Board Meeting. The Board meets monthly, first Monday (except holidays), guests welcome.
Thursday Sept. 17	12:00	TBA	“Third Thursday” Lunch. TBA

THIRD THURSDAY LUNCH—LOCAL IMMIGRATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

Our lunch on **August 20 at 12:00** will focus on the current program in Nashville that screens all persons brought to the Sheriff's office regarding immigration status under an agreement with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement). A recent US Government Accountability Office report describes the **287 G Program** as resulting in the deportation of thousands of illegal immigrants, most of whom have committed only minor offenses. The Department of Homeland Security has issued new guidelines which would focus efforts on deportation of violent offenders. However, the guidelines will also make data about the program less accessible to the public. The Metro Council could vote soon to accept the changes in the program or could decide to end the program. For information from the *Tennessean*, WPLN, ACLU, Heritage Foundation, and ICE, go to www.LWVNashville.org.

Debbie Gould will lead the discussion of this controversial program. We'll gather at 12:00 at the Edgehill Library, 1409 12th Ave, South (continuation of Granny White Pike). If you wish to order a box lunch for \$8.00, please RSVP by August 17 to Jo Singer at 794-2781 or gjosinger@aol.com. So gear up for Fall, bring a friend and enjoy another lively League lunch!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The League of Women Voters of Nashville ushers in the new fiscal year with great excitement. A standing ovation goes to our outgoing board members who provided so much support and dedication to the League. We also wish to acknowledge the fine work and special verve that **Judy Raines** brought to her duties as our office administrator. She has retired in order to spend more time with her kids and grandkids, but will continue as a member and as Co-Chair of the Membership Committee. At the same time, we welcome our new office administrator, **September Landers**. You can reach her at lwnash@gmail.com.

In June more than 80 people attended the terrific **Health Care Forum** sponsored by the League at the First Amendment Center. Sue Bredensteiner and Debby Gould coordinated this timely event and have provided online a summary of the fascinating discussion of health care issues and solutions now being debated in Congress. See www.LWVNashville.org.

From the President, cont'd.

I want to take a moment to present some **Fun Facts** on our current board members. See if you can identify the member and the answer will be provided in the next VOTER issue.

Is a 2nd generation league member. Was on her college rifle team. Completed the Chicago Marathon in 2005. Plays the standard and baritone ukulele. Enjoys jam bands, collecting antiques, and recycling. Collects Tigers in every form but live. Moved 11 times in 38 years including Argentina and Puerto Rico. —Lucy Chism

LEAGUE EXCEEDS LEGISLATIVE EXPECTATIONS

In a difficult legislative environment, the League did a whole lot better than expected. “In many ways this was a surprisingly good session for our priorities!” said League Lobbyist Stewart Clifton. On several bills, in which committee votes or floor votes were extremely close, the calm voice of the League was likely decisive. Thanks to the members of the state action committee who were on site following the action, providing information to legislators and presenting testimony and to those who wrote or called in response to our action alerts.

Our positions **prevailed** relative to retaining merit-based judicial selection, blocking a proposed change to the constitution to prohibit the income tax, endangering water quality (with one exception), ensuring Pre-K funding, maintaining appointed superintendents, blocking photo I.D and proof of citizenship requirements for voting, and implementation of the Voter Confidence Act. Our positions **did not prevail** regarding tax fairness and amending the constitution to limit the right of privacy.

Good News:

- **Merit-Based Judicial Selection and Retention:** The new law, PC 0517, maintains a modified system of merit-based Appeals Court and Supreme Court selection and retention to avoid direction elections and expensive, partisan campaigns.
- **Constitutional Amendment to Prohibit Income Tax:** The League strongly opposed this proposed amendment that would have tied the hands of future legislatures in meeting citizens' needs.
- **Environment:** The League and other groups stopped several bills that would have weakened state regulation of clean waters. However, one did pass which would allow developers to bypass state regulators by hiring their own consultants in making watercourse determinations. PC 0464.
- **Early Childhood Education:** In a budget compromise, the state will retain the 250 Pre-K classrooms with recurring funds, as the League and many other groups advocated.
- **Appointed Superintendents:** Bills to revert to elected superintendents did not pass.
- **Elections:** Bills to require a Photo ID to vote or to require proof of citizenship were narrowly defeated. The bills would have placed unacceptable burdens on elderly, low income, and disabled voters.
- **Paper Ballots:** Efforts to delay the implementation of the Tennessee Voter Confidence Act beyond 2010 failed legislatively, although the act now faces potential judicial action by the Secretary of State. Members, contact your State Reps and Senators to urge Election Commission to implement in 2010.

Not-so-Good News:

- **Right of Privacy:** A resolution passed calling for a constitutional amendment that will limit the right of privacy of individuals to make reproductive choices. It must be adopted by the next legislature and in a public referendum in 2014 in order to come into effect. SJR 127.
- **Environment:** An anti-mountain top removal bill (SB 1398 Jackson/HB 0455 McDonald) did not pass. However, another bill, The Responsible Mining Act of 2009, prohibiting the issuance of permits for the removal of coal within 100 feet of the “ordinary high water mark” of any stream did pass. PC 0289.
- **Taxes:** Several bills to improve tax fairness and increase revenues (to offset budget cuts of over 10% from appropriations made the previous year.) did not pass. In addition to the drop in revenue due to the economy, Tennessee's tax structure results in a fiscal crisis every 7 or 8 years—which legislators and the executive branch seem unwilling to address. We are beginning to read reports of the impact of budget cuts on Tennessee's most vulnerable populations.

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 Bredensteiner; 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.