



THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

PO Box 158369, Nashville TN 37215 | 615-297-7134

www.LWVnashville.org

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June-July, 2010

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Time	Place	Description
Monday July 26	9:00 am to noon	Barbara Devaney 2813 Tyne Blvd Nashville, TN	LWVTN Action Committee Meeting Monthly planning meeting. For more information contact Barbara (bdevaney@comcast.net ; 665-9057) or Margie Parsley (mparsley99@comcast.net ; 352-7551).
Thursday August 5	7:00 am to 7:00 pm	TN polling locations	State Primary and County General Election (including Metro School Board) Early voting (July 16–31); see sample ballot information at http://www.nashville.gov/vote
Tuesday August 17	5:30 pm to 7:30 pm	Judy Raines 1632 S. Observatory Dr Nashville, TN 37215	New Member Party! A fun and informative gathering celebrating new members and guests—meet new friends and learn how the League of Women Voters can work for you and your community.
Monday August 23	9:00 am to noon	Barbara Devaney 2813 Tyne Blvd Nashville, TN	LWVTN Action Committee Meeting Monthly planning meeting. For more information contact Barbara or Margie (see above).
Monday August 23	5:00 pm	E/Spaces, Inc. 4322 Harding Nashville, TN 37205	LWV Nashville Board Meeting Guests are always welcome at the League’s monthly board meeting on the fourth Monday (5–7 pm). NOTE: New location upstairs of the Belle Meade Publix on Harding Pike near White Bridge Road. Covered parking is available through the driveway between Sweet CCs & Publix. Take the elevator bank to the office building (not grocery) up to the 4th floor, then left off the elevator, and the conference room is to your left as you come in the door.
Thursday September 16	Noon	TBA	Third Thursday Lunch—The Art of Voter Registration Training Lynn Williams will demonstrate her “Train the Trainers” module. For additional information, contact Vicki Ziegler at Vziegler@comcast.net
Monday September 27	9:00 am to noon	Barbara Devaney 2813 Tyne Blvd Nashville, TN	LWVTN Action Committee Meeting Monthly planning meeting. For more information contact Barbara or Margie (see above).
Monday September 27	5:00 pm	E/Spaces, Inc. 4322 Harding Nashville, TN 37205	LWV Nashville Board Meeting Guests are always welcome at the League’s monthly board meeting on the fourth Monday (5–7 pm)—directions above.

LWVN Celebrates 90 Years at Annual Meeting

On May 3 with the flood waters still receding in Nashville, League members celebrated 90 years as a national organization focused on educational work, advocacy, and community service. One of the few events downtown that evening—indeed, Representative Gilmore had spent the afternoon in a helicopter with Mayor Dean surveying damage—those in attendance enjoyed a delicious buffet at The Mad Platter in the historic Germantown. Then they participated in the formal changing of the guard as they said thank you to President Lucy Chism and members Jacquie Crumley, Marian Ott, and Karen Weeks who were retiring, and elected the new slate headed by a capable leader who consistently demonstrates innovative ideas, 2010-2012 President Jo Singer.

The incoming LWVN Board includes 1st Vice President Vicki Ziegler, 2nd Vice President Barbara Gay, Secretary Dianne DiIanni, Treasurer Lee Fairbend, Action Chair Riffi O'Brien, Education Chair Debby Gould, Environment Co-chairs Eileen Beehan (off-Board) and Tiffany Wilmot, Human Needs Co-chairs Carolyn Harris and Reba Holmes, Membership Chair Freda Player, Publicity Chair Burkley Allen, Metro Government Co-chairs Mary Beth Ikard and Margie Parsley, *Voter* Editor Sue Bredensteiner, Voter Service Chair Lynn Williams, and Nominating Committee members Brenda Gilmore, Pat Post, and Karen Weeks (all off-Board). In addition, Kay Simmons will continue as finance chair (off-Board) and Judy Raines as membership co-chair (off-Board).

Former League presidents, Roz McGee and Susan Gutow, were back in town to enjoy sharing good memories and see a vital and thriving Nashville League in action. Everyone delighted in the presentation of the 2010 Molly Todd Award to Karen Weeks. Recognized for her support of public education, the Nashville Public Library system, and Tennesseans for Fair Taxation as well as her work to keep League members informed through clear communication as *Voter* editor and about policy issues as chair of the LWVTN Action committee.

In remarks prepared in collaboration with Karen Edwards, Pat Post described the other attributes that make Karen Weeks such a special recipient of the 2010 award: “Although she prefers working behind the scenes, her thoughtful consideration of issues big and small is critical to the League’s success. She mentors new leaders and supports experienced leaders by being a sounding board, providing wise advice, and sharing insight from her own extensive experience.”

And so very important to any organization, “Whether the event is monitoring a poll or organizing hearings on the Metro budget, she is always a willing volunteer, steadfast in her attention and follow-through—she shows up, does the work, and makes sure the event is a success—always smiling and reminding us that we can have fun being together while advocating for issues we care about with good humor and grace.” Clearly delighted by the acknowledgment of her long-standing commitment, Karen thanked the group and enjoyed a lively round of applause.

Stewart Clifton, the League’s lobbyist, presented highlights of the 106th Tennessee General Assembly then still actively involved in budget hearings. He encouraged ongoing League advocacy for passage of the Governor’s Budget with amendments to maintain funding for vital social programs. He also warned of continued last minute action on voter services and environmental legislation that could require League action.

Continuing the evening’s festive spirit, Debby Gould introduced Candace Anderson Corrigan. A playwright, songwriter, and producer, Candace has recently reprised “The Perfect 36” for public television as “How Southern Women Won the Vote” (available on DVD at <http://howsouthernwomenwonthevote.com>). The musical documentary lauds young Harry Burn for casting the deciding vote for women’s suffrage and his mother on August 18, 1920, making Tennessee the 36th and pivotal state to ratify the 19th amendment that granted women the right to vote. Candace led rousing choruses of several songs ending the program with a happily energized audience.



Immediate Past President Lucy Chism; Marian Ott with Lee Fairbend; Lynn Williams, Berdelle Campbell, State Representative Brenda Gilmore, Margie Parsley; 2010 Molly Todd Recipient Karen Weeks with husband Kent and daughter Kris; 1967 LWVN President Roz McGee, Silvine Hudson, Joan Harshman; former LWVN & LWVTN President Susan Gutow with Berdelle Campbell.

From Nashville's President

Jump starting my service as president of LWVN, I attended the LWVUS 49th Biennial Convention in Atlanta, June 11-15. Our Tennessee contingent joined nearly 600 League members from Alaska to Florida, learning, networking, and sharing ideas and challenges. There were workshops and caucuses that will help us do our jobs better, and programs educating us about a range of topics such as food deserts, the National Popular Vote compact, and the LWVUS position on immigration. Together, we celebrated the League's 90th anniversary, heard inspirational speeches from many leaders, discussed critical policy issues, and elected a new national president.

Congressman John Lewis' message reminded us that "change comes when groups like the League are not afraid to get in the way." A panel of past LWVUS presidents emphasized core values the League holds dear: careful study, consensus building, and speaking with one voice. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius thanked us for the League's key role in achieving significant health care reform and reminded us that much more remains to be done. Walter Shur joined us to celebrate the legacy of his wife, longtime League member Ruth S. Shur. We received messages of support and thanks from the President of the United States and the Speaker of the House. Each of us can access speeches and League business including additions, changes, and resolutions passed during the Convention at the LWVUS website (www.lwv.org).

New LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara, a longtime Dekalb County, Georgia resident, was elected and installed—a special treat for us because she has been our regional representative on the national Board for several years and visited with us during our last two LWVTN annual meetings. Professionally, Elisabeth is an attorney who graduated from Emory University with a BA (1976) and JD (1979), and recently retired as deputy chief assistant district attorney in charge of the office's juvenile court division in Dekalb County. Prior to this promotion, she had served as assistant district attorney since 1986. Her interest in juvenile justice arose after years of volunteering for the public high school activities of her two sons, including mock trial, academic bowl, track, marching band and cross country.

Elisabeth joined the League in 1983 and her service has touched all levels. In 1983, she joined the Board of directors of the LWVGA as the Courts/Criminal Justice chair. She served on the state Board until 1991, also serving as vice president for Program and as secretary. In 1984, she joined the Board of directors of the DeKalb League, serving as Courts/Criminal Justice chair, Education Committee chair, vice president, and secretary between 1984 and 1997. In 1997, she was president of the DeKalb League. Elisabeth rejoined the Board of directors of the LWVGA in 1999, and served as president of that Board beginning in 2001.

As we look forward to a busy year for LWVN, it is important to emphasize that every one of us is needed! You have received an email request from Lynn Williams, our Voter Service chair, to be part of our Voter Services committee, which can take many forms: registering voters in both usual and unusual sites, helping with the planned gubernatorial forums, and doing voter education. As with all things League, you are never without resources to guide you in your volunteer efforts. Please make your League experience an even more meaningful one by giving of your time, with the understanding that even a few hours help. Our Third Thursday luncheons begin again in September and will offer a broad range of topics. There will be many opportunities to learn and participate in discussion as well. Check with the LWVN website (www.lwvnashville.org) for changes and updates between issues of the *Voter*.

I look forward to working with you, *Jo Singer*

Hitting the Ground Running!

On June 19, the LWVN Board met for its summer planning retreat at Barbara Devaney's home and enjoyed a delicious continental breakfast while learning about League procedures and discussing activities for the coming year. **September Landers**, office administrator (lwvnash@gmail.com), provided each member with new Board Handbook materials.

President Jo Singer walked Board members through each section in the Handbook, first making sure all contact information was correct, and then reviewing the bylaws, nonpartisan political policy, League 101, financial procedures, and the LWVN program of services. Jo noted that the LWV has understood the importance of nonpartisanship since its inception and during politically sensitive campaign seasons, part of the nonpartisan policy always bears repeating:

In order for Democrats, Republicans, and Independents to pursue and work for the same things, we must as an **organization** neither support nor oppose any political party or candidate for public office. However, the League is a political organization and as such encourages its member to participate fully in the party of their choice. It is an advantage to the League to have politically active members, as well as members whose paid employment is in the political arena. . . . The President, Voter Services Director, and Voter Editor may not take an active visible role in a

campaign for a political candidate or for a non-League issue. Directors are encouraged to have party affiliations, fulfill their responsibility to become informed about candidates, attend precinct meetings and caucuses, and exercise their franchise. Directors may make non-conspicuous (not identified or affiliated as a League Director) contributions to a political party or candidate, but must refrain from hosting parties or rallies for particular candidates of one party. Attendance, however, is encouraged.

Understanding the vision, beliefs, and intentions of LWV is important as well and can be found in detail on the website (www.lwvnashville.org/about_vision.html). In short, the goal of the LWV is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide and demonstrate their belief in respect for individuals, the value of diversity, and the empowerment of the grassroots, both within the League and in communities, while acting with trust, integrity, and professionalism.

Board discussion led to near term plans that include:

- Initiating a Forum Committee with broad member participation (contact: Lynn Williams, lynn.wms@comcast.net)
- Establishing a League presence at citizenship ceremonies and collaborate with Catholic Charities in their refugee settlement program (Judy Raines shares an interesting article on Citizenship recently published in Southwest Airlines *Spirit Magazine* (<http://www.spiritmag.com/features/article/citizenship/>))
- Designing a website report card tracking legislative action on League issues
- Organizing an observer corps to attend public meetings and governmental boards and establish a LWVN presence (contact: Barbara Gay, barbara.b.gay@gmail.com)
- Creating a Tech Committee to enhance use of the LWVN website (contact Reba Holmes, rholmes@comdata.com)
- Hosting new member parties for fun introductions to other League members and LWVN opportunities—see calendar for **first event scheduled on August 17** (contact: Judy Raines, judy.raines@comcast.net)

We Do Action

The LWVTN Action committee is meeting monthly to establish legislative priorities for the 107th Tennessee General Assembly in 2011. At the June meeting, the group agreed on criteria for its legislative priority:

- Achievable and practical
- Related to the LWV core mission of voter education and participation
- Lends itself to increasing LWV's visibility and credibility with the electorate and legislators
- Within LWV's expertise

Based on a survey of local LWVTN Boards, possible legislative priority issues were (1) voter confidence and paper validation, (2) poverty awareness and reduction, (3) changing the BEP formula, (4) implementation of health care reform, (5) mandating a living wage, (6) voter confidentiality for domestic violence victims, (6) green space planning, (7) food desserts, (8) mandatory civics classes in schools, and (9) juvenile justice. After discussion the committee recommended adoption of achieving voter confidentiality for victims of domestic violence because this issue best fit the stated criteria and other groups, such as the Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, would be interested in working with the League. Margie Parsley took the committee's recommendation to the LWVTN July 16 Board meeting for their approval.

Help Encourage Family, Friends, Colleagues, and Neighbors to Vote

Interested in helping encourage others to vote? Do you believe League forums and debates are important?

If you answered YES, then this message is for you. The LWVN Voter Services committee needs your participation to provide assistance for on-site voter registration and volunteer training, plan and staff issue forums and candidate debates, and increase attention to legislation that concerns elections and voters rights.

This year, we plan to expand our services to engage new citizens as voters, assisting with voter registration at naturalization ceremonies and extending invitations to help new citizens get involved in democracy. Would you like to help? Please contact Lynn Williams, Voter Services chair, at 383-0778 or at lynn.wms@comcast.net. Lynn will demonstrate voter registration best practices at our September 16 Third Thursday luncheon. Come and get involved!

ATTENTION! *The Nashville Voter* became a "green" digital publication in Spring 2010. If you have received this copy of the *Voter* in the mail, it means the League of Women Voters of Nashville has no recorded e-mail address for you. Please help us in the switch to electronic publications and announcements by sending your e-mail address to LWVNash@gmail.com. This will assure you receive all LWV newsletters, event invitations, Third Thursday announcements, and Call to Action alerts. Thank you, *Voter* Editor Sue Bredensteiner (suebred@mindspring.com).