



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
Tuesday August 16 DEADLINE	8:00 am to 4:30 pm M–F	Election Commission 800 2nd Ave South Nashville 37210	Application for Voter Registration DEADLINE to register for Davidson County Run Off General Election Information and application are available at http://www.nashville.gov/vote/voter_reg.asp *If you register by mail, your application must be post marked by the registration deadline date.
Wednesday August 17	2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Barbara Devaney's 2813 Tyne Blvd, Nashville 37215	LWVTN Action Committee Meeting Committee members will report on summer research projects and plan for the 2012 Legislative Session priorities. For more information contact Chair Barbara Devaney (bdevaney@comcast.net) or LWVTN President Margie Parsley (mparsley99@comcast.net).
Monday August 22	5:15 pm to 7:00 pm	E/Spaces, Inc. 4322 Harding Pike, Suite 417 Nashville, TN	LWV Nashville Board Meeting Guests are welcome at the League’s monthly board meetings. NOTE: Location is upstairs of the Belle Meade Publix on Harding Pike near White Bridge Road. Covered parking is available. Use the elevator bank to the office building (not grocery), exit on the 4th floor, then left off the elevator, and left again to the conference room.
Friday August 26 through Saturday September 10	TBA	Check Davidson County Election Commission http://www.nashville.gov/vote/upcoming_elections.asp	Early Voting for Davidson County Run Off General Election On the ballot: Determined from results of August 4 Election
Friday September 9	11:30 am to 1:00 pm	Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee—The Martin Distribution Center Metro Center 331 Great Circle Rd. Nashville 37228	First Friday Forum & Lunch—Current Issues that Impact the Wellbeing of Tennessee Children Tennessee Stand for Children’s Political Director Emily Ogden will discuss the organizations work to address issues of educational equity in Tennessee. This program will provide a good introduction to the League’s upcoming study and consensus activities this fall around key public education issues. Reservations to lwvnash@gmail.com are advised ; for additional information, contact Vickie Ziegler (Vziegler@comcast.net)
Thursday September 15	7:00 am to 7:00 pm	Davidson County Election Commission polling sites www.nashville.gov/vote/docs/ads/pdf/110804_VotingLocations.pdf	Davidson County Run Off General Election On the ballot: To be determined after the results of the August 4 election.
Friday September 30	5:00 pm	Downtown Marriott Chattanooga	Reservation Deadline LWVTN Fall Conference (see Announcements). Deadline for \$99 rate for king or two double beds; WIFI included. Call Marriott at 1-800-841-1674.

From Nashville's President

Fresh from poll watching, I am reminded of what a privilege it is to live in this country. Ordinary people voicing their opinions at the ballot box: outcomes decided by as few as 20 people, a controversial referendum to save the Nashville Fairgrounds passed. I saw people determined to find their correct precinct polling place and cast their vote despite this spring's extensive redistricting based on the 2010 Census. Poll workers delighted to see a new voter, thanking everyone for coming out, and telling them to wear that sticker to advertise voting because "we need the business!"

It is our mission as the League of Women Voters to make sure all those who are eligible to vote have the unrestricted opportunity to register and to vote. We have a mission to educate the public on issues in a fair and balanced way, so that informed decisions can be made. We, my friends, have work to do.

We embark on our new year with plans to examine what's going on with education as our first topic for our newly christened **First Friday** forum and lunch program. Second Harvest Food Bank in Metro Center will be our meeting place for the entire year, where we may enjoy their Friday buffet while supporting a good cause. They are graciously allowing us the use of their large board room off the lobby, so please make plans to join us there.

We will also be working with Leagues throughout Tennessee and the Tennessee Election Commission to educate the public about the new voter ID bill that takes effect in January 2012 (see article "LWVTN Reading Report").

In order to enjoy all that the League has to offer, you must be a member. Please take time now to heed the reminders that have come via email and snail mail and update your membership. Our website makes the process as easy as a click of your mouse (<http://lwvnashville.org/>). Membership Director **Freda Player** has requested that membership renewals be completed by July 31 and new membership recruitment run through the end of September this year. The new LWVN Directory will be available early in October. We absolutely need each of you to become as involved as your time allows, lending your voice to our discussions and planning, and your elbow grease to our work.

See you September 9th!

In League, *To Singer*



First Friday Forum Launches on September 9 Current Issues that Impact the Wellbeing of Tennessee Children

This year, the LWVN popular Third Thursday lunch programs are becoming First Friday forums allowing the League to partner with Second Harvest and support their delicious Friday Lunch Buffets at the Martin Distribution Center in Metro Center. It's a plus for both organizations because the League will consistently meet at Second Harvest with easy access and parking.

Our September program speaker is Tennessee Stand for Children's Political Director **Emily Ogden**, a lawyer who specializes in education law. She brings to the table experience from the Tennessee Comptroller's Office of Research and Education Accountability and as a lobbyist for the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents. Prior to her work with Stand for Children, Ogden served as legislative liaison to the administration of Governor Phil Bredesen, helping to pass an overhaul of the state's education funding formula along with an increase of millions of dollars for K-12 education.



Founded in 1999, Tennessee Stand for Children is a statewide advocacy group, which believes *all* Tennesseans need to make children a top political priority. Through effective advocacy, they have already won 15 victories that directly improve the lives of more than 300,000 children in the state and leveraged more than \$149 million in public funding for children's programs (<http://www.stand.org/Page.aspx?pid=1439>).

We'll all learn more about Stand for Children's work addressing issues of equity in Tennessee. This program also will provide a good introduction to the League's upcoming study and consensus activities this fall around key public education issues.

The LWVUS has prepared a series of materials for the Public Education Study Consensus to be pursued by local Leagues this fall. PDF and PowerPoint documents chart the Role of the Federal Government in Education through its history, equity and funding, and common core standards and assessments (available at http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Public_Education&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=17804). In addition, a series of articles are available for reprint in local *Voters*, the first of which is included here. LWVN members will receive a complete packet of these materials via e-mail by the end of August.

The History of Federal Government in Public Education: Where Have We Been and How Did We Get Here?

Where Have We Been?

From the very beginning of our Republic, a well-educated citizenry was thought to be essential to protect liberty and the general welfare of the people. Even before the Constitution was established, the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 included responsibilities of the nation for an education system. Education has long been considered a national concern by the federal government. Through federal action, education has been encouraged and financially supported from the first Northwest Ordinance in 1785 to the present. Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution granted Congress the power to lay and collect taxes to provide for the general welfare of the United States. It is under this “general welfare” clause that the federal government has assumed the power to initiate educational activity in its own right and to participate jointly with states, agencies and individuals in educational activities.

During the first century of our new nation, Congress granted more than 77 million acres of the public domain as an endowment for the support of public schools through tracts ceded to the states. In 1841, Congress passed an act that granted 500,000 acres to eight states and later increased land grants to a total of 19 states. The federal government also granted money, such as distributions of surplus federal revenue and reimbursements for war expenses, to states. Though Congress rarely prescribed that such funds be used only for schools, education continued to be one of the largest expenses of state and local governments so the states used federal funds whenever possible for education.

Two of our constitutional amendments played an important role in public education. In 1791, the 10th Amendment stated, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” Public education was not mentioned as one of those federal powers, and so historically has been delegated to the local and state governments.

In 1868, the 14th Amendment guaranteed rights to all citizens by stating, “all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens in the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.”

Included below is a brief historical overview of federal involvement in public education.

History of the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education: Timeline

Event	Date	Explanation
Land Ordinance & Northwest Ordinance	1785/1787	Requirement of a system of public education to be established in each township formed under a specified formula. Regulated monies raised via taxes and selling or renting land.
Land Grants	1841/1848	Congress granted 77+ million acres of land in the public domain as endowments for support of schools. Federal government also granted surplus money to states for public education.
Early philosophy – first six presidents		Discussion of a national university and urging of federal involvement in public education. Seen as critical to preparation for citizenship in a republican form of government.
First Morrill Act otherwise known as the Land Grant Act	1862	Donated public lands to states to be used for the endowment to support and maintain at least one college with specific purpose of teaching branches of agriculture, mechanic arts and industrial education.
The original Department (Office) of Education established	1867	Began to collect data – information on schools and teaching that would help states establish effective school systems.
Second Morrill Act	1890	Gave the Office of Education responsibility for administering support for the original system of land-grant colleges.
Smith-Hughes Act	1917	Promoted vocational schools
Lanham Act	1941	Eased the burden on communities affected by presence of military and federal installations: payments to school districts.
Impact Aid laws	1950	
GI Bill	1944	Provided post secondary education assistance to GIs returning from World War II
George-Barden Act	1946	Provided funding for agricultural, industrial and home economics

		training for high school students
National Defense Education Act	1958	In response to Soviet Sputnik. NDEA included support for loans to college students in science, mathematics and foreign languages.
Elementary and Secondary Education Act	1965	Established comprehensive set of programs including Title I of federal aid to disadvantaged.
Title IX	1972	Prohibited discrimination in education based on gender.
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	1973	Prohibited discrimination based on disability.
Department of Education cabinet level agency	1980	Recognized the important role of public education in our country.
Educational Testing Service (ETS) and NAEP	1983	Federal government transferred responsibility for administering the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to ETS: the nation's report card.
Nation at Risk	1983	Report indicating that the USA was falling behind in education achievement.
President G.H. Bush	1989-1992	“Indian Education Bill of Rights” K-12 Drug awareness model Advisory committee on Hispanic education America 2000 education reform program Work began on national standards
President W. Clinton	1993-1999	Academics 2000 offered grant to states / local school districts for innovation. Teach for America.
President G.W. Bush	2001-2008	Reauthorization of ESEA –No Child Left Behind.
President Barack Obama	2009 -	President Obama's Blueprint for Reform – Reauthorization of ESEA. Race to the Top: Grants awarded to states with innovative ideas that accepted the Common Core Standards.

Produced by the LWVUS The Education Study: The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education © 2011 by the League of Women Voters of the United States

Voter Service

The Voter Service Committee coordinated a poll-watching project during the recent Davidson County Mayoral and Metro Council elections. Poll-watching volunteers recruited from the League, area organizations, and neighborhood associations were stationed at precincts across the county. Poll watching is a League initiative that aims to ensure that elections are fair and accessible. The Voter Service Committee is in the process of compiling poll-watcher observations into a comprehensive report. The report will be posted on the LWVN website and Committee Co-Chairs **Libby Thurman** and **Lynn Williams** plan to present the report to Davidson County Election Commission officials.

Finance

Finance Director **Carol McSwiney** says: “I have learned a great deal from our wonderful Treasurer **Lee Fairbend**, and feel it worthwhile to share with members actual budget and funding information so you may understand why LWVN always needs additional operating funds.

“When you make your annual dues payment of \$60, you most likely assume that all of that money stays within our local organization. I know that’s what I thought. In fact, only \$12 stays with Nashville. Of the 60, \$29.70 goes to the National League (LWVUS) as a PMP (per member payment) assessment and the additional \$18.30 goes to the state organization (LWVTN). The LWVTN does share the cost of our administrative assistant, so some funds do come back to LWVN helping pay that expense. In the coming months, I will share additional budget and funding information with you and then plan to send a letter, asking you to consider helping with the operating fund. As always, please let me know if you have any questions (camcsw@yahoo.com).”

LWVTN Reading Report

Saturday, August 6, League members from several Tennessee chapters convened at the East Tennessee home of LWVTN Board member **Mary Headrick** for a day-long meeting, open to the general public, to learn about and discuss voting in Tennessee and how new laws will impact voters in 2012. Copious background materials based on Headrick’s research were provided ahead of time, and reading the three volume work “Voting in America,” edited by Morgan Felchner, was

recommended. Director of Elections in Tennessee **Mark Goins** presented an overview of the new laws, then provided details about the plans to help voters statewide become acquainted with them. District 36 Rep. **Dennis Powers** and District 16 Rep. **Bill Dunn** also spoke briefly. Representatives from the major parties, Congressman Jim Cooper's office, county election directors, and the Tennessee Library Association also attended, adding a great deal to the general discussion.

One of the primary issues discussed was the implementation of the photo ID law, which goes into effect in January 2012. Goins explained that the new law was enacted to certify that the people presenting themselves to vote are who they say they are. The ID must be issued by a government entity but does not need to be current. In other words, if you have an expired driver's license or passport, that will meet the criteria. Gun permits, state workers' ID badges, military IDs, or the specific ID issued through the Department of Safety are examples of valid ID. College and university photo IDs are not valid as voter IDs.

Following the presentations, there was plenty of time for questions and brainstorming. If voters do not understand this new law and do not have this ID when voting in 2012 or thereafter, they will be given a provisional ballot. This ballot will only be counted if the voter provides the proper evidence of identification to the administrator of elections by the close of business on the second business day after the election. More information is available on the Tennessee Secretary of State's website (<http://tn.gov/sos/elections>).

Among the concerns raised is that provisional ballots are time-consuming. In addition, there is already a system for casting provisional ballots, thanks to the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). Such ballots are allowed when there is a dispute about whether the voter is indeed registered. The voter in question may cast a provisional ballot—which is a paper ballot—and the issue of his eligibility to vote is resolved after Election Day by the election commission. The provisional ballot cast by a voter without the proper ID would be resolved in a different way. The administrator of elections would have to certify the person's ID when they came back, and then allow the ballot to be counted. Questions still to be answered include: Would there be two different stacks of provisional ballots? Does this impact voter confidentiality?



L to R: Mark Stephens, Election Commissioner of Anderson Co., Mark Goins, TN Director of Elections, Kathy Edwards, LWVTN 1st VP and Voter Service Chair



Rep. Dennis Powers, Jacksboro Dist. 36, addresses the crowd

The League plans a concerted statewide effort to educate the public about the new law, collaborating with the Tennessee Election Commission to relay concerns and solutions on issues and practices. LWVN President Jo Singer says: “We plan to expand League poll-watching projects, collect data, and find a way for every eligible voter to obtain the appropriate ID so that they will not be disenfranchised. League members will be a source of information, and continue a proud history of helping all voters be accurately informed voters.”

Observations on Democracy in Crisis

Members of the Yale University faculty, Jacob S. Hacker, professor of political science, and Oona A. Hathaway, professor of international law wrote an interesting article for *The New York Times* on July 31 titled “Our Unbalanced Democracy.” Leaguers will be interested in their observations: “The [recent debt ceiling] debate has threatened to play out as a destructive but all too familiar two-step, revealing how dysfunctional the relationship between Congress and the president has become.

“The two-step begins with a Congress that is hamstrung and incapable of effective action. The president then decides he has little alternative but to strike out on his own, regardless of what the Constitution says. . . . After the debt crisis ends, the democracy crisis must be tackled. Nobody wins when our constitutional system falters: not the president, who gains unilateral power but loses a governing partner; not Congress, which gets to blame the president but risks irrelevance; and certainly not the American people, who have to bear the resulting dysfunction.” The complete article is thought provoking, related to our mission, and available at the *New York Times* website

(http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/01/opinion/our-unbalanced-democracy.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Jacob%20Hacker&st=cse).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAVE THE DATE FOR LWVTN FALL CONFERENCE!

It's just a short drive to network and learn with League members from across the state. Come relax and enjoy the truly unique city of Chattanooga! **When:** Oct. 22–23, 2011. **Where:** Chattanooga's Downtown Marriott (1-800-841-1674).

Deadline: Special \$99 accommodation rate for king or two double beds with WIFI included is Sept. 30, 2011.

Schedule: Meetings/workshops on Saturday afternoon from 12:30 to 5:00 pm; social hour 5:00 to 6:00 pm; dinner with keynote speaker at 6:00 pm; meetings/workshops on Sunday morning from 9:00 am until noon.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

The LWVN gives a special shout out to **E|SPACES**—a new kind of office—designed for people who work from home, their cars, coffee shops, hotel lobbies, in other words mobile, connected professionals. This attractive business center combines the functionality of state-of-the-art offices with a wide variety of work and meeting spaces that offer the aesthetics of a comfortable, inviting, and professional community. Meeting rooms can be scheduled in advance. The LWVN appreciates the opportunity to hold our monthly meetings at **E|SPACES**, 4322 Harding Pike, Suite 417, Nashville, TN 37205 (615.777.8514; info@espaces.com).

ATTENTION: *The Nashville Voter* became a 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 by sending your e-mail address to LWVNash@gmail.com. This will ensure you receive all LWV newsletters, event invitations, meeting announcements, and Call to Action alerts. Thank you, *Voter* Editor Sue Bredensteiner (suebred@mindspring.com).