



THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

PO Box 158369, Nashville TN 37215 | 629-777-5650

www.LWVnashville.org

Volume 72, No. 9

February 2019

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 27, 2019, 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. Immigration, Racism, & the Education System in Nashville and Middle TN. YWCA, 1608 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville, 37215. Sponsored by YWCA and Metro Human Relations Commission. Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/no-hate-no-fear-part-2-immigration-racism-the-education-system-tickets-54982489105>

February 28, 2019, 7:00 p.m. The Immigrant Crisis: Where have we been? Where are we going? West End Synagogue, 2810 West End Ave. Nashville, 37205. Sponsored by West End Synagogue.

March 1, 2019, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Hot Topics: Criminal Justice Reform in Tennessee. Presented by the ACLU. Goodwill Lifsey Center, 937 Herman Street, Nashville, 37208. Program starts at Noon. Bring your own lunch.

March 13, 2019, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Hot Topics: Criminal Justice Reform in Tennessee. Presented by the ACLU. Green Hills Public Library, 3701 Benham Ave, Nashville, 37215.

March 27, 2019. Lunch & Learn at YWCA: Immigration, Racism, and the Criminal Justice System. YWCA, 1608 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville 37215. Sponsored by YWCA and Metro Human Relations Commission. Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/no-hate-no-fear-part-3-immigration-racism-the-criminal-justice-system-tickets-54982629525>

April 6-7, 2019, 1 p.m. April 6 to Noon April 7. 2019 LWV of Tennessee Convention. Murfreesboro, TN. Register: www.lwvtn.org

President's Message



The **Nashville LWV** is focusing on our state legislature that is in the process of passing bills that will impact all of us in Tennessee. Our **LWVTN Advocacy Committee** meets the **first** and **third** Mondays of the month and all members are invited to attend or call in. You should be receiving our lobbyist, **Stewart Clifton's**, weekly report highlighting the bills on the League's priority list. If you are not receiving these reports, please let me (<mailto:barbara.b.gay@gmail.com>) or **Debby Gould**, (<mailto:debbygould@bellsouth.net>) Advocacy Chair, know. You may also follow bills on the Tennessee General Assembly [website](#). We need volunteers to attend important legislative committees that make the decisions.

All members are invited to attend the **LWVTN** convention in **Murfreesboro** on **April 6th and 7th**. The Nashville League can earn up to \$100 in an attendance incentive if we have twelve members come. Here is the [registration](#) information.

Mark Goins, State Election Commissioner, will be speaking about the numerous election bills that have been filed. We will also discuss and vote on **two** concurrence topics on the League's election process statement and our diversity statement. This language is important so we may support or oppose specific legislation. Please join us in learning about our state legislation, contacting our legislators, and attending

our convention in Murfreesboro.

Barbara Gay

——
In Memoriam

It is with sorrow that we remember **Louise Ellis Clifton**, wife of **Stewart Clifton**, and long-time member of the **League of Women Voters Nashville**. Louise (Lou) died on January 26, 2019 from complications of cancer. A dedicated teacher, librarian, and public servant, Lou also volunteered with many nonprofit service groups and with her church, Glendale Baptist, where both she and Stewart were active members. Passionate about bettering the lives of others, she reached out to all whether they needed health care, GED, help with voter registration, or a warm cup of tea. We offer our deepest condolences to Stewart and members of her family.



The Bills have been Filed and our Advocacy is Underway
By State Advocacy Chair Debby Gould

With the deadline last week for filing bills, members of the Tennessee legislators are now faced with the daunting task of assessing and voting on hundreds of bills. Participants in the **LWVTN Advocacy Committee** are working this month on narrowing our focus to the bills that impact our core issues of free and fair elections, open government, as well as key issues in education, healthcare, environment, and immigration. There are at least **87 bills dealing with elections** alone!

We are especially heartened by the level of legislative interest in addressing the issue of voting rights restorations for individuals who have completed their sentence for felony convictions and are ready to reintegrate with their community. Currently, Tennessee has one of the most complex and restrictive protocols in the nation for voting restoration. Estimates are that **one in twelve** Tennesseans cannot vote because of past convictions.

We know from experience that our collective voices and individual communications with legislative representatives from across the state can sway votes for -- or against -- legislation. As a member, you can choose the level of participation that suits you best:

- **Weekly legislative report** — **Stewart Clifton**, our LWV lobbyist, sends out a summary of key bills we are following and recommendations for when action is needed.
- **Action alerts** — Periodically during the session, you will receive a time-sensitive request to contact your legislator **immediately**, by phone or email, about an upcoming key vote.
- **Advocacy Committee Meetings** — **All LWV members** are invited to attend these meetings in person or virtually. They are scheduled for the **first** and **third** Monday of the month, **11:30-12:30 CDT**, during the legislative session at the office of the **TN Disability Coalition**, 955 Woodland St, Nashville. If you have yet to do so, please respond to this survey in order to receive the call-in information for the meetings. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PJC7LTB>
- **Dive deeper into the issues**— Issue Chairs on the Advocacy Committee provide additional

information and suggested actions to those LWV members who are especially interested in the following issue areas: Elections, Open Government, Education, Environment, Healthcare, Immigration, and Finance/Budget. Indicate your interests on the survey form.



Notes from February Hot Topic: Reframing High School Education: Metro Schools' Academies

By Voter Editor Madeline Garr

Governor Lee has highlighted the need for career preparation in our public schools as a central theme in his education plans. On Friday, February 1, 2019 and Wednesday, February 13, 2019, members of the League of Women Voters and the Nashville Community gathered to hear how **Metropolitan Nashville Public School System** has been doing this over **the last 15 years** and how their efforts are proving to be successful.

Donna Gilley, Academies of Nashville Director, traced the history of the Academies, which began at Glenclyff with the concept of Pocket Academies and grew to **39 different Academies**, also known as Pathways, in **twelve** schools throughout Nashville. The Academies offer the following:

- **RIGOR:** All students form a deeper understanding of required academic subjects, electives and specialized courses to prepare them for college.
- **RELEVANCE:** Teachers incorporate real-world examples into all academic and specialized courses. In the Academies of Nashville, they strive for every student to participate in at least one experiential learning activity every year of high school. Experiences are designed to build upon one another in order to narrow a student's postsecondary focus.
- **RELATIONSHIPS:** Students share smaller personalized environments with classmates with common interests and a team of teachers who serve as their advocates.
- **READINESS:** Connections with business and community partners provide students with 21st Century skills for post-secondary and career success.

They also offer opportunities beyond the classroom for every student:

- **Career Exploration Fair:** Freshman have the opportunity to talk to industry professionals from more than 400 different career areas and attend at least one college visit. In Freshman Academy, students receive classes through a core team of teachers that share students to provide supports for student achievement.
- **Industry Fields Trips:** Sophomore students attend industry field trips to confirm or re-evaluate academy choices through real-world experiences
- **Job Shadowing:** Junior students gain insight into the daily realities of their professions of interest. Students complete a one-day job shadowing experience where they observe professionals in a career area related to their academy.
- **Internships:** Senior level students participate in hands-on experience where they can see the importance of their studies first-hand and form valuable connections with industry professionals.

While enrolled in their academies, students can complete their choice of advanced academic classes, honors, global arts, and music courses. Every pathway within the 39 academies offers

pathway dual credit and often an industry certification. In addition to the academy pathway courses, students can earn early post-secondary opportunities through **Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, or Dual Enrollment** through their general education courses. Director Gilley said that the Academies have breathed new life into both the school system and the city. Twelve years ago, the Metropolitan Nashville School System had a graduation rate of only **58%**. Today the graduation rate is between 80 to 82%, with the goal of moving that to **90%** in the near future.

The program has also had an impact throughout the community. It is transforming the concept of teaching and learning by involving teachers in scheduling and planning, having teachers teach core subjects such as English or Math through the lens of a **Pathway** such as business or music, creating smaller learning communities in the high schools, and engaging the business and industrial communities in interactive, creative, and meaningful activities. A key phrase that drives the program is “*If students can’t see it, they can’t be it*”. This phrase speaks to the importance of community and business involvement.

Director Gilley told many success stories of how the program has changed the lives of students, teachers, and community leaders. For more information, click [here](#) to learn more about the Academies of Nashville.



The League of Women Voters of Nashville

Presents

First Friday Hot Topics at Lunchtime

Friday, March 1, 2019

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Goodwill Lifsey Center

937 Herman Street, Nashville, TN 37208

Bring Your Own Lunch. Program begins promptly at noon.

&

Second Wednesday Evening Encore

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

6:00 to 7:00 pm

Green Hills Public Library Community Room

3701 Benham Avenue, Nashville 37215

Criminal Justice Reform in Tennessee Presented by Representatives of the ACLU

**Free and open to the public. No reservations needed.
Parking at both locations is Easy & Free!**

For additional information, contact LWVNash@gmail.com



Voter Services Update

By Voter Services Chairs Hazel Thornton and Perry Macdonald

We have had a quiet month, but are not entirely in hibernation. The rainy day of the Women's Rally on **January 19** found us roaming in the intrepid crowd, clipboards and I-phones in hand, seeking anyone who hadn't yet registered to vote (or downloaded the GoVoteTN app) and helping them to get that accomplished. Many thanks to Tony Garr for spending several hours helping us that day.

On Saturday, **February 16**, we had (for the first time) a table at the United Way Free Tax Prep **Taxathon**, joining Mayor Briley and Congressman Cooper as well as community-based agencies (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Neighborhood Health, Imagination Library) to support citizens of East Nashville. We understand from the organizers that "a large crowd" is expected, so we're packing plenty of forms.

Both **Hazel** and **Perry** have joined the State Action/Advocacy group, keeping track of legislation related to elections and open government. Over eighty election-related bills have been filed in this session: very impressive! Several that are of great interest to us:

- Restoration of Voting Rights (SB 36/HB137) sponsored by **Sen. Brenda Gilmore and Rep. Jesse Chism**, would reduce some of the barriers for those who have lost their voting rights;
- Voter Registration and Social Security Number ((SB74/HB195) sponsored by **Sen. Brenda Gilmore and Rep. Justin Lafferty**, would allow voter registration using only the last four digits of the SSN; and
- Absentee Ballot Voting by First Time Voters (SB 193/HB 145) sponsored by **Sen. Katrina Robinson and Rep. London Lamar**, would eliminate the *requirement* that anyone who has registered to vote by mail or on-line must vote *in person* the first time they vote.

We are enthusiastically endorsing all of these efforts by our Tennessee legislators.



Metro Nashville gives Affordable Housing a Jump-Start

By Metro Government Co-Chair Winnie Forrester

Interest has been running high in Metro's new land trust program created to address Nashville's growing affordable housing crisis. This month, Metro Council provided a boost by passing a resolution donating **15 parcels of land to the land trust by a vote of 27-4**. The vacant land parcels were declared surplus property after being originally obtained by Metro from delinquent tax sales. A list of the properties is [here](#).

In late 2017, the **Barnes Housing Trust Fund** selected **The Housing Fund**, a local non-profit, to develop a community land trust, a vehicle used by other municipalities to hold down the cost of housing. The non-profit holds the land and the residents own the structure, eliminating the cost of land appreciation and one of the main reasons for the spiraling cost of housing. The Housing Fund's President and CEO **Marshall Crawford** announced this past December the hiring of bi-lingual **Dominique Anderson**, head of equity, diversity inclusion and social innovation at Vanderbilt University to lead the initiative.

According to the Metro Human Relations Commission, households that spend **more than 30%** of their income on housing are considered **cost-burdened**. In **Davidson County**, 31% of homeowners with a mortgage in Davidson County are cost-burdened and 12% without a mortgage are cost burdened. For more in-depth information, click [here](#) for affordable housing primers published by the **Metro Human Relations Commission**.



Membership Update for January **By Membership Co-Chairs Reba Holmes and Tracy Smith**



It is with great delight that we announce and welcome our new and returning members that joined the **Nashville League of Women Voters**. It is our privilege to welcome these individuals to the organization: **Joseph Armstrong, Patricia Armstrong, Barbara Dentz, Faith Haber Galbraith, Sabrina Mohyuddin, Lauren Sherrill, Dorothy Sinard, Alice Sanford, Katherine Stanford, Liz Stanford, Steve Stanford, Jessalyn White, and Lynn Williams**.

Anne Dallas Dudley membership - [Patty Daniel](#)

Many thanks to these members and all our members for their support of the League's activities and programs.

Invite Your Friends to Join Anytime

We encourage you to invite your family members, friends, and colleagues. Membership allows you to share a year's worth of experiences promoting democracy, educating others in the community, participating in political discourse, registering new voters, just to name a few. Plus, the annual membership includes membership to the national, state, and local LWV organizations.

Details regarding the various support levels may be found on our [website](#).

Comments from members as to why they joined the League

- "I think it is important to empower others in our community especially those that are marginalized. Democracy for everyone regardless of education or economic level the Nashville League affords me that opportunity."
- "I want to support an organization whose mission sponsors nonpartisan activities, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy."
- "Somehow we need to restore civil discourse in this country, and I hope to accomplish this through

nonpartisan activities and education.”



Please let us know if there is a death in your family so that the membership may be aware of your loss.

Thank you!



2018-19 LWVN Board of Directors

President **Barbara Gay**

Vice President **Clare Sullivan**

Secretary **Ethel Detch**

Treasurer **Susan Mattson**

Portfolio Chairs

Communications: **Harriet Vaughan-Wallace** and **Kieran Bailey**

Community Connections **Hasina Mohyuddin** and **Tamanna Qureshi**

Education **Lara Webb**

Environment **Barbara Futter**

Fundraising **Cindee Gold** and **Debby Gould**

Health Care **Constance Caldwell** and **Rashonda Lewis**

Membership **Reba Holmes** and **Tracy Smith**

Metro Government **Michelle Steele** and **Winnie Forrester**

Voter Services **Hazel Thornton** and **Perry Macdonald**

Voter Newsletter Editor **Madeline Garr**

Nominating Committee Chair (2017-2019) *Off Board*: Chair **Representative Brenda Gilmore**

Nominating Committee Members: **Betsy Walkup, Diane Dilanni, Cindee Gold, Michelle Steele**