



THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

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

www.LWVnashville.org

Volume 71, No. 8

January 2018

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 16, 2018, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Member Conversations: Motivate the Vote. Home of Hazel Thornton, 405 Charlesgate Ct., Nashville, 37215. Plan to attend one of these members-only sessions to brainstorm ways to motivate registered voters to vote in upcoming local elections in 2018. **Please RSVP at lwnashville@gmail.com**

January 20, 2018. Women's March. Sponsored by indivisible Middle Tennessee, TN Equality Alliance and others. LWVN is not a sponsor, but will be providing voter information and registration to participants. *"Marching is not enough...VOTE!"* Morning workshops, 8:30 to 12:30 p.m. at the Avon Williams Campus of TSU. AT 2:30, marchers will gather at Metro Public Square and march to the Bicentennial Mall. LWVN will conduct voter registration.

January 25 to February 2, 2018. Voter Registration in every Davidson County High School. Times and locations to be announced. LWVN volunteers, along with staff from Congressman Cooper and Senator Dickerson's offices will be on hand to assist at school-based assemblies to promote voting. Volunteers will distribute LWVN information resources to help first time voters. The Davidson County Election Commission will handle the actual registration. Contact lwnashville@gmail.com to volunteer.

February 2, 2018, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00p.m. First Friday Hot Topics: "Media in the Age of Fake News", Scott Stroud, AP News Editor. An overview of the increasingly difficult time we face detecting the blurred line between legitimate news and "fake news" and the rise of propaganda. **New Location: Goodwill of Middle Tennessee Corporate Office Center, 1015 Herman St., Nashville, TN 37208.** Open to the public. *Note: No lunches are available for purchase at this location so plan to bring your own.*

February 3, 2018, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Member Conversations: Motivate the Vote. Home of Debby Gould, 1817 Beechwood Ave., Nashville, 37212. Plan to attend one of these members-only sessions to brainstorm ways to motivate registered voters to vote in upcoming local elections in 2018. **Please RSVP at lwnashville@gmail.com**

February 6, 2018, 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Member Conversations: Motivate the Vote. Home of Debbie Meredith, 1103 Shelby Avenue, Nashville, 37206. Plan to attend one of these members-only sessions to brainstorm ways to motivate registered voters to vote in upcoming local elections in 2018. **Please RSVP at lwnashville@gmail.com**

February 7, 2018, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Member Conversations: Motivate the Vote. Home of Jan Sobotka, 6442 Currywood Drive, Nashville 37205. Plan to attend one of these members-only sessions to brainstorm ways to motivate registered voters to vote in upcoming local elections in 2018. **Please RSVP at lwnashville@gmail.com**

February 14, Wednesday, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Encore Hot Topics: "Media in the Age of Fake News", Scott Stroud, AP News Editor. He will give an overview of the increasingly difficult time we face detecting the blurred line between legitimate news and "fake news" and the rise of propaganda. **Green Hills Library Community Room, 3701 Benham Ave., Nashville, 37215**



President's Message

Does **every** vote really matter? The recent cliffhanger of an election in Virginia that rested on just a **single** vote is a telling reminder that **every** vote could make a difference. We have lots of opportunities this month to talk about voting.

Women's March 2.0 on January 20th

"It's not enough to march ...VOTE" is our message. Although we are not sponsoring the event, we will have voter registration tables in two locations. In the morning, we will be at the Avon Williams TSU Building as part of the morning conference. Individuals interested in marching should be at the Metro Courthouse Square between **2:00 and 2:30**. The march will follow James Robertson Parkway and end at the Bicentennial Mall by **3:00 p.m.** LWVN will have a table there. LWVN members who want to assist can contact **Hazel Thornton**, Voter Services Chair at hazethorn@gmail.com.

Volunteers needed for high school voter registration drive

Did you know that only **2%** of 18-24 years olds are voting? We need to help high school students start on the path of voting. We are joining with the Davidson County Election Commission, **Congressman Jim Cooper**, and **Tennessee Senator Steve Dickerson** to support efforts to register Davidson County students. This will happen through a series of in-school assemblies, classroom presentations, and, of course, voter registration tables.

As usual, the Election Commission will handle the actual registration. We need LWVN volunteers to be the "encouragers" to guide students to registration tables. In addition, we will be distributing our own handouts that have important information about Photo ID's. Because other volunteer groups will be helping in this process, coordination of volunteers is being handled through **Congressman Cooper's** office. You can sign up for various time slots here:

[Help us register high school students to vote!](#)



January Hot Topic Follow Up -- What Comes Next?

By President - Debby Gould

What Comes Next? A Preview of Tennessee's Legislative Session

Stewart Clifton, lobbyist for the [League of Women Voters of Tennessee](#), gave a preview of what we can anticipate when the Tennessee Legislature convenes in **January 2018** and how we can be effective policy advocates during the upcoming session.

He began by reviewing some of the legislation that passed last year that closely aligned with **LWV** positions, including an important bill that improved the criteria Tennessee uses to maintain accurate lists of registered voters. Stewart emphasized that our success as volunteer lobbyists rests on our ability to develop ongoing **relationships** with our legislators and to provide clear and accurate data for our positions.

This is the second year of this legislative session, which means that all bills that were introduced but not passed last year can be re-activated. **February 2nd** is the deadline for legislators to introduce additional bills for consideration. This will be a very short and intense session because legislators cannot raise election campaign money while the legislature is in session. Stewart believes that the session will end by the **second week in April**.

An unusually large proportion of legislators will not be seeking re-election. This includes **8 of the 33** senators and **21 of the 99** representatives. While many are retiring, there are also many individuals who are running for different elected offices or seeking political appointments.



The League of Women Voters of Nashville

Presents

Hot Topics

Media in the Age of Fake News

Presenter: Scott Stroud

News Editor for Kentucky, West Virginia, and Tennessee at Associated Press

FIRST FRIDAYS HOT TOPICS

Friday, February 2, 2018 — 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Lifsey Career Solutions Building

at

Goodwill Industries, 937 Herman Street, Nashville 37208

Bring your own lunch. Program begins promptly at noon.

And

ENCORE HOT TOPICS

Wednesday, February 14, 2018 — 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Green Hills Public Library Community Room

3701 Benham Ave, Nashville 37215

Determining who and what to believe in the age of fake news is hard for all of us. Come hear **Scott Stroud** talk about the task of a professional journalist in assessing the reliability of news sources and the important role of the press in a democracy.

Scott wrote, “...while I know our business is evolving, I still believe the core of what we do is crucial in a democratic society. People need us to find things out and keep them informed about their government, trends in society that affect them directly and indirectly, and the changing world around them.”

For additional information about Hot Topic programs, contact Debby Gould debbygould@bellsouth.net or (629)777-5650

Free and open to the public. No reservations needed.
Programs are cancelled on the same snow days as Metro Schools.
Parking is Easy & Free at both locations!

Contact LWVNash@gmail.com for more information

Please remember to LIKE **LWVN** on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/LWVNNashville?ref=ts>



Quarterly Report and Further Information By Treasurer Winnie Forrester

I must confess I've got a soft spot for good country tunes like LeAnn Rimes' *"Put a Little Holiday in your Heart"*. I hope all of you had as good a time as our board had at our recent party hosted by our own [Aftyn Behn](#).

We have wrapped up our **Annual Fall Fundraising** Event at the Hermitage Hotel and raised a healthy sum after paying all expenses. Thank you to all who helped us celebrate the women's right to vote. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and is essential to fund and operate our mission.

Another important component of funding to our non-partisan organization are the contributions to our **TAX-DEDUCTIBLE Education Fund**. These funds are earmarked for **Voter Education**, which as we all know is more important than ever during these tumultuous times. We have recently depleted those funds for a special project, and it needs replenishing. Please consider making a donation directly to the fund.

Checks should be made payable to **LWVTN Education fund** and mailed to **PO Box 158369**, Nashville, TN 37215.

Happy New Year!



What is Happening in Voter Service? A Lot!!! By Voter Service Director Hazel Thornton

Link to the LEAF presentation

Board members [Hasina Mohyuddin](#), [Tamanna Quereshi](#), and [Debby Gould](#) have put together a clever Power Point Presentation, which they debuted at a LEAF workshop recently. The intended audience is our immigrant community and it reflects our continued focus on increasing voter participation. Click [here](#) to view this great presentation.

Upcoming voter registration events:

Saturday, January 20, 2018—Women's March 2.0

January 24-February 2, 2018—Support for high school voter registration in Davidson County

Other activities on the horizon:

A series of **four** "Motivate the Vote" group discussions. Discussion topics will include:

- Reviewing the demographics for who votes and who doesn't
- "My vote doesn't count"—electing a candidate vs. changing public policy and recording statistics
- "The system is rigged"—gerrymandering, Electoral College "winner take all" systems in 48 states, hacking/low trust of electronic voting equipment that has no "paper trail"
- Ignorance of how government works
- Voter suppression such as photo ID laws and felon disenfranchisement

The hard-working **Wednesday morning NES registration** group has submitted a list of glitches in the new Online Voter Registration system to the TN Election Commission, which has welcomed the feedback.

Last, but not least, paper trails are coming to TN!! Last week, the **TN Election Commission** approved new

voting equipment that has a paper trail. This equipment will not be employed statewide, but it's a great start.

For further information, contact [Hazel Thornton](mailto:hazethorn@gmail.com) at <mailto:hazethorn@gmail.com>.



School Voucher Update

By Education Co-Director Lara Webb

The last several years have seen various school voucher bills debated in the **Tennessee General Assembly**. This year, one of the main sponsors, **Sen. Brian Kelsey** of Germantown, TN, is not pursuing his voucher legislation. Co-sponsor, **Rep. Harry Brooks'** house legislation, HB 0126, is on the calendar for the Finance, Ways, and Means Subcommittee, but he has also stated that he will **not** pursue vouchers this session. School vouchers allow parents to use taxpayer money to pay for private schools. The **League of Women Voters Nashville** opposes the use of public funds for private school vouchers. See the position statement for more information.

While in theory, many legislators support vouchers as an option for school choice, many questions have arisen. How would private schools be held accountable? What about special education services? What about discriminatory policies and practices at some schools? Opposition to vouchers has come from across the state in urban and rural districts alike because of the concern over loss of funding for already underfunded public schools.

While vouchers do **not** appear to have much support in this legislative session, **LWVN** will be monitoring to make sure that remains the case. One thing that we might see more support for in this session and in the future are **educational savings accounts** or **tax credit scholarships**. The recent passage of the federal tax law allows people to use educational savings accounts such as **529s** to pay private school tuition. Tax credit scholarships allow individuals and corporations to allocate a portion of tax money owed to the state to nonprofits that grant scholarships to K-12 students. Tax credit scholarships could be particularly detrimental as they drain money away from state tax revenue that would usually go to funding public education. The **LWVN** does not have a position statement on educational savings accounts or tax credit scholarships, but in general, the **LWVN** supports well-funded public education as a core tenant of democracy.

For further reading:

<https://chalkbeat.org/posts/tn/2018/01/08/vouchers-have-dominated-tennessees-ed-debate-for-years-but-wont-in-2018-heres-why-and-what-could-come-next/>

<https://1rc21718tip33bvvhv11apgn1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2013-LWVN-Position-on-School-Vouchers.pdf>



Health Issues to Follow

By Health Care Co-Director Constance Caldwell

Since our **Congress** has just reconvened for the year and our **local legislators** have just returned in session, most health issues have been on hold. There are significant topics that we need to be alert to as well as to communicate with our congressional representatives and local officials. These include but are not limited to

- **C.H.I.P**
- How the **Tax Reform Law** will affect health provision and access since it overturned subsidies which were put in place in the **Affordable Care Act**
- Proposed **Work Requirements** for Medicaid recipients
- The **Future of Nashville General Hospital**
- The **Extension of Medicaid** in Tennessee or an alternate proposal

- **Defunding** of Planned Parenthood in Tennessee

Please stay alert to legislative action and be ready to contact lawmakers as becomes necessary.



Update on LWVTN position on Net Neutrality

By Liaison to LWVTN Action Committee Aftyn Behn

A millennial Leaguer's Brief Explanation on Net Neutrality

Many of you approached me after Thanksgiving with tales of grandchildren and children venting over their mashed potatoes and gravy about the **battle for the Internet** and requested that I provide context about the current debate and outline League's policy position on net neutrality.

Q: What is net neutrality?

A: Net neutrality is the idea that **all** internet service providers (e.g. AT&T, Comcast, etc.) and wireless providers (e.g. Verizon, Sprint, etc.) should treat content the same: for example, companies cannot slow internet traffic for one specific type of content, while establishing fast lanes prioritizing other content.

Q: Does the League have a position on net neutrality?

A: In 2006, at the *national* LWV Telecom Convention, **Connecticut** delegates spearheaded a **nationwide** resolution on net neutrality, which passed with an overwhelming majority. When asked about new policy, **LWVCT's** co-president at the time, Jara Burnett, said: *"This is all about our core belief that democratic government depends on the informed and active participation of all. Whenever we reach out to our 25,000 members, provide nonpartisan election information to voters, or speak out to our legislators to protect the civil liberties of all Americans, we depend on neutral Internet access. After all, what other information delivery system is more participatory than the Internet?"*

Q: So why are my grandchildren yelling about the Battle of the Internet right now?

A: In **2015**, the **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** adopted a new set of rules that regulated internet service and wireless providers like public utilities. Network neutrality supporters lauded the proposal; however, many telecom industry groups sued to stop the new rules, arguing that the FCC overstepped its authority. On **December 14th, 2017**, under the new administration, the FCC voted to repeal these rules.

Q: What's next for net neutrality?

Right now, the battle of the internet is being fought across the country from the courts to Congress. States like New York have filed **lawsuits** against the FCC for its lack of transparent procedure leading up to the December 14th vote; state legislatures in at least six states have introduced legislation to preserve the 2015 rules; and, just last week, a Senate bill reversing the FCC's 2017 decision gained enough co-sponsors to receive a vote on the Senate floor.

Q: What's next for net neutrality and the League?

As you may know, this Spring the **LWVTN** will consider adopting the LWV Connecticut's Internet and Media policy position, which includes not only a position on broadband **BUT ALSO** a position on net neutrality.

The position statement is as follows:

*The **LWVCT** believes that a free and open Internet is increasingly important to the protection of individual liberties – freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of association – guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and by the Connecticut Constitution. The League also believes that net neutrality protections are essential for political discourse, dissemination of news, and democratic participation. Therefore, the League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports the LWVUS position to protect the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet. To further this position, the LWVCT supports efforts by the State of Connecticut to protect*

the open, neutral, nondiscriminatory nature of the Internet.

If you are concerned about net neutrality, the **LWVTN's** Spring Council will convene in Chattanooga on April 28-29th at which time you can provide comments about the proposed policy position.

Stay Informed about Upcoming Calendar Events!

If you get the electronic version of the **Voter**, we want you to know that the upcoming calendar events are available on our wonderful, new website – www.lwvnashville.org. On the right side of the home page the calendar scrolls on the events of the current and upcoming events thanks to **Tracy Depp**, who keeps the calendar current. If you haven't taken a look, do so to make sure you mark **your** calendar so you won't miss a thing!



ATTENTION: *The Nashville Voter* is a digital publication. If you have received this copy of the *Voter* in the mail, it means LWVN does not have an e-mail address for you. Please help us by sending your e-mail address to LWVNash@gmail.com. Inclusion on our e-mail database ensures your receipt of all LWVN newsletters, event invitations, meeting announcements, and Call to Action alerts. Thank you, *Nashville Voter* Editor **Madeline Garr** (mgarr2@gmail.com) and Harriet Vaughn Wallace (harrietwallace@yahoo.com).



2017-2018 LWVN Board of Directors

President **Debby Gould** ▪ Vice President **Barbara Gay**

Secretary **Ethel Detch** ▪ Treasurer **Winnie Forester**

Directors—Education **Lara Webb & Lisa Mingrone** ▪ Environment **Barbara Futter**

Fundraising **Cindee Gold & Judy Raines** ▪ Health Care **Constance Caldwell & Rashonda Lewis**

Community Connections **Hasina Mohyuddin & Tamanna Qureshi**

Membership **Reba Holmes** and **Tracy Smith** ▪ Metro Government **Michelle Steele**

▪ *Voter* Editor **Madeline Garr & Harriet Vaughn Wallace**

▪ Voter Service **Hazel Thornton** ▪ Liaison to LWVTN Action Committee **Aftyn Behn**

Nominating Committee *Off Board*—**Brenda Gilmore**, Chair; **Betsy Walkup & Diane Dilanni**
