



# THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

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

[www.LWVnashville.org](http://www.LWVnashville.org)

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September 2018

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**September 14 – September 23, 2018. Voter Registration-YMCA Welcome Week.** Green Hills YMCA, 4041 Hillsboro Circle, Nashville 37215.

**September 17, 2018, 5:00-7:30 p.m. A Greater Society – a documentary about the power of voting in a Florida retirement community.** Room 235, Commons Center, Vanderbilt University, 18<sup>th</sup> and Horton, Nashville, 37212. Sponsored by Vanderbilt University.

**September 22, 2018, 1:00-3:00 p.m. A Witness to History: Dr. King’s Last Days in Memphis –** ACLU lawyer Mike Cody shares his experience at the sanitation workers’ strike in Memphis and the last days of Dr. King. Nashville Main Library, 615 Church St, Nashville, 37219 Sponsored by ACLU and Nashville Public Library.

**September 25, 2018, 6:00 p.m. Televised Debate with Candidates for TN Senate.** Cumberland University, 1 Lebanon Square, Lebanon, TN 37087. Sponsored by Cumberland University, Tennessean/USA Today, LWV of Tennessee, and WDCN Public Television and WSM-TV. The program will be broadcast live on NewsChannel 5 and WDCN, carried statewide on public television and streamed on NewsChannel5.com and Tennessean.com.

**September 29, 2018, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. LWVN Voter Registration Table – Good Neighbor Day.** Richland Park, 4711 Charlotte Ave, Nashville, TN 37209.

**September 29, 2018, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. LWVN Voter Registration Table – Recovery Fest.** East Park, 700 Woodland St, Nashville, TN 37206.

**September 29, 2018, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. LWVN Voter Registration Table – Back to School Bash.** Wells Elementary School, 401 Meridian Street St, Nashville, TN 37207.

**September 29, 2018, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. LWVN Voter Registration Table.** Edgehill Community Day at Easley Community Center. 1277 12 Ave. South, Nashville, TN 37203.

**October 5, 2018, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Hot Topics: The Proposed Community Oversight Board. [Note: our change in location]** Oasis Center, 1704 Charlotte Ave, Nashville, 37203. Come learn more about the proposed referendum for the November ballot to create a COB. Bring your own lunch. Program starts promptly at noon.

**October 12, 2018, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Hot Topics Evening Encore: The Proposed Community Oversight Board.** Green Hills Public Library, 3701 Benham Ave, Nashville, 37215. Come learn more about the proposed referendum for the November ballot to create a COB.

**October 21, 2018, 2:30-4:00 p.m. High Tea and Ballet – LWVN’s Annual Fund Raiser Celebration Tennessee’s Pivotal Role in Securing Women’s Right to Vote with a special “teaser” of a commissioned ballet to tell the story.** Nashville Main Library, 615 Church St, Nashville, 37219



## President's Message

The **League of Women Voters** of Nashville extends its deep sympathy and condolences to long-time board member Reba Holmes on the death of her younger brother, **Mason Taylor Holmes**. Members may send donations in his honor to the **Bob and Lois Holmes Memorial Fund**, The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, 3833 Cleghorn Avenue, Nashville, TN 37215.

With regret, we accept the resignation of First Vice President, **GINNA FOSTER CANNON**. She has been an outstanding board member and expertly arranged our public information forums. Ginna has a new full-time job at **MTSU** in Murfreesboro and we understand her need to balance it with family and a long commute. We hope she will be able to join our board again. Members interested in becoming First Vice President, please contact **Barbara Gay** at **615-297-4145**.

**Perry McDonald** and **Hazel Thornton**, Voter Service Chairs, have been working over time to schedule voter registration events. We are encouraged that many Nashville groups are seeking our help to register voters before the October 9th deadline. We all hope to improve voter turnout in the November election.

On **September 25th**, **LWVTN** is co-sponsoring a **Senate Debate at Cumberland University** with the **University, the Tennessean/USA Today, WDCN Public Television, and WSM-TV**. The debate will be shown live on Channel 8 and Channel 5.

Women, men, and students may join the **League of Women Voters of Nashville** at any time, although our annual membership drive occurs in July. Thank you to **Reba Holmes** and **Tracy Smith**, Membership Chairs, and their committee for revising our membership materials. Please invite your family and friends to attend our public meetings and to join.

**Barbara Gay**



## Invitation Coming for our Annual Fundraiser to Celebrate Women's Suffrage

By Fundraising Co-Chairs Cindee Gold and Debby Gould

Invite your family and friends to join us **Sunday, October 21** from **2:30-4:00 p.m.** for High Tea and Ballet at the Nashville Main Library. The Nashville Ballet will perform a "teaser" of the original contemporary ballet commissioned by the League of Women Voters using the language of dance to tell the dramatic story of how Tennessee gave American women the right to vote. A traditional high tea will follow. Invitations will be in your mailbox next week. You won't want to miss this!



## Notes from September Hot Topic: Mental Health Issues: Incarceration or Treatment? By Voter Editor Madeline Garr

On Friday, September 7 and Wednesday, September 12, Hot Topics presented a program on **Mental Health: Incarceration or Treatment?** **Pat Halper**, a member of the Criminal Justice Task Force of NOAH, Davidson County Sheriff **Daron Hall**, and **Amanda Bracht**, Senior VP of Clinical Services of Mental Health Cooperative each addressed this important issue through the lens of their experience and perspective.

**Pat Halper** spoke first and gave a quick history of how **NOAH** became interested and involved in this issue beginning with the Mayor's Forums in 2014 and the identified goal of NOAH to reduce the jail population by 50%. The research shows that the jails have become de facto places for those who have mental health issues. In setting the goal to reduce the population, NOAH talked to judges, public defenders, etc. They learned that it was easier for police to take people to jail than to take them to a mental health institution. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mayoral Forum, NOAH obtained a commitment from the candidates that whoever won would work toward reducing the jail population. Mayor Barry's first budget included resources to pull together a public/private partnership to work on this by looking at the situation in Davidson County. The Community Mental Health Systems working group was formed and eventually funded to work on building 21 beds at the Mental Health Co-operative. In addition, the new jail being built will have an area that is dedicated to behavioral health care. Mayor Briley has established a Behavioral Health and Wellness Council with a portion of the \$15,000,000 in federal funding that the state received to do intervention.

**NOAH** shone the light on this issue and will continue to pay attention and advocate when it is necessary.

**Sheriff Daron Hall** followed Pat Halper by first discussing his experience in becoming involved in this issue. He grew up asking "why" as he believes when we know the "why", we can try to do something about the issue. He reviewed the history of the deinstitutionalization of those with mental health issues, noting that when people were released into the community, nothing really changed.

Sheriff Hall worked under Sheriff Gayle Ray (a former LWVN president) who worked to reduced jail overcrowding and was able to get a Mental Health Court established in 2001. Once Sherriff Hall took office, he found that nothing was really working and the jailed population of the mentally ill continued to increase so he began monthly meetings with stakeholders to try to figure out the why. He learned that the number 1 reason a person with mental health issues is jailed is that they had failed to do what they were required to do, i.e. show up for court, meet probation rules, etc. These types of situations require that the police arrest them because there is a warrant out for their arrest. In other words, the police cannot use their discretion. He also learned that only 5% of the people who have mental health issues and are arrested are served by the mental health care court and that only 30% who are put on probation are able to meet those demands because of their mental health condition.

Sheriff Hall talked about the new plan. Once the new jail and behavioral care center is completed, those who do not have a warrant for their arrest and who have committed misdemeanors will go to *pre-arrest diversion*. This means that they will be taking to the Mental Health Services, be triaged for mental health issues on a scale between 1 to 7, receive services, be released to a responsible party, and referred to longer-term treatment. This protocol is 12 months away and will require significant training of all involved in both the police and judicial sectors in order to make this all work.

Finally, **Amanda Bracht** spoke. She shared that she had a calling to advocate for the mentally ill and has worked to get adequate funding for the services that are so needed. With the funding, the Mental Health Cooperative has been able to build a facility where they can provide treatment and oversight. The

organizations have to be accountable to provide the services and they have to get results. The fact is that the percentage of the mentally ill has doubled from 2007 to 2015.

The **Mental Health Cooperative** has modeled their program after programs in Phoenix and Tucson and combines health services, physical health care and pharmacy resources to help the whole person. The plan for the new facility is to fully staff 24/7 for 21 beds. The patient will have a 3-day stay. The short time period is to provide stabilization during which an after care plan to fit their individual needs will be determined. The key to success will be good training and good follow-up. Amanda also hopes that working with the police department, a Crisis Intervention Team can be established comprised of officers who want to work on this need in the community.



**The League of Women Voters of Nashville  
Presents**

**First Friday Hot Topic at Noon**

**The Community Oversight Board Referendum**

**Participants: To Be Announced**

**FIRST FRIDAYS HOT TOPICS:**

**The Proposed Community Oversight Board**

**Friday, October 5, 2018 — 12:00 to 1:00 pm**

**Oasis Center, Second Floor**

**1704 Charlotte Ave, Nashville 37203**

**Bring your own lunch. Program begins promptly at noon.**

**&**

**SECOND WEDNESDAY EVENING ENCORE:**

**The Proposed Community Oversight Board**

**Wednesday, October 10, 2018 — 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

**Green Hills Public Library Community Room**

**3701 Benham Ave, Nashville 37215**

**Free and open to the public. No reservations needed.**

**Parking is Easy & Free at both locations!**

Contact [LWVNash@gmail.com](mailto:LWVNash@gmail.com) for more information

Please remember to LIKE **LWVN** on Facebook

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



**Treasurer's Quarterly Report**

**By Treasurer Susan Matson**

I took over as Treasurer for the LWVN in July. The transition has gone smoothly, thanks to the meticulous records and direction from past treasurer **Winnie Forrester**. **LWVN** remains in a very positive financial position and is in line to meet its FY 2018-19 budget and priorities.

## Voter Service Report for August/September

By Voter Services Chairs Hazel Thornton and Perry Macdonald

A number of League members attended the **August 27** panel discussion "*Why Aren't Tennesseans Voting Like They Should?*" hosted by Lipscomb University as part of its Civility Tennessee series. Matters of voter security, engagement, and turnout were discussed by Secretary of State **Tre Hargett**, **Shanna Hughey** of ThinkTennessee, **Senator Steve Dickerson**, and **Congressman Jim Cooper**. The grim statistics concerning Tennessee voter registration and participation and the many vulnerabilities identified with our voting machines and computer systems made for a sobering evening.

As we go forward, the number and variety of our voter registration events can only be described as **unprecedented**. Our volunteers are in schools, at neighborhood fairs, community events, and film screenings. We are occasionally covering more than one event on the same day. **Thank you** to all who have stepped up to help accomplish this important civic work!

To complete all its tasks in this election-laden season, the **Davidson County Election Commission** has met three times since our last report and still does **not** have a final ballot for November. **Debby Gould**, who observed for us on September 14, advised that the **question** of a referendum on a community oversight board remains unanswered. The Judge's ruling is expected on **September 21**.

We **need** volunteers to serve as poll watchers for both **early voting** and **election day**, November 6. If you are interested, please contact Hazel at hazethorn@gmail.com.



## Membership Update

By Membership Co-Chair Reba Holmes

It is with great delight that we announce and **welcome** our **new** and **returning** members that have joined the Nashville League of Women Voters. It is our privilege to welcome these individuals to the organization:

**Jennifer Corwin, Barbara Costello, Susan McClanahan, Suzanne Petrey, and Jane Stumpf.**

**Susan B. Anthony Membership: Annette Eskind**

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. Details regarding the various support levels may be found on our website <http://lwvnashville.org/join/>.

### **Comments from members as to why they joined the League**

*"I wanted a platform to promote voter education and engagement in all elections, not just the election of the*

*President of the United States but state and local elections as well.” - M. Tanner*

*“Participation in the democratic process in a non-partisan way.” – Anonymous*

Joining the League of Women Voters is the **perfect** way to get involved in the democratic process.



## Updates on Metro Government

By Metro Government Co-Chair Winnie Forrester

### First Test of Jackson Law-Bordeaux Residents Claim Environmental Racism as Metro Council Approves a Waste Processing Facility

In **May 2017**, Metro Council passed [BL2016-484](#) enacting T.C.A. § 68-211-707 which specifically permits local government legislative bodies to approve of landfills, solid waste disposal facilities and solid waste processing facilities **prior** to their construction and issuance of a permit by the **Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation**. Before the passage of the **Jackson Law**, the Metro Council did not have a say in the approval of a solid waste processing facility; it was left up to the **Solid Waste Region Board**, subject to review by the TDEC Commissioner.

The first test of the **Jackson Law** came at the **September 4, 2018 Metro Council** meeting. The controversial bill that will allow an aging liquid waste processing facility with multiple environmental violations to be closed and rebuilt in a new location, both within District 2, was **overwhelmingly** approved. The facility processes landfill leachate, oily waste, and grease from area restaurants. The bill was shepherded through Council with the assistance of the District’s own Councilman, **Decosta Hastings** against well-organized **community opposition**. Some observers noted that councilmanic courtesy and preference to business interests overrode the community’s objections.

For decades, the facility has been located on **World Baptist World Center Drive** near downtown and next door to the predominantly African-American **Brooklyn Heights** neighborhood. The facility will now move 3 miles north to **Haynes Manor**, another African-American community and further from the downtown core. The move clears the way for up to 15-story buildings to be erected on its present site, gentrifying the existing

minority neighborhood.

**Opponents** say the relocation will make millions of dollars for the owners in the sale of their property and line the pockets of the developers, land engineers, and attorneys while offering nothing to the long-time residents in the **Haynes Manor** community of **900** homes. Instead there will be a steady stream of trucks causing noise, air, and water pollution not to mention safety concerns. **Proponents** claimed it will modernize the facility and be an asset to the surrounding neighborhoods. It will be located across the street from a quarry and a nearby UPS facility. The waste facility will be separated from the residential homes by a 300-foot buffer.

The **Haynes-Trinity Neighborhood Coalition** held a press conference on **August 28<sup>th</sup>** attended by over 40 residents at the North Police Precinct, and made the case that their communities were being subjected to **environmental racism**. They stated, *“According to the 2010 Census, more than 32% live under the poverty line in District 2 (more than double than the average of Davidson County). Approximately half of the Haynes-Trinity area is located in a federally-designated Promise Zone area and has several large low-income housing properties. It also has a disproportionate number of children and over age 65 populations when compared to the rest of Davidson County. Because of this, our community is especially vulnerable.”*

Their statement continued, *“The MDHA 2017 Assessment of Fair Housing Report reported North Nashville and Bordeaux (including the predominantly African-American Districts 1 and 2) experience disparities in access to opportunity, because of the location of environmental health hazards and have less access to environmentally healthy neighborhoods. It references one of the contributing factors is the land use and zoning laws. As a result, we host many undesirable facilities like landfills, prisons, rock quarries, asphalt plants, waste processing and concrete plants, and many more industrial companies next door to our residential communities.”*

Indeed, The **Atlantic Magazine** concluded in its February, 2018 edition, that the EPA’s National Center for Environmental Assessment study shows almost anywhere researchers look, there is **more** evidence of deep racial disparities in exposure to environmental hazards. Environmental racism exists as the inverse of environmental justice... often without the input of the affected communities of color.



## A Healthier Tennessee

By Health Care Co-Chair Rashonda Lewis

### The continued fight for a Healthier Tennessee

Last month, Constance covered the **four** drivers of health as identified by the **Sycamore Institute**: health behavior, clinical care, physical environment, and the social and economic environment. (<https://www.sycamoreinstitutetn.org/2018/07/18/drivers-of-health/>). These drivers affect the number of lives lost each year and the cost of healthcare to the State. The **Governor’s Foundation for Health and Wellness**, a non-profit organization that works to promote healthier lives through its **Healthier Tennessee Initiative**, is wrapping up its roundtable series next month, with meetings scheduled in **October** for community and business leaders in **Chattanooga** and **Franklin**. The **goal** of these roundtable events is to discuss drivers of health and identify and execute solutions that will help improve health outcomes in Tennessee.

### Using big data to improve population health

Researchers throughout the country are turning more and more to **healthcare data analytics** to help them predict and improve health outcomes in vulnerable populations. **Meharry Medical College**, through its **Data Science Institute**, is using data from 200,000 patients to identify trends related to cardiovascular disease,

affect poor communities and communities of color. With data in hand, students, researchers and clinicians can better understand patient health behaviors, patient clinical needs and how to more efficiently connect appropriate resources to patients. [Vanderbilt University](#) and [Middle Tennessee State University](#) have also launched data science institutes this year. **Open enrollment coming soon**

## ACA Open Enrollment approaches

It's almost that time again. The **2019 Open Enrollment** period for the Healthcare Marketplace (Affordable Care Act/Obamacare) runs from **Thursday, November 1<sup>st</sup> to Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**. Choosing a health plan and signing up sounds easy, but it is **not**. There are many plans to choose from and people have to carefully weigh premium cost, deductible cost, benefits offered, and provider access. Consumers will need help. **Family and Children's Services** is the lead agency for Get Covered Tennessee and offers assistance with insurance through its Get Covered Hotline at its statewide hotline **844-644-5443** or locally at **615-724-1339**.



## Community Connections

By Community Connections Co-Chair Hasina Moyuddin

**Alignment Nashville** is once again sponsoring its **LEAF** (Linking, Empowering, and Advancing Families) Community Nights. Similar to the LEAF presentations given at Wright Middle School last year, this year's LEAF program will include sessions given at **Goodlettsville and Antioch Middle**. The LWV proposal for participating was submitted on Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup> and was as follows:

The League of Women Voters (LWV) would like to propose a workshop focusing on civic engagement and voting rights for parents, especially those from minority and immigrant communities. We will review the process of voter registration, ID requirements, and the rights to voting assistance (including translation services). We will also engage parents in discussing the opportunities that civic engagement holds at the local level, and the impact of local voting on policy decisions that shape our communities. In particular, we will use the November referendum on the Community Oversight Board (COB) as an example of how voting effects our daily lives.

The League should be notified by **September 22** on whether the proposal has been accepted.

The **LWVN** has also been asked to support voter registration efforts in the Muslim community. The **American Muslim Advisory Council (AMAC)** will hold voter registration drives at mosques on **Friday, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>** and **Friday, Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>**. The Middle TN Program Director, **Sabina Mohyuddin**, will arrange for voter drives in as many mosques as possible, depending on who is available to volunteer. If you are interested in participating, the voter drives would be between **12:30 to 2pm** on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> and Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>.

**AMAC** will also host a Voter Party on **October 26, 2018** at **Casa Azafran** and needs volunteers to help staff the event. Set up will start at **1:30pm** and will finish by 7:30pm. Volunteers are asked to sign up to help in two-hour shifts.

To volunteer for the voter drives or the Voter Party, **please** contact **Sabina Mohyuddin** at: [pr@amactn.com](mailto:pr@amactn.com) or 931-247-1963. Additional volunteer opportunities with AMAC can be found here: <https://www.amactn.org/services/volunteer-with-amac>.

Also at **Casa Azafran** is a **Civic Saturday** Nashville event on **Saturday, October 27**. This is a free event that is open to the public. From their event page,

*Join us for Civic Saturday, a civic analogue to church started by [Citizen university](#): a gathering of friends and strangers in a common place to nurture a spirit of shared purpose. But it's not about church religion or synagogue or mosque religion. It's about American civic religion— the values and practices of being an active and contributing member of civic life.” They promise: MUSIC / SPOKEN WORD / CIVIC CIRCLES / NEIGHBORS / NEW FRIENDS / COFFEE! / SNACKS / ARTIVISM. Again, it is on Saturday, October 27, 2018 from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM CDT at Casa Azafran located at 2195 Nolensville Pike, Nashville, TN 37211.*

The **TN Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC)** also has multiple volunteer opportunities to support civic engagement and participation in immigrant and refugee communities. For example, they will host a **Nashville Citizenship Application Assistance Workshop** on September 22, 2018 at 8:30 AM at Hillcrest United Methodist Church, 5112 Raywood Lane, Nashville, TN 37211. If you are interested in volunteering, please visit: <https://www.tnimmigrant.org/volunteer/>.

Finally, the **Vanderbilt** screening of *A Greater Society*, which is free and open to the public, will occur in the Commons Multiple Purpose Room 235 on Monday, **Sept. 17 from 5 to 7:30 p.m.**



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

**Thank you!**

#### **2018-19 LWVN Board of Directors**

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