



# 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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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**March 27, 2019, 9:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. TN Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.** Sponsored by US Commission on Civil Rights. Nashville Public Library, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219. Free to the public.

**March 27, 2019, 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. 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>

**March 28, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Stronger than Hate: Journey to the Promised Land – Community Seder.** Gordon Jewish Community Center, Pargh Auditorium, 801 Percy Warner Blvd. Nashville, TN. Hosted by Jewish Federation & Jewish Foundation of Nashville & Middle Tennessee. If interested, please [RSVP](#) for the event.

**April 5, 2019, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Hot Topics: Protecting America's Waterways and the Water We Drink.** Speakers: Anne Passino and Amanda Garcia, Southern Environmental Law Center. Goodwill Lifsey Center, 937 Herman Street, Nashville, 37208. *Program starts at Noon. Bring your own lunch.*

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

**April 10, 2019, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Hot Topics: Protecting America's Waterways and the Water We Drink.** Speakers: Anne Passino and Amanda Garcia, Southern Environmental Law Center. Green Hills Public Library, 3701 Benham Ave, Nashville, 37215.

**April 25, 2019, Noon to 1:00 p.m. Stand Against Racism.** Metro Courthouse Public Square, Nashville. Sponsored by YWCA.

**June 6, 2019, 6:30 p.m. League of Women Voters of Nashville Annual Meeting.** Home of Susan Mattson, 1733 Woodsong Drive, Brentwood, TN. **Mark your calendars and plan on coming!!!**

## President's Message



Calling **all** members to attend the **League of Women Voters of Tennessee** convention **Saturday, April 6** and **Sunday, April 7**. The Nashville League will earn **\$100** if we have **12** participants. We will be discussing and voting on the national Election Process Concurrence proposal, our Diversity Statement, and new Board Members.

The convention is being held at **MTSU**, Sam H. Ingram Bldg., 2269 Middle TN Blvd., Murfreesboro. It starts at **1:00 p.m.** on **Saturday** and ends at **12:00 p.m.** on **Sunday**. Registration fee is **\$40**. Members will be staying at the Holiday Inn Express, 129 Chaffin Pl, Murfreesboro. **Mark Goins**, TN Coordinator of Elections and **Jessica Vocaturo**, LWVUS Staff will be speaking. The Saturday Evening

Event will be a presentation of "**72 Steps**", the ballet celebrating the arduous fight for women's rights. I hope to see you there.

The **LWVTN Advocacy Committee** is offering volunteer opportunities to observe state legislative committee hearings and write a short report. If you are **not** receiving these emails, they may be going to your spam. Please report lack of emails to [lwvnash@gmail.com](mailto:lwvnash@gmail.com). You should be receiving notices of our **First Friday, Encore Wednesday Programs**, our lobbyist, **Stewart Clifton's weekly report**, and notices of volunteer opportunities, as well as other emails.

Please mark your calendar for our **annual** meeting on **Thursday, June 6, 2019, 6:00 to 8:00 pm**. We will be voting on new Board Members and honoring our 2019 **Molly Todd** award winner.

**Barbara Gay**



### **Encore Ballet Performance at the State Convention** **By State Advocacy Chair Debby Gould**

As a highlight of the **LWVTN Convention** that will be held in Murfreesboro this year, we will be presenting a free performance of "**72 Steps**" a ballet that tells the arduous 72-year struggle for the women of America to gain the right to vote in **1920**. Choreographed by **Gina Patterson** and performed by the **Nashville Ballet**, this is an event you won't want to miss. The performance on **Saturday, April 7** at **7 p.m. at Central Magnet School, 701 E. Main St, Murfreesboro** is free and open to the public.



**Save the Date**  
**June 6, 2019**

**League of Women Voters of Nashville**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Home of Susan Mattson**  
**1723 Woodson Drive, Brentwood**



**Notes from March Hot Topic: Voting Rights Restoration in Tennessee**  
**By Voter Editor Madeline Garr**

On Friday, March 1, members of the **League of Women Voters** and from the Nashville community gathered to hear **Lindsay Kee** of the ACLU of Tennessee present the topic on Voting Rights Restoration in Tennessee. **Ms. Kee** began her presentation with an overview of the Criminal Justice picture in the United States as it applies to incarceration rates. Although the United States is about **5% of the world population**, the US houses around **25% of the world's incarcerated population**. One in seven are white males, one in six are Latino, and one in four are black. In Tennessee, around 58,000 people are behind bars today.

There is a long history of voter disenfranchisement in our country, especially since the end of the Civil War in reaction to the “Reconstruction Amendments.” Between 1865 and 1870, the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution were passed, **abolishing** slavery, **establishing** citizenship of slaves born in the United States, and **prohibiting** the denial of the right to vote based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude. As a reaction, during and after the reconstruction era, some states, many of them in the South, enacted laws targeting voters with the goal of disenfranchisement and second class citizenship. Tennessee was one of those states.

Currently, to regain the right to vote in Tennessee, the following requirements **must** be met:

1. Time must be served.
2. Must be paroled.
3. Must meet probation requirements.
4. Must be up to date on court restitution and court costs requirements.
5. Must have paid back and current child support.

In Tennessee, it is estimated that 420,00 people are **currently** disenfranchised. That is one out of twelve Tennesseans. The process to get voter rights restored is a maze of requirements, signatures, and barriers, which explains why so many remain disenfranchised. The ACLU supports the restoration of voter rights as doing so would eliminate the modern day poll tax, cease the indefinite punishment of people who have already served their time, support reintegration into the community, reduce repeat incarcerations, and save tax payers money.

**Currently** there are two bills in the General Assembly that are addressing this issue.

- **SB589/HB547**, sponsored by **Dickerson and Curcio** would stipulate that:
  - Rights be restored upon completion of incarceration, probation, and parole;
  - Certificate of restoration be provided by either the prison warden or the parole officer;
  - Financial obligations would not be a pre-requisite
  - Department of Corrections required to update the Secretary of State regularly.
- **SB875/HB1258**, sponsored by Akbari/Dixie would stipulate that:
  - The certificate of restoration would be issued from the Secretary of State office;
  - There would be a 30-day deadline before an Election;
  - Explanation of voter rights, requirements, and registration be provided;
  - If voters move between counties, it is no longer necessary to repeat the process but only notify the new county election commission.

Ms. Kee believes that the Dickerson/Curico bill seems to have a lot of support in the legislature. Governor Lee has expressed interest in supporting this bill. For more information regarding these bills and other issues, please click [here](#) to go to the ACLU website.



## The League of Women Voters of Nashville

*Presents*

### **Protecting America's Waterways and the Water We Drink**

**Speakers: Anne Passino and Amanda Garcia**

**Southern Environmental Law Center**



The future of the landmark **Clean Water Act** is uncertain. The current administration is seeking to redefine water systems that have been protected for nearly 50 years so that a million acres of wetlands and an estimated 60% of streams (approx. 32,000 stream miles in Tennessee alone) would no longer be covered. **Learn** more about this issue and the work of the Southern Environmental Law Center in addressing water contamination issues that impact Tennessee's waterways.

### **First Friday Hot Topics at Lunchtime**

Friday, April 5, 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.*

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### **Second Wednesday Evening Encore**

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

6:00 to 7:00 pm

**Green Hills Public Library Community Room**

3701 Benham Avenue, Nashville 37215

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

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

*For additional information, contact [LWVNash@gmail.com](mailto:LWVNash@gmail.com)*



### **Volunteers Needed to Follow League-priority Bills in the Tennessee General Assembly By Voter Services Chairs Hazel Thornton and Perry Macdonald**

**Hazel Thornton** and **Tracy Depp** are still making progress on a **LWV** Observer Corps-style project that was initiated last month. Specifically, Tracy issues a weekly email sign-up notice that goes out to our local **League** members. The notice identifies individual **election**-related bills that are **League** priorities, together with corresponding committee meeting times. Our members may sign up online. So far we have had an excellent participation rate and hope to maintain the project through the end of this Legislative session and beyond.

Many thanks to those who have volunteered for this important work! I hope our members will **consider**

volunteering to participate in this project. Living in a state capitol gives us a unique opportunity to witness our government in action.



## **A Possible New Model for Health Care Delivery to the Uninsured and Underinsured** **By Health Care Co-Chair Rashonda Lewis**

This month, **Meharry Medical College** and community leaders working as **the Indigent Care Stakeholder Work Team**, introduced a proposal to **revamp** health care delivery for Nashville's **uninsured** population. The proposal, if enacted, would create a new care management program called **BetterHealth Nashville** that would oversee and coordinate care for people who have no or little income or are underinsured. **Nashville General** would serve as the initial point of contact for care and "hub" for the program, with a narrow focus on **diabetes, hypertension, oral and systemic** health issues. Patients with more complex health needs would be routed to other hospitals, such as **Vanderbilt, TriStar, or Saint Thomas**, for more specialized treatment. Meharry and the stakeholder work team envision that this model, which includes a network of hospitals, a central source of care coordination, and a single electronic health record, will result in a better distribution of care for the uninsured among Nashville's hospitals. Currently, **over 50%** of Nashville General's payer mix is uninsured. Now the proposers must figure out a funding mechanism and get the other hospitals on board.



## **Important Education Bills in the Tennessee General Assembly** **By Education Chair Lara Webb**

With the Tennessee General Assembly in full swing, there are **two** education bills to be watching. Some details keep changing as the legislation becomes more fully formed, but below are summaries of what is **currently** known as of the writing of this newsletter. There will likely be **action alerts** regarding these bills in the near future.

**HB 940/SB 796:** This bill would **rewrite** the charter school authorization process. **Currently**, charter schools apply to local school boards, and the **local board** makes the determination whether to accept the application. The charter school can appeal the decision to a state **ad-hoc** committee **if** it is rejected by the local school board. **The new bill** is an **attempt to strip** the decision from **elected** local school boards, which understand the needs of the community and the local budget and resources. This bill would instead place the **decision-making power** in the hands of a **charter authorizing commission** that is **appointed** by the governor. The commission will draw a 3% authorizer fee, but the local school districts will be shouldering the costs of the charter schools.

**HB 939/SB 735:** This bill will outline Governor Lee's plan for **Education Savings Accounts** (also known as **vouchers**). If this voucher bill passes, it will have a negative impact on Nashville schools. The bill allows for students who live **in a district** with 3 or more schools in the bottom 10% to apply for a **\$7300 voucher/education savings account** that could be used for expenses stemming from **private school attendance** or **homeschooling**. Anyone in an eligible district could apply for the voucher not just those that are zoned to go to schools in the bottom 10%. For more information on the specifics of this plan especially the financial costs, please see:

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/tn/2019/03/14/tennessee-governor-reveals-details-about-his-parent-choice-proposal-including-its-75-million-price-tag-in-first-year/>



## 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: **Adrienne Clagett, Ann Lucas, Joan Sands, Jo Singer, and Jennifer Watson.**

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 <http://lwnashville.org/join/>.

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

*"I want to be politically empowered."*

*"Citizenship is about being well informed on the current issues and voting concerns. The League is the perfect resource for this information. I look forward to the annual kickoff session with our lobbyist Steward Clifton. Can't begin to express how helpful the preview of the TN General Assembly. This is very important to transparency."*

*"I joined the League of Women Voters because, first of all, it is an organization that has tremendous credibility and respect both locally and nationally. I love the fact that the League encourages everyone to become informed on the issues and involved in their communities and their states. An educated and informed electorate is essential to maintaining our democracy and I feel that the League of Women Voters has a major role to play in that work."*



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**

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*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**