



December 2020
Volume 74, No. 7

THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

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<http://www.LWVnashville.org>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 17, 2020. 6 p.m. Metro Budget 101: City/State Revenue. Finance Director Kevin Crumbo and State Rep. Harold Love. Livestream this event: ([Join December 17 meeting](#))

January 2, 2021. 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. 21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge. YWCA and the League of Women Voters TN. Look for an email to register for the Challenge and for a Zoom link.

January 7, 2021. 6 p.m. Metro Nashville Public Schools. School Board Member Freda Player-Peters and Chief Operating and Financial Officer Chris Henson. Livestream this event: ([Join January 7 meeting](#))

January 8, 2021. 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Hot Topic: Looking Ahead to the 2021 Legislative Session. Stewart Clifton. Look for an email to register on Zoom.

January 14, 2021. 6 p.m. Metro Budget 101: Metro Public Works and Metro Parks Departments. Public Works Interim Director Shanna Whitelaw and Metro Parks Director Monique Odom. Livestream this event: ([Join January 14 meeting](#))

January 16, 2021. 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. 21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge. Look for an email to register for the Challenge and for a Zoom link.

January 21, 2021. 6 p.m. Metro Budget 101: Nashville General Hospital. Livestream this event: ([Join January 21 meeting](#))

January 25, 2021. 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. League of Women Voters State Advocacy Committee. Look for an email to register for the Challenge and for a Zoom link.

January 28, 2021. 6 p.m. Metro Budget 101: Public Safety. Metro Nashville Police Department, Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office. Livestream this event: ([Join January 28 meeting](#))

January 30, 2021. 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. 21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge. Look for an email to register for the Challenge and for a Zoom link.

February 4, 2021. 6 p.m. **Metro Budget 101: Community Panel Discussion.** Livestream this event: ([Join February 4 meeting](#))

February 11, 2021. 6 p.m. **Metro Budget 101: Expert Panel Discussion.** Livestream this event: ([Join February 11 meeting](#))

February 13 2021. 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. **21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge.** Look for an email to register for the Challenge and for a Zoom link.

February 18, 2021. 6 p.m. **Metro Budget 101: How the Budget Process Works.** Livestream this event: ([Join February 18 meeting](#))

February 25, 2021. 6 p.m. **Metro Budget 101: Participatory Budget.** Council Member At-Large Zulfat Suara. Livestream this event: ([Join February 25 meeting](#))

February 27, 2021. 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. **21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge.** Look for an email to register for the Challenge and for a Zoom link.



President's Message



The year turns. Very soon, we will be celebrating Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year, yet a night full of hope because from this point onward the nights become shorter and the days get longer. Spring is approaching!!!

The **League of Women Voters Nashville's** Board is excited to announce a new venture: **Conversations to Move Us Forward.** Beginning in January, we will be inviting groups of members to participate in one of our Zoom meetings. The goals of these meetings are to get to know each other and share ideas and strategies as we look ahead to **2021 and beyond.** Please **look for an email** inviting you to join the Zoom meeting and reserve your space when you receive **your** invitation. Your skills, experience, energy, and ideas are valuable to us. Indeed, it has been your skills, experience, ideas and energy that have enabled this organization to endure and grow in these last 100 years!!!

After this year of joys and sorrows, may we all look forward to a new year, to renewed relationships, to re-commitment to our work, and to hope in 2021.

Happy Holidays!

Madeline Garr

With Deep Gratitude

We are thankful to announce that [Karen Weeks](#) and her family have made a generous long-term donation that will be shared by [LWVTN](#) and the [LWVNashville](#) over the next ten years. This gift will give our organizations the jumpstart we need to initiate a strategic planning process for our future work. It will help us map out and sustain plans to build on the strengths of our organizations and to explore new and innovative program development.

We are enormously grateful to the vision of the Weeks Family in making this gift and to [Karen](#) for her many years of LWV leadership. Our two boards will begin the planning process in 2021 and will be turning to our membership for additional feedback. Stay tuned!



Vote411 Continued to Educate More Voters in 2020

By LWVN VOTE411 Coordinator Susan Mattson



VOTE411 – the [LWV](#) on-line election information and voter's guide – educated **more** voters than ever in 2020. Nationally, **VOTE411** logged over **7.7 million sessions** from January through Election day – a **141% increase from 2016** and a **20 % increase from 2018**. [LWVUS](#) revamped the website in 2019 and worked tirelessly to add more candidates to the guide across the country in 2020. The [LWVUS](#) and [Leagues](#) across the country ramped up promotion of **VOTE411** through social media posts and ads, news articles and ads, partnerships with other organizations, and billboards, among many others.

Vote 411 users continued to **grow** in Tennessee and Nashville. In 2020, **Tennessee** logged 65,589 user sessions; **Nashville** had 21,736. Nashville voters continue to be the primary users of **VOTE411** in Tennessee - 32% of users with 10 percent of the voting population.

This September and October in the period leading up to the Presidential election, **19,240 Tennesseans used VOTE411, a 42 % increase** from the mid-term elections in 2018. Nashville's 9,130 users representing a **28 % increase** from 2018. **LWVUS** expected only about a 20 % increase in users from 2018 to 2020, given that Tennessee and Nashville had already doubled its use of VOTE411 from 2016 to 2018.



December State Advocacy Report

By State Advocacy Chair Debby Gould

Now that the national election saga has come to an end for the year, **LWVN** is turning its attention to the Tennessee General Assembly and their upcoming session in **January 2021**. The **LWVTN** State Advocacy Committee will meet on **Monday, January 25, 11:30-12:30 p.m.** We encourage any interested LWV member to join in these meetings to discuss high priority proposed legislation and determine the appropriate follow-up advocacy action by either our lobbyist **Stewart Clifton**, members of the Advocacy Committee, or the **very best lobbyists** of all — our statewide membership. Look for a zoom meeting invitation in January.

As a great kick-off in December, we had the opportunity to meet the newest member of the Davidson County delegation, **Senator Heidi Campbell**, representing District 20. During the presentation **LWVN** learned of her interest in quality public education, proactive steps to address climate change, improved access to healthcare, protection of LGBTQ rights, and expanding voting access. We also shared with her some of the ongoing **LWV** legislative priorities such as support for ex-felon voter restoration, opposition to school vouchers, and support for expanded healthcare coverage. The recording of this presentation can be viewed at: <https://lwvnashville.org/blog/>.



What is New in Williamson County?

By Linda Sherman

The **League of Women Voters of Williamson County (LWVWC)** meets Wednesday, Dec. 16, at 1:00 p.m., on Zoom. To register, please visit the Adult Programs page at the John P. Holt Brentwood Library website. **Randall Putala**, CEO of **World Hunger Team**, will be the meeting guest.

Mr. Putala is the founder of World Hunger Team, a non-profit foundation dedicated to ending world hunger. While serving as its CEO, Mr. Putala is also currently president of Strategic Direct Marketing in Nashville. During his career as an advertising executive, he has worked for large agencies including Tracy-Locke/BBDO, FKB Group PLC, and Allied Graphic Arts. Please join us in hearing how we could address world hunger.

Additionally, please note that **LWVWC** will **not** meet on the regularly scheduled third Wednesday of January in recognition of Inauguration Day, but our next meeting will be **February 17th, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.** Everyone is welcome to attend.





Looking for a Holiday Gift? What About a Print Commemorating Nashville Women's March for Suffrage?

By Fund Raising Chair Anne-Marie Farmer

Only \$50 including shipping!

As part of our centennial celebrations and the holidays, the **LWVN** is offering a limited edition, signed, heirloom-quality print of *"Nashville Parade for Women's Suffrage"* by acclaimed Tennessee artist **Shirley Martin**.

The painting depicts the historic women's parade from the state capitol to Centennial Park to promote the cause of women's suffrage. The original painting is the property of the Tennessee State Museum. Click to make a gift or buy one for yourself, click [here](#).



Summary of December Hot Topic – Vanderbilt Professor, James Blumstein Speaks on the Constitution and Presidential Powers

By Co-Vice President Ethel Detch

As our nation struggles with the fallout of the November Presidential Election, our December Hot Topic could not have been timelier. **Dr. James Blumstein**, Vanderbilt University Professor of Constitutional Law and Health Law & Policy, spoke via Zoom on “**Presidential Powers and the Constitution.**”

Professor Blumstein noted that for a constitution to work, a country must have a “**culture of constitutionalism.**” In other words, the citizens must be willing to accept the constitution and abide by its rules and outcomes. **Self-restraint** is vital—otherwise, it becomes just words on paper. He added that a culture of constitutionalism must also have elements of **custom** and **practice**. In some cases, the constitution itself may not exactly spell out a practice, but the country develops traditions of practice for carrying out its provisions. These can be renegotiated, of course, but sometimes at great cost.

Professor Blumstein then turned specifically to Executive Powers in the Constitution, as well as the separation of powers. The US Constitution grants the President tremendous authority, some through inherent powers, but also enhanced by statute, as well as custom and practice. The President’s powers, however, have been somewhat restrained through the **Uniform Administrative Procedures Act**, which was adopted shortly after World War II, to place parameters on the authority of executive branch departments.

Most 21st Century Americans would probably be surprised to learn that the US Constitution actually doesn’t **mandate** that Presidents to be elected at all—the selection falls to each state’s legislature. In the earlier years of our nation, there were no popular elections for the President. Today, however, all 50 states have elected to allow popular elections.

Questions followed Dr. Blumstein’s remarks on wide-ranging topics such as Presidential pardons, the Electoral College, the power of the President to negotiate with other countries without the consent of Congress, and challenges to the US Census process.

This Hot Topics meeting, as well as others, was recorded and can be viewed on the **League of Women Voters of Nashville’s website** at <https://lwvnashville.org/blog/>



League Lobbyist, Stewart Clifton, to be January’s Hot Topic Speaker

By Co-Vice President Ethel Detch

The **League of Women Voters** is well-known for its community voter registration efforts, but did you know that **advocacy** is also part of the organization’s mission? In fact, the **LWVTN** employs a professional lobbyist to monitor legislation and advocate for bills that support the **League’s** priorities in Tennessee’s General Assembly.

On **Friday, January 8, 2021, at 12:00 noon**, join us by Zoom for the Nashville League’s monthly Hot Topic program, “**Looking Ahead to the 2021 Legislative Session,**” which will

feature that lobbyist, **Stewart Clifton**, of **Clifton Government Relations**. Stewart has served as the **League's** representative on Capitol Hill for many years and will share his thoughts and insights about the upcoming legislation session, which is likely to break new ground on several subjects—the challenges of the Covid-19 virus, health care, broadband availability, charter schools—just to name a few. Stewart regularly gives presentations about the public policymaking process and delivers substantive workshops on public issues to a variety of groups.

The meeting is free and open to the public. Be on the lookout for registration information by e-mail, Facebook, or on the League's website at <https://lwvnashville.org/>.



January 8, 2021

HOT TOPICS
Continues on ZOOM!

Looking Ahead to the 2021 Legislative Session

Presenter: Stewart Clifton, League of Women Voters Lobbyist

**Be on the lookout for Zoom registration information
in your email, Facebook or the League website.
Register and tune in on Friday, January 8, 2021 at Noon.**



Keeping Our Focus

By Health Care/Public Health Co-Chair Constance Caldwell

The entire country is mesmerized as the first COVID -19 vaccine is introduced and distributed to the public. This is a cause for relief, considering all that the nation and the world has experienced since **March 2020**. Now we need to **ensure** that the medication is distributed appropriately and that, through public relations and education, citizens take advantage of its availability.

The country has also been pre-occupied with election politics and what appears to be the corroding of our democratic process. Perhaps with the **Electoral College** having cast its votes on Monday, we can settle down to a **peaceful** transition of presidential power.

As informed citizens, we must continue to focus on and stay abreast of those issues that have **never** gone away—issues affected by **long-term disparity** that cannot be addressed or solved with a pill or vaccine. While **COVID** has been in the forefront, people are continuing to die of **drug addiction** and **abuse**. The numbers have not decreased but appear to be on the rise. Nashville and Tennessee still have this malady to contend with. **Infant and Maternal mortality** still remains higher than that in many undeveloped countries.

Because of the pandemic, many people have **lost health insurance, housing and the ability to work and pay bills**. Our federal government continues to hassle over the cost of a stimulus package that would bring relief to those who are really in need. While we have been distracted, the current administration has **reversed its stand on protecting Medicaid programs**. It now allows states and legislatures to reduce or eliminate optional services like home health care, oral health care, substance use/abuse treatment, increase cost-sharing and even reduce benefit packages. This all during a pandemic. This ruling became **effective immediately** without the benefit of public comments.

COVID cases are continuing to rise and hospitalizations are on the increase with shortages of ICU beds becoming the norm in some areas. Deaths are increasing. Nashville and Tennessee have not been exempted. It will take awhile for the vaccine to produce its intended effect. We still need to be **vigilant** and **follow** the protective measures we have all been advised to observe. Let's continue to look at the entire health picture and **not forget** those issues that concerned us before March of this year.



The Cumberland River Compact

By Environment Chair Barbara Gay

Election challenges and COVID 19 have us all distracted, but the **climate and environment** will be a major focus when these current problems are solved. It is comforting to know that the **Cumberland River Compact** is working in several areas to address environmental issues. Their goal and mission is:

" Three million people and thousands of species depend on clean water from the Cumberland River. We work on the root causes of water pollution, both urban and rural. Our goal is to give people the tools to be smart, impactful stewards of their watershed and to constructively partner within policy planning with government agencies. Through generous support from individuals, corporations, foundations, and grants, we are able to work on projects that positively impact our community. These projects are why we exist-and their results are what drive our mission and vision."

The Cumberland River Compact has **numerous projects** involving agriculture, riverbank stabilization, best management practices, climate resilience, dam removal, de-paving, environmental education, flood buyout, green alleys, green infrastructure, invasive removal, rain gardens, rainwater harvesting, river cleanup, schools, storm-water mitigation, stream restoration, teachers' curriculum, and tree planting.

If you are interested in working on any of these projects, go to cumberlandrivercompact.org.



News from Metro Government

By Metro Government Chair Winnie Forrester

NEW TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR NASHVILLE

Mayor Cooper's administration is proposing a new multi-modal transit plan, totaling **\$1.6 billion** over 10 years or more. Metro intends to pay for these improvements with annual capital budgeting and with state and federal grants. No public vote is required, because no tax is planned. *(As a reminder, in 2018, Nashville voters rejected a \$9 billion mostly light-rail system that relied primarily on a modest sales tax increase.)*

The plan's focus areas include **modernizing** the city's traffic management system, **upgrading** the WeGo bus system, **investing** in neighborhood infrastructure including sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways. The plan also has a focus on **improving** safety as a part of Mayor Cooper's Vision Zero Action Plan. [You can read more of the top line details of the plan here](#) and [here](#), and [the full 348-page plan is here](#).

On **December 15th**, the Council agenda includes a vote on a non-binding resolution, [RS2020-656](#), that expresses the Council's endorsement of the plan. The resolution also states that the plan may not be changed unless via the passage of another Council resolution and that the resolution is **not** an authorization to finance any portion of the plan and that any such request must be addressed by future legislation.

METRO BUDGET 101 SERIES

Councilmembers **Kyonztè Toombs** (Chair) and **Delishia Porterfield** (Vice-Chair) of the Metro Budget and Finance Committee will be hosting a virtual Metro Budget 101 Series over the next few months. All sessions, beginning at **6 p.m.**, will provide transparency and education for the general public concerning Metro Nashville Davidson County's revenues, finances, and the budget process. These sessions are also recorded and **posted here** for later review.

Questions from the public may be submitted to kyonzte.toombs@nashville.gov by 5 p.m. on the day before the session. All questions must be on-topic.

How the City Gets Money

December 17, 2020 - City/State Revenue: Finance Director Kevin Crumbo and State Rep. Harold Love ([Join December 17 meeting](#))

How the City Spends Money

January 7, 2021 - Metro Nashville Public Schools ([Join January 7 meeting](#))

School Board Member Freda Player-Peters

Chief Operating and Financial Officer Chris Henson

January 14, 2021 - Metro Public Works and Metro Parks Departments ([Join January 14 meeting](#))

Public Works Interim Director Shanna Whitelaw

Metro Parks Director Monique Odom

January 21, 2021 - Nashville General Hospital ([Join January 21 meeting](#))

January 28, 2021 - Public Safety (Metro Nashville Police Department, Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office) ([Join January 28 meeting](#))

Community Panel Discussions

February 4, 2021 - Community Panel Discussion ([Join February 4 meeting](#))

February 11, 2021 - Expert Panel Discussion ([Join February 11 meeting](#))
February 18, 2021 - How the Budget Process works ([Join February 18 meeting](#))
February 25, 2021 - Participatory Budget ([Join February 25 meeting](#))
Councilmember At-Large Zulfat Suara

This series of sessions will provide helpful information, and we hope you will participate as we work through the upcoming 2021 budget year. The schedule will be updated as speakers are confirmed.

Members of the public may watch the following meetings live online at stream.nashville.gov, and Metro Nashville and Davidson County residents can view Metro Nashville Network on Comcast channel 3, AT&T U-verse channel 99, Google Fiber channel 3, and streaming on the Metro Nashville Network Roku channel.



December Membership Update

By Membership Co-Chairs Reba Holmes and Karen Hernan

With great delight, we announce and welcome new and returning members who have joined the Nashville League of Women Voters. It is our privilege to welcome these individuals to the organization: **Angela Adams, Maggie Adams, Rose Ballard, Alyssa Dituro, Patricia Farmer,** and **Deborah Fisher,**

We are grateful to these members and to all our members who support the League's activities, programs, and underwriting.

It is never to late to give a LWV membership as a holiday gift!

What about a membership for the League of Women Voters? Membership allows you to share a year's worth of experiences **promoting** democracy, **educating** others in the community, **participating** in political discourse, and **registering** new voters, to name a few. Plus, the annual membership includes membership in **national**, **state**, and **local** LWV organizations. Details regarding the various support levels may be found on our website [<http://lwvnashville.org/join/](http://lwvnashville.org/join/).

Comments from members as to why they are excited about The League of Women Voters.

I am excited that I am a part of thousands of others joined together to defeat systemic racism, end voter suppression in our communities, promote criminal justice reform, and provide equal access to education, health care, and economic development. It is exciting to know that these efforts will reverberate through our communities for generations to come.



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

Thank you!



LWVN 2020-2021

Board of Directors

President: **Madeline Garr**

1st Vice Presidents: **Ethel Detch and Carole Kenner**

2nd Vice President: **Open**

Secretary: **Elise Lamar**

Treasurer **Susan Mattson**

Portfolio Chairs

Communications: **Lara Webb and Ophelia Doe**

Community Connections: **Sabina Mohyuddin and Tamanna Qureshi**

Education: **Jamie Oakley**

Environment: **Barbara Gay and Russanne Buchi-Fotre**

Fundraising: **Debby Gould and Anne Marie Farmer**

Health Care/Public Health: **Constance Caldwell and Clare Sullivan (on temporary leave)**

Membership: **Reba Holmes and Karen Hernan**

Metro Government: **Winnie Forrester**

State Advocacy: **Debby Gould**

Voter Services: **Perry Macdonald**

Voter Newsletter Editor: **Madeline Garr and Elise Lamar**

Williamson County Representative: **June Bond**

Nominating Committee Chair (2020): **Senator Brenda Gilmore**

Nominating Committee Members: **Betsy Walkup, Constance Caldwell, Hasina Mohyuddin,
June Bond and Brenda Wynn**