

The Nashville Voter

Volume 74, No 12-- September 2021

Welcome to this issue of the *LWVN Voter*. You'll notice that the Emma page design allows you to access the LWVN Calendar by pressing a button at the top of the page!

Please note, you can increase your screen size within your personal information manager (i.e., Microsoft Outlook). In the Microsoft Outlook Message Bar at the top of the e-mail page, choose "Other Actions" and then in the dropdown menu choose "Zoom." The Zoom window allows you to increase the file size; try 140% for easier onscreen reading.

Also, please note that if you want to share/forward this newsletter to others, you MUST click on the **envelope icon** at the upper right side of this emailed version

Calendar of Events

September 18, 2021 and September 25, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. **Increasing Equity & Access Through Insuring All Tennesseans.** Sponsored by the Tennessee Health Care Campaign on Zoom. Register [here](#).

September 18, 2021 and September 25, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. **Increasing Equity & Access Through Insuring All Tennesseans.** Sponsored by the Tennessee Health Care Campaign on Zoom. Register [here](#).

September 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. **The Legacy of Women's Suffrage in Tennessee.** Presenters: Elaine Weiss and Dr. Carole Buey. Tennessee State Museum in Nashville, TN. [Click here](#) for tickets or watch via live stream at TNMuseum.org/Videos

September 21, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. **Redistricting, Transparency and Engagement.** Presenter: Jesse Mayshark, Editor at CompassKnox.com. [Click here](#) to register.

September 29, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. **Public School Hall of Fame Awards.** Sponsored by the Nashville Public Education Foundation. Senator Brenda Gilmore will be honored. [Click here](#) to register.

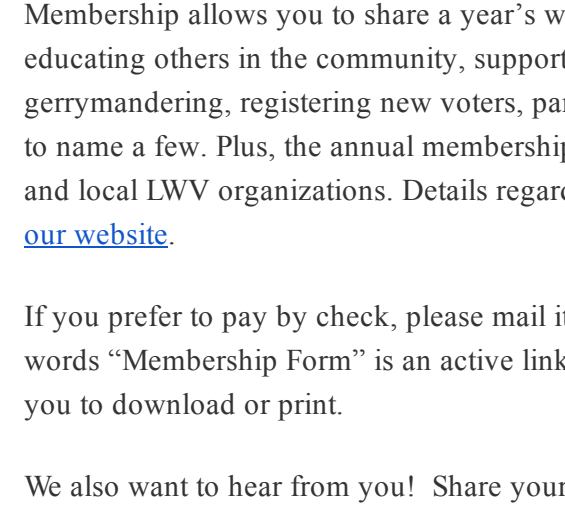
October 1, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. **Learotha Williams, Jr. PhD will discuss his publication, I'll Take You There: Exploring Nashville's Social Justice Sites (Vanderbilt University Press, 2021).** Contact Karen Wieckert for details (kweicker@gmail.com).

October 2, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. **Restoring Voter Rights Steering Committee Meeting.** Contact Kathy Greenberg at kgreen@utk.edu for more information.

October 19, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. **Redistricting: Perspectives from Tennessee Legislators.** Presenters: TN Senators Jeff Yarbrough and Ferrell Hinkle. [Click here](#) to join.

October 20, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. **League of Women Voters of Williamson County hosts discussion on redistricting, voter participation and other legislative issues.** Featuring: TN Representatives Glen Casada, Brandon Ogles, and Sam Whitson. [Click here](#) to visit the Brentwood Library Website and register.

September's Co-President Message



As Fall approaches, the [League of Women Voters of Nashville](#) (LWVN) continues to find ways to engage with the greater Nashville community despite the challenges that the recent spikes and restrictions that the Delta variant of Covid-19 has required of all of us, even those of us who are vaccinated. The LWVN Board portfolio committees have identified their annual goals. These will soon be available to all members on the LWVN website and in the Nashville Voter. These goals reflect the needs and concerns of the wider community as well as our continual goal to register and educate voters, and advocate for an open and transparent government.

In addition, the LWVN is also engaged in monitoring the redistricting process on both the state and the local level. In partnership with [LWVTN](#), members are engaged in both educating themselves on the complexity of this work and advocating for an open and inclusive process. Redistricting also affects Davidson County. Every ten years Metro Nashville must re-establish the boundaries for Metro Council and School Board Districts. The process has already begun. I encourage each of you to [click here](#) to learn about what is happening, explore the timeline, and participate in future town hall meetings in October or November.

Finally, [National Voter Registration Day](#) is September 28, 2021. LWVN is participating in this effort to register and educate more voters. We are partnering with Nashville State Community College on September 17th. We continue to work with Farmer's Markets and MNPS as well as with the LWVTN Restoring Voting Rights committee to expand voter registration opportunities and to encourage both the importance of registration and voting! Please reach out to your family, friends, and acquaintances to spread this message.

Don't forget to renew your membership for 2021-2022 and thank you for all you do!!

Thank you for all you do!

Madeline Garr

Membership Committee

By Reba Holmes

With great delight, 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:

Danna M. Bennett, Janice Bossing, Deborah Webster-Clair, Deborah Clapper, Karen Davis, Ann Erceclawn, Russanne Buchi-Fotre, Angela Hubbard, Kayla Jenkins, Trinita Jennings, Carole Kenner, Patsy Lanigan, Gail Markert, Mary McLennan, Sabina Mohyuddin, Elizabeth O'Shea, Freda Player, Tamanna Qureshi, Miura Rempis, Cheryl Sachan, Joan Sands, Joseph and Judy Shank, and Allison Stewart.

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

Anne Dallas Dudley \$250.00

- Michael Caldwell and Shannon Lashlee
- Susan Dougherty
- Joan Shayne

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Annual Membership Drive Continues

Our annual membership continues, and many of you have renewed or joined the league for the first time. Outstanding effort, and thank you!

You matter and your involvement in all we do makes a difference. Our collective voices will make a difference. We are counting on you to serve or continue to serve as an advocate to defend and protect our system of democracy and its cornerstones. We need more advocates like you; please encourage your family, friends, and co-workers to join the league.

Membership allows you to share a year's worth of experiences promoting democracy, educating others in the community, supporting redistricting reform and ending gerrymandering, registering new voters, participating in the overall political discourse, to name a few. Plus, the annual membership includes membership to the national, state, and local LWV organizations. Details regarding various support levels may be found on [our website](#).

If you prefer to pay by check, please mail it along with a "Membership Form." The words "Membership Form" is an active link, if you click on it a form will appear for you to download or print.

We also want to hear from you! Share your comments regarding why you want to join the League of Women Voters and email us your comments to lwnash@gmail.com.

Here is what one of our members said:

I joined for my kids. Yes, for my kids. As a society, we are grappling with critical issues, such as voting restrictions, gun violence, equity, etc. For me, there was no better group to work with than the League of Women Voters. I needed to join a non-partisan group because the issues are non-partisan. I am so grateful the League of Women Voters exists. The League is timeless.

Education Committee

By Committee Co-Chairs Jami Oakley and Mary Claire Dismukes

The League of Women Voters Education team met with a new locally-based nonprofit, Kidizenship, this month to discuss ways that we could potentially partner to encourage civic engagement among students. They are launching a web-only magazine next month that will be written for kids, by kids and will feature articles and other interactive pieces that involve politics and all aspects of the civic process from a youth and non-partisan perspective. Voters! See below for details of a contest that spans Nashville and League of Women Voters! They're in for details and share [this link](#) with any young people or teachers, music teachers, librarians, in your life – anyone who may want to participate or inspire someone to participate.

Inspire Young People to Compose Anthems and Share Their Talent With Musical Icons!

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about the national anthem? Do you see the crowd standing at the presidential inauguration and Lady Gaga hitting the high notes on the White House balcony? Do you think of "rockets' red glare" and the flag waving "o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?"

If you could ask your students to write their anthem, what would it sound like? What would it say?

If you think you have an idea, we want to tell you about Kidizenship and SING Your Anthem. [Kidizenship](#) is a non-partisan media platform for young citizens that merges civics education with creative self-expression, art, music, and community action.

SING Your Anthem is our current contest that invites young people to write and perform their own national anthems, giving voice to THEIR values & vision for THEIR America. There's an all-star lineup of musicians judging this contest: Folk-rock guitarist and four-time Grammy winner [Jason Isbell](#); Americana multi-instrumentalist and Grammy winner [Rhiannon Giddens](#); country icon and three-time Grammy winner [Darius Rucker](#); and hip-hop artist and activist [Genesis Be](#).

This is an opportunity for young writers and musicians to share your talent with great musicians and create something that celebrates what YOU have to say about YOUR country!

This contest will be judged in two age categories (8-12; 13-18). And there's money to be won! 1st prize in each category: **\$1000**, 2nd: **\$750**, 3rd: **\$500**. Kidizenship is accepting submissions now through **October 12, 2021**.

Kidizenship is looking for songs that describe what is beautiful about your communities and our shared nation. Songs that inspire and unite people across divisions.

Songs can be submitted by one person and up to 3 collaborators per song. You might want to do this solo with your guitar. Or partner up with up to two other collaborators. Maybe one person loves to sing, one thrives in composition, and one plays instruments. Whatever the set-up is, this is supposed to be FUN!

For contest details and submission guidelines, go to: [SING Your Anthem](#)
If you have questions, please reach out to info@kidizenship.com

And to view the winning submissions of previous contests, which have been judged by leading lights across the political spectrum, from Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Jon Favreau, and Andrew Yang to Representatives Susan Molinari and Will Hurd, see: [Kidizenship.com/contest-winners](#).

Metro Council Meeting

By Committee Co-Chairs Pat McCauley and Karen Hernan

Metro Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesday at 6:30pm. Committee meetings begin at 12:00 pm and are scheduled through the afternoon as well as other specific days and times. The schedule for Metro Council meetings and committee meetings is found online <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/council/boards/metro-council/meetings>. One can view meetings online accessing <https://www.nashville.gov/information-technology-services/Cable-Television-Services/Metro-Nashville-Network/Live-Streaming.aspx>.

August Metro Council Meeting Notes

- Approved solid waste master plan to achieve zero waste in 30 years
- Approved receipt of 9.2 million dollars of American Rescue Plan monies to fund Metro Action Coalition's efforts to identify and financially assist Davidson County citizens with rent and utility relief.
- Approved a resolution to assign 1.5 million dollars from the TN covid relief package to Davidson County's Municipal Auditorium
- Passed a bill to protect and replace trees on city property
- Passed bill for contract between Mental Health Cooperative and Metro Police for MHC to support police on calls and services

On September 7, 2021, council discussed a resolution to urge the Medical Director, Metro Public Health Department, to mandate mask wearing in all public indoor spaces within Davidson County. There was also a resolution by the council members to approve 3 million dollars funding from American Rescue Plan Act to identify and financially assist Davidson County citizens (affected by covid-related economic hardship) with financial assistance for rent or mortgage and/or utility bills.

LWV members Pat McCauley and Karen Hernan will monitor future meetings and report on resolutions and bills relevant to League portfolio positions.

Health Care/Public Health Committee

By Committee Co-Chairs Constance Caldwell and Claire Sullivan

The Public Health Committee encourages League members to contact our Congressional representatives and Senators in support of the Medicaid Saves Lives legislation. This bill, which may be incorporated into the Budget Reconciliation Infrastructure Package, would create a federal Medicaid look-alike program that low-income adults living in non-Medicaid expansion states could enroll in through the Affordable Care Act exchanges. Because Medicaid expansion for all states was funded years ago when the ACA was passed, this new public option would not need additional funding.

The Medicaid Saves Lives bill would also increase the incentives for non-expansion states to expand. Here are some numbers to know:

- The American Rescue Plan offered Tennessee (and other non-expansion states) an additional 5% of the federal share of TennCare (our state Medicaid program) for two years.
- Changing the federal to state formula for covering Medicaid costs from 65% federal: 35% state to 70% federal: 30% state for those two years would net Tennessee an estimated \$900 million dollars.
- Under the Medicaid Saves Lives proposal the federal government would assume 75% of TennCare's regular expenses for 10 years, as well as cover 90% of the costs for the new population in perpetuity of the program. A decision by our governor and state legislators to proceed with expansion would thus not only provide an affordable coverage option for low-income Tennesseans but also be a windfall for the state government.

Let's Not Underestimate Influenza This Season

For the last eighteen months, the public has been bombarded with statistics, case reports, evidence of health disparities, political influences and varied opinions pro and con relative to the Coronavirus. The good and bad of COVID-19 vaccines and masking have become fighting points pitting neighbor against neighbor.

Let's not forget, we need to be reminding that we continue to suffer as another familiar virus that can cause significant short-term disability and/or even death. The Influenza virus took a back seat during 2019-2020 and fewer cases were documented. This drop has been related to the use of masks as we sought to control the spread of COVID as well as to good hand hygiene. There are similarities in some symptoms of both COVID and Influenza; however, we will concentrate on looking at the latter.

The Influenza season is generally from September to March. An effective vaccine for this virus has been available for years and it is recommended that persons six months and older get vaccinated. With in-person schooling being revived this year, it will be important that our children are protected. Because the strains of influenza change from year to year (and even within a flu season), vaccines need to be given annually. Those most at risk for severe influenza infection are children, pregnant women, the elderly, those with underlying chronic medical conditions and those who are immunosuppressed. It is recommended that the vaccine be taken in late September or October.

Please check with your caregiver should you have questions about the relevance of the vaccine to your individual condition. It is important that we take care of ourselves.

Environment Committee

By Education Co-Chair Barbara Gay

Waste disposal is a continuing issue for Davidson County and Middle Tennessee residents. The aftermath of the 2020 tornado and bombing and the 2021 flood, coupled to our economic growth and development have created more than expected waste and debris. Expansion of local landfills in Bordeaux and Murfreesboro have become controversial.

John Sherman, chair of the Davidson County Solid Waste Region Board, penned a [July 2021 Op-Ed in The Tennessean](#), and included three recommendations from the Board's report on Zero Waste:

- Enforcing current and adopting new ordinances that offer construction companies and their contractors incentives for reducing and recycling their construction wastes;
- Expanding composting of food and other organic wastes, which is about 23% of all our waste; and
- Moving garbage and recycling to a fee-based system (like electricity or water) based on the amount you throw away, which is offset by how much you recycle.

Care for our environment: Home composting is something each individual household can do to help. There are local businesses that will pick up compostables weekly, including all food scraps, shredded paper, etc. For those interested in composting themselves, informative programs run by local organizations can help, including [The Tennessee Environmental Council's composting program](#) and [Seminars by Urban Green Lab and Metro Public Works](#).

September Hot Topic: Community Needs Evaluation: The State of Wellbeing 2020 by Dr. Garrett Harper, Nashville Metropolitan Social Services

By Co-Vice President Carole Kenner

Dr. Harper presented the challenges from 2020, a difficult year for Nashvillians, the pressing issues Nashville faces currently, and the city's focus for the future.

Much of the talk presented data from pre and post pandemic Nashville. Prior to the pandemic, the poverty rate was falling, inequality was declining, and unemployment was low. Unfortunately, the pandemic reversed many of those trends.

For example, almost 40,000 full time workers earn less than \$12/hour and one in ten Nashvillians lack health insurance. Depending upon the geographic neighborhood and/or demographic category, the needs of our fellow Nashvillians can be considerable. The presentation included detailed data on persistent, structural poverty in Nashville and Davidson County.

To address poverty and wellbeing, Dr. Harper suggested the importance of a unified effort based on an understanding of the issues. He also stressed the importance of community wide efforts that are sustained over time and designed to align the priorities of community and economic well being. The Metropolitan Social Services office expects to continue its focus on local actions based on proven results, including possibly instituting a Wellbeing Cabinet.

For more information about what the [Nashville Metropolitan Social Services](#) department does, please visit <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/social-services>.

"I'll Take You There: Exploring Nashville's Social Justice Sites
Learotha Williams, Jr. PhD will discuss his publication, I'll Take You There: Exploring Nashville's Social Justice Sites (Vanderbilt University Press, 2021) on October 1, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. Contact Karen Wieckert for details (kweicker@gmail.com).

Dr. Williams is a scholar of African American, Civil War and Reconstruction, and Public History at Tennessee State University. He is a native of Tallahassee, Florida, where he earned his doctorate in history from Florida State University in 2003. At TSU, Dr. Williams coordinates the North Nashville Heritage Project, an effort that seeks to encourage a greater understanding of the history of North Nashville, including but not limited to Jefferson Street and its historic relationship to the greater Nashville community. <https://www.tnstate.edu/nshhp/>

"I'll Take You There is written by and with the people who most intimately know Nashville, foregrounding the struggles and achievements of people's movements toward social justice. The colloquial use of "I'll take you there" has long been a response to the call of a stranger: for recommendations of safe passage through unfamiliar territory, a decent meal and place to lay one's head, or perhaps a watering hole or juke joint.

In this book, more than one hundred Nashvillians "take us there," guiding us to places we might not otherwise encounter. Their collective entries bear witness to the ways that power has been used by social, political, and economic elites to tell or omit certain stories, while celebrating the power of counternarratives as a tool to resist injustice. Indeed, each entry is simultaneously a story about place, power, and the historic and ongoing struggle toward a more just city for all. The result is akin to the experience of asking for directions in an unfamiliar place and receiving a warm offer from a local to lead you on, accompanied by a tale or two.

Contact Karen Wieckert if you would like a copy of the book (kweicker@gmail.com), as she has a number she hoped to make available at the previously planned in person event.

Williamson County Update

By Linda Sherman

In August and September, the [League of Women Voters of Williamson County](#) (LWVWC) hosted two forums for Franklin City Alderman candidates. Moderated by Tom Lawrence of WAKM AM-950, the forum gave candidates an opportunity to discuss some of the city's hottest issues.

Read more by clicking the links below:

- [Franklin alderman candidates meet for forum](#) - Candidates for Wards 1, 2 and 4 present
- [League of Women Voters hosts second Franklin alderman forum](#) - At-large, Ward 3 candidates talk mental health, infrastructure, affordable housing

On October 20 at 1:00 p.m. the LWVWC will host a discussion on redistricting, voter participation and other legislative issues. The following TN Representatives will be in attendance:

- Glen Casada, TN District 63, has served 18 years
- Brandon Ogles, in TN District 61 for three years
- Sam Whitson TN District 65, has served in the House for six years

[Click here](#) to visit the Brentwood Library Website and register.

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

Thank you!

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.lwnashville.org. On 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 the League of Women Voters of Nashville does not have an e-mail address for you. Please help us by sending your e-mail address to LWVNVash@gmail.com. Being on the LWVN e-mail database ensures your receipt of all LWVN newsletters, event invitations, meeting announcements, and Call to Action alerts.

2021-2022 LWVN Board of Directors

- Co-Presidents: **Madeline Garr and Lara Webb**
- 1st Vice Presidents: **Carole Kenner and Karen Weikert**
- Secretary: **Elise Lamar**
- Treasurer **Susan Mattson**

Portfolio Chairs

- Communications: **Ophelia Doe and Jack McFadden**
- Community Connections: **Sabina Mohyuddin and Felisha Baquera**
- Education: **Jami Oakley and Mary Claire Dismukes**
- Environment: **Barbara Gay and Russanne Buchi-Fotre**
- Fundraising: **Ann Marie Farmer**
- Health Care/Public Health: **Constance Caldwell and Claire Sullivan**
- Membership: **Reba Holmes**
- Metro Government: **Pat McCauley and Karen Hernan**
- Voter Services: **Beth Gordan, Alison Haymer, and Rita Bullinger**
- Williamson County Representative: **June Bond**
- Nominating Committee Chair: **Senator Brenda Gilmore**

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

