



CALENDAR | NASHVILLE VOTER

## The Nashville Voter

*Volume 74, No 12-- December 2021*

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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

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### Reminder!

**Open Enrollment for the ACA ends on January 15, 2022.** Call **844-644-5443** to see if you're eligible for help, for information, or to make an appointment. This number is supported by the [TN Health Care Campaign](#).

### League Events (<https://lwvnashville.org/event-calendar/>)

**January 7, 2021, Noon to 1:00 p.m. Hot Topics: Looking into the Crystal Ball: Stewart Clifton's Preview of the New Legislative Session. Debby Gould, President of League of Women Voters of Tennessee (LWVTN) also joins us to talk about Redistricting.** [Click here to RSVP](#) at the LWVTN website.

**January 19, 2022. Williamson County League of Women Voters (WCLWV) Meeting with Mayor Rogers Anderson.** [Click here to register](#) for the Zoom meeting on the [Brentwood Library website](#) calendar.

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## Metro Nashville Meetings

(<http://www.facebook.com/MetroNashvilleNetwork>)

**December 15, 2021: Sales Taxes, Downtown Revenue, and Grants.** Councilmember At-Large, Bob Mendes, Metro Finance Deputy Director, Mary Jo Wiggins. [Click here](#) to learn more.

**January 5, 2022: Nashville Public Schools.** Metro School Board Member, Freda Player-Peters Metro Schools Chief Operating and Financial Officer, Chris Henson. [Click here](#) to learn more.

**January 13, 2022: Public Safety Metro Nashville.** Police Department, Metro Sheriff's Office, Metro Juvenile Court. [Click here](#) to learn more.

**January 20, 2022: NDOT, Metro Parks, Health and Social Services.** Nashville Department of Transportation Interim. Director, Faye Dimassimo Metro Parks Director, Monique Odom Nashville General Hospital CEO, Dr. Joseph Webb Metro Affordable Housing Manager, Hannah Davis. [Click here](#) to learn more.

**January 27, 2022: Debt Service and General Government.** Metro Planning Capital Improvement, Greg Claxton Metro Treasurer, Michelle Bosch. [Click here](#) to learn more.

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### December's Co-President Message



As we near the end of 2021, I want to thank each of you for all that you do to make our democracy work through the support of the League of Women Voters. Each of us are making a difference in the conversations we have with our friends and acquaintances, in our public support for voting rights, restoration of voting rights, fair maps in the redistricting

process, community responsibility when it comes to controlling the COVID-19 virus, educating ourselves regarding issues affecting education, environment, public health, and local issues in Davidson County.

This time next month, we will have begun a new journey around the sun. New challenges await us. Yet, within each challenge is an opportunity to enhance our vision as individuals and as LWVN members.

Beginning in January 2022, LWVN will activate our community outreach program by

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community needs. Council representatives are being asked to make this information available to those in their districts. As a follow-up to distributing this information, we are hoping to speak with community leaders to address the needs of communities and offer LWVN services to arrange meetings for those who live in the communities of Nashville with those who can answer the questions neighborhood communities may have.

In January as well, the League of Women Voters Tennessee will activate its State Action Committee. The General Assembly will begin meeting in early January and the League will be monitoring bills that are of concern. Any member may join the State Action Committee. Look for an email or contact me at [mgarr2@gmail.com](mailto:mgarr2@gmail.com) for more information.

Finally, don't forget that in 2022, Davidson County will have several elections. Those affecting the entire county are:

- May 3, 2022: County Primary Elections
- August 4, 2022: State Primary and County General Elections
- November 8, 2022: State and Federal General Elections

The Voter Services Committee is working now to prepare voter registration and education events for the public. Look for future information about these events and others on social media, on the website, and in future newsletters.

Finally, if you are looking for a gift for a loved one, be sure to read Ann Marie Farmers' article below. May each of you be full of warmth and joy during the upcoming holidays!

## **Madeline Garr**



### **Fundraising by Ann Marie Farmer**

#### **Nashville Parade for Women's Suffrage Painting Available for Purchase**

When looking for that perfect holiday gift, don't let supply chain concerns stress you out! Give this limited edition, signed, heirloom-quality print of "Nashville Parade for Women's Suffrage" by acclaimed Tennessee artist Shirley Martin for just \$50.

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.

Your loved ones will enjoy this beautiful work of art, and your gift will support the important work of the League of Women Voters in Nashville: <https://lwvnashville.org/product/commemorative-print>.

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## **January Hot Topic: Lobbyist Stewart Clifton Previews the New Legislative Session**

**By Co-Vice President Carole Kenner**

### **In Anticipation**

Well, every time I think we might be able to meet "in person," a new variant of Covid-19 seems to pop up! So my friends, we are still on Zoom!

"First Friday" will be on January 7th at Noon. We will begin the program with a state-wide update on redistricting from Debby Gould, the [State President of the LWV of Tennessee](#). Then, following a long-standing tradition, our favorite lobbyist, Stewart Clifton, will share with us some of the legislative efforts that we can anticipate from state lawmakers when they reconvene in January. Don't miss this opportunity to see what is in store for us on a state level in the coming year.

Best wishes for a warm and wonderful holiday season. If you have suggestions for hot topics in the new year, email Carole at [carolekenner@gmail.com](mailto:carolekenner@gmail.com).

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## **December Hot Topic: Thistles are Fierce But Resilient**

**By Committee Chair Karen Wieckert**

### **A Thistle to Love and Cherish**

At December's Hot Topic we were joined by Terrie Moore, from the Thistle Farms/Magdalene program. She presented her moving story of adversity and resilience, as well as the support she received from Thistle Farms. Thistle Farms is a nonprofit social enterprise dedicated to helping women survivors recover and heal from prostitution, trafficking, and addiction.

Please consider helping out by considering purchasing one of their lovingly crafted products, found at their store on [Charlotte Avenue in Nashville](#) or online at <https://thistlefarms.org>.

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## **Membership Committee**

**By Reba Holmes**

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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:

Kathryn Anderson, Jan Bossing, Kitty Calhoon, Ken and Linnea Folger, Nelda Schreiber, and Tish Womack.

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

#### Interested in Communication, Recruiting, or Social Media?

We are excited to announce that we are establishing a Membership Committee to provide guidance during the annual membership drive and develop other vital programs related to membership. We invite you to join the new committee to serve as a communication lead, recruiting lead, social media lead, etc.

The goals of the committee are:

- Launch the annual renewal campaign – plan and execute
- Develop a program design to mentor new members, specifically young adult members
- Create a new members campaign to expand the existing base
- Develop a strategy to recruit potential members across various demographics

Schedule: The initial meeting will be held in February 2022. We will meet every month after the first meeting.

If you are interested in serving on the committee, please send an email to expressing your interest to [lwvnash@gmail.com](mailto:lwvnash@gmail.com)

#### Member Comments

We want to hear from you. Share your comments regarding why join the League of Women Voters? Email your comments to [lwvnash@gmail.com](mailto:lwvnash@gmail.com).

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### **Health Care/Public Health Committee** **By Committee Co-Chairs Constance Caldwell and Claire Sullivan**

The LWVNashville Public Health Portfolio Committee has begun planning for 2022. Several of the issues we have been engaged with this past year are awaiting administrative or legal action, delaying our ability to strategize and prioritize where our education and advocacy efforts will be focused:

- **Reproductive Rights for Women.** The impact of the Supreme Court ruling on reproductive rights for women in Mississippi probably will not be known until June. That ruling could have significant ramifications for [Roe vs. Wade](#). There are multiple legal speculations as to what the ruling will or could be.
- **Build Back Better Bill Delays.** Continued delays and lingering negotiations over the final contents of the [Build Back Better Bill](#) create uncertainty about its impact on access to health care for low-income Tennesseans and to support services for working families.
- **The Omicron Variant of COVID-19.** The emergence of the new and not-yet-fully-understood [Omicron variant](#) of COVID-19 in the midst of another variant surge and conflicting federal, state, local regulations of vaccine, testing and masking mandates threatens to further prolong the pandemic public health emergency across our state and intensify rising rates of infection.
- **Drug Overdoses and Deaths.** The escalation of drug overdoses and Fentanyl-related deaths continues to haunt medical and legal professionals. How to decrease the flow of Fentanyl in our community remains a focus.

The committee will continue to monitor efforts of Nashville and Davidson County Department of Public Health to deal with dual epidemics of COVID-19 and substance use related deaths, dive deeper into how we can support the needs of the unhoused, and build partnerships with other Nashville based organizations seeking to strengthen efforts to promote vaccinations, masking and testing to curtail COVID-19.

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## Education Committee

### By Committee Co-Chairs Jami Oakley and Mary Claire Dismukes

During the two-day legislative session in September that focused on education, a bill was passed to allow for partisan school board elections. Davidson County's Republican and Democratic parties subsequently voted on whether or not to hold primaries and run partisan races, with the Democrats deciding that they would only run primaries if the Republican party did so.

The **Republican** party did, in fact, decide to let party affiliation enter the school board election process. They held out this news until the last day of the deadline to inform the Election Commission of their decision, announcing the results of their vote last Friday morning (30 days after the passing of the bill).

The **Democratic** party and other public school advocates have indicated apprehension that making the elections partisan will dissuade qualified individuals from running for school board and that it further politicizes the issue of public education, which should be relatively free from party concerns. [Axios Nashville](#) reports that all nine of the current school board members would run as Democrats. [Click here](#) to learn more.

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The **Governor's** BEP Review efforts remain underway, with all eight regional town halls complete and subcommittee meetings in process. All Tennesseans are invited to submit public comments by emailing [tnedu.funding@tn.gov](mailto:tnedu.funding@tn.gov). [Click here](#) to learn more.

Commissioner Schwinn is regularly reminding folks that they are monitoring the email daily and thoroughly, and taking everyone's input into consideration as the report is developed that will ostensibly guide proposed legislation this year. With the state's revenue continuing to surpass expectations month after month (see the November report [here](#)), it is not a question whether the school funding formula could undergo major changes this year, but whether or not the state prioritizes public education.

The LWVN attended and spoke at a town hall organized by [Nashville Organized for Action and Hope \(NOAH\)](#) and the [Tennessee Alliance for Equity in Education](#), an advocacy subgroup of The Ed Trust, and of which the LWVTN is a member, in early December.

Our ask was as follows, and would serve as good inspiration for an email:

*I applaud Governor Lee for calling for a review of the State Education Funding Formula. Our state has kept our public school system on a starvation budget, despite multiple years of significant budget surpluses. We fund our students, statewide, at nearly \$4,000 less than the national average. We must do better. We must ensure that the education framework we create now is inclusive of the needs of all children across the state. A funding formula that meets the needs of our most vulnerable children will positively impact the future of all Tennesseans. The League of Women Voters believes it's important that all public school advocates join together this legislative session to demand more funding for our students in order to ensure a bright future for Tennessee.*

*We ask for the following:*

- *Funding for Classroom Technology*
- *Funding for Lower Student/Teacher Ratios*
- *Funding for Professional Development for Teachers*
- *Funding for Social Worker, School Counselor, and Nurse ratios that mirror national recommendations*
- *Funding that adequately addresses the needs of low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities, in order to produce predictable, equitable allocations to every school district*

*National research shows that increased funding can improve student achievement, high school graduation rates and even life outcomes, especially for students from these historically underserved groups. We ask that the revised formula produces predictable, equitable allocations to districts year-over-year.*

In addition to emailing the Department of Education and keeping up with news on the

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individual and keep up with news and add your voice to the call for more funding that way. [Click here](#) to learn more and join.

The group is offering a **Tennessee School Funding Advocacy Bootcamp** in January – sign up [here](#) for the January 10th virtual event, and then consider joining the LWVN's Education Committee!

We'd love to have you.

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## **Community Connections**

### **By Committee Co-Chairs Sabina Mohyuddin**

#### **Help Us Build a Coalition of Voters**

The Community Connections Committee is building a coalition of voters and we need your help. We are gathering resources from other **LWVN** members such as partner organizations and individuals whom you've contacted. This will help our committees connect with local partners and find internal resources amongst **LWVN** members to make our work as efficient and collaborative as possible. [Click here to add partner organizations to the spreadsheet.](#) (Duplicates are allowed.)

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## **Environment Committee**

### **By Education Co-Chairs Russanne Buchi-Fotre and Barbara Gay**

The Nature Conservancy began when leading scientists, committed citizens, and dedicated

leaders came together with a shared vision to protect and care for nature. Today, as we take on the most complex environmental challenges of our lives, our diverse staff, partners, and members impact conservation across more than 70 countries and territories.

The impacts of climate change include more extreme weather and natural disasters, chronic drought, and economic instability. To match the urgency of this crisis, we're deploying innovative solutions that maximize nature's ability to fight climate change while bolstering resilience for our most precious ecosystems and vulnerable communities. Together, we can halt the worst impacts and shape a better 2030 and beyond.

To learn more about local activities and take a quiz to estimate your carbon footprint click here: [The Nature Conservancy Tennessee](#) or visit [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org).



## **Voter Services**

**By Committee Co-Chairs Beth Gordon, Allison Haymer, Emily Grohs**

Voter Services and Education Committee help register high school students at Hume Fogg

The Education Committee joined the Voter Services Committee at Hume Fogg High School to [help register students to vote](#). While there, they spoke with the school's librarian about civics education and how they can help increase voter registration and engagement among students.

If you are interested in helping increase youth voter registration and participation, please email [mgarr2@gmail.com](mailto:mgarr2@gmail.com).

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## **Metro Council Meeting**

**By Committee Co-Chairs Pat McCauley and Karen Hernan**

LWVN members Pat McCauley and Karen Hernan will monitor future meetings and report on resolutions and bills relevant to League portfolio positions. Metro Council Meetings can be found online at <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/council/boards/metrocouncil/meetings>.

Metro Council Meeting Notes:

- Passed a \$0.5 billion capital spending plan bill for Nashville. This is the largest in 5 years, possibly the largest ever.
- Approved American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to metro parks with the purpose to renovate and repair Brookmeade Park AFTER the Brookmeade's homeless encampment residents are moved to housing.
- Passed a bill to give the proceeds of the sale of delinquent tax sale properties to the Barnes Fund instead of into the General Fund. Barnes Fund is a tool to build affordable housing. It currently has no permanent funding. The hope is to get matching funds later.

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## **Williamson County Update**

**By Committee Chair Linda Sherman**

**Meet with Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson**

The [Williamson County LWV Chapter](#) will meet on January 19, 2022 at 1:00pm. Our guest will be Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson. Previous to being elected mayor, Mr. Anderson served as County Commissioner, as Vice-Chairman (8 years), and as Chairman (4 years). He has served on numerous boards of Williamson County and of state organizations, and is the recipient of several honorary appointments and awards.

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Once elected County Mayor in August, 2002, Mr. Anderson retired from his 25 year career in the private insurance sector.

All are welcome to attend. Zoom meeting by registering on the [Brentwood Library website](#) calendar.

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## **Communications Committee**

### **By Committee Co-Chairs Ophelia Doe and Jack McFadde**

The Communications Committee has spent this month increasing the League's social media presence. We connected with other Nashville organizations on social media, which has helped with our visibility online and within the community. Please be sure to like, follow, and share our content to help increase the League's visibility in Nashville.

We are looking for content creators and designers! If you or anyone you know is interested in helping with our social media presence, please email: [contact@lwvnashville.org](mailto:contact@lwvnashville.org)!

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

**Thank you!**

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## **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](http://www.lwvnashville.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!

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## 2021-2022 LWVN Board of Directors

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1<sup>st</sup> Vice Presidents: **Carole Kenner and Karen Weikert**

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Community Connections: **Sabina Mohyuddin and Felisha Baquera**

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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**

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