



# THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville  
PO Box 158369, Nashville TN 37215 | 615-297-7134  
[www.LWVnashville.org](http://www.LWVnashville.org)

Volume 70, No. 10

March 2017

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**March 28, 2017, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Dessert Reception with Senator Steve Dickerson**, Home of Cindee Gold, 7 Northumberland, Nashville, TN. RSVP at [lwnash@gmail.com](mailto:lwnash@gmail.com)

**March 30, 2017, 7:00 p.m. Gun Sense in America**, West End Synagogue, 3810 West End Ave. A forum featuring **Beth Joslin Roth, Director of Safe Tennessee Project** and **Laurie Woods, PhD, Lecturer in Sociology, Vanderbilt University and former police officer**. Free and open to the public.

**March 30, 2017, 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Athena Awards, OZ Arts Nashville, 6172 Cockrill Bend Circle, Nashville, 37209**. Support Hasina Mohyuddin, LWVN's Athena Nominees 2017. Sponsored by CABLE.

**April 6, 2017, 5:30 p.m. Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope**. Belcourt Theater, 2012 Belcourt Ave. Documentary describing how toxic stress caused by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) triggers hormones that wreak havoc on the brains of children impacting their health and prosperity as adults. Followed by discussion. Sponsored by the Frist Foundation and Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee. Tickets are free and available for reservation at <http://www.pcat.org/events>.

**April 7, 2017, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. First Friday Hot Topics: Livable Nashville-Draft Recommendations for Making a Sustainable Community**. Representatives from the Mayor's Office will discuss the most recent report. **Second Harvest Food Bank – Metro Center, 331 Great Circle Rd., Nashville, TN 37228**. Open to the public.

**April 27, 2017, 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Fundamentals of Democracy: The Vote, The Right, The Barriers, Nashville Public Library, Main Library Auditorium, 651 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219**. Panelists Linda Wynn, Charles Grant, and Shanna Hughey will talk about the history of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the current challenges to voting rights. Sponsored by LWVN and LAW (Lawyers Association for Women). Free and open to the public.

**April 29 to April 30, 2017. LWVTN Spring Convention, Hyatt Place, 300 East Main Street, Hendersonville, TN 37075**. For more information and to register, please go to [www.lwvtn.org](http://www.lwvtn.org).



## President's Message

Debby Gould

**As a volunteer-led organization, we depend on our members for our successful projects.**

Thank you for being a member of the [League of Women Voters Nashville](#). Our mission is to encourage voting, provide educational forums and opportunities, influence public policy through education and advocacy, and celebrate Tennessee women's journey to obtain the right to vote. This mission takes many forms. On **Tuesday, March 28, 2017**, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., we are inviting you to a **Dessert Reception and Conversation** with **Senator Steve Dickerson**, who serves Tennessee District 20. This will take place at the home of Cindee and Michael Gold, at 7 Northumberland, Nashville, 37215. Please **RSVP to [LWVNash@gmail.com](mailto:LWVNash@gmail.com)**

In addition, many volunteer opportunities are available to you. LWVN reaches out to our community in many ways. None of us can do everything but together we can achieve a lot. I invite you to consider the opportunities below.



## Living in a Democracy: How to Become an Active Citizen

We are planning a series of small and informal teas with women who have recently become citizens to give them the information and the confidence to vote and participate fully as active members of the Nashville community. Can you help make this project a success?

Contact Hasina Mohyuddin, [hasina.a.mohyuddin.1@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:hasina.a.mohyuddin.1@vanderbilt.edu) or Tamanna Quereshi, [tamanna13@hotmail.com](mailto:tamanna13@hotmail.com)

## Registering New Voters

Thousands of newcomers move to the Nashville area each year. Help them become part of our community by registering them to vote.

Contact Hazel Thornton to find out when the next registration activity will take place.

[hazethorn@gmail.com](mailto:hazethorn@gmail.com)

## Outreach to high schools

Volunteers are needed to support high school registration in Davidson County, April 17-18, by providing the resources first time voters need. Registration will take place in each high school in the county, usually midday.

Look at these two students who celebrated their 18<sup>th</sup> birthdays last year by registering.

Contact Hazel Thornton if you are available to help [hazethorn@gmail.com](mailto:hazethorn@gmail.com)



## OBSERVER CORPS:

### Providing independent observations of government at work

Observer Corps volunteers attend public meetings of elected officials and governmental boards, note what happens, and report back to LWV members and the community.

Through their presence, they encourage transparent and accountable government. It is also an excellent way to learn how government works. Contact Barbara Gay to learn more. [Barbara.b.gay@gmail.com](mailto:Barbara.b.gay@gmail.com)



## Planning and presenting community programs and forums

Helping the public understand issues and policies that impact our community is an important and exciting part of our focus.

We are kicking off a monthly evening program similar to our monthly lunchtime First Friday Hot Topics series. We need your help in launching these.

Contact Melissa Holden if you are available to help.  
[Melissa.holden@cat.com](mailto:Melissa.holden@cat.com)

## Women's History Celebrations

Our annual fall event will be in the historic Hermitage Hotel –where the final battle for women's suffrage was waged.

Other exciting celebrations of women's history are also in the works including a collaboration with the Nashville Ballet celebrating the suffrage story.

Contact Cindee Gold to volunteer.





Melissa Holden with Sharon Felton and Lori Birkhead

## March First Friday Follow Up – Joelton and Cane Ridge Gas Compressor-Pipeline Project By 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Melissa Holden

Our March First Friday began with a story about an onion. **Sharon Felton, Communications Director for the Concerned Citizens for a Safe Environment (CCSE)**, used the vegetable as a prop for explaining the many, many layers of public interest, profit, and regulation intersecting around the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company project to construct an industrial gas pipeline compressor station in northern Davidson County on Whites Creek Pike. A similar facility is now proposed for the Cane Ridge (District 31) area of metro Nashville.

Sharon's story started with a zoning change notice from **Kinder Morgan** (the largest energy infrastructure company in North America) to **Lori Birkhead** and her nearby neighbors in Joelton. Lori owns a 96-acre organic vegetable farm in close proximity to the proposed 80-acre Compressor site and became quite concerned about the impact to her livelihood and her family's health. Sharon's own home is within 75 feet of what is known in the pipeline industry as the "incineration zone" should a catastrophic accident occur. A report by the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA <http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/portal/site/PHMSA>) indicates that between 2006-2014, Tennessee Gas Pipeline had **92 "significant incidents"** resulting in over \$88 million dollar in property damage and 19 federal enforcement actions.

As a result of these notifications and concern, a grassroots advocacy group was formed (**CCSE**) and Lori became its President. Together with other concerned neighbors, they began researching gas compression stations and the pipeline that runs through middle Tennessee.

If completed, the proposed station in **Joelton** will be among the largest in the country and could potentially impact health and safety for a large portion of middle Tennessee. The Joelton plant would house a 60,000hp pump that is estimated to generate the same noise decibels as 2 jet engines. The facility is expected to run **24/7/365**. The facility proposed for **Cane Ridge** would house a 40,000hp compressor engine. The compressor stations are designed to move the gas in the pipeline faster and farther to the next station en route to the Gulf ports for ultimate export.

Noting the 322 homes within a 1-mile radius of the Joelton facility, Sharon addressed some additional concerns. Once operational, the facilities will produce toxic emissions that contain methane, nitrogen oxides, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide, and **Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)**. These VOCs are also known as greenhouse gases and create ozone above the earth, but the solids also provide an environmental hazard due to surface contamination of soil and water. Additionally, the project land adjoins Paradise Ridge Park, which provides walking trails, a community center with after school programs and is one of the sole recreational facilities in Joelton. The **Walden's Puddle** wildlife rehabilitation center is also nearby.

The permits for proposed project intersect with local zoning regulations, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and the State Air Pollution Control Board, the US Fish and Wildlife Department, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Clean Air Act and the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

So far, CCSE has been successful with their compelling argument to the **Metro City Council** and two ordinances were passed: BL2015-1210 and BL2016-234. These regulations require appropriate zoning for industrial facilities and implement stricter requirements for compliance with the federal Clean Air Act. At the state level, **Senators Steve Dickerson** and **Jeff Yarbrow** have sponsored **SB917**, which passed on Second Consideration, and was referred to the Senate Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Committee while Representatives **Bo Mitchell** and **Jason Powell** have sponsored **HB1359**. As introduced, that bill prohibits the construction of a gas compressor on land that is located within one mile of a public park or public school.

The most recent legislative strategy action regarding the proposed project took place on March 9. **The State of Tennessee, Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Air Pollution Control** was requested by the Metro/Davidson County Pollution Control Division to incorporate revisions to the Davidson County Code of Ordinances regarding Construction Permits into the State Implementation Plan (SIP). This would have strengthened the applicability of the Tennessee Air Quality Act. (View the Board Agenda and packet here <https://www.tennessee.gov/environment/article/board-air-pollution-control-board>)

Sharon reported that the Board came back with a 10-2 vote **against** incorporating the local ordinance into the SIP and CCSE issued the following statement, *“Tennessee's Air Pollution Control Board had an opportunity to vote for the health and welfare of Davidson County residents by adopting a Metro ordinance tied to clean air into the State Implementation Plan (SIP). Air pollution causes 200,000 premature deaths per year in the United States, so any steps that can be taken to ensure clean air is sensible legislation. It is unfortunate that the Air Pollution Control Board chose to vote in favor of oil and gas industry interests and against those of the citizens of Davidson County. This carefully-crafted legislation was voted down despite compelling evidence from air quality and legal experts.”*



## **The League of Women Voters of Nashville**

**Presents**

**FIRST FRIDAY**

**HOT TOPICS & LUNCH**

**Friday, April 7, 2017— 11:30 am to 1:00 pm**

**Livable Nashville Draft Recommendations**

Plan to join League members and guests at the April 7 Hot Topic session when representatives from the **Mayor's Office of Infrastructure and Sustainability** will discuss their recently released report. The infrastructure team

provides leadership, accountability, and stakeholder engagement around **Mayor Barry's** efforts to create an efficient, equitable transportation network, including expansion of mass transit services and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The infrastructure team also works to incorporate sustainability throughout all operations of the Metropolitan government.

**Second Harvest Martin Distribution Center in Metro Center**  
**331 Great Circle Road, Nashville 37228**  
**Parking is Easy & Free!**

Enjoy the Second Harvest Friday Lunch Buffet at \$12/person or byo brown bag.

For additional information about First Friday programs, contact Melissa Holden  
at [meholden01@comcast.net](mailto:meholden01@comcast.net) or 217-257-5193.

***FOOD DRIVE: Second Harvest is always in need of food items. Together we can make a big difference by bringing one item per person to each meeting. The items most needed are Peanut Butter, Canned Meat (Chicken or Tuna), Canned Vegetables, Canned fruit, Pasta and Cereal.***

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

Please remember to LIKE the **LWVN** on Facebook

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<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=lwvnashville>



## **The LWVTN ACTION Committee Update**

**By 2nd Vice President – Barbara Gay**

Please read **Stewart Clifton**, our lobbyist's, latest report and contact the appropriate committees to express your position on bills. We are opposed to the voucher bill moving forward. We are supporting the bill allowing citizens to request records by email. For details on legislation, please join the State Action Committee meeting on **Monday, March 20th at 11:30 a.m.** at Stewart's office. If you do not receive email notices of these meetings and would like to join this committee, please contact **Barbara Gay at 615-297-4145** or [barbara.b.gay@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.b.gay@gmail.com).

Plan to have dessert and a conversation with **Senator Steve Dickerson** on **Tuesday, March 28th at 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.** at the home of Cindee and Michael Gold, 7 Northumberland, Nashville, TN 37215.



## **From our Treasurer**

**By Treasurer Winnie Forrester**

The Budget committee, consisting of **Barbara Gay, Debby Gould** and myself met in February and compiled the proposed budget for our next fiscal year beginning June 30, 2017. The budget was presented to the **LWVN Board** at the March Board meeting, which will vote on proposed budget at next month's meeting. The budget will be distributed to all our members at least 30 days before our Annual Membership Meeting in **June**, where we will ask for your approval by membership vote.

It is good news indeed that we brought in more income than we spent last year and we continue to have a healthy balance sheet. This, along with the arrival of a host of new members, allows us to proceed with confidence for our various [Voter Services](#) projects.



## Metro Government

By Metro Government Director Michelle Steele

### Metro Council Resolution on Body Camera's

On **Tuesday, March 7**, the Metropolitan Council took up a resolution asking the city to immediately purchase body cameras for the Metro Nashville Police Department (MNPD). This resolution comes after the shooting death of **Jocquese Clemmons** by Metro Police Officer Joshua Lippert and *Justice for Joquese* activists' plea to the Metropolitan Council during its meeting on February 28, 2016, to take action. Additionally, last fall **Gideon's Army** released *Driving While Black: A Report on Racial Profiling in Metro Nashville Police Department Traffic Stops*. In a special called meeting of the Metro Council on Monday, January 9, representatives of the organization presented their findings to the council. The report was refuted by the Police Department. These instances in the past several months led to the resolution before the council Tuesday night.

**Councilmember Karen Johnson** began the discussion asking for the support of the non-binding but memorializing resolution. According to Johnson, "the council has two ways to speak. By resolution and through bills." She noted body cameras are essential crime fighting solutions and that while the **MNPD** will purchase body cameras eventually, the resolution requests a phased-in approach. The resolution specifically requests the city to purchase **168 cameras** for members of the **flex units** that patrol high crime areas in public housing developments. The resolution requested the cameras be in place by **June 30, 2017**. Members of the Council opposing the resolution noted their opposition was due mostly to the non-binding authority of the resolution because it doesn't require action and "that it was a quick response to a very complicated issue." **The resolution ultimately passed 30 -5.**

Additionally, the council passed a resolution at this same meeting officially requesting a response from **Chief Steve Anderson** of the MNPD addressing not only whether or not police agreed with the Gideon Reports findings, but also indicating what specific data or maps were inaccurate in the report. Chief Anderson did respond in email to the sponsor of the resolution, Bob Mendes, stating the report alleges racial bias in traffic stops by Nashville police and that he strongly denies the accusation calling the report a "morally disingenuous" attempt to drive a wedge between police and Nashvillians. Anderson went on to say that the use of Census data is not a reliable research methodology and only provides a snapshot of where people live, not where they drive their cars. Researchers with Gideon's Army responded, asserting the chief cherry picked the material and failed to address several points in the report thereby missing the overall point of the research. Metro Police have been criticized by Metro Council members for failing to collaborate with Gideon's Army at the meeting in January.

### Mayor Barry Launches Opportunity Now Portal

"After months of laying the groundwork for an ambitious summer job initiative for Nashville's youth,

Mayor Megan Barry joined with students at Pearl-Cohn Magnet High School to launch the **Opportunity NOW job portal** that will connect Nashvillians, ages 14-24, with meaningful jobs and paid internship opportunities." Over 7000 jobs or paid "meaningful" internships have been secured and will be available this summer to Nashville youth. This project comes after 400 students from area public high schools sat down with the Mayor over a year ago to discuss ways to reduce youth violence and to create more opportunities for youth. Youth can apply at [on.nashville.gov](http://on.nashville.gov) to see the portal and to learn more about how they can use it to find meaningful opportunities for work.

## Updates on Health Care

By Health Care Co-director Rashonda Lewis

**On March 6<sup>th</sup>**, the U.S. House Republican leadership introduced the **American Health Care Act (AHCA)**. This legislation is the product of a mid-January budget resolution that directed two House committees to draft a budget reconciliation bill to repeal the ACA. The AHCA, as introduced, makes significant changes to key ACA provisions relating to insurance affordability, individual and employer health insurance mandates, taxes and Medicaid funding.

Right now, the bill is being marked up in committee and is expected to undergo many revisions and challenges. Republican leaders are hoping that the bill makes it out of committee and to the full House for a vote by the **end of March** and to the Senate by **the first week in April**. Whether this will actually happen is anybody's guess.

The **AHCA**, as introduced, keeps in place the following ACA health plan provisions:

- Covers **pre-existing conditions**;
- Guarantees **availability and renewability of coverage**;
- Covers **adult children up to age 26** on parent's insurance; and
- Imposes **caps on out-of-pocket expenditures**.

The **AHCA**, as introduced, includes the following reforms to the health insurance marketplace and Medicaid funding:

- **Eliminates the tax penalty for those who do not purchase insurance.** The ACA requires individuals, with some exceptions, to purchase health insurance and imposes a tax penalty on those who do not comply. The new legislation does away with the tax penalty.
- **Eliminates the tax penalties related to the employer mandate.** The ACA requires that all employers with **50 or more full-time employees** offer health coverage.
- Allows insurance companies to impose a **30% surcharge** on premiums for people who have lapses in coverage.
- **Replaces the ACA's income-based subsidies with age- and income- based refundable tax credits**, which experts believe will be less generous than the ACA subsidies. This means that many folks with lower incomes will be unable to afford health insurance.
- **Changes the current structure of Medicaid funding** from a federal matching formula to a per-capita cap basis by 2020. Currently, the federal government matches Tennessee Medicaid expenditures at 65%. In a per-capita cap structure, the state would receive a fixed amount per enrollee, based on annual spending target set by the federal government. The state will be responsible for all additional expenditures.

- **Phases out the enhanced federal match for the Medicaid expansion by 2020** but allows those enrolled to remain covered.
- **Provides \$10 billion over 5 years** for increased payments to Medicaid providers in the 19 non-expansion states (this would include Tennessee). Safety net grants will be used to increase payments to Medicaid providers.
- **Prohibits Medicaid reimbursement for women’s health services provided at Planned Parenthood facilities.** This would further weaken the health care safety net that serves many women with low or no incomes.

The **Congressional Budget Office** and **Joint Committee on Taxation** estimate that enacting the American Health Care Act will **reduce** the federal deficits by \$337 billion dollars over the next ten years. They also estimate that **14 million more people will be uninsured** under the AHCA legislation compared to the number uninsured under the Affordable Care Act. This number is expected to rise to **24 million** over the next ten years. **24 million people.**

The current ACHA bill is a budget reconciliation bill, which can address only issues related to taxing, spending and debt limits. Congress will have to tackle other parts of the ACA, such as essential health benefits, through the normal legislative process, which takes longer and requires more votes than the budget reconciliation process. So expect, and pay close attention to, a parade of mini-bills as next steps to “**repeal and replace**” ObamaCare.

This bill has not yet made it to the House for a vote nor has it reached the Senate. There is time to take action. **Call our U.S. Senators and ask them to vote NO on the American Health Care Act.**

**Senator Lamar Alexander**

Nashville Office  
615-736-5129

**Senator Bob Corker**

Nashville Office  
615-279-8125

If you are interested in more ways to take action on this issue, visit the Tennessee Justice Center Take Action Page that lists other steps to protect affordable health care for people in Tennessee. Visit <https://www.tnjustice.org/coverage-matters/take-action/>.



**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 right side of the home page 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!



**THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

The League of Women Voters of Nashville gives a special shout out to the Nashville **YWCA** for continuing to welcome the LWVN Board for monthly meetings in their offices at 1608 Woodmont Boulevard, Nashville



**ATTENTION:** *The Nashville Voter* is a digital publication. If you have received this copy of the *Voter* in the mail, it means LWVN does not have an e-mail address for you. Please help us by sending your e-mail address to [LWVNash@gmail.com](mailto:LWVNash@gmail.com). Inclusion on our e-mail database ensures your receipt of all LWVN newsletters, event invitations, meeting announcements, and Call to Action alerts. Thank you, *Nashville Voter* Editor **Madeline Garr** ([mgarr2@gmail.com](mailto:mgarr2@gmail.com)).



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