



THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville

PO Box 158369, Nashville TN 37215 | 615-297-7134

www.LWVnashville.org

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June 2017

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 1, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Voter Registration with the First Saturday Art Crawl. 237 5th Ave. North, Nashville Tennessee

July 7, 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. First Friday Hot Topics: Keeping Nashville a Warm and Welcoming City. Lisa Sherman-Nickolaus, Policy Director of Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, Second Harvest Food Bank – Metro Center, 331 Great Circle Rd., Nashville, TN 37228. Open to the public.

July 12, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Second Wednesday Hot Topics Encore Program: Keeping Nashville a Warm and Welcoming City. Lisa Sherman-Nickolaus, Policy Director of Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition. Green Hills Library Meeting Room, 3701 Benham Avenue, Nashville 37215.

August 5, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Voter Registration with the First Saturday Art Crawl. 237 5th Ave. North, Nashville Tennessee

August 26, 2017: 10:a.m. Commemoration and wreath-laying for Women’s Equality Day, in partnership with the **Tennessee Suffrage Movement.** Women’s Suffrage Monument on the lakeside of the Parthenon, Centennial Park.

September 2, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Voter Registration with the First Saturday Art Crawl. 237 5th Ave. North, Nashville Tennessee

October 7, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Voter Registration with the First Saturday Art Crawl. 237 5th Ave. North, Nashville Tennessee



President’s Message

Our annual membership meeting and desert reception was so much fun! Thanks to our hostess, **Judy Raines**, for sharing her beautiful house and to **Melissa Holden** for the delicious array of desserts. Members approved our new board slate, annual budget, and continuation of the same Strategic Focus, www.lwvnashville.org/advocate, that guided our education and advocacy efforts during the past year.

Nominating Committee chairwoman **Brenda Gilmore** and committee members **Diane DiIanni, Betsy Walkup, Cindee Gold,** and **Michelle Steele** did an excellent job of identifying new talent for our board. We welcome new Board members **Constance Caldwell, Barbara Futter, Aftyn Behn, and Harriet Vaughn Wallace** and give our thanks to departing members **Barbara Devaney, Katie Alexander, Jennifer Westerholm, and Leigh Lindsey.**

The meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on the enormous amount of work that our league has accomplished this year. Through a record number of voter registration events, extensive poll watching, and the development of www.myfirstvoteTN.org, LWVN was deeply engaged in voter services and the electoral process. We dramatically expanded our advocacy training for citizens to include **over 400 people** in the Nashville community. True to our mission of giving Nashvillians the tools to be engaged and informed about public policy issues, we hosted a **dozen** First Friday programs and **two** major community forums. Thanks to our fabulous board and membership for these wonderful achievements.

As we move into summer, we are expanding our programming to new audiences, with an **encore** of our First Friday topics to an early evening time slot. Hot Topics will be repeated on the **second Wednesday of the month at Green Hills Library community room from 6:00-7:00 p.m.** Pass the word along!

Debby Gould



Melissa Holden with Richard Kennedy, Associate Director at TCCY

June First Friday Follow Up -- Adverse Childhood Experiences

By 1st Vice President - Melissa Holden

On June 2, League members and guests were fortunate to hear from **Richard Kennedy**, Associate Director of staff at the **Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY)**, who presented on the very troubling effects of **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**. The TCCY agency is governed by a 21-member commission whose members are appointed by the governor; they meet 4 times per year to provide oversight to the agency. The organization's vision is to ensure *"All children in Tennessee are safe, healthy, educated, nurtured and supported, and engaged in activities that provide them opportunities to achieve their fullest potential."* Their mission is to *"advocate to improve the quality of life for children and families and provides*

leadership and support for child advocates.” Staff provides research and policy recommendations for a number of issues and programs ranging from children’s mental health, to juvenile justice, along with child abuse, transitioning beyond foster care, and a myriad of other challenges facing today’s youth.

The initiative to improve childhood well-being and prevent ACEs is currently being shared across the state through a **Train the Trainer** model amongst a broad coalition of potential stakeholders whose interest areas may include educational achievement, economic productivity, strong citizenship, law enforcement and the judiciary, addiction services providers, and physicians. This is not just a school teacher issue. So far, over 400 people have been exposed to the awareness campaign including classroom educators, childcare providers, employees at DHS and TennCare, school social workers and psychologists, State District Attorneys, a growing number of elected officials, and members of faith communities.

Richard began by sharing some of the physiology behind the impact of ACEs. From the TCCY website, *“The early years of life matter because the basic architecture of the human brain is constructed through an ongoing process that begins before birth and continues into adulthood. Early experiences literally shape how the brain gets built, establishing either a sturdy or a fragile foundation for all of the development and behavior that follows. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) harm the developing brains and bodies of young children and lead to poor mental and physical health across the lifespan. Preventing and mitigating these experiences benefit all Tennesseans by reducing crime, violence, substance abuse, unhealthy behavior and physical disease.”* - See more at: <https://www.tn.gov/tccy/topic/tccy-ecwb#sthash.KY8JB8H9.dpuf>

He then shared evidence of the effects ACEs can have on developing brains with PET scans of children who had suffered psychological trauma. Stress hormones can cause very real damage to the developing structures in the brain. The damage requires extensive and intensive intervention to **mitigate** the negative impacts such as cognitive issues, greater risk of addiction, and life-long health problems.

There are **three types** of ACEs: **abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction**. Within these categories are several specific issues. According to a **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 2013** survey of more than 17,000 people, over 28% of respondents had suffered some form of physical abuse, 20% had been traumatized by sexual abuse, and 1 in 10 has been victimized by emotional abuse. Emotional neglect could be claimed by nearly 15% of respondents and another 10% has been physically neglected. Over a quarter (26.9%) of those surveyed had experienced substance abuse in the household. Parental divorce, household mental illness, witnessing violence against the mother, and incarceration of a household member also adversely impact children.

Overall, 64% of those surveyed reported at least one of the markers of ACEs, while nearly 14% incurred 3 or more of the experiences. Some of the possible behavior-related risk outcomes from these experiences include smoking, alcoholism, drug use, missed work, and lack of physical activity. Physical and mental health impacts range from severe obesity to depression and suicide attempts, to heart disease, stroke, and cancer. More recently added ACEs include poverty, racism and bullying. The toxic stress brought about by any and all of the ACE actions and events has a lifelong impact that is typically addressed much further down the path after brain development has tapered off and is less adaptable.

As the number of instances in a child’s life ACEs increase, so too, does the risk of negative outcomes. So what does this all mean for a community? The **CDC** estimated that the lifetime costs for new cases of child maltreatment in 2008 alone resulted in approximately **\$124 billion** in child and adult medical, child welfare, special education and criminal justice costs, and productivity losses.

The impact on child development is huge. The presence of ACEs disrupts and disturbs **executive function development** in the child’s brain and impacts **the ability to handle multiple information streams, pay attention, plan ahead, follow rules, regulate decision making, and manage stress**. As one might imagine,

the cascade impacts from this can have an effect on overall educational achievement as well as early interaction with law enforcement and limits earnings among a host of other challenges. Advocates for reducing the occurrence and impact of ACEs emphasize a shift is needed **from** remediation **to** a focus on primary prevention and targeting dollars on programs to address causal factors and build resilience in youth. The national conversation can then be reframed from “**What is wrong with you?**” to “**What has happened to you?**”

To learn more about this important topic visit the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** <http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/collections/aces.html>, and watch “**Brain Builders Alberta Family Wellness Initiative**” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=23jDxNOdDck>.

You can also take the ACE survey yourself which is linked to this National Public Radio story: <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/03/02/387007941/take-the-ace-quiz-and-learn-what-it-does-and-doesnt-mean>

You may also take a moment to view the TCCY Final Report overview at [https://tn.gov/assets/entities/health/attachments/Tennessee ACE Final Report with Authorization.pdf](https://tn.gov/assets/entities/health/attachments/Tennessee%20ACE%20Final%20Report%20with%20Authorization.pdf)

IMPORTANT: Starting this month, we are offering our Monthly Hot Topic on the first Friday of each month at our lunchtime meeting (11:30AM -1:00PM) at Second Harvest in Metro Center and an encore presentation on the second Wednesday evening (6:00 – 7:00PM) at the Green Hills Public Library. Tell a friend!



The League of Women Voters of Nashville
presents

**FIRST FRIDAY
HOT TOPICS & LUNCH
Friday, July 7, 2017— 11:30 am to 1:00 pm
Second Harvest Martin Distribution Center in Metro Center
331 Great Circle Road, Nashville 37228**

and

**Second Wednesday
HOT TOPICS
Wednesday, July 12, 2017— 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Green Hills Public Library Community Room
3701 Benham Ave. Nashville 37215**

Presenter:

**Lisa Sherman-Nikolaus, Policy Director
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC)**

Nashville has a history of being a welcoming community to immigrants and refugees who have made Nashville their home. Recently members of Metro Council filed two ordinances to draw a bright line between the work of

city agencies and federal immigration enforcement. **TIRRC** has worked with the sponsors to draft strong legislation to protect Nashville residents and reaffirm the city's values of being welcoming in an era of mass deportations.

Come learn more about the potential **impact** of these ordinances and the **work** of TIRRC to continue the tradition of Nashville as a welcoming community.

Free and open to the public. No reservations needed.

For additional information about First Friday programs, contact Melissa Holden at meholden01@comcast.net or 217-257-5193.

For additional information, contact LWVNash@gmail.com
Please remember to LIKE the LWVN on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/LWVNNashville?ref=ts>



LWVTN Action Committee – Thank you and an Update

By 2nd Vice President – Barbara Gay

The **state** league board will be discussing how we can improve the action committee at our board meeting in **July**. Please send your suggestions to Barbara Gay and barbara.b.gay@gmail.com or call 615-297-4145.

The LWVTN Action Committee welcomes our **new** Nashville liaison, **Aftyn Behn**. Aftyn is a social worker who was employed by the United Nations in Switzerland. She now works for the **TN Justice Center**. Welcome! Aftyn. We are excited to have you join the action committee and will appreciate your contributions and participation.



Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

By Treasurer Winnie Forrester

Our proposed budget for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017 was approved by the membership at our Annual meeting this month. We are in a healthy financial state due to the contributions and efforts by all of our patrons and members. In addition, we received almost \$700 from **The Big Payback**, an initiative of the **Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee**. As always, these Education Fund donations will be used to enhance our services to voters.



Voter Service Report

By Voter Services Co-Directors Hazel Thornton and Lynn Questell

Davidson County Election Commission called a special meeting June 5, 2017 for the purpose of determining the logistics for an election to fill the vacant **Metro Council District 33 seat**. District 33 covers parts of Antioch. This move was occasioned by the appointment of 10th Division Councilman **Sam Coleman** to the Davidson County General Sessions Court to replace former Judge Casey Moreland.

From the **DCEC website**:

The following dates have been established for the Metro Special Election to fill the vacant District 33 Council seat:

- **Election Day: Tuesday: August 15, 2017**

- **Early Voting:** Wednesday, July 26, 2017 – Thursday, August 10, 2017
- **Qualifying Deadline:** Noon, Thursday, July 6, 2017
- **Registration Deadline:** Monday, July 17, 2017

After careful consideration of a variety of logistical issues, it was decided that **early** voting would be held at the **1417 Murfreesboro Pike Election Commission location**.

The next two DCEC meetings are scheduled for **July 15** at 1pm, and **August 21** at 10am.

Announcement from the Davidson County Election Commission

Commissioner Emily Reynolds began her tenure on the Davidson County Election Commission on May 19, 2017. She replaces former Commissioner Jennifer Lawson.



Nashville native Emily J. Reynolds has had an extensive career in public service since 1980. Tennessee has had two Senators who served as Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate, and she has worked for both, Senator Howard Baker and Senator Bill Frist.

In 2003 she was elected by the U.S. Senate to serve as the **31st Secretary of the Senate** where she managed the Senate’s legislative, financial and administrative operations for the 108th and 109th Congresses. She had previously served as Chief of Staff and State Director for Senator Frist.

In 2007, Ms. Reynolds joined the **Tennessee Valley Authority** as a senior vice president, and she completed her service at TVA in 2013.

She has continued her commitment to public service as a member of the **Tennessee Board of Regents**. Originally appointed by Governor Phil Bredesen in 2010, she was reappointed to the board by Governor Bill Haslam, and has served as TBR Vice-Chairman for four years.

Ms. Reynolds is a former regent (Board Chairman) of the Ladies Hermitage Association, now the Andrew Jackson Foundation. In 2012 she was named to the Nashville Public Education Foundation’s Public Schools Hall of Fame. This year, she received the **Distinguished Leaders Award from Women in Numbers**, a nonpartisan local organization encouraging women to become more involved in government and politics. She is a graduate of Stephens College in Columbia, MO.



Advocating for School Nurse Funds for MNPS

By Education Co-Director Anne-Marie Farmer

The Metro Council is **currently** considering whether to add \$900,000 to the Metro Schools budget appropriation to add more school nurses for the district. Some background: Metro Schools initially asked for a \$59 million increase in its budget for the next school year. Mayor Barry included an increase of \$36 million in her budget recommendation, meaning that in order to keep the proposed 3% raise for all teachers and school staff provided in its original budget request (sorely needed in this time of skyrocketing cost of living in Nashville), MNPS had to cut from next year's budget several new initiatives it had hoped to launch, one being an increase in the **number** of nurses in schools. Currently, most schools have a nurse who splits his or her time between two or three schools.

The Council has the authority to add additional funds to the MNPS budget over and above what Mayor Barry recommended. There has been discussion that the Council may provide additional funds to increase the number of school nurses. At an event on the school budget with the League of Women Voters of Nashville, **Dr. Jana Carlisle, Chief of Staff for Metro Schools**, stated that money for more school nurses would be one of the most impactful ways Metro Schools could use additional resources if they were available.

The **Director of Public Health** for Nashville made a compelling case for more school nurses earlier this year, although he suggested a much bigger expansion and allocation than one currently being considered. Metro Schools has also put forth information about the reasons school nurses are critically important to student and school success.

An excerpt from that article follows:

"A typical day for Metro Public Health Department school nurse Jennifer Putnam consists of arriving at a school a half hour before children arrive, managing health plans, and meeting with diabetic students to administer insulin and check blood sugar levels. She's been a school nurse for two years. School nurses are on the front line for many of the chronic diseases and problems children cope with everyday. Beyond treating minor cuts and bruises, school nurses also provide a connection to students who may have behavioral, emotional or mental health issues, becoming a confidant to students struggling with puberty or who may be at risk for abuse, homelessness or other distressing situations. In one school year alone, Metro school nurses have more than 40,000 office visits with children and administer nearly 80,000 procedures that help kids stay in school."

If you would like to voice your opinion about this proposal, or any other Metro government issue, you can easily contact the members of the council using this form: <http://www.nashville.gov/Metro-Council/Metro-Council-Members.aspx>



Current Status of the ACA repeal and Medicaid cuts From Tennessee Justice Center Website

What's Happened So Far?

- On **May 4th**, the House passed the American Health Care Act ("**AHCA**").
- On **May 24th**, the Congressional Budget Office released a revised [score](#) on the AHCA, which found that **23 million people** would lose coverage and Medicaid funding would decrease by \$834 billion. CBO also determined that the AHCA would save \$119 billion.

What's Next?

- Senate Republicans met on **June 7th** to negotiate a consensus on how they would alter the AHCA.

Although there is little public information available, we hear that there may be some changes to the options that state have for waivers and that there may be changes to the timeline for ending Medicaid expansion. We believe that the substantial cuts to Medicaid and the per capita cap will remain in the bill but that the option for a block grant will be eliminated. Essentially this means that the majority of the provisions in the House version will be in the Senate bill.

- We also hear that they intend to send language to the **Congressional Budget Office** by Friday and hope to have a CBO score for their version of the bill by the end of next week. As a reminder, the Senate version must save at least the \$119 billion that CBO estimated the House version would save.
- Once CBO releases a new score, Senate leadership can offer their version of the legislation as a substitute for the bill passed in the House and move to take a vote.
- We hear that Senate leadership aims to hold a vote **before** the Fourth of July Recess, which begins July 1st. This means there may be a vote as early as the **week of June 19th** but it is more likely that the vote will occur the week of June 26th.
- Currently, it is unclear whether the Republican leadership has the votes for passage and may not have the votes locked down even when the bill hits the Senate floor. Leadership will be working the Senators to vote yes from now right up to the roll call vote on the floor.
- When the bill goes to the Senate floor, Senate rules require 20 hours of debate before a vote, followed by unlimited amendments (vote-a-rama). Only 51 votes are required to pass budget reconciliation in the Senate.
- Since the Senate will **not** pass the same bill as the House, the legislation will either go to a conference committee or directly back to the House for a final vote. If the bill makes it through these steps, Congress would send the bill to the President for his signature.



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. 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!



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