



THE NASHVILLE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Nashville
PO Box 158369, Nashville TN 37215 | 615-297-7134
www.LWVnashville.org

Volume 71, No. 5

October 2017

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 11, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Second Wednesday Hot Topics Encore Program: Where Are We Going---An Update from the Transit for Nashville Coalition. Representatives of the Transit Authority. Green Hills Public Library – Community Room 3701 Benham Avenue, Nashville, 37215. Open to the public.

October 19, 2017, 5:00 to 5:30 p.m. Women’s Suffrage and Beyond. Annual Celebration and Fundraiser for LWVN. Hermitage Hotel, 231 6th Ave. North, Nashville, TN 37219. [Secure your reservation](#)

October 21, 2017. 1:00-3:00 p.m. LWVN voter registration. Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church, 1032 Monroe Street, Nashville, TN 37208.

October 25, 2017, 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. Civic Education and Voting. Metro Schools Leaf Community Nights for International Families. Wright Middle School, 180 McCall Street, Nashville 37211.

October 28, 2017, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. LWVTN Fall Workshop. Casa Azafran, 2195 Nolensville Pike, Nashville, TN 37211. Register at www.lwvtn.org

November 3, 2017, 11:30-1:00 p.m. First Friday Hot Topics: Community Schools in Tennessee. State alliance coordinator for The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS) **Lyn Hoyt**, and MNPS Executive Officer **Dr. Tony Majors** will talk about the community school concept and innovative practices that expand learning while building a sense of community. Second Harvest Food Bank, 331 Great Circle Rd, Nashville, Tennessee 37228. Open to the public.

November 8, 2017, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Second Wednesday Hot Topics Encore Program: Community Schools in Tennessee. State alliance coordinator for The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS) **Lyn Hoyt**, and MNPS Executive Officer **Dr. Tony Majors** will talk about the community school concept and innovative practices that expand learning while building a sense of community. Green Hills Public Library – Community Room 3701 Benham Avenue, Nashville, 37215. Open to the public.

In Memoriam

It is with sorrow that we remember **two** outstanding women who died this past month and an outstanding man who died in September.

Jane Entrekin (1929-2017) was an energetic and enthusiastic president of LWVN, 1975-78. As her friend, Alice Randall wrote, “Jane Entrekin was quite simply one of the most wonderful women ever to live in Nashville. She was bright; she was charming; she was inclusive, and she was curious.”

Dikkie Schoggen (1925-2017) and her late husband **Phil Schoggen** were well known in our community for their passion and commitment to quality public education, community engagement, and civil rights issues. Her work career as a research psychologist focused on the health and well-being of children. Her musical talents led to her avocation in music, including her original musical, “Aging Grace.” In 2003 Dikkie received the Molly Todd Award.

The League also extends sympathy to board member, **Barbara Erskine Futter**, on the death of her husband, **Philip Debusk**, on September 4, 2017, following a brief illness. Phil, who was also a League member, worked for

the Comptroller of the Treasury for 26 years, first as a performance auditor, and since 1996, as the Comptroller's legislative liaison. He was a familiar and well-respected staffer around Legislative Plaza. At the last Government Operations Committee meeting before his retirement, the chairman noted "His calm and collected demeanor has supported legislators, legislative staff, agencies, and audit staff through politically sensitive audits and helped all involved to focus on the goal of serving the public interest . . . Legislators and public servants on both sides of the political aisle have come to trust Phil's insight and information as truthful and intended to help the public discourse."



President's Message

If you haven't made your reservation yet, you still have time to **RSVP** for our October 19th annual fundraising event, **Women's Suffrage and Beyond**, at the historic Hermitage Hotel. Our celebration is a statement of optimism and perseverance as we remember the determined women and men who led the struggle for women's suffrage in Tennessee one hundred years ago. Chancellor Claudia Bonnyman will be sharing her reflections about her great-grandfather, Governor Albert Roberts, and his critical role in this moment in our history. [Secure your reservation.](#)

We live in a different era now. Gender is no longer a reason to deny the right to vote. However, other barriers continue to exist for citizens who might lack a photo ID, or who are ex-felons, or who simply do not have easy access to the polls. We will continue to address these important roadblocks to full suffrage in the coming months.

During **September**, LWVN conducted vote registration drives as part of **National Voter Registration Day**. Our thanks to **Hazel Thornton** for spearheading this effort with a cadre of trained volunteers. It was our first opportunity to introduce the public to Tennessee's new **Online Voter Registration** and voters were enthusiastic about this major improvement in our voting system.

However, Tennessee's recent history shows that voter registration is only the **first** step. In the last mid-term election (2014), Tennessee ranked **50th** in the nation in terms of voter turnout. Last month, a run-off election for a Metro Council seat only drew the votes of 10% of those registered in the district. How do we help our citizens believe that their vote has value?

In the upcoming months, we hope you will join us in thinking about new ways to engage voters before the next election cycle begins. We want to instill in our current generation the same certainty that suffragists shared one hundred years ago that their vote truly could make a difference.

-Debby Gould



Meet Your 2017-2018 LWVN Board of Directors

President: Debby Gould's professional background is multifaceted having involved educational research and policy, professional development, and program implementation. For 16 years she served as executive director for the Nashville Public Education Foundation. She has also worked in a variety of nonprofit organizations including the Tennessee Environmental Council, Second Harvest Food Bank, PENCIL Foundation, United Ways to Tennessee, as well as the Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University.

Gould holds a BA from Vanderbilt University, a MA in sociology of education from the University of Manitoba, and a master's in public administration from Middle Tennessee State University. She currently serves on the

Steering Committee for the Nashville Coalition for Education on Immigration and the Public Policy Committee of United Ways of Tennessee.

Gould has been a board member of the LWVN for the past ten years and is a member of the LWVTN Action Committee. She is energized by the commitment and passion of fellow League members. Gould was the 2012 LWVN ATHENA Award nominee.

First Vice President: After moving to Nashville in 2011, **Melissa Holden** sought out the LWVN and joined its board in 2012, serving as membership co-director. Her past experiences in public school education, municipal government, and non-profit organizational leadership have provided her with an on-going curiosity about thinking globally and acting locally. She finds **League** members to be similarly engaged, astute observers of democracy in action and with this in mind, selects the First Friday and Encore Evening Hot Topics each month in her current role as 1st VP. The monthly speaker series brings League members relevant information about pending initiatives and legislations that impacts Tennesseans at the local, county, and state level.

Holden was honored as the LWVN 2016 ATHENA nominee and is a Senior Human Resources Generalist for Caterpillar's Financial Products Division, headquartered in Nashville.

Second Vice President: **Barbara Gay** holds a bachelor's degree in French from Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky. She began her master of social work degree at the University of Chicago, completing it at the University of Toronto in 1977, and received certification in school psychology at Tennessee State University in 1990.

Gay has been a high school foreign language teacher, practiced social work at St. Joseph's Hospital cancer ward in Hamilton, Ontario, and worked with the Comprehensive Developmental Evaluation Center at Vanderbilt University. A social worker with MNPS for 24 years, she also served as the department's interim director. In addition, she administered a \$1.1 million U.S. Department of Education elementary school counseling demonstration grant from 2000 to 2004.

Gay has been a member of the LWVN since 1981. She served as director of the juvenile justice portfolio and on the education committee before becoming second Vice President in 2008. She is also chair of the LWVTN State Action Committee. Gay likes to read, paint and draw, swim, and ride horses.

Secretary: For 28 years, **Ethel Detch** worked with Tennessee's Comptroller of the Treasury, first as a legislative performance auditor, and later as the director of Research and Education Accountability. She continues to work as a public policy analyst. Detch joined LWVN in 2011, and has served as co-chair of Voter Services and Membership.

Detch holds a bachelor's in political science from West Virginia University and a master's in public administration from the University of Tennessee. She volunteers at the Bethlehem Center's Greater Charlotte Avenue Hot Lunch Program and sings in her church choir. She has been active in the Tennessee Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration for 30 years. Detch lives in Franklin with her husband, Steve Rogers, and has two grown children. She is a native of Lewisburg, West Virginia.

Treasurer: **Winnie Forrester** has a lifelong commitment to social justice issues and the environment having been born into a family whose dinner table conversations centered upon the importance of diversity, civil rights, education, and service to the community. Forrester is a Certified Financial Planner and an Associate Vice-President with Wells Fargo Advisors. She has served on the State Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities and volunteers her time to local schools and other organizations. She lives in Nashville with her two children.

Education Co-Directors: **Lisa Mingrone** works as a Stay At Home Mom to her 6-year-old daughter. Her husband, Mark Mingrone, is a business manager. They are both on the Rosebank Elementary School PTO Board for the 2016/17 school year.

Lisa is the President of the school board and is working with other PTO boards to create increased collaboration across East Nashville. Lisa has an M.Ed from TSU and a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has taught in public and private schools as a classroom art instructor, as a teaching artist through several art organizations, and as a teacher trainer in arts integration. Lisa has been an active advocate and volunteer for education and those in need for much of her life and is currently focused on supporting public education and her community.

Lara Webb, (information will be updated soon)

Environment Director: **Barbara Futter, (information will be updated soon)**

Fundraising Co-Directors: **Cindee Schreiber Gold** hails from Brunswick, Georgia. After graduating from Newcomb-Tulane College in 1982, she worked for Sara Lee in Chicago until 1989 when she moved to Nashville. She is married to Dr. Michael Gold and is mom to Ilissa, age 28, and Benjamin, age 25.

Gold is past president of Reading is Fundamental, Book 'em, Hillel at Vanderbilt University, and the Temple Sisterhood. During her term as president of the Temple Sisterhood, she also served on the executive committee of the National Women of Reform Judaism. Gold's hobbies include reading, ballet, triathlon sprint, travel, and playing Words With Friends. She likes to raise money and is very excited to be part of the LWVN Board.

Judy Raines is a Richmond, Virginia native who moved to Nashville in 2003. She spent most of her time volunteering until she became the administrative assistant for the LWVN from 2007 to 2009. It was during her work with the League that she developed an interest in enhancing the organization's effectiveness through communication with Tennessee legislators. Her interests continue to include the oversight and regulation of the hydraulic fracturing process in Tennessee and her outgoing personality makes her a natural on the Hill.

Health Care Co-Directors: **Rashonda Lewis** most recently worked at Vanderbilt University Medical Center as an assistant research professor, where she was involved with a variety of women and children's health projects including the National Children's Study, the Growing Right Onto Wellness clinical trial, and the 2013 Tennessee Women's Health Report Card. From 2007 to 2008, she served as director of Governor Bredesen's Women's Health Initiative.

Lewis has earned a master's of health administration and a juris doctorate. She and her husband are the parents of a daughter and son.

Constance Caldwell is a native of Durham, North Carolina. By professional training she is a Registered Nurse, now retired from the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Tennessee Air National Guard. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, NC, a Masters of Public Health Degree from the School of Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a Master of Science Degree in Counseling from Tennessee State University.

She loves to travel and that experience has acquainted her with the varied statuses of women in different cultures, especially in the area of women's health. She currently serves as the Coordinator of the Mission Ministry for her local church, Temple Baptist Church, here in Nashville where they are involved in outreach ministries in Haiti and Belize, Central America. She also serves as Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors for Samaritan Ministries, Inc. and was nominated by her sorority chapter, Nashville Metropolitan Alumnae of Delta Sigma

Theta Sorority, Inc. as a candidate for the ATHENA Award in 2012.

Community Connections Co-Directors: **Hasina Mohyuddin** is a PhD candidate in the Community Research and Action (CRA) program at Vanderbilt University. Prior to joining the program, she received a BA in Economics from Yale University, and Hasina is a PhD candidate in the Community Research and Action (CRA) program at Vanderbilt University. Prior to joining the program, she received a BA in Economics from Yale University, and an MBA from Owen Graduate School of Management at Vanderbilt University. After working in the healthcare industry for several years, she went back to school to complete her doctoral degree. Her dissertation research explores the religious identity development for Muslim American youth in the context of widespread negative stereotypes of Islam and Islamophobia. In addition, Hasina is serving as the Study Coordinator for Professor Carol Nixon on two grants: one evaluating HIV/AIDS education for the Southeast AETC, and the other evaluating the implementation of environmental strategies for alleviating prescription drug abuse programs by community coalitions for the TN Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

Hasina has been married for over 20 years to her husband Shuaib and has three wonderful sons. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Islamic Center of Nashville, as well as on the boards of the League of Women Voters, PENCIL and Nashville OIC.

A lawyer and qualitative research analyst, **Tamanna Qureshi** provides legal, political, social, and economic research-oriented consultation to a range of clients. She has practiced in areas of labor law, commercial arbitration, securities exchange, mergers and acquisitions, IT, general commercial law, insurance, banking, corporate law, consumer protection, and intellectual property law.

Metro Government Director: **Michelle Cummings Steele** is the Academic Director and Assistant Professor in the Nelson and Sue Andrews Institute for Civic Leadership for the College of Leadership and Public Service at Lipscomb University. With more than 15 years experience working with governmental agencies, Michelle served as director of Nashville's Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods for four years during the Purcell administration, is a former case manager for the Mid-Cumberland Community Services Agency, and supervised the customer service team at the Metropolitan Nashville Department of Codes and Building Safety. She has worked with countless local community groups teaching them to develop the capacity within them to affect sustainable and collaborative change. She has taught graduate courses in leadership, community change, public administration, issues and ethics, and organizational skills and development.

Michelle is a native Nashvillian and gives back to her community by serving on the boards of the Metro Parks and Recreation, Adventure Science Center, Northwest Family YMCA, and the League of Women Voters. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from the University of Tennessee- Chattanooga, a Master of Science degree in public service management from Cumberland University and a Doctorate of Education in leadership and professional practice from Trevecca Nazarene University. Michelle is married to Larry Steele, Jr. and they have two adorable children, Sheldon and Chellsea.

Membership Co-Directors: **Reba Holmes** is particularly interested in helping people achieve their highest potential and protecting them as they chart paths to success. A graduate of David Lipscomb University, she is director of human performance at Comdata. Holmes believes that the League is an important link to nonpartisan information allowing individuals to make educated decisions about issues and candidates. Her interest in voting issues began in high school, prompting her to work as a volunteer on several local, state, and federal campaigns.

Holmes also takes customer service and quality issues seriously and has achieved the Black Belt level in Six Sigma, a data-driven approach and methodology that statistically measures the quality to perfection of a company product or service. This level of expertise allows her to serve as a corporate leader giving voice to customers in order to meet profitability and growth objectives aligned with corporate goals. She also is an

advocate for children and works to help them achieve higher self-esteem.

Tracy Smith, a native Tennessean, has been interested in social justice movements since attending college in Memphis during the Sanitation Workers Strike in the late 60s. She received a masters degrees in both teaching and in library science and believes deeply in the importance education and access to accurate information to our democracy. She has taught in many different school environments in Atlanta and Boston as well as in Nashville before serving as a librarian at Dupont Elementary, Meigs Magnet, Harpeth Hall, and Hume-Fogg. After she retired in 2011, she has served as a volunteer in many areas, including coordinating with schools and libraries to expand community outreach services.

Voter Service Co-Directors: Hazel Thornton came to Nashville in 2010 as a result of family ties to the music business. Prior to that, she was an election judge in Cook County, Illinois for many years, and once worked sixteen consecutive elections.

Thornton has served as LWVN secretary for two years and has been active on the LWVN Voter Service and Observer Corps committees. She has become a fearless advocate for voters while chronicling many challenges at the Davidson County Election Commission.

A retired financial planner, she actively supports public policy that encourages personal and social stability. In Chicago, Thornton was a grassroots activist involved in various projects intended to promote separation of church and state. In Tennessee, she often visits the state Legislature and reports to the League about legislation touching LWVN and LWVTN priorities. In addition, she is a former professional choral singer, and has founded two book clubs. Thornton was the LWVN 2015 Athena Award nominee, and is a newly appointed LWVTN board member holding the Elections portfolio.

Lynn Questell is an attorney, a Rule 31 mediator, and a member of the State Bars of Tennessee and Georgia. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Akron and a Master's and law degree from the University of Georgia. After clerking at the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, Ms. Questell served as a staff attorney for the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit and the Georgia Court of Appeals and worked in private practice. Upon moving to Nashville, Ms. Questell clerked for the Tennessee Court of Appeals, served as Counsel to the Tennessee Regulatory Authority, and became General Counsel to the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board. In 2005, she was appointed Executive Director of the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board and retired in 2014. She authored a book on the Federal Laws Prohibiting Employment Discrimination in the Public Workplace, which was published by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia.

Liaison to LWVTN Action Committee: Aftyn Behn, has an LMSW and works as the Engagement Manager for the Tennessee Justice Center. She connects the organization to advocates across the state by fostering relationships and increasing their commitment to improving health security for Tennesseans. With a particular focus on rural Tennessee, Aftyn is interested in the intersection between healthcare and broadband and identifying solutions to closing the connectivity gap in rural communities.

Prior to working for the Tennessee Justice Center, Aftyn worked for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Switzerland developing community-based protection policies for special interest refugee groups, which included improving healthcare accessibility. Aftyn holds a Master's in Social Work from the University of Texas Steve Hicks School of Social Work specializing in community administration, policy practice, and disability studies. Aftyn is from East Tennessee and is proud to be from the state that ratified the 19th amendment.

Nashville Voter Co-Directors: Madeline Garr is a native Nashvillian. She has a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in English with a concentration in English as a Second Language. In addition to volunteer

service to LWVN, she has been active for years in the community both as a teacher and as a volunteer. Garr's professional experience includes teaching in private Catholic schools, in Metro public schools, and at the International English Institute where she served as an instructor for 25 years as well as the Academic Director 12 years until 2005. From 2005 to 2012, Garr worked at Vanderbilt University as a health educator and intrinsic motivator coach. She retired in 2012 and has since taught when needed at the International English Institute. During her career, she also taught English as a Language to refugees with Catholic Charities and adult ESL students with Metro Adult Education programs.

As a volunteer, she offers her skills to the Tennessee Health Care Campaign, the Tennessee Justice Center, and the Nashville Public Library. Since 2013, she also has been involved in ACA enrollment efforts in the Nashville area and in educating Tennesseans about their health care options. Garr enjoys using her language skills and love of writing in service to LWVN. She is married to Tony Garr and they have two adult daughters.

Harriet Vaughan Wallace, (information will be updated soon)

Nominating Committee

The LWVN nominating committee consists of three elected members.

Brenda Gilmore chairs the nominating committee. Gilmore, a former Metro councilwoman from 1999 to 2006, is presently representative for District 54 in the Tennessee General Assembly, where she has served since 2006. Her career includes almost twenty years as director of University Mail Services for Vanderbilt University.

A strong voice of advocacy in the community, Gilmore has served on a number of boards in Middle Tennessee, and received numerous awards. Among those: the board of Vanderbilt's Susan Gray School for Abused and Special Needs Children at the John F. Kennedy Center and as board chair of the Margaret Cunningham Women's Center. She is currently a member of the boards of TSU Women's Center and Fifty Forward. In addition, she chairs the Davidson County Delegation, is vice president of the Tennessee Black Caucus of State Legislators, and co-chairs the STEM Caucus.

A life member of the NAACP, Gilmore holds membership in the Music City Chapter of the Links, Inc., Top Ladies of Distinction, the National Council of Negro Women, and is president of both the National Hook Up of Black Women and the Minerva Foundation.

Betsy Walkup has long been involved in issues that impact children and youth in Nashville. She is a former member and chair of the MNPS Board of Education. She has also served on the board of directors and is current co-chair of the Middle Tennessee Advisory Board for Youth Villages, a nonprofit that works with children and youth who are in state custody. In addition, she is a member of the board of trustees for the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee.

Betsy has a bachelor's degree in English from Millsaps College and a master's in library science from Emory University. She and her husband, Knox, have two grown daughters.

Diane Di Ianni, an attorney who began practicing law in Boston over two decades ago, focused her practice in the areas of complex civil litigation, civil rights litigation, public sector law, and government relations. Currently, she is an adjunct Professor of Law at Vanderbilt Law School. Di Ianni has been long active in professional ethics and judicial selection issues, and in 2013, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights appointed her as chair of its Tennessee State Advisory Committee. Since 2008, Di Ianni has served on LWV committees at the national, state, and local level, most recently as a member of the LWVTN Action Committee. She earned her bachelor's from the University of New Hampshire *cum laude*, her master's from the University of Virginia, and her juris doctorate *cum laude* from New York University School of Law.

Di Ianni also is a playwright and was selected into the Tennessee Repertory Theatre's Ingram New Works Lab and Festival during its inaugural season.

October Hot Topic Follow Up -- Where Are We Going? Transit Now and in the Future

By 1st Vice President – Melissa Holden

At this month's Hot Topic meeting, attendees heard from president and CEO of the Urban League of Middle Tennessee **Clifton Harris**, who serves as one of three Co-Chairs of the recently formed Transit for Nashville Coalition. **Shelley Courington**, state director of advocacy for AARP Tennessee, and **Ethan Link**, program director of the Southeast Laborers' District Council, also serve as Co-Chairs.

The Coalition represents a growing and broad cross-section of approximately 50 groups ranging from unions, builders, and engineer companies to the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, universities, transit advocacy organizations, and senior citizen groups. All have come together to support **comprehensive** solutions for the transit challenges facing Middle Tennessee. The Coalition's motto, "*Less Gridlock. More time for what matters.*" summarizes the group's advocacy mission: "*Job growth. More sidewalks. Community advancement. Connecting neighborhood to neighborhood. This is the vision we have for Nashville. This vision is about more than transit - it's about our future.*" (www.transitfornashville.com)

The Coalition supports **three** broad commitments for a comprehensive transit solution:

- Increased access for Nashvillians to get around the city
- Economic opportunity throughout the city
- Diverse mobility options

Mr. Harris cited support for a comprehensive transit plan in the recommendations of the **2016 nMotion** plan that came out of the multi-year **Nashville Next Comprehensive Plan**. Light rail on Gallatin, Nolensville Pike, Murfreesboro Pike and Charlotte Avenue is identified in the Middle Tennessee's **\$6 billion** regional transit plan.

Also noted was Governor Haslam's **IMPROVE** Act, which had the support of Nashville Mayor Meagan Barry and other Middle Tennessee Mayors, and seems to allow the transit referendum to actually take place. The **IMPROVE** legislation gives Metro and other local municipalities the authority to hold public referendums on funding transit projects with a surcharge on sales tax and other taxes. As readers may recall, back in April, the Tennessee Legislature approved the Governor's plan to raise the tax on gas and diesel fuel for the first time in nearly **30 years** to help fund a \$10 billion backlog in needed transportation projects. Projects to help fix the state's crumbling roads and bridges **include** 962 projects in all 95 counties in the state.

One of the specific efforts of Transit for Nashville Coalition **right now** is to gather signatures for a petition to present to the Metro Council to approve a referendum on transit funding on the May 2018 ballot. The petition reads, "*I'm for transit, and I'm willing to help pay for it. We can't afford to wait!*" It can be completed online at <http://www.transitfornashville.com> and "signatures" of support can also be texted via instructions on the group's website.

From a procedural standpoint, the mayor's office would need to get approval from the **Metro Council** more than 90 days in advance of the **May 1** election to place the item on the ballot. The petition showing citizen support will be submitted later this fall. Historically, the May voting opportunity has the lowest turnout history of the three elections in Nashville that are now set for 2018. As **The Tennessean** reported earlier this year, **Transit for Nashville** is also working under a chamber-aligned political action committee, Citizens for Greater Mobility, which is raising money for Mayor Barry's proposed referendum on creating new dedicated funding for transit. The Mayor's office has not yet identified which tax revenue streams will be targeted for the directed funding but intends to unveil a more detailed transit plan this month and host community meetings and open a public comment period.

Some community groups such as **PATHE** (People’s Alliance for Transit, Housing, Employment) have also formed to express their concerns to the transit plan by citing the critical need for a social compact or Community Benefits Agreement to address involuntary residential displacement, affordable housing, green space, access to education, employment opportunities and health care services that go hand in hand with transit needs. PATHE’s consortium of **Democracy Nashville, Homes for All Nashville, Music City Riders United and Amalgamated Transit Local 1235**, express concern that Middle Tennessee’s already marginalized low-income populations will be pushed out by further development along rapid growth corridors, which may see increases in property value as commercial developers swoop in. Others worry that construction jobs will go to out-of-staters and permanent transit-related jobs will not provide living wages. The group also cites the 31,000 affordable housing unit deficit, the current MTA bus service that needs improvements right now, and their desire to require that any land taken by Eminent Domain be placed in a public land trust and not sold to developers.

Additionally **opposition** comes from a local anti-tax supporter who has also launched a petition effort to add a referendum to the November 2018 ballot that would let Nashville voters decide whether to limit Metro’s borrowing capacity by capping the city's debt level. If **Nashville Tea Party President** (but Sumner County resident) Ben Cunningham’s proposal passes, it would limit Metro’s ability to issue bonds for city projects by capping the city's total debt at 15 percent of the total assessed value of taxable property in Nashville, which would fall short of the \$6 billion transit funding proposal.

The total assessed value of taxable property for the past four years has been **\$20.7 billion**, meaning the referendum would cap the debt at \$3 billion under those figures. The cap will be larger after this year’s reappraisal of property values but still the proposed cap would more likely to be around \$4.4 billion.

Other tax-related **opposition** stems from the use of regressive taxes to fund the new transit plan. In Tennessee it is unconstitutional to tax income so the city is looking into all funding options the plan could utilize to be successful such as sales, business, motor vehicle, tourism and residential development taxes, and still be as equitable as possible. Additional potential public funding sources (again, all have advantages and disadvantages) could include property taxes, sin taxes (alcohol, smoking, gambling), vehicle fee/wheel levies, utility levy, road tolls, parking taxes and parking levies, station rents, advertising, and fare increases as well as others.

While not every Middle Tennessee resident will use mass transit, most will agree that an improved and expanded mass transit plan for the region will expand accessibility, mobility and economic opportunity and that everyone benefits from the reduction in cars on the roads, more jobs and a safer city.



The League of Women Voters of Nashville

Presents

FIRST FRIDAY and SECOND WEDNESDAY HOT TOPICS EVENTS

Friday, November 3, 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, November 8, 2017— 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm

**Green Hills Public Library Community Room
3701 Benham Ave. Nashville 37215**

Community Schools in Tennessee

Presenters: Lynn Hoyt (AROS) and Dr. Tony Majors (MNPS)

A successful community schools concept uses a framework grounded in parent engagement, positive culture and a collaborative emphasis on creating great schools for all children. School climate and culture, social and emotional learning, student discipline, student health, and community engagement are all part of this important framework. Join state alliance coordinator for The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS) **Lynn Hoyt**, and MNPS Executive Officer **Dr. Tony Majors** to learn more about the community school concept and innovative practices that expand learning while building a sense of community for students, parents and community stakeholders.

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.

Parking is Easy & Free!

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 – Support Open Government

By 2nd Vice President – Barbara Gay

The **League of Women Voters of Tennessee Action Committee** will meet **Monday, October 23rd at 11:30 a.m.** Central Time at the office of Stewart Clifton, our lobbyist's. If you wish to attend or call in and are not on the Action Committee, please respond to the Action Survey or contact **Barbara Gay**, Chair, at 615-297-4145 or barbara.b.gay@gmail.com. We will discuss our response to proposed bills and policy that will be considered when the state legislature reconvenes in **January**. The League's priorities are already under attack.

The **Tennessee Coalition for Open Government (TCOG)**, which includes the LWVTN, is concerned about the **Office of Open Records Counsel's Model Public Records Policy**, effective January 20, 2017 and amended August 16, 2017. If you receive email from TCOG, you should have received the letter from Adam Yeomans, Vice President of TCOG and Representative on the Advisory Committee on Open Government. To read his letter, go to tcog.info and click "letters" under Programs and Services.

The Tennessee Open Records Act ensures that citizens have access to public records. Since the new policy was put into place, government entities across the state are **not** allowing citizens to make copies of public records using their cell phones. **TCOG** and the **League** believe that this violates the law. **Senator Mike Bell**, chairman of the Joint Government Operations Committee, has expressed alarm that state agencies have adopted language prohibiting all photographs of public records. Other states allow it.

TCOG with the support of the League urges the **Office of Open Records Council** to take action quickly to end these restrictions that violate Tennessee law. The League's watchdog role is more important now than ever and your participation strengthens our voice.



Quarterly Treasurer's Report

By Treasurer Winnie Forrester

How do I love thee? Let me count some of the ways you can support **LWVN**:

Our Fall Fundraising Event: We are in full swing with our fundraising efforts. Thanks to all the sponsors and supporters who have registered for our Fall Event at the **Hermitage Hotel!** Your contributions and support are much appreciated and make our work possible.

Memberships: We are also winding up our annual membership drive. If you haven't yet paid your membership dues for our fiscal year beginning July 1, you have the following options:

- Give cash or check to me or to Debby Gould at one of our monthly events
- Send a check by mail to LWVN, P.O. Box 158369, Nashville, TN 37215
- Go to <https://lwvnashville.org/join> to pay via Paypal

Amazon Smile: Another way to support us is through Amazon Smile. We receive regular quarterly donations from Amazon Smile into our **Education Fund**. Thank you to all of you who have already chosen **The League of Women Voters Nashville** as the recipient of your Amazon Smile donations! If you have not set this up, it's very easy to do. Go to smile.amazon.com and type in League of Women Voters of Tennessee Education Fund (it comes directly into Nashville's account). Very easy, and all those pennies add up!



Davidson County Election Commission Report

By Voter Services Co-Director Lynn Questell

The **Davidson County Election Commission (DCEC)** held a regularly scheduled meeting on September 26, 2017. Commissioner Emily Reynolds was not in attendance.

At the meeting, the Commissioners unanimously certified **Antoinette Lee** as the winner of the September 19, 2017 run-off election for Council District 33. It was noted that only 10% of the eligible voters participated in the election with 4% participation in early voting.

The Commission then addressed a request from the City of Berry Hill to set the city election on **March 20, 2018** and consolidate the election sites at the Berry Hill city hall, unanimously approving the request. The Commission also approved the joint request of the Democratic and Republican Parties to set their primaries for **May 1, 2018**.

The Commission agreed to start the process of evaluating the **Administrator of Elections (AOE)**. There was discussion about the process for selecting the proper form, individual evaluations by the Commissioners, and concerns about compliance with the Open Meetings Act. It was discussed that the process should be completed in January, 2018, when staff evaluations were being processed.

Finally, the Commissions unanimously approved a resolution praising the long and distinguished service of **Commissioner A. J. Starling**, noting his grace, humor and record.

Voter Registration Report

By Voter Services Co-Director Hazel Thornton

We held a voter registration event **Saturday, September 30**, at the annual Nashville Neighborhood Celebration. This year, the celebration was held in Elizabeth Park in north Nashville. Shout out to the League volunteers who made it possible: **Josephine Darwin, Elise Lamar, Sherry Loller, Sammy Cousino, and Perry MacDonald.**

We have another registration event scheduled for October 21st at Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church. I already have enough volunteers for this one.

Debby and I (mostly Debby) have been working on a new LWV brochure designed to answer the FAQ's we typically get from newly registered voters. It will be translated into Arabic and Spanish! It works wonderfully with the **GoVoteTN** postcards that come from the TN Secretary of State. Many thanks to League member **Maureen Organ** for getting the ball rolling on this project!

Thanks also go out to **Vickie Ziegler**, long-time League member, for introducing me to **Kate Tucker**, a Nashvillian who has put together a coalition of people to register concertgoers. They are focusing on millennials. We will not be joining their coalition, but we have begun mentoring them about voter registration protocols and best practices.

Voter registration is easier than ever with the rollout of online registration earlier this year. Getting voters to the polls? Not so easy. The turnout for the recent Metro Council District 33 election was a paltry *10% of registered voters*. We will be focusing on ways to improve voter participation in the coming months and years.



The Latest Information on the Affordable Care Act and CHIP

By Health Care Co-Director Rashonda Lewis

The 2017 Affordable Care Act (ACA) open enrollment period is **November 1st through December 15th**. Navigating ACA enrollment can be tricky, even for the more savvy health plan consumers. And while ACA repeal efforts are dead, at least for the moment, efforts that will likely undermine enrollment are alive and kicking.

First up is a shortened enrollment period. In previous years, enrollment has run for approximately **twelve weeks**. In 2017, plan shoppers will have **only six weeks** to research and compare plans, make a selection and apply for coverage with all the required documentation.

In **August**, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced that it would slash the ACA advertising budget from \$100 million to \$10 million, while cutting spending on navigators by 39%. Navigators are community outreach workers who walk consumers through the application process.

On top of the abbreviated enrollment period and slashed outreach budget, consumers will face **weekly maintenance outages** on the Healthcare.gov website. DHHS is planning to close down the site from 12 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Sundays – Sunday mornings - during open enrollment, except December 10th.

The best advice for consumers during this enrollment period is to start preparing early. Gather in advance documents you may need to apply for tax credits such those that verify your income, address, and immigration status. Review your current health plan, including details about your network, premiums, deductible, co-insurance and out of pocket maximum. Keep in mind, there are only **two** carriers offering ACA exchange plans in Nashville: **Cigna and Oscar Health.**

The **Tennessee Health Care Campaign** is preparing for ACA Open Enrollment and is asking for our help to reach people. They are asking organizations to commit to:

- Share open enrollment dates (November 1-December 15);

- Share the Tennessee Health Care Campaign **844-644-5443** number staffed by volunteers to help people connect with a Certified Application Counselor or Navigator; and
- [Join their ThunderClap](#) to collectively announce the start of enrollment.

Also, <http://www.getcoveredtenn.org> is a wonderful website for consumers. The website includes a countdown to the start of enrollment, an explanation of coverage options, a handy marketplace application checklist and an interactive map that helps consumers connect with assisters who will help them navigate the enrollment process.

Finally, please **stand up** for our children by contacting Tennessee members of Congress to insist that they reauthorize the federal Children’s Health Insurance Program (**CHIP**). On September 30th, Congress allowed this important program to lapse. Nationally, CHIP covers **9 million children** and hundreds of thousands of pregnant women. Tennessee’s CHIP program, called **CoverKids**, covers over 70,000 children. According to **Tim McBride**, professor at the Brown School and director of the Center for Health Economics and Policy at Washington University, CHIP is one of the most successful government programs ever implemented and has led to a substantial reduction in the uninsured rate for children.



Voting Rights Workshop presented by LWVN and LEAF

By Community Connections Co-Director Hasina Moyuddin

The League of Women Voters will present a workshop on **Voting Rights** at **Wright Middle School's LEAF Nights on October 25th**. LEAF Community Nights is a collaborative opportunity that offers international families free English classes and a diverse array of workshops every Wednesday night at **Wright Middle School** (180 McCall St, 37211). In our workshop, we will review the process of voter registration, ID requirements, and the rights to voting assistance (including translation services). We will also engage parents in discussing the opportunities that civic engagement holds at the local level, and the impact of local voting on policy decisions that shape our communities. We have been asked to speak on **Wednesday, October 25th from 6-6:30pm**.

We are welcome to join LEAF participants for dinner (5:30-6:00pm) but need to make sure we’re at Wright by 5:45pm so we can start the workshop on time. Workshops are half an hour from 6-6:30pm. LEAF will try to provide interpreters for us (in the past, they’ve had at least one Spanish and one Arabic interpreter every week), but if any LWV members are bilingual, we would love to have you join us for the presentation. If you are interested in helping with this program, please contact Hasina Mohyuddin at hmohyuddin@comcast.net, or Tamanna Qureshi at tamanna13@hotmail.com.



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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(mgarr2@gmail.com) and Harriet Vaughn Wallace (harrietwallace@yahoo.com).



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