

March, 2007

The Voice

League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham

205 583-5000
admin@lwvqb.org

Board of Directors

Yvonne Brakefield, President
516-8235
ybrakefield@lwval.org

Nancy Ekberg, 1st Vice President
967-2897
nanekberg@aol.com

Virginia Randolph, 2nd Vice President
vrandolph@lwvqb.org

Cissy Bennett, Secretary
969-0249
cissybennett@bellsouth.net

Sarah McDonald, Treasurer
967-2829
Smcdonald3357@charter.net

Kaydee Erdreich-Breman
871-5541
kaydeeb@bellsouth.net

Kate Long
879-5347
Shima_om@yahoo.com

Beverly Nelson, Editor, *The Voice*
beenel@bellsouth.net

Cary Page
879-3697
cpa323@aol.com

Carol Ann Vaughn
988-3789
cavaughn@samford.edu

Betty Warnock
254-6052
bettyjwarnock@bham.rr.com



At the February LWVGB membership meeting *Dr. Joyce Lanning* shared information on the science of global warming with a program based on Al Gore's slide show on climate change. She also provided information and resources for individuals who want to take action to reduce their personal "carbon footprint."

February Membership Meeting Global Climate Change

Dr. Joyce Lanning retired from UAB after a career in Health Care Organization and Policy in the School of Public Health. Although she says she stayed busy after retiring, she had no "primary cause" until she saw the movie, "An Inconvenient Truth".

Dr. Lanning told us that this issue engaged both her head and her heart. It began after being "blown away" by the movie. After visiting the internet site www.theclimateproject.org she signed up for a presenter training session in Nashville. These two-day training programs familiarize volunteers with the science of climate change, equip them with skills and materials for presenting the program and add them to the online community that updates lecturers with the latest information.

Dr. Lanning is aware that some people have strong feelings about Al Gore, so stipulated that the story is the about message, not the messenger. The message is: Global Warming is Real.

Although the natural greenhouse effect has kept us comfortable for about 8,000 years, human activity is disrupting the natural systems that disperse heat back into space. Because the Polar Regions serve as the earth's air conditioners, a 5 degree increase in overall global temperature would equal a 12 degree increase at the poles.

In the United States, the per capita average carbon dioxide "footprint" per year is 20.2 metric tons. The goal of The Climate Project is to help individuals achieve a carbon neutral life style. In addition to resources available at www.theclimateproject.org, Dr Lanning recommended a book written by David Gershon, "Low Carbon Diet: A 30 Day Program to Lose 5000 Pounds--Be Part of the Global Warming Solution!"

March Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 29
Homewood Library
6:00 pm
"It's a Thick Book"
A documentary on the 1901
Alabama Constitution

In Memory

Mary Burks, former member of LWVGB, died February 16, 2007. Gaynelle Tatum, past LWVGB president, credits Mary for influencing the League's initial involvement in environmental issues. Mary will be remembered as the individual who spear-headed the drive to obtain federal legal protection for an area in the Bankhead Forest, now known as the Sipsey Wilderness, and for convincing the Department of Transportation, along with the help of Governor Siegleman, to protect wildflowers planted in the right-of-way of highways.

Time To Act!

Rep. Paul DeMarco of Homewood has introduced a bill in the State Legislature to authorize the Jefferson County Commission to employ a county manager. The League has long advocated just such a position.

Since this is a "local bill", the Jefferson County Delegation to the Legislature will decide its fate. The legislature usually follows the wishes of local delegates on local bills. Therefore we need each of you to be ready to contact the members of the delegation when the time is right.

We'll get all the pertinent information to you so that you can call or email the legislators about this important bill. Please be ready to act when you are contacted.

Let the People Vote!

In a remarkable bi-partisan effort, twenty-three (23) Alabama Legislators have joined together to sponsor and co-sponsor companion bills, House Bill 98 and Senate Bill 99, to Let the People Vote on calling a Constitution Convention to rewrite the 1901 Alabama Constitution.

If passed, Alabama citizens will have their first opportunity in over 100 years to vote for a Constitution Convention at a special election in February 2008, at the same time as the Alabama Presidential Preference Primary.

Speaker Pro Tem Demetrius Newton, the Sponsor of HB 98, was joined by 16 Co-Sponsors in the House: Representatives Alvin Holmes, Bill J. Dukes, Priscilla Dunn, Thomas Jackson, Pebblin Warren, James Gordon, Rod Scott, John Knight, Jr., Sue Schmitz, John Robinson, Alan Harper, Barbara Bigsby Boyd, Patricia Todd, Mary Moore Mac Gipson and Mike Hill

During the opening day of the new Legislative Session, Senator Ted Little, Sponsor, filed SB99 and was joined by five Co-Sponsors in the Senate: Senators Bradley Byrne, Steve French, Rodger Smitherman, Linda Coleman and Vivian Figures.

League members are urged to thank their Legislators from this group, for their support of this important issue. And then League members are asked to call all other legislators in Jefferson and Shelby Counties and tell them to vote for HB 98 or SB 99. Get contact information for the legislators at:

www.lwvgb.org/fingertips.pdf or www.legislature.state.al.us/

Government Representatives at Your Fingertips

Two updated versions of *Alabama Government at Your Fingertips* are now available on www.lwvgb.org - a short one that is easy to carry around and a longer version that has email addresses and web sites for those elected officials who have moved into the electronic age. Thanks go to Judith Hand, Kaydee Erdreich-Breman, Yvonne Brakefield, Cissy Bennett, Jean Johnson, Kate Long and Colette Scott for collecting, proofing data and/or posting this document.

Welcome New Members!

Dr. Joyce Lanning
Anna Brantley Fry

Public Transportation

"Transportation Means Business." a statewide conference on the need for public transportation is scheduled for April 18th in Montgomery. The event will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., in the capitol city's Embassy Suites Hotel. Featured speakers will include Norman Mineta, former National Secretary of Transportation and Governor Bob Riley. The conference is sponsored by the Alabama Road Builders Association, the Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce and others. Additional information can be found at www.transportationmeansbusiness.org

Nancy Ekberg is representing our League in the planning committee, which includes more than thirty organizations and governmental units. Montgomery's "Envision 2020" is coordinating the event. The Jefferson County Commission, The Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Birmingham City Council via three members (President Carole Smitherman, Carol Reynolds and Valerie Abbott) are sponsors.

Let your representatives on these three governmental/business agencies know you are grateful for their support of this important issue.



League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham Membership

***Join us today and help make a difference in the Greater Birmingham area!
Membership is open to anyone aged 18 or older, male or female.***

Fill out this form and mail with your check payable to "LWVGB" to:

**League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham
3451 Cliff Road South
Birmingham, AL 35205**

Please check one. (See Membership and Dues Policy below for reduced rates.)

Individual Membership (\$40.00)

Family Membership (\$60.00)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

**I am unable to join at this time but I would like to make a contribution of
\$ _____ .**

Membership and Dues Policy

Annual dues are \$40.00 for individual membership. A family membership is \$60.00 for two in the same household. Dues are paid annually by September 15. New members who join between January 1 and March 31 pay half of the annual dues; new members who join between April 1 and June 30 pay one fourth of the annual dues. Payment may be made in three consecutive monthly payments without penalty.

Membership to the LWVGB also includes membership in the League of Women Voters of Alabama and in the League of Women Voters of the United States. Full membership is open to anyone of voting age.

Questions? Call 205 583-5000 or e-mail to admin-lwvqb@lwval.org

LWVGB Calendar of Events

Thursday, March 29 th	LWVGB Membership Meeting "It's a Thick Book" Homewood Library 1721 Oxmoor Road Room 116	6:00 PM
Wednesday, April 18 th	Public Transportation Statewide Conference "Transportation Means Business" Embassy Suites Hotel 300 Tallapoosa Street Montgomery, AL	7:30 AM – 3:00 PM
Thursday, April 19 th	LWVGB 2007 Annual Business Meeting Nabeel's Imported Foods 1706 Oxmoor Road Dessert Room	6:00 PM
May 19 th -20 th	LWVAL Convention 2007 Four Points Sheraton Hotel Tuscaloosa, AL	

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