



The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

<http://www.lwvgb.org>

NOVEMBER 2016

We are pleased to announce that T. K. Thorne, author of *Last Chance for Justice: How Relentless Investigators Uncovered New Evidence*

Convicting the Birmingham Church Bombers, will be our guest speaker at this year's LWVGB Holiday Luncheon. The luncheon will be held at The Club, atop Red Mountain, on December 3, 11:30

a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Save the date and time for now

and we will have reservation information to you soon. We will likely fill to capacity for this event, so please make your reservation A.S.A.P. when you receive that information.



T.K. Thorne



Black Friday. Cyber Monday.

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

November 29, 2016

Please remember LWVGB this holiday season!

<http://www.lwvgb.org/about/donate/>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

Mark your calendar. See this issue or [LWVGB Online Calendar](#) for event details.

November 7: Deadline to deliver or postmark Absentee Ballot (see pg 9 of 2016 [Alabama Voter Guide](#) for exceptions)

November 8: Election Day

November 11: Veteran's Day

November 29: Giving Tuesday

December 3: LWVGB Holiday Luncheon @ The Club, 11:30 a.m.

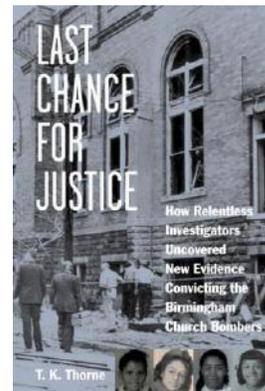
December 15: Bill of Rights Day

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

RIDES TO THE POLLS ON NOVEMBER 8

Contact : Chris Underwood
chrisunder31@gmail.com
(See page 4 for details)

We are excited that members and guests of the Greater Birmingham League will have the opportunity to hear T.K. speak on *Last Chance for Justice*. She brings to life the tragic event of the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing and the struggle for justice that followed. T. K. is a compelling storyteller and a meticulous historian. She is also the former Executive Director of Birmingham's Citizen Action Partnership (CAP) and is recently retired after many years of service. T.K. now spends much of her time on book tours around the country. She is the winner of several awards for her historical nonfiction books *Noah's Wife* and *Angels at the Gate*. Read more about T.K. at <https://tkthorne.com/books/>.



FYI, T.K. (or Teresa, as we know her) is the daughter of Jane Katz, a forceful lobbyist for the LWV of Alabama years ago at the state legislature. In her honor, the "Jane Katz Award" is given each year by LWVAL to "recognize an individual or organization whose work strengthens democracy."

We look forward to seeing you at The Club on December 3rd!

PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

Jean Johnson

Well, after a 15 month-long election season, the election is finally upon us. I don't yet know who the next President of the United States will be. What I *do* know is that your League of Women Voters has been focused – laser focused – on getting as many people registered to vote as possible, educating them in a nonpartisan, unbiased manner about the candidates and the amendments, and getting them out to vote. I want to thank all League members and their family and friends who have worked so diligently to make this happen. Special thanks go to Nancy Sales and Maggie Howard for leading our Voter Service effort. LWVGB student intern Shibani Chakrabarty has a very fun contest for you to enter. Hint: In order to win, you have to vote and you have to let the world know through social media! ☺ And if the election is still in the future when you read this, please contact Chris Underwood at (205) 515-5704 to volunteer to take voters to the polls.

As you know, the credibility of the election is under scrutiny. False and unfounded rumors of election manipulation is a direct threat to our American democracy and it belittles the real challenges that many citizens have encountered in trying to cast their vote. The League of Women Voters is responding with the **"I know my vote will count" campaign**. With press statements and strong social media attention, we want to assure the public that our elections are secure. LWVUS has stated, "For nearly a century, the League's members have worked tirelessly to ensure that elections in this country are free, fair, and credible. Thanks to our work, we know voters who cast their ballots do so with the confidence that their votes will count. The League is obligated to set the record straight so that voters across the country have the real facts." **Look for LWVGB's Facebook and Twitter posts on this issue and please share! And use this fun Facebook filter :**

<https://www.isupportcause.com/campaign/i-voted> on "The Day"!



In other work, LWVGB held a very informative public forum on Payday Lending. This Citizen Education effort was led by Haley Colson Lewis who shared information from the LWVAL study committee with League members and the public. Thank you Haley! Member consensus discussion followed directed by former LWVGB president Ida Tyree-Hyche, Esq., a member of the state League's Payday Lending Study Committee, Thank you Ida! And thanks also to Joyce Lanning who served as Consensus Recording Secretary.

As you can imagine, all this Voter Service and Citizen Education activity plus the fun evening we had last month at City Club Birmingham reception has brought several new members into the League. It's even caused a few previous members to "re-up." If you have not yet paid your 2016-2017 dues, please do so today. Membership Co-chairs Starr Culpepper and Mikesha Harvill will be mailing membership renewal reminders very soon. Good work, Starr and Mikesha!

We are pleased to announce that author and League friend T. K. Thorne will be guest speaker at our annual Holiday Luncheon on December 3rd. T. K. is a celebrated author of historical fiction. Fortunately for us, she has also thoroughly researched and written about the real-life criminal investigation of the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in 1963 that killed 4 little girls. Come to the LWVGB Holiday Luncheon and hear the real back-story of *Last Chance for Justice: How Relentless Investigators Uncovered New Evidence Convicting the Birmingham Church Bombers*. See this issue of *The Voter* for reservation information. I promise, you don't want to miss T.K.. There's more to this story than you know and T.K. will share it!

I know you will go to the polls on November 8. I hope that you will be well informed about the candidates and amendment referendums. LWVAL has done the research for you on state-wide candidates and amendments. Go to <http://www.Vote411.org>, enter your address, and then click "Get personalized information on candidates and issues." In Birmingham, LWVGB (and by that I mean Secretary Starr Culpepper – thank you again, Starr!) has done the research on Jefferson County judicial candidates. Go to <http://www.lwvgb.org/learn-vote> and click on "Decision 2016" to get those candidate bios in a downloadable file. You'll find much more election information on that "learn-vote" webpage, too! Please share that page address with friends and family.

Please don't forget the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham on Giving Tuesday, November 29! Give at:

<http://www.lwvgb.org/about/donate/>

And invite friends to join the League at:

<http://www.lwvgb.org/join/>

We need your support and your membership to carry on all this good work! Thank you!

CALLING ALL LWVGB MEMBERS AND FUTURE MEMBERS

Join or Renew Your Membership TODAY!

Starr Culpepper and Mikesha Harvill, LWVGB Directors



\$55 for Individual Membership; \$75 Family Membership (2 in same household); \$27.50 Student

Join Online

<http://www.lwvgb.org/about/join/>

or

By Mail

Rev. Albert Hyché
LWVGB Treasurer
P.O. Box 530522
Birmingham, AL 35253

The Membership Committee hosted a very successful Membership Cocktail Reception on September 22, 2016, at City Club Birmingham. There were approximately 63 people to sign-in with 21 being current LWVGB members. The membership Co-Chairs Ms. Starr Culpepper and Ms. Mikesha Harvill would like to thank everyone who helped to make this event a success!

We would also like to welcome our 2 newest members, Elizabeth H. ("Betty") Likis and Helen Rivas to the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham. These ladies are actually returning members with a history of strong leadership in our League. Welcome back, ladies!

VOTERS SERVICE

Nancy Sales and Maggie Howard, LWVGB Directors

After so much voter registration activity in September, it may be good that October was quieter. Only 9 registrations turned in sounds too quiet. Despite that, the events were interesting.

First was a power point presentation by Maggie Howard to a meeting of Sigma Kappa sorority at UAB. About 70 in attendance (mandatory meeting). Second was at Elmcroft Assisted Living in the Chalkville area which had about 12 to participate. The staff member was very helpful, knowing the residents as she did. We were able to confirm registration status and current addresses. Though information about absentee voting had been requested, the residents present all want to vote in person!

The remaining two plus a potential were all part of Birmingham Housing Authority. One central office staff and one local community center staff reached out to us. Loveman Village had had another registration event the previous week and no one came to ours. Harris Homes also had registered some residents at other meetings. One young man who came for basketball did register. Kimbrough Homes's request came to us on October 19th. They were having a registration that day - at which we were invited to help! We offered someone for their other registration, October 21st, but in the end they felt they had enough help. I think we made some good acquaintances. There seems to be interest in registration events and perhaps information gatherings for the Birmingham municipal elections next year.

There will be an informational meeting Nov. 4th at Shepherd Center East. It will be a short presentation on importance of voting and information about the amendments. That too is a different focus and audience - seniors.

Thanks to five member volunteers: Rita Winkates (2 events), Connie Arnwine, Chris Underwood, the two co-chairs, Maggie Howard and Nancy Sales, and a friend, Sally Harris.

As part of The Youth Voter Registration Project the LWVGB took steps toward bridging the communication gap between LWV members who may see phones as machines and youth voters who relate to their Smartphones as cyborg extensions of themselves. By design, on October 23rd and 24th in follow-up to the Spring Youth voters registration/education drive in High schools, LWVGB e-connected via automated E-Mail and text messaging with 352 Youth Voter Registration students who registered to vote **and** signed up to receive follow-up information and election reminders from the LWVGB electronically. Messages highlighted the October 24th deadline for registering .If students did not receive a voter registration card, they were encouraged to check their registration status online or call their County Board of Registrars. A reminder to get out and vote on November 8th with details of poll hours and acceptable forms of ID was also included. Thank you to Shibani Chakrabarty, our Birmingham Southern College intern, for inputting student information into our data base and to President Jean Johnson for arranging for the automation of emails and text messaging.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RIDES TO THE POLLS ON NOVEMBER 8

Can you help seniors and/or handicapped individuals get to the polls on November 8th? Many do not have transportation but very much want to vote. LWVGB wants to coordinate with senior centers to provide rides to the polls, that is IF we get enough League volunteers to help with this service. This will, of course, be a nonpartisan effort. The need is highest in low-income areas of our community. If you can join our transportation team operating that day, please email Chris Underwood at chrisunder31@gmail.com. Riders will be grouped by polling areas.



LWVGB CONDUCTS CONSENSUS STUDY ON PAY DAY LENDERS IN ALABAMA

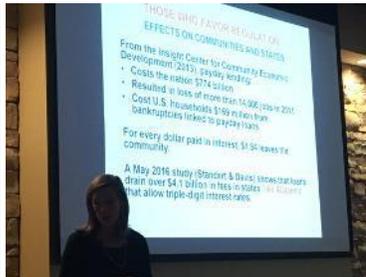
Ida Tyree Hyche, Esq., LWVGB Advocacy Chair

A public seminar on Payday Lending in Alabama followed by a closed consensus building session for League members brought 13 persons to the Vestavia Hills Library on October 16, 2016. Haley Colson Lewis, Esq. presented the open community forum presentation of payday lending and Ida Tyree Hyche, Esq. facilitated the consensus building session.

The membership reached consensus on the following:

- a) The Alabama Legislature should change current laws regulating payday loan stores;
- b) Payday lending stores increase employment in Alabama;
- c) Interest rates should be capped at a certain amount, and limited rollover fee amounts;
- d) There should be consumer education related to finance;
- e) There should be incentives for small loan lending by banks and credit unions;
- f) Eliminate the Payday store requirement that borrowers give them a post-dated check, or automated bank account transfer authority at the time a loan is taken out;
- g) Extend the time for repayment of the loan before a new fee is applied;
- h) Require a multi-payment plan to replace the one-time payment requirement now in place;
- i) Give the consumer a choice between a one-time payment plan and a multi-payment plan;
- j) Require clear and simple written loan agreements.

The LWVGB consensus results were submitted to the LWVAL to be included in the state consensus building process. If consensus is reached throughout Alabama, the LWVAL will write a position statement. Then, if Payday Lending legislation is introduced in the 2017 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature as expected, the LWVAL will be ready to speak out!



SHOW US YOUR “I VOTED!” STICKER ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOU COULD WIN!

Shibani Chakrabarty, LWVGB Member

The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham will sponsor a competition on Election Day to encourage Americans to commit to their civic duty. **On Election Day, if you post a picture of yourself with your “I Voted!” sticker to Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram with the hashtag #LWVGB, you will be entered into win a \$50 Amazon gift card!** We encourage you to vote early and post early on November 8th so that you can inspire and remind your friends to get out to the polls, too! You do not have to be a resident in order to be eligible to win. LWVGB will announce the winner on Veteran’s Day, Friday, November 11th.



Unfortunately, this election season has been tainted with disparaging comments about our democratic system. Some may be afraid that their vote on November 8th will not count. We encourage every registered citizen to vote because we know that American democracy is strong and that **every vote counts!** We hope that this competition will not only encourage voter participation this Tuesday, but will also ensure that Americans realize that their vote matters.

So, get out and VOTE on Tuesday! Then snap and post away! We can’t wait to see your awesome photos!

P.S. Be informed before you go to the polls. Check out state-wide candidates, analysis of constitutional amendment referendums (14 state-wide and one for Jefferson Co.), and other election information at the League’s own <http://www.vote411.org>. Just enter your address and then click “Get personalized information on candidates and issues.” Get information about Jefferson County judicial candidates in [LWVGB’s Decision 2016](http://www.vote411.org) at <http://bit.ly/2fpMgL5>. Then, if you live in Alabama, go to the polls between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on November 8th and remember to take your valid photo ID with you when you go to the polls!

NAACP seeking nonpartisan poll watchers

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. is seeking volunteers to do nonpartisan poll watching on November 8th. Please read the message below from Remington A. Gregg, Prepared to Vote Attorney, NAACP-LDF and consider if you would like to help. Please notify Jean Johnson at jjohnson@lwvgb.org if you are a League member participating in this program. Thank you!



“The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (“LDF”), the nation’s first civil rights law firm, will be on-the-ground in Alabama on Election Day, monitoring the polls and working to ensure that all eligible voters are able to cast a ballot. LDF is partnering in a non-partisan effort with organizations and community leaders to recruit lawyers, law students, and other volunteers to monitor polling sites that serve large populations of Black and Latino voters.

“We are still actively recruiting people to volunteer to be election monitors. It is no secret that this Election Day may be one of the most challenging we have faced in decades. The November 8, 2016 election is the first presidential election in fifty years in which African Americans and other people of color will vote without the full protections of the Voting Rights Act, one of this nation’s most important pieces of legislation, as a result of the Supreme Court’s 2013 decision in *Shelby County, AL v. Holder*. In the wake of *Shelby*, states have unleashed a number of schemes that seek to deny or abridge the rights of voters of color to participate equally in our political system.

“Interested volunteers should contact Deuel Ross (dross@naacpldf.org) and Remington Gregg (rgregg@naacpldf.org) **immediately** for more information. LDF will provide training on Monday, November 7, at Samford University’ law school.”

Board of Directors, 2016-18

Jean Johnson	President (2017)
Arlene Godwin	1st Vice President (2017)
Starr Culpepper	Secretary (2017)
Rev, Albert Hyche	Treasurer (2018)
Mikesha Harvill	Director (2018)
Margaret Howard	Director (2018)
Nancy Sales	Director (2017)

Nominating Committee (2017)

Ida Tyree Hyche, Esq., Chair
Starr Culpepper

Off Board

Yvonne Brakefield Knowles	VOTER Editor
Ida Tyree Hyche, Esq., Chair	Advocacy Committee
Haley Colson Lewis	

QUOTABLE QUOTES

In seeking truth you have to get both sides of a story.

~ *Walter Cronkite*

I can normally tell how intelligent a man is by how stupid he thinks I am.

~ *Cormac McCarthy*

Let's grow the LV
Network

Like



Follow



League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham
P. O. Box 530522
Mountain Brook, AL 35253