



The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

<http://www.lwvgb.org>

MARCH 2017

Help Wanted: Youth Voter Registration Project

Maggie Howard and Nancy Sales, LWVGB Voter Services

Voter Services needs your help. The LWVGB has for the second spring been awarded a grant to bring voter education and registration to local high school seniors. The most difficult part of the project is establishing initial contacts in the school. You can help! If you have a friend or acquaintance who works in a high school in Birmingham City, Jefferson County, or Fairfield City, contact them and ask if they will help our voter services committee set up a school visit.

Don't know anyone in the schools but want to help with the Youth Voter Registration Project? Volunteer to go with a group into a local high school, present a brief voter education presentation and register all eligible 18 year old students. (If you haven't been involved before, there will be a training session to prepare you for the visit.) Today, thanks to Connie Arnwine's help, we have a tentative date during the first week of April to visit Bessemer High School. Our grant requires a minimum of five school visits so there will be plenty of opportunities to get involved. Volunteer now! E-mail Maggie Howard at nat728@bellsouth.net.



#WomensHistoryMonth

"...I desire you would **Remember the Ladies**, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If perticular care and attention is not paid to the Laidies **we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation...**".

Abigail Adams to John Adams; Braintree, MA, 3/31/1776

CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

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

- March 2017:** Women's History Month
- March 8:** International Women's Day
- March 12-16:** Sunshine Week
- March 15:** Observer Corps Training
- March 28:** LWVGB Board Meeting
- April 16:** Emancipation Day
- April 22:** Earth Day
- April 23-29:** National Volunteer Week
- April 27:** LWVGB Annual Business Meeting
- April 29-30:** LWVAL Convention; Mobile

Mark Your Calendar!

LWVGB 2017 Business Meeting

Location TBD

Thursday, April 27th

5:00 - 5:45 p.m. social time and dinner

5:45 - 7:00 p.m. business meeting

Let's socialize, enjoy a delicious dinner, and set LWVGB's course for the coming year at the 2017 LWVGB Business Meeting. It's a great time to see old League friends and make a lot of new ones. This is THE business meeting of our grassroots organization, so please be there. It is for ALL members of the Birmingham League. We'll send you more information soon. Business, yes! But fun, too! Promise!



Need a ride? Give a ride?

Not everyone drives, but we don't want anyone to miss this meeting for lack of transportation. If you need a ride, let us know. If you can offer a ride in your vicinity, let us know. We'll try our best to match up. Contact Chris Underwood at chrisunder31@gmail.com. Tell her: 1) Need a ride or offering a ride? 2) Your address. 3) Your phone number.

If you have an issue with driving at night, you should not have a problem. Daylight on April 27th lasts until [7:27 p.m. CDT](#). ;-)

PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

Jean Johnson



Although, spring is a little time away, it is in the air now. The weather, the birds, and the pollen producers say so. (AAHH-CHOOO!) The League of Women Voters says so, too. It is this time of year that we are in the throws of planning voter registrations and making plans for end-of-year meetings. And this year we are making a bold new start on the work of the LWVGB Observer Corps.

Voter Service Co-chair Maggie Howard submitted and **won another national Youth Voter Registration Project grant for our League (for the second year in a row!)** from the national LWV Education Fund. She and Co-chair Nancy Sales will need a lot of help in carrying this off in at least five area high schools. Please volunteer! Scheduling is very flexible and any time you can give in late March through April will be greatly appreciated. See Maggie's article in this issue of *The Voter*.

Ann Smith, Haley Colson Lewis, Carol Clarke and I have been working together over the past several months to kick off our **revised LWVGB Greater Birmingham Observer Corps**. This is the result of the vision and initiative of Haley, Carol, and several other community leaders who have the wonderful idea of bringing in select non-League members to join our Observer Corps team. In order to insure that new volunteers (League members and non-League members) understand League protocol and the absolute necessity for unbiased observation and reporting, Ann Smith is developing an Observer Corps Training and Certification Course to be offered on March 15th. Ann is the long time director of our League's Observer Corps, and she is bringing in other experienced instructors to help, too. This is a long-term project for our League. We are excited to offer this service that will provide better government transparency and much needed education about community affairs to area citizens. Sunshine is essential to a healthy democracy. Read Haley's article in this issue of *The Voter* for more information and to see how you might contribute to the Greater Birmingham Observer Corps. Also, did you catch our [press release](#)?

There are two important League meetings that you need to mark on your calendar. First, on April 27th, LWVGB will hold its annual **Business Meeting**. The title sounds dry, but believe me, we have a good time, especially at a good restaurant. We're working on finding a location. Criteria: fun and delicious. At this meeting you, the members of the LWV of Greater Birmingham, play an essential role in setting the course for our League in the coming year. We'll share much more information about this meeting soon, but for the time being put a pin in April 27th and plan to meet up at 5:00 p.m.! (If you're running late from work, no worries. Come when you can.)

The other important League meeting to mark on your calendar is **LWVAL Convention on April 29-30th in the very fun city of Mobile**. This is not just for delegates, but for all League members, especially any LWVGB member who would like to learn more about the League's "big picture" focusing on state issues. **Consider attending as a delegate of the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham**. Read more about this important grassroots event in this issue of *The Voter*.

President's Paragraphs (Continued)

It's going to be a very busy and exciting time for our League going forward. So, what part will you play? The Women's March in Washington, D.C. and the Sister Marches all over the United States on January 21st were just the beginning. The time for active participation in our democracy is now. Make your own mark in this Women's History Month of March. Spread sunshine on our government through the Greater Birmingham Observer Corps. Work through LWVGB Voter Services to encourage citizens, young and old, affluent and disadvantaged alike, to learn about their government and be informed, engaged participants in the election process. Email, call, and write letters to your elected officials in support of a League Call to Action. These are all critically important in League service. Yes, continue to keep up with the news on TV, radio, and newspapers and post to social media, too. But it is your actions that will get the job done. I look forward to seeing you on a League project soon or at a League meeting to discuss plans and progress. Your help in any and every way is greatly appreciated!

Enjoy Mobile and the League in the Spring!



**League of Women Voters of Alabama
State Convention 2017
April 28th Early Arrival
April 29-30th Convention
Hampton Inn & Suites
Mobile Downtown Historic District
62 South Royal Street
Mobile, AL 36602**

It's not just Birmingham League delegates! All Alabama League members are welcomed and encouraged to attend. You will learn so much about our League - the members and our business. Also, the schedule includes two workshops on advocacy, so if you are looking to become involved in our League's advocacy for certain issues, you don't want to miss this. You don't have to be a delegate to attend, but LWVGB can have up to three delegates in attendance. How about you? If you would like to be considered, contact Jean Johnson at jjohnson@lwvgb.org or 205 222-2097.

[Register for LWVAL Convention 2017](#)

Register by April 15.

Cancelations accepted until April 17

[Make hotel reservations](#)

Reserve by March 28, 2017

for special LWVAL Convention rates

Get all LWVAL Convention information [here](#).

Informational Session for Greater Birmingham Observer Corps a Huge Success

Haley Colson Lewis, LWVGB Observer Corps



On February 23rd, 2017, the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham hosted an Informational Session on our efforts to strengthen the Greater Birmingham Observer Corps. LWVGB members Carol Clarke and Haley Colson Lewis, and LWVGB President Jean Johnson spent the past several months planning this Informational Event and invited all LWVGB members, CAC Young Partners, media partners and other community-service minded Greater Birmingham residents.

We welcomed about 20-25 (including representatives from Weld and Birmingham Watch) guests at Architecture Works on the 23rd. After enjoying delicious refreshments and conversation, Carol Clarke began the session by welcoming everyone and explaining that she, Jean and Haley came

together to work on reviving the Observer Corps after discussing with other Birmingham community leaders that a “helpful presence” in board and agency meetings is a current, un-met need in Greater Birmingham. Jean Johnson then briefly introduced the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham and explained the history of the Observer Corps and its role in board and agency meetings. Jean also described the role of an Observer and the benefits to the person observing, to the board or agency being observed and to the community at large. Finally, Haley Lewis initiated the call to action: to encourage all attendees to sign up for Observer Training, which will be spearheaded by Ann Smith, on March 15th, 2017 from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at ArchitectureWorks.

It is so appropriate that this training course falls in the middle of [Sunshine Week](#), March 12-18th, 2017. LWV fully supports this project and urges all government entities to be open and transparent. These are vital components of a healthy democracy.

Many thanks to the [ArchitectureWorks](#) Foundation and [Richard Pigford](#) for the free use of that wonderful facility. We have found that the Foundation lives it’s [philosophy](#), “...We aspire to create memorable places through the exploration of the dialog between architecture and its surroundings... We continually endeavor to make a positive difference in the world through our work, our client relationships, our commitment to community and our respect for the natural environment...” Many thanks, also, to AW Office Coordinator [Amy Drinkard](#), who has been of great help in making these events possible. Amy, you are the greatest!

For more information about the Greater Birmingham Observer Corps, visit <http://observercorps.lwvgb.org>. If you are interested in attending the training, please email observercorps@lwvgb.org. We are all thrilled at the level of interest we have received thus far and are eager to revive the Greater Birmingham Observer Corps in the coming months!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Gia Bivens, Carol Clarke, Jan Colson, Brittany Jones, Patty Pilkerton, Cindy Willingham

WELCOME BACK – Betty Likis, Virginia Volker

Do you have questions about the League or are you looking for a volunteer opportunity? Contact us at 205 583-5000 or email to admin@lwvgb.org. We welcome you and look forward to connecting with you soon!



If you are not a member of LWVGB, please check us out in this [video](#) and consider [joining us](#)! The League of Women Voters welcomes the membership of anyone (men and women!) 16 years of age or older.

Board of Directors, 2016-18

Jean Johnson	President (2017)
Vacant	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.	Advocacy
Haley Colson Lewis	Observer Corps

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent."

~ *Madeleine Albright*

"Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself."

~ *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Let's grow the LWVGB Social Network!

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