



The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM
<http://www.lwvgb.org>

April 2017

Youth Voter Registration Project

Maggie Howard and Nancy Sales, LWVGB Voter Services

Wednesday, April 5th the LWVGB begins our Youth Voter Registration Project at Fairfield High School. Volunteers will spend the morning with Mrs. Mays's senior social studies classes. A classroom presentation on the importance of voting will include a brief history of voter rights, a discussion of "all politics are local" - the importance of voting in local and mid-term elections- and a review of Alabama's photo ID requirements. Students will be given the chance to complete a voter registration form and to sign up to receive text or e-mail reminders from the League for upcoming elections.

We will set up a registration table outside the cafeteria during lunch sessions for any other eligible students or faculty needing to register to vote or submit a change of address.

A second registration event is tentatively set for the Wednesday or Thursday, April 12th or 13th at Bessemer High School. Additional volunteers are needed for that day. If you can help, please e-mail Maggie Howard at nat728@bellsouth.net or call 205-969-0817 and leave a message.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

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

- 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
- May 29: Memorial Day
- June 22-25: LWVUS Council; D.C
- June 14: Flag Day
- July 4: Independence Day
- August 22: Birmingham City Municipal Election
- August 28: Bessemer City Municipal Election
- August 28: Mountain Brook City Council Election



LWVGB Annual Business Meeting

(For Members only please.)

Nabeel's Café and Market

1706 Oxmoor Road

Homewood

Thursday, April 27th

5:15 – 7:00 p.m.

RSVP: mikeshatharvill@outlook.com or

205.243.0417 by Monday, 4/24

"Fingertips" is Back!

"Government Representatives at Your Fingertips" is one of our League's most requested documents. It is now updated and available [here](#). This document has information you need to contact your local, state, and national government representatives. Get answers to your questions or tell a government official your opinion on the issues. Be involved. Your voice can make a difference.

LWVGB Vice President Resigns

Vice President Arlene Godwin Woods resigned from the LWVGB Board of Directors effective February 27th, 2017. We thank Arlene for her service and wish her well in future endeavors.

PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

Jean Johnson

No matter one's opinion about the outcome of last November's election, one thing is for sure – citizens are definitely fired up and seeking to get actively involved in our democracy. That's a good thing. In our League, volunteerism has greatly increased in the areas of voter service and citizen education. And it has spread beyond our membership to those outside of our organization. We welcome the help of citizens willing to give nonpartisan service.



I particularly want to thank members of the LWVGB and the Community Action Committee – Young Partners (CAC-YP) who are giving their time and energy to the Greater Birmingham Observer Corps (GBOC) program. By shining light on government and reporting government actions to the people, you are empowering our citizens. You are making them informed voters and active participants in democracy. Read on in this issue of *The Voter* to learn about the great contributions these observers and researchers are making to the GBOC program.

And once again the Richard I. Pigford Family Foundation has made the wonderful [ArchitectureWorks](#) venue available to us free of charge for GBOC training! Thank you all.

Chairs Maggie Howard, Nancy Sales, and our great Voter Service Team are at it again! Thanks to a generous pass-through grant from the League of Women Voters Education Fund, they will be in high schools and on college campuses all over the Greater Birmingham area registering young, first-time voters and educating them about the election process. Maggie tells our readers in this issue of *The Voter* about the exciting plans underway to get these young people registered, informed, and actively participating in democracy. Way to go, Voter Service Team. Oh yes, and they need your help. [Please volunteer today.](#) This group is very active, and they always need more volunteers!



Many thanks to LWVGB leaders Yvonne Brakefield and Judith Hand for updating "Government Representatives at your Fingertips." This updated resource provides citizens with all the information they need to make their voices heard at the local, state, and national levels of government.

Two very important end-of-year League meetings are coming up soon. Those are the local LWVGB Business Meeting at Nabeel's in Homewood on April 27th and state LWVAL Convention 2017 in Mobile, AL on April 29-30th. Because we are a grassroots organization, your active participation at the LWVGB Business Meeting is critical in setting the future course of our League. This meeting is for members of LWVGB. At the state level we govern through our representative delegates. I sincerely hope that members attend the LWVGB Business Meeting. The public is invited to attend the LWVAL Transparency in Government Award Celebration at the Mobile convention. Read this *Voter* for more information and make plans to be there!

And finally, several have asked about LWVGB Director Nancy Sales following her recent surgery. I'm very glad to share that she is at home now and doing well. Healing is a slow process, but she is following doctor's orders and listening to the advice of friends and family. She enjoys short walks on pretty spring days and is striving to make them a bit longer. She's anxious to get back to Voter Service registering young people in local schools. I know she would appreciate your calls, cards, and perhaps even a visit. Call me at 205 222-2097 for her contact information. Get well soon, Nancy!

See you at Nabeel's on April 27th!

Enjoy State Convention in Mobile!

Don't miss our state convention in Mobile, April 29-30th! This event is for all League members in Alabama. You do not have to be a delegate. The League of Women Voters of Alabama is offering educational opportunities – particularly in the area of advocacy. On Saturday evening our League will recognize the winner of the Second Biennial "Transparency in Government" Award at a special celebration and reception. Kyle Whitmire, state political columnist for the Alabama Media Group and [@aldotcom](https://www.aldot.com), will be the guest speaker. (Catch him on Twitter [@WarOnDumb](https://twitter.com/WarOnDumb) and on Facebook [@kyle.whitmire](https://www.facebook.com/kyle.whitmire).) And be sure to come in early on Friday, April 28th. LWV Mobile, host League for the convention, wants to show you some fun and southern hospitality in their beautiful city.



LWVGB will be well represented by delegates Connie Arnwine, Tyrone Williams, Sr., and Robyn Hyden. Connie and Tyrone are nominated for election as directors at our own LWVGB Business Meeting on April 27th. (See this issue of *The Voter* for more information.) Connie is a long time leader of our League in Birmingham, and she is also serving on the LWVAL Advocacy Team at state level. Tyrone and Connie have both been very active in our Youth Voter Registration Program making it possible for many high school and college students in our community to vote. You'll most likely see LWVGB member Robyn Hyden taking a leadership role in the state League in the next two years. She is on the slate to be elected at convention as a LWVAL director. So, as you can see, your League voice will be well represented at the LWVAL Convention. We are in good hands! Thank you, delegates!

Let our delegates know how you want them to vote on LWVAL business. They are representing you. Get all LWVAL Convention information [here](#) and then let them know your views. You can chat with them at the LWVGB Business Meeting or contact them:

Connie Arnwine	arnconn@outlook.com
Tyrone Williams, Sr.	ty1williams@aol.com
Robyn Hyden	robynhyden@gmail.com

But don't let Connie, Tyrone, and Robyn have all the fun. Get in on it yourself! Attend LWVAL Convention 2017. At minimum, let our delegates know your views. We are a grassroots organization. Just like at the local level, our state League is directed by you. LWVGB Members are encouraged to get all [LWVAL Convention 2017 information](#) and be ready to speak out.

Greater Birmingham Observer Corps Volunteers Trained and Ready!

On March 15th, 2017 LWVGB held the first Greater Birmingham Observer Corps training session at ArchitectureWorks in downtown Birmingham. Under the experienced guidance of Observer Corps Training Director Ann Smith, 16 volunteers are now certified and ready to keep a watchful eye on Greater Birmingham government. LWVGB recognized the importance of transparent government with this highlight event of Sunshine Week, March 12-18th and announced the program to the public through this [press release](#). See more [photos of the event](#).



Several LWVGB members assisted with the training. Ann Smith coordinated and led the program. At the training, she reviewed the purpose and long history of this League program, volunteer opportunities available, proper protocol for observers before, during and after an observation session, and ways in which information will be shared with the public and the press. Judge O. L.

Greater Birmingham Observer Corps Volunteers Trained and Ready! (cont'd)

"Pete" Johnson, Retired, informed the group about Alabama's Open Meetings Law and their legal rights and limitations as observers. Jean Johnson gave further information about volunteer roles and stepped the group through the method and process of reporting. Nancy Ekberg, a long-time League observer at both the local and state levels, inspired the trainees with real life examples illustrating how observation and reporting can lead to positive changes in the behavior of observed government officials and the resulting actions of those government bodies.

In addition to our wonderful League members, we greatly appreciate the many volunteers who stepped forward at CAC-Young Partners (CAC-YP) to actively support this effort. We give much credit for this partnership to Haley Lewis, President of CAC-YP, Haley is also a member of our League and a prominent leader in our Observer Corps program. The CAC YPs are young people to watch! And you can do just that [@CAC_YP](#) on Twitter and [@CACBham](#) on Facebook.

Trainees have signed up to observe the following government entities:

- Birmingham Airport Authority
- Birmingham Water Works Board
- Birmingham Board of Education
- Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority
- Housing Authority Birmingham District
- Birmingham Public Library Board
- Jefferson County Board of Education

Researchers Ann Smith and Haley Kendrick have compiled fact sheets on these entities and also on the Birmingham City Council and the Jefferson County Commission. Information in the fact sheets include the address, phone number, website, schedule and location of meetings, members of the entity, terms of office, and how and when elected or appointed. Get the facts on all of these government entities in the [government section](#) of our GBOC website.

[Weld](#) and [BirminghamWatch](#) are collaborating to observe and report on the Birmingham City Council and the Jefferson County Commission, respectively. Read those [news reports here](#).

You will see observation reports posted soon on the [GBOC website](#). GBOC Observers are only waiting for pending letters of introduction to reach their respective government assignments. These volunteers are excited and ready to go! The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham thanks them in advance for their service and for making government more transparent for all citizens in our community.

Many thanks to Ann Smith, Haley Lewis, and Carol Clarke for their leadership in developing and sustaining this program. It would not be possible without them! We also thank the Richard I. Pigford Family, LLC, for allowing LWVGB to use the wonderful [ArchitectureWorks](#) venue to present this program.



Let's meet at Nabeel's!

For LWVGB Members only...

LWVGB DINNER AND BUSINESS MEETING

THURSDAY, APRIL 27th, 5:15 - 7:00 P.M.

NABEEL'S CAFE & MARKET

1706 Oxmoor Road
Homewood, Alabama 35209

-- [MAP](#) --

Members are encouraged to come to Nabeel's Cafe and Market in Homewood on Thursday, April 27th for LWVGB's 2017 Business Meeting! We'll enjoy [delicious Mediterranean cuisine](#). Then we will do a little business as we set the course for our League in 2017-2018. Our grassroots organization depends on you, the members, to determine who will lead and what we will accomplish in the coming year.

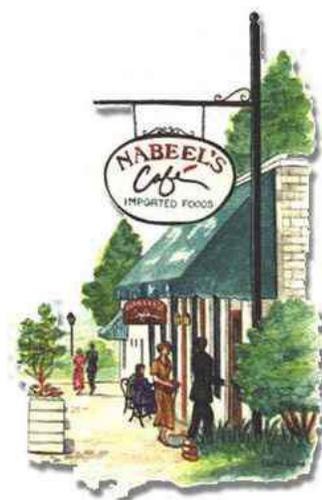
LWVGB Members, we need a headcount, please! Contact Director Mikesha Harvill at mikeshatharvill@outlook.com or 205 243-0417, and let her know you're coming. No payment up front is necessary. You'll choose what you want from the menu and pay your own ticket. (Prices are very reasonable.)

What's on tap? We'll discuss and vote on program, budget, bylaws, and the slate of officers and directors for 2017-2018.

We must have a quorum present to do our business, so it's very important that members please be there! Might run late? No problem! Come as soon as you can. We won't get down to business until about 5:45. Need a ride? Can you give a ride? Contact Chris Underwood at chrisunder31@gmail.com. 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. ;-)

See you April 27th at Nabeel's!

Questions? Contact Jean at jjohnson@lwggb.org or 205 222-2097.



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Jean Johnson	President (2017)
Vacant	Vice President (2017)
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Rev, Albert Hyche	Treasurer (2018)
Mikeshia Harvill	Director (2018)
Margaret Howard	Director (2018)
Nancy Sales	Director (2017)

Nominating Committee (2017)

Ida Tyree Hyche, Esq., Chair
Starr Culpepper

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Yvonne Brakefield Knowles	VOTER Editor
Ida Tyree Hyche, Esq.	Advocacy
Haley Colson Lewis	Observer Corps

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost."

~ *John Quincy Adams*

"Live long and prosper."

~ *Mr. Spock, Star Trek*

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