



The VOTER

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

December 2018

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

[Alabama Government Representatives at Your Fingertips](#) is one of LWVGB'S most widely accessed collection of voter services information.

Two volunteers are needed to review the current version for changes needed to bring contact information for local, state and federal officials up to date due to 2018 election results.

If you are interested in helping with this short-term project, contact [Leonette Slay](#).



LWVGB MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Monday, January 28th, 6:30 p.m.
at [Beloved Community Church](#)

Senator Cam Ward

**CHANGES IN ALABAMA'S CRIMINAL
JUSTICE SYSTEM SINCE 2013**

DECEMBER HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Jean Johnson, LWVGB Member

On Dec. 1, 2018, members of the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham and guests gathered at City Club Birmingham in the Regions-Harbert Plaza for the annual Holiday Luncheon. This always-festive event featured as guest speaker The Hon. Robert S. Vance, Jr., Circuit Court Judge in the 10th Judicial Circuit (Jefferson Co.).

We were also pleased to have three members of the League of Women Voters of Mobile at the luncheon - League of Women Voters of Alabama President Barbara Caddell, Myra Evans, and Andrea Pennington.



Judge Vance spoke about the ongoing financial shortage borne by the judicial system in Alabama and some of the difficulties and injustice this causes. He also spoke of the value of therapeutic courts (e.g. mental health court, drug court) in alleviating prison overcrowding, rehabilitating defendants, reducing taxpayer burden, and decreasing the recidivism rate. Judge Vance also spoke on the inherent problems of partisan selection of judges and the difficulties this posed in his own recent run for Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court and the importance of a balanced political landscape.

Thank you again to Judge Vance for sharing his time and expertise with us. And thank you to those who came from near and far to help us celebrate the season.

See more photos posted on [Facebook](#) and [Flickr](#).

**Please remember LWVGB
in your end of year giving!**

<https://lwvgb.org/about/donate>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

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

- Jan 21: MLK Day of Service
- Jan 28: Membership Meeting
- Feb 14: LWV Birthday
- Week of Feb 25: Tentative Membership Mtg
- March 2019: Women's History Month
- Mar 10-16: Sunshine Week
- Apr 22: Earth Day
- May 17-19: LWVAL Convention 2019
- Jun 20-22: LWVUS Council 2019

TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR PAYING YOUR 2018-2019 DUES

Leslie O'Neil, LWVGB Treasurer

We welcome the 24 new members and transfers who have joined us since the beginning of September. Because of them, our membership has the potential to show a big increase this year. But for this to happen, many current members need to send in their renewal dues.

The local League gets to keep only \$13 of the \$55 dues payment, because per-member-payments are sent to the LWVAL and LWVUS based on our membership at the end of January. So, we can't keep you on our membership list beyond January UNLESS you send in your dues payment.

To pay your 2018-2019 LWVGB dues online, go to:

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

To pay your 2018-2019 LWVGB dues by mail, send a check made out to the LWVGB to:

Leslie D. O'Neil

LWVGB Treasurer

1964 Rocky Brook Drive

Birmingham, AL 35243-1762

If you aren't certain whether you have paid for the current year, please email Leslie at ldoneil@bellsouth.net.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Brooke Adams
Kathleen Barry
Karen Barwick
Hayden Brown
Stephanie Byrne
Vivian D'Arpa
Shade' Dixon, Esq.
Dana Ellis
Amber Ladner, Esq.
William (Chip) Bradford
Catherine Ladner
Frances MacDougall
Thierry Guyader
Judge Teresa Pulliam
Kathy Rostand
Rev. Jennifer Sanders
Phyllis Mark
Jennifer Sobaski
Madison Danielson
Alexis Thomas, Esq.
Harmony Thomas
Teresa Thorne
Christine Tomberlin
Joi Travis, Esq.

A PROSPECTIVE NEW MEMBER

Ida Tyree-Hyche, LWVGB Member

League members Haley Colson Lewis and Ida Tyree Hyche participated in a documentary about the 19th Amendment at the request of Ramsay High School senior Lyndia Stinson.

Ms. Stinson is writing a documentary for the C-Span Competition on the theme of what it means to be an American. She will share the entire documentary with the League when it is completed. Of course, Haley and Ida would like to see Ms. Stinson as a winner in this contest. She plans to visit the League at one of its future meetings.



PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

Leonette Slay

We ended our meeting year on a high note with Judge Bob Vance as speaker at our annual holiday luncheon. He gave us candid insights and suggested policy and legal changes that LWV might assist with (see Jean Johnson's article page 4). We were honored to have LWVAL President Barbara Caddell and two other members of the Mobile LWV, Andrea Pennington and Myra Evans, join us.



I participated in a LWVAL conference call this month. Participating LL presidents had an opportunity to share with other LWV leaders what their league's projects/events had been in the fourth quarter. We also had the opportunity to weigh in on decisions regarding the state convention May 17-19th in Tuscaloosa. This promises to be an exciting convention, with environmental justice one of the broad themes. Convention planners announced that Friday evening will be a time of fellowship at the Bryant Museum and that the Transparency Award will be given at a special awards luncheon on Saturday. The traditional membership award (for highest percentage of new members over the last two years) will now honor one small League and one large League in the state. Planners also anticipate another social opportunity Saturday night. While membership numbers dictate the number of voting delegates from a local League, any member can attend a state convention or council, and we encourage you to do so. It's a great way to synergize and network on issues of common concern--not to mention a wonderful opportunity to socialize with women and men committed to making democracy work for all.

Dr. Betsy Emmons, Samford University journalism professor, has confirmed that students in her class are interested in having LWVGB as a client to research government transparency with a goal of revealing their research during Sunshine Week in mid-March --so this initiative is officially going forward. More details will be forthcoming.

As we prepare for the holidays I have been reading a stack of Christmas themed books and want to share a surprising snippet from a book of columns written by Celestine Sibley, a features writer in the 1960s at the old Atlanta Constitution. One of her sketches dealt with an 80-something year old woman, Arizona Bell, who sold newspapers on a downtown Atlanta street. "She was proud of the fact that one of her credit customers was William B. Hartsfield, Atlanta's mayor for a quarter of a century. He would stop by his law office on his way home from the city hall at night and, frequently, wouldn't have a nickel to pay for his Constitution when he was ready to board the bus. He not only was a good credit risk, Mrs. Bell felt, but such a good Mayor that when he had opposition one term, she broke a habit of a lifetime and registered so she could vote for him. She hadn't thought it quite "nice" for a lady to vote ... but there were times when bold action overbalanced decorum. Once she had voted, Mrs. Bell found it such a heady experience, she joined the League of Women Voters and really got interested in politics." (From "Especially at Christmas, 1969). So, it's never too late to start civic involvement!

If you are in the habit of making resolutions for the new year, I encourage you to resolve to choose one LWV activity or area of interest and volunteer your talents, and involve a friend or two. And I would be remiss if I did not end the year by thanking our board/off board members and the many LWVGB volunteers who combined to make 2018 such a success for our organization. Let's do even more together in 2019, as we prepare for national elections and our centenary celebration in 2020.

JUDGE KING SPEAKS ON 2018 MID-TERMS

Jean Johnson, LWVGB Member

On Thursday evening, November 8th, Judge Alan King spoke to League members and the public about the 2018 mid-term election. Judge King has been a probate judge in Jefferson County since 2000 and has served as the Presiding Judge of Probate and the county's Chief Election Official since 2006. Despite rainy, chilly weather, Jefferson County residents turned out to the Vestavia Library in the Forest and were very interested to hear his review.

Judge King covered several topics in his presentation and followed up by responding at length to audience questions. Among the topics, he discussed the training of election officials, the choice of voting machines, use of vote pass pads (for checking in voters at the polls), the choice of election sites, compilation of the inactive voter list, and hearings for disenfranchised voters. He shared some problems that have arisen before and on Election Day and how they were resolved. And he discussed the fast-moving advances in technology and how these affect the election process. Judge King compared the election process in Jefferson County to that in other Alabama counties and in other locations across the nation.



Judge King was recently a member of the now-dissolved Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity (sometimes referred to as the Kobach Commission). He shared his experience in being selected and serving on that commission.

The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham greatly appreciates that Judge King was willing to share his expertise and long-time experience in overseeing Jefferson County elections. Thank you, Judge King!

See more photos of this event at <http://bit.ly/2RVuySxt>.

UPDATE:

Readers may know that Judge King, wife Karen, and daughter Kendall were struck by a hit and run driver in Denver, CO on Thanksgiving night, Nov. 22nd. Karen was killed. Judge King and Kendall were severely injured. Judge King is at home in Birmingham now. Kendall is also out of the hospital. She lives in Denver. Judge King and Kendall continue in our thoughts. We send our deepest sympathy to the King family and wish Judge King and Kendall a speedy recovery.

Please contact [Jean Johnson](#) if you would like to send a card or message to Judge King.

Board of Directors, 2018-19

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Nancy Sales	Director (2019)

Nominating Committee (2019)

Yvonne Brakefield Knowles, Chair
Jean Johnson
Nancy Sales, Board Appointee

Off Board

Yvonne Brakefield Knowles VOTER Editor

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"The prisons in the United States had long been an extreme reflection of the American system itself: the stark life differences between rich and poor, the racism, the use of victims against one another, the lack of resources of the underclass to speak out, the endless "reforms" that changed little."

~ **Howard Zinn**, American Historian

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