



The VOTER

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

July 2020

[TYRONE WILLIAMS, SR.](#)

July 18, 1948 – June 19, 2020

We were deeply saddened to learn of the unexpected death of former LWVGB board member and community supporter Tyrone Williams, Sr. He served on our board twice and was a delegate to the



2017 LWVAL convention in Mobile. He most recently served our League as a member of the 2020 Nominating Committee. We are going to miss his wide smile, concern for his community, and his incisive contributions to discussions about improving daily life in Birmingham. Please keep Tyrone's family in your thoughts.



UPCOMING LWVGB ZOOM MEETING

AUGUST 27th @ 7:00 P.M.

The Alabama Bar Association Presents

A Jenna Bedsole Documentary

**"The Fight for the Noblest Democracy:
Women's Suffrage in Alabama"**

ZOOM Meeting Details TBA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

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

August 12: LWVGB Board Meeting

August 27: LWVGB Membership Meeting

SUPPORT THE LWVAL EDUCATION FUND THROUGH AMAZON SMILE

If, like many of us, you are doing more shopping online, please use the [Amazon Smile](#) website to designate the League of Women Voters of Alabama Education Fund as your charity. Every purchase that generates a contribution, no matter the size, helps in educating voters.

PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

Leonette Slay

After an unavoidable hiatus, LWVGB will again be sending a monthly Voter to your inbox, thanks to Voter editor Yvonne Brakefield Knowles. This newsletter is full of news and links from the virtual LWVUS convention (across 7 time zones!) during the last week of June, introduction of new board members elected during our annual meeting on May 12, and updates on what LWVGB members are doing to encourage citizen participation while adhering to CDC guidelines during a pandemic.

At all three levels of League, we are in sound financial shape. Both national and state organizations have waived per member payments for students with no increases in per member payments for other members. Currently LWVGB dues are \$15 for students. Also we have no new program studies so we can concentrate on voter services/voter outreach during an election year.

While we take a monthly program break in July, our August program will be the Alabama Bar Suffrage Committee's outstanding documentary "The Fight for the Noblest Democracy: Women's Suffrage in Alabama". This film is entered in Birmingham's Sidewalk Film Festival Competition, so our program, scheduled for August 27, will be after the film's premiere earlier that week. This is a film that you will want to enjoy with your children or grandchildren.

Memberships have steadily increased during the spring and summer, and we are currently at 120! The [LWVAL civil lawsuit](#) against the Secretary of State to ease absentee ballot restrictions has been one factor. Another has been two sets of ads that have run on WBHM urging completion of the census, use of Vote411, and the voter education purpose of LWV.

Thank you for your membership and support of League principles during our centennial year!

LET'S GET THE MOST OUT OF [VOTE411](#) – SIGN UP NOW

[Vote411](#) is a nonpartisan website funded by the League of Women Voters that enables voters to be more informed by giving them access to candidates' responses to questions that the LWV has posed.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS will be held August 25 for most municipalities except Birmingham and Bessemer, so we must act quickly.

Can you help identify candidates for office, connect with their campaigns via email or DM and help develop nonpartisan questions relevant to your local elections? This is a job that can be done from home, and guidance will be provided.

Gardendale—Contact [Ida Tyree-Hyche-Hill](#).

Homewood—Contact [Nancy Ferrell](#).

Hoover—Contact [Ellen Buckner](#) at (205) 910-9877.

Mountain Brook—Contact [Knox Bricken](#).

Vestavia Hills—Contact [Judith Hand](#) at (205) 822-1702.

All others - Adamsville, Adger, Alabaster, Brighton, Center Point, Fairfield, Fultondale, Irondale, Leeds, Trussville, Pelham, Pell City, Pleasant Grove, Springville, Sylacauga etc. - contact [Leslie O'Neil](#) at (205) 968-9863.

SPECIAL ELECTION FOR HOUSE DISTRICT 49 (parts of Bibb, Chilton and Shelby counties)

The primary is August 4, runoff September 1, and general election November 17.

Can you help formulate questions, find contact email addresses and follow up on participation? Contact [June Fletcher](#) at (205) 960-8279.

JEFFERSON COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION

Contact [Barbara Lewis](#) if you can you help with Vote411 information for the six Jefferson County positions that are in the general election.

CAN YOU HELP MAKE OUR DEMOCRACY WORK?

Volunteer Your Ideas and Time to Make A Difference in These Important Areas

VOTER REGISTRATION

Join other LWVGB members in developing ways to promote voter registration in the time of COVID 19. Contact [Barbara Lewis](#) to volunteer.

ABSENTEE VOTING

Join in developing ways to help voters overcome current obstacles while voting absentee. Contact: [Christine Tomberlin](#) or [Ruth Varnell](#) at (205) 999-6154.

RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS

Are you interested in developing skills that will enable you to assist with voting rights restoration? Where can the LWVGB make this information available in the time of COVID 19? Contact [Dana Ellis](#) at (205) 531-5668.

LWVGB MEMBERSHIP ZOOM MEETING

August 27th, 2020

7:00 P.M.

The Alabama Bar Association Presents

A Jenna Bedsole Documentary

“The Fight for the Noblest Democracy:
Women’s Suffrage in Alabama”



Image courtesy of Allison Skinner, LWVGB Member

SUPPORT VOTER EDUCATION WITH YOUR POCKETBOOK

Leslie D. O’Neil, LWVGB Treasurer

Voter Education projects such as the cost of materials for voter registration and handouts advertising [Vote411](#) are funded out of the LWVGB account of the LWVAL Education Fund. In addition, the board is looking at the possibility of holding a Hoover mayoral forum and purchasing some “Remember to Vote” radio ads.

You can show your support for these activities by making a tax-deductible donation:

- Go to <https://lwvgb.org/about/donate/> and choose the “Donate” button on the RIGHT. You can make a one-time or recurring donation via PayPal.
- If you prefer to pay by check, make it out to LWVAL Education Fund and mail it to Leslie O’Neil, 1964 Rocky Brook Dr., Birmingham, AL 35243-1762.
- If you are over 70 ½, you can instruct your IRA administrator to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution as part of your RMD. For more information, contact Leslie at (205) 968-9863.

You will receive a confirmation of your tax-deductible contribution at the end of the calendar year.

WELCOME NEW LWVGB BOARD MEMBERS



Dana Ellis, LWVGB Vice President, worked as a RN for 38 years at UAB Hospital and also served as Director, Heart and Vascular Center. Her current activities include Alabama Chapter Leader of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, Coordinating Committee Member - Alabama Poor People's Campaign and a member of Faith in Action Alabama. Dana joined LWVGB in 2018.



Cindy Lowry, LWVGB Membership Director, currently serves as Executive Director of the Alabama Rivers Alliance. She has served on numerous boards, including Alabama Arise, Friends of the Locust Fork River, The Wildlife Center, and the UAB MPA Alumni Association, and supports many other non-profit organizations, including Black Warrior Riverkeeper, GASP, and Greater Birmingham Ministries. Cindy joined LWVGB in 2018.



Brooke Adams, LWVGB Director, is currently a Senior Auditor with the federal government. She graduated from the University of Alabama in 2003 and holds both a Bachelors and Masters degrees in Accounting. Brooke is member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Jack and Jill of America, and J. Mason Davis Leadership Society. She is mother to five-year-old daughter, Brooklyn, and enjoys reading, running, swimming and traveling.



Janet Colson, LWVGB Director, is a retired teacher and has served on the Sun Valley Elementary School Board. She has been involved in numerous volunteer activities, including ESL teacher for Birmingham Baptist Association, volunteer tutor for students at Grace House Ministries, and reading interventionist at Better Basics. Jan is active in her church and enjoys spending time with her granddaughter. Jan joined LWVGB in 2015-16.

PBS AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: [THE VOTE](#)



As a part of PBS American Experience's [The Vote](#), celebrate the strategies and tactics of suffrage with a new interactive experience. [She Resisted](#) invites you to explore the final decade of the women's suffrage movement through its most powerful images, brought to life with color for the first time.

In this new [interactive](#), American Experience brings you an intimate look at the women who forever transformed the politics of social and political change in America.

VOTING DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Because of the importance of voting absentee during a pandemic, LWVGB members have distributed hundreds of applications for absentee ballots before the July 9 deadline to request a ballot. Former LWVGB President Ida Tyree-Hyche-Hill and Dr. Carl Hill distributed over 300 applications during a free food drive through at Zion Star Missionary Baptist Church in west Birmingham. They posted reminders about the deadline on social media and sent reminders to church members using the LWV link for downloading absentee ballots. Leonette Slay provided 175 absentee ballot applications for the Bluff Park UMC food pantry drive through on July 3 and 100 applications for Urban Ministry clients in west Birmingham. Wild Roast Cafe owners in Bluff Park also requested that absentee voting applications be placed in their shop for customers. We anticipate offering this outreach service in selected locales for August 25 municipal elections and more broadly for the November 3 general election.

To download an application or to find the address of your absentee election manager, go to alabamavotes.gov.

A REPORT FROM LWV NATIONAL CONVENTION 2020

Dana Ellis, LWVGB Vice President

I had the opportunity to attend the LWVUS convention as a first-time attendee this year. I must admit that I was not excited about attending a virtual convention as I anticipated that I would be spending hours sitting at my computer. In recent months I have spent more time in front of a computer screen and like everyone else I have Zoom fatigue.

I am happy to report that the experience was far less painful than I thought it would be. Kudos to all of the people involved in the massive undertaking of designing a virtual convention for close to 2000 attendees.

The week began with the opportunity to attend various caucuses which were offered Monday-Wednesday evenings. There was a plethora of options (28) to choose from which speaks to the depth and breadth of the League's work.

LWVAL was represented by our own Kathy Jones from the Tennessee Valley League. She was one of the presenters for the "Youth Voter Registration and Education Programs" A link to the power point presentation can be found [here](#).

An important caucus was "Making Democracy Work in the Criminal Justice System". The response to this caucus was so overwhelming that many of the delegates who had registered for this event (including me) were unable to join live. Fortunately, the group has released a video of this caucus and you can find it [here](#). You can also access information at LWVCA website [here](#).

The business portion of the meeting occurred Thursday- Saturday. You can access the convention workbook [here](#).

An important resolution which was passed by an overwhelming vote was the Racial Justice for Black People and all People of Color. Alabama was one of the 23 Leagues which initially signed on to this resolution. You may access the resolution [here](#).

It is impossible to cover all of the convention activities in a brief report. In closing, I would like to share this link to a [voting rights panel discussion](#) featuring Valerie Jarrett and others. This was a very engaging panel discussion and I hope that you will have time to listen.



Last but certainly not least, I am sharing the remarks of the new LWVUS board president, Dr. Deborah Taylor [here](#). After watching this video, I am sure you will agree with me that the League is in good hands with Dr. Taylor at the helm.

Board of Directors, 2020-21

Leonette Slay	President (2021)
Dana Ellis	Vice President (2021)
Jennifer Sanders	Secretary (2021)
Leslie O'Neil	Treasurer (2022)
Brooke Adams	Director (2022)
Jan Colson	Director (2022)
Cindy Lowry	Director (2022)

Nominating Committee (2021)

Michael O'Donnell, Chair
Jean Johnson
TBA, Board Appointee

Off Board (2021)

Jean Johnson	Vote411/Communication Mgr
Ida Tyree-Hyche-Hill	Advocacy Liaison to LWVAL
Yvonne Brakefield Knowles	THE VOTER Editor

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"The vote is a power, a weapon of offense and defense, a prayer. Understand what it means and what it can do for your country. Use it intelligently, conscientiously, prayerfully... Progress is calling to you to make no pause. Act!"

~ **Carrie Chapman Catt**

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