



# The VOTER

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

September 2020

## DUES! DUES! DUES!

Pay membership dues for the 2020-21 year now.

Dues amounts are: Individual - \$55.00  
Household - \$80.00  
Student - \$15.00


[Click here](#) for information about paying dues by check or credit card. (Consider listing LWVGB as a payee in online banking--your bank will write the check/mail it to LWVGB.)

To pay by Cash App, send the money to: \$lwvgb.

[Click here](#) to take advantage of our Dues Assistance Fund.


Questions? Contact [Leslie O'Neil](#).

Please pay dues for 2020-21 by September 30.  
**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**



**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL MONTH**

September is our traditional dues renewal month. Please submit your dues payment [online](#) or by [postal mail](#) by **9/30/20**.



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

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

- Sep 2020: Dues Renewal Month
- Sep 17: Constitution Day
- Sep 21: UN Day of Peace
- Sep 22: LWVGB Membership Meeting
- Oct 13: AAUW Presentation
- Oct 14: LWVGB Board Meeting
- Oct 19: Deadline to register for Gen. Election
- Oct 24: United Nations Day
- Oct 29: Absentee Ballot Application Deadline
- Nov 02: Deadline to cast Absentee Ballot
- Nov 03: ELECTION DAY
- Nov 11: LWVGB Board Meeting
- Dec 01: Annual Giving Tuesday
- Jan 18: MLK Day of Service
- Feb 14: LWV Birthday
- Mar 14-20: Sunshine Week
- Apr 22: Earth Day

**IMPORTANT EVENT ON 9/22/20**

**National Voter Registration Day**

## GIVE \$20.20 IN 2020

The LWVGB Board has budgeted funds to distribute video clips to encourage college student voting and radio spots containing voter service information. We need your help to fund these efforts.

Honor the suffragists who went before us and those who are continuing the fight for access to voting and voter equality.

Please contribute \$20.20 or any amount [by check or credit card](#) to the general fund or the tax-deductible education fund or by **CashApp** to the general fund at \$lwvgb.

### A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE: 8-25-1995

Photos from the LWVGB 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Right to Vote Rally  
courtesy of Judith Hand



Carolyn Crawford (L), Judith Hand (R)



L-R: Margie McDermott, Barbara Denley and daughter, Sarah McDonald

## SEPTEMBER MEMBERSHIP ZOOM MEETING

9/22/20 @ 6:00 P.M.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6676814937>

Meeting ID: 667 681 4937

LWVGB Presents  
**Voting Safely During a Pandemic**

September 22, 6:00 - 7:00 PM on ZOOM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6676814937>  
Meeting ID: 667 681 4937

Jackie Anderson-Smith, Jefferson County  
Circuit Clerk and Absentee Elections Manager

Dr. Mark Wilson, Health Officer, Jefferson  
County Department of Health

#VoteSafeAL

## VOTER SERVICES VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### Ida Tyree-Hyche Hill, Voter Services Director

**Grace Klein Community, Inc.**, 2652 Old Rocky Ridge Rd, Hoover, AL 35216

Either day, Monday – Friday, 1-4 p.m., **September 17, 2020 through October 29**

**Volunteer job description:** To set up a small table to pass out League voter education tip sheets, voter registration forms, applications for absentee ballots, to sign as witnesses on absentee ballot form or act as notary, if possible, during Grace Klein Food Drive-by Pick up. Their process is very organized. Two volunteers on any given day will likely have the opportunity to pass out educational materials to at least 45 to 60 persons. The persons do not get out of their car. Wear your mask, carry hand sanitizer and practice six feet distancing.

**Current volunteers:** Nancy Sales, Sally Harris, Dana Ellis

**Additional volunteers needed:** 5 – 10 to cover 8 weeks. Send e-mail to [voterservice@lwvgb.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvgb.org).

**Bryant Chapel AME Church, RAYAC**, 3125 Spaulding Street, SW, Birmingham, AL 35221

“Drive-In Absentee and Voter Registration Drive”, **September 19, 2020 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

**Volunteer job description:** To set up a small table to pass out League voter education tip sheets, voter registration forms, applications for absentee ballots, to sign as witnesses on absentee ballot form or act as notary, if possible, during Drive-by. The persons do not get out of their car, unless absolutely necessary. Wear your mask, practice six-feet distancing & carry hand sanitizer. The League will aim to provide a face shield or a table shield, if available.

**Current volunteers:** Nancy Sales, Ida Tyree-Hyche Hill

**Additional volunteers needed:** 1. Send e-mail to [voterservice@lwvgb.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvgb.org).

**Magic City Bar Association & Alabama Lawyers Association Voter Registration Drive**, Piggly Wiggly Grocery Store parking lot, 1697 Tuscaloosa Ave., SW, Birmingham, AL. 35221

“Voter Registration Drive”, **September 26, 2020 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 Noon (Includes set-up time)**

**Volunteer job description:** To set up a small table to pass out League voter education tip sheets, voter registration forms, applications for absentee ballots, to sign as witnesses on absentee ballot form or act as notary, if possible. Wear your mask, practice six-feet distancing and carry hand sanitizer. The League will aim to provide a face shield, as needed, and a table shield, if available.

**Current volunteers:** Michael O’Donnell, Esq. & Ida Tyree-Hyche Hill, Esq. (needed to set up & to provide voter education). For the most part, both organizations have a host of volunteers and The Links, Inc. were added recently as additional volunteers.

**Additional volunteers needed:** 2. Need as back-ups or so four volunteers can work only two-hour shifts: 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., first shift; and 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 Noon, second shift. Send e-mail to [voterservice@lwvgb.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvgb.org).



Do you know anyone who needs help filling out an application for an absentee ballot? Phone the LWVGB number (205) 583-5000 and press #3. Ruth Varnell will be happy to help.

Click [here](#) for tips on absentee voting in Alabama.

## **VOTER SERVICES VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, cont'd**

**America's Thrift Stores, Inc., Greater Birmingham locations,** Gardendale, Center Point (Huffman), Bessemer, Alabaster locations  
"Voter Registration, Support & Education", Tables set up at each site beginning

**National Voter Registration Day, September 22, through October 29, 2020 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m**

**Volunteer job description:** *To set up a small table to pass out League voter education tip sheets, voter registration forms, applications for absentee ballots, to sign as witnesses on absentee ballot form or act as notary, if possible, during specified date & times for each respective location – once a week. Wear your mask, carry hand sanitizer & maintain six-foot distancing. The League aims to provide face shields, as needed, and/or a table shield, if available. Also, there may be a request for speakers to America's Thrift Stores' employees to provide voter education. STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION!*

**Current volunteers:** None.

**Volunteers needed:** 8-10 volunteers for each store location (there are four stores) to cover 8 weeks. The National Coalition of 100 Black Women of Central Alabama reached out to The League to partner with us in a volunteer activity. Director Tyree-Hyche Hill requested their collaboration with this urgent and immediate volunteer services request and is awaiting a response. Send e-mail to [voterservice@lwvgb.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvgb.org).

**LWVGB VOTER SERVICES "PROJECT: #SENIORSVOTE",** A new project developed by Director, Voter Services.

**Purpose:** To provide voter education and materials to a designated Staff member at Senior Citizens housing complexes and nursing homes

**AIM:** To educate the appropriate staff member via individual teleconference or ZOOM on how to help seniors complete the application for an absentee ballot or register to vote; to ask them to determine the number seniors needing forms, then drop the forms off to the staff person while wearing a mask, carrying hand sanitizer and practicing six-foot distancing. We will collect data by the number of forms we drop off at the request of the staff member.

**Volunteer job description:** *To get a directory of nursing homes/senior citizens housing and make telephone calls to determine the items mentions in "Aim", above.*

**Current volunteers:** None. The President, National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Central Alabama has agreed to try to find a directory. This is an area they may want to collaborate with The League – to be determined; however, time is of the essence. Therefore, we are looking for volunteers within the League, also, for Project:#SeniorsVote.

**Volunteers needed:** 1 - 10. Send e-mail to [voterservice@lwvgb.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvgb.org).

### **VOTER EDUCATION TRAINERS/PRESENTERS**

Director, Voter Services would like "back up" presenters, should she have a conflict for training opportunities, during the next eight weeks prior to Election 2020. The Director will provide the presentation(s) and guidance.

**Volunteers needed:** 1-2. Send e-mail to [voterservice@lwvgb.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvgb.org).

### **DONATION/VOLUNTEER SUPPORT OPPORTUNITYTABLE/DESK FACE SHIELDS**

Director, Voter Services, is soliciting table shields to be hand-carried to voter education/registration sites in order to promote additional health and safety for our volunteers at the America's Thrift Stores sites and others. The **Upsilon Eta Omega Chapter Connection Committee of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.** has agreed to purchase a table shield that will be on loan to The League of Women Voters. **Tyree Hyche & Dixon, LLC** has agreed to purchase two table shields that will also be on loan. Voter Services would like two more table shield donations to cover all upcoming sites. If you will donate, send e-mail to [voterservice@lwvgb.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvgb.org).

### **NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION WEEK - SEPTEMBER 22, 2020**

The LWVGB is registered with National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) and we will observe it on September 22, 2020 by providing an education video that the Director, Voter Services has already recorded. It will be sent to the Board, LWVGB for approval before release. She has also encouraged the President, LWVGB to prepare a 3 to 5-minute video to be published on NVRD. Our September 19 event will kick off the League's NVRD and the September 26 event will be also be included for NVRD.

### **ELECTION PROTECTION VOLUNTEERS**

**Volunteer Opportunities with Election Protection – Educate. Empower. Protect.**

**Election Protection** – led by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law – is the nation's largest non-partisan voter protection coalition. Through the 866-OUR-VOTE hotline and our voter assistance field program, Election Protection helps ensure eligible voters are able to participate in our democracy while collecting data for meaningful reform so that our elections are free, fair, and accessible. They are currently recruiting volunteers in a number of states across the country to help voters in 2020. Please note that we recruit volunteers in the states where they live and cannot support deployment to other states.

Are you a lawyer, paralegal, law student or other legal professional? Sign up to volunteer with Election Protection at <https://electionprotection.wetheaction.org/>.

If you aren't a legal professional, sign up with Election Protection with our nonpartisan poll monitoring program at <https://protectthevote.net/>. Please email [volunteer@866ourvote.org](mailto:volunteer@866ourvote.org) if you have any questions.

## LWVGB PROVIDES NOTARY ASSISTANCE AT AHEPA PENELOPE SENIOR LIVING APARTMENTS

### Mary Angelyn Lewis, Friend of LWVGB

Ms. Belinda Johnson with AHEPA, a facility for low income elderly and persons with disabilities, reached out to the LWVGB in search of notary who could assist the residents of AHEPA Penelope who were planning to vote by absentee ballot this November. Jean Johnson, LWVGB Communications Manager, asked for my assistance, knowing I was a notary for the State and had previously attended a voter registration drive meeting in February. At that time, we didn't know the full extent of how COVID-19 would disrupt the registration drive process this election year. I was more than happy to provide this service to anyone in the area who needed it, especially for our senior citizens who were unable to procure the necessary documents needed to vote via absentee ballot.



I visited AHEPA Penelope on August 31<sup>st</sup> and met with two of the residents who were very interested in getting their absentee ballots as soon as possible. Keeping COVID-19 safety precautions in mind during my visit, I helped them with their absentee ballot applications and assured them that I would be able to provide notary services when their ballots arrived. The ladies were a delight and I look forward to meeting with them again very soon. During the visit, I also provided Ms. Johnson with a folder full of applications, precinct locations/codes, envelopes, and mailing address labels for any of the other independent living facilities who expressed an interest in my notary services. Once the Penelope residents receive their ballots, I look forward to returning and helping them exercise their right to vote.

## VOTER RIGHTS RESTORATION PROJECT

### Dana Ellis, LWVGB Vice President

As you all know, there is confusion regarding the voting rights of individuals with previous felonies. Many think, incorrectly, that they have lost their right to vote based on a felony conviction. A law passed in 2017 was designed to clear up that confusion but unfortunately there was little public education, so many people remain in the dark. Many LWVGB members have been trained to assist individuals. Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic put a halt to in person events where this help could be provided.

Technology has come to the rescue. Several LWVGB members (5 of them LWVGB members) have been involved in a texting project which has allowed us to interact with people requesting help. To date, we have interacted with over 800 individuals. Many of them get the good news that they can register! Some require our help in going through the process of restoring their rights. We have also found some systemic issues throughout the state which appear to be related to lack of knowledge of the 2017 law. Fortunately, because of our relationships with the individuals, we have been able to stay in touch with them as they navigate the process and successfully restore their voting rights.

Please [email Dana Ellis](mailto:danaellis@lwg.org) if you have an interest in being trained to work on this project. If you would like to financially support this important work, please donate [here](#). Your donation is used to support digital advertising that informs about the assistance available and to help underwrite the cost of researching and supporting each individual case.

## I CHOOSE TO VOTE BECAUSE ...

### Ellen Buckner, LWVGB Member

The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham is sponsoring a video **by and for college students** encouraging participation as voters. Most campuses that have returning students are actively discouraging them to leave campus. The best way for them to vote is absentee in their home state. The short videos (15, 30, 60 secs) are designed to be posted on social media-Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and others—and shared broadly.

Objectives are to introduce a broad range of issues-oriented reasons for college students to vote, encourage utilization of the online program [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org), register to vote in their home state and verify status, and vote early and safely without leaving campus. The project also provides a mechanism for students to share with their friends and social groups and networks to get students engaged!

Two options were sent out in the call for video clips. One is to state on camera—"I choose to vote because" and "I will vote absentee because..." with video clips done by students on campus or in campus gear. Another is to video an adaptation of the Hamilton song "My Shot!" to "My Vote!" The latter emphasizes the 1971 amendment lowering the voting age to 18.

The project is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham and produced by See It Productions, LLC. League members are encouraged to post the videos on social media once they are available and encourage college age students to spread these on their own social media pages and sites.

For questions or to get the clips (once completed) contact Ellen Buckner, LWVGB Member, at [ebbuckner@gmail.com](mailto:ebbuckner@gmail.com), 205-910-9877.

## PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

### Leonette Slay

September is proving to be frenetic for LWVs throughout the state, and LWVGB is no exception. Ida Tyree-Hyche Hill, the tireless Voter Services Chair, has organized a group of volunteers, including many new members, to respond to daily requests. She has coordinated specific events with previous partners like America's Thrift Stores, Magic City Bar, National Coalition of 100 Black Women, and Alpha Kappa Alpha. Just as exciting, she is forging new partnerships with neighborhood associations, Grace Klein Community and YWCA. Board member Cindy Lowry will be delivering voting materials to downtown Birmingham breweries. Want to volunteer? Contact Ida at 205-583-5000, Option 5.

Voting Rights Restoration (VRR) volunteers have also been active in helping returning citizens regain their voting rights or work with local voting officials to correct rights that have been erroneously denied. See page 4 for Vice President Dana Ellis' article on VRR.

Dana has arranged a timely Zoom meeting on September 22 at 6 p.m. with two sought-after experts: the JeffCo Health Officer and Absentee Election Manager. This discussion promises to provide factual, current information for us all so mark your calendars.

I hope this provides you with a perspective on the important work LWV volunteers are doing throughout the metro area and the valuable monthly programming for members. We cannot do this without your "on the ground" support \*and\* your dues. Please renew this month, and consider adding \$20.20 in honor of our suffrage centennial if you are able. If events in 2020 have left you in a new place, we have a confidential Dues Assistance Fund.

Finally, Alabamians have just a few weeks left to participate in the census. We have the worst participation rate in the nation, and are almost guaranteed to lose a representative and billions in federal dollars. Check in with your AL social network and see if there are procrastinators, or "too busy" acquaintances that need a strong push.

### "Motor Voter Act"

From time to time we might get discouraged at the slow pace of removing voting barriers, so let's have a throwback moment to celebrate national legislation that LWV was instrumental in passing: the 1993 National Voter Registration Act. It was informally known as "Motor Voter" because it required offices that issued driver's licenses or public assistance to provide voter registration. The law became effective in 1995 and also required the USPS to treat states mailing voter material as nonprofits. Long-time LWV members will recall the LWVUS "call to action" for members to call/write elected representatives to support passage and the diligent work of our DC-area volunteer Lobby Corps.

Little known fact: the 1990s rock band R.E.M. also had a role in Motor Voter passage, by placing a tear off request on a boxed record set (Out of Time for you R.E.M. fans) to send to Rock the Vote. Over 100,000 fans responded, and all were forwarded to the Senate.

#### Registering to Vote in 1968

*"When I wanted to register to vote after moving to Williamsburg, VA, I discovered that voter registration was only available in person on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:00 to 2:00. It was done at the office of a lawyer, who I assume was an elected official, and I had to wait for him to return from a luncheon engagement before I could register."*

Leslie D. O'Neil

See the sidebar of treasurer Leslie O'Neil's memory of voter registration, pre Motor Voter. The League continues to work for removal of overt and subtle forms of voter suppression so that all eligible voters can cast their votes easily and be assured that their votes are counted.

## STATUS OF HOMEWOOD MAYORAL FORUM

As Robert Burns noted, "the best laid plans...often go awry."

On Friday night, September 5 LWVGB was asked to conduct a mayoral debate for the runoff candidates in Homewood. After hearing expressions of support from several diverse groups, the LWVGB board decided to proceed. The Chair, Voter Services issued letters of invitation on Thursday, September 11 to the two candidates for a debate to be held via Zoom on Monday, September 21. The letter included rules for the debate and requested a response by Saturday, September 13 for further planning. Neither candidate responded. The President, LWVGB called both candidates September 14. One candidate, after discussion, agreed to a debate. The other candidate did not respond to a voicemail left on his cell phone. After discussion with board members and off-board leaders who had devoted hours to planning, LWVGB decided not to pursue the debate and to concentrate our limited resources in other areas. We appreciate the valuable input from League members who are Homewood residents and other Homewood voters. We have notified the candidate who did agree and the interest groups who were eager to support a debate.

# LWVGB HAS BEEN BUSY WITH VOTER SERVICE ACTIVITIES!

## VOTER EDUCATION

LWVGB had a voter education table at [The Lumbar](#) in Pepper Place on Saturday, September 12. Volunteers pictured to the right are (R-L) new member Julie Reese and League supporters Winston Lancaster, Candace Weatherby, and Ginger Lancaster. Visitors to our table included probate judge Sherri Friday and a young law student who assisted Joyce White Vance in her work on behalf of LWVAL lawsuit against the secretary of state. Absentee ballot applications and LWVAL tip sheets were popular takeaways.



Ann Lee at Judson College VR event



Rylie Hightower, Lumbar Owner

## KUDOS! VOTE 411.ORG IS NOW ONLINE

**Barbara Lewis, LWVGB Member**

As LWVGB members know, our local league provides many opportunities for getting involved in ways that contribute to the democratic process. One way during the past two election cycles has been to assist Jean Johnson with *Vote 411.org*, the league's nonpartisan online voter guide. Although Jean did all the heavy lifting, several members, including Connie Arnwine, helped by finding contact information for the candidates, suggesting questions for the candidates to answer, and making follow-up calls once the invitations to participate went out

The candidates were gracious when called and, in a few instances, even wrote a note thanking the league for its efforts. Many, though, have not participated in an online guide and this requires ongoing reminders and assistance from the league. The goal is to have *all* candidates view *Vote411.org* as an essential way of informing voters about their background and positions, thereby building the "informed citizenry" that as Thomas Jefferson said, "is at the heart of a dynamic democracy."

### Why I Joined the League Megan Cheek

*"I felt compelled to join as the League has been mentioned in four different emails with four different groups tonight (from the upcoming mayoral debate to the restoring voting rights campaign!). THANK YOU for being a shiny light and doing ALL the goodness!"*

### LWVGB's THE VOTER Virginia Kase, LWVUS Executive Director

*"I just need to let you know how much I love getting your newsletter and when COVID passes I hope I can come visit your League. Such an inspiration!"*



## 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, Chair Finance Cmte (2022)
Jan Colson	Observer Corp Director (2022)
Cindy Lowry	Membership 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	Voter Services Chair
Nancy Sales	Voter Services Advisor
Yvonne Brakefield Knowles	<b>THE VOTER</b> Editor

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

"If white American women, with all their natural and acquired advantages, need the ballot, that right protective of all other rights; if Anglo Saxons have been helped by it ... how much more do Black Americans, male and female, need the strong defense of a vote to help secure them their right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?"

~ *Adella Hunt Logan*

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