



# The VOTER

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

February 2021

## PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

### Leonette Slay

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, LWVVA sponsored a festive 101<sup>st</sup> virtual birthday party for members throughout the state. Over 80 League members competed in suffragist trivia history, toasted the League's birthday, and even had a zany scavenger hunt to end the evening. Our MC for the evening was Stephen Stetson from Montgomery, and we enjoyed jazz music from Baldwin County member Jeanine Normand.

Our LWVVA virtual biennial convention will be May 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM, with a lunch break. This meeting will be business only, with another gathering in summer 2021 to present awards and hear our keynote speaker. Our LWVGB annual business meeting and election of officers will be virtual on May 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.

The statewide Advocacy Team has opened up a training opportunity to all LWV members: the Auburn University Elections Center will conduct training on the National Voter Registration Act and voter roll maintenance on February 24<sup>th</sup> from 10 -11 AM. Register directly with our Advocacy Chair, Kathy Jones, at [kathy.u.jones@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.u.jones@gmail.com) who will then send you meeting details.



## LWVGB Membership Meeting

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
6:00 P.M.

### "Homelessness in Our Community"

Val Green – Firehouse Shelter  
Carrie Leland – Pathways  
Gordon Sullivan – One Roof

[ZOOM Meeting Link](#)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

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

- Feb 24: LWVVA Advocacy Training
- Mar 10: LWVGB Board Meeting
- Mar 14-20: Sunshine Week
- Mar 18: LWVGB Membership Meeting
- Apr 14: LWVGB Board Meeting
- Apr 22: Earth Day
- May 22: LWVVA Virtual Convention
- May 24: LWVGB Annual Business Meeting
- Aug 24: Birmingham Mayoral Election
- Oct 05: Birmingham Mayoral Election Runoff

### CONGRATS TO HALEY COLSON LEWIS!

Congratulations to mom Haley Colson Lewis and grandmother Jan Colson. Haley had baby boy Colson William Lewis on January 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:25 AM, weighing 7 lbs, 5 oz. Sister Vivian eagerly welcomed her little brother!

Thanks to so many for renewing your membership in LWVGB! Our membership shows an upward trend (see statistics in the article below). We continue our work in 2021 to educate members and supporters on national, state, and local issues as well restoring voting rights. We will also start preparing for 2022 statewide races and have renewed our participation in Vote411.

## LWVGB IS GROWING! WE NEED YOU!

The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham grew by leaps and bounds in 2020! We recently reported 106 active members on roll to the national League. LWVGB grew by 14% over the previous year when we had 93 members. The last time we had over 100 members was in 1997, and we had to look back to 1994 - 27 years ago - to find membership even slightly higher than it is today.

Although we are very proud to close out the year with 106 members, LWVGB had to drop many at the end of January for non-renewal. (We had as many as 143 on roll at one time last year!) If you are one of those who renewed for 2020-21, thank you!! If you have not renewed, please consider doing so now. We are a grass-roots organization, and membership is our lifeblood. It is through you that we are able to educate about voting, elections, and important public issues. It is through you that we can advocate at the local, state, and national levels of government.



If you are unsure about your membership status, contact LWVGB Treasurer [Leslie O'Neil](#). You can [pay dues online or get mail-in information here](#). Thank you for your continued support of the League!

## LWVGB MARCH MEMBERSHIP MEETING

"Homelessness in Our Community"



[Join LWVGB online](#) on Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:00 PM to discuss homelessness in the Greater Birmingham area. We will examine the factors impacting homelessness, ways in which agencies are addressing the issue, and ways in which you can personally help. Guest panelists will be: **Valencia "Val" Green**, Assistant Director for [Firehouse Ministries](#), a men's homeless shelter that also provides services and counseling aimed at ending homelessness; **Carrie Leland**, Executive Director of [Pathways](#), a provider of day services, counseling, and emergency shelter to homeless women and children; and **Gordon Sullivan**, Operations Director for [One Roof](#), the coordinating agency for the homeless Continuum of Care of Central Alabama serving Jefferson, Shelby, and St. Clair counties.

Panelists will answer questions following the presentations. [Zoom registration is required](#) to attend this meeting. It is free and open to the public.

## RECAP OF LWVGB JANUARY/FEBRUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Dana Ellis, LWVGB VP and Cindy Lowry, LWVGB Director

The LWVGB January and February programs focused on environmental issues and how members can join in ongoing efforts to ensure that we have clean air and water and are working to address the impacts of climate change both globally and right here in Birmingham.

On January 12<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Joyce Lanning and Dr. Emily Northrop, presented "**The Case for Carbon Pricing and How You Can Help**" and introduced us to the work of the ten new [LWVUS Climate Teams](#). One of these is the Carbon Pricing Team. Cap and trade and the carbon tax - two methods of carbon reduction - were clearly explained. Also, we were invited to examine the many small ways we can all reduce our personal carbon footprint. The Citizens' Climate Lobby invites all concerned citizens to join the CCL's Monthly Calling Campaign. Sway your elected representative in favor of climate stabilization! See the [MCC Monthly Calling Campaign Flyer](#) to sign up and follow easy steps. If you were able to join us for this meeting, you already know how stimulating this meeting was. For those who would like to learn more but were unable to attend, you can watch a [recording of the program here](#).

The February program "**Environmental Issues in Alabama and How You Can Help**" featured **Stephen Stetson**, League member and staff for the [Sierra Club](#) Beyond Coal Campaign, **Cindy Lowry**, LWVGB Board Member and Executive Director of the [Alabama Rivers Alliance](#), and **Nina Morgan**, Environmental Justice Organizer with [GASP](#). Stephen shared about the work of the Sierra Club both nationally and in Alabama focused on advocating for energy production to move away from harmful fossil fuels and toward cleaner sources, like solar and wind. He explained that Alabama is behind many of our neighboring states in embracing these changes and how Sierra Club is partnering with other groups in the state to address these challenges. Cindy spoke about the work of the Alabama Rivers Alliance to address issues impacting our waterways and vital water supplies in Alabama. Building on Stephen's presentation, she explained that Alabama's energy sector, which relies largely on the burning of fossil fuels, like coal and nuclear power plants, represents 83% of our water withdrawals annually. This large water use goes completely unchecked because of lack of a statewide water plan and appropriate laws and regulations. Nina rounded out this enlightening discussion with the story of what is happening here in our own backyard and the hard truth about the communities that are most impacted by polluting industries and climate change. GASP has been working with the communities of North Birmingham to address decades of toxic industrial pollution that has plagued their neighborhoods leading to negative health impacts and countless other challenges. Their work alongside the community-based group, [PANIC](#), is helping raise awareness and advocacy efforts to clean up their community. All three speakers emphasized the need for League members to volunteer and get engaged by talking to elected officials about protecting the environment and public health. Dozens of league members tuned in with great questions providing an exciting interactive discussion.

If you were unable to attend and would like to listen to a recording of the meeting, you may do so by clicking [here](#).

### Update on "Fingertips"

A group of LWVGB volunteers have completed an update of "[Government at your Fingertips](#)" for the 2020 election cycle. During their work, the team considered the League's mission of encouraging informed and active participation in government and that "Fingertips" was a tool to further this mission. They visited websites for area municipalities and compiled names of officials with their physical/ mailing addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. Other helpful resources and information located will be saved as new ideas are developed to expand the usefulness of "Fingertips" for the Greater Birmingham area. The group is currently formatting the compiled information and verifying web links and contact information for officials. The [new "Fingertips"](#) is expected to be uploaded to the League's website by the end of February.

Please [email Judy Jones](#) if you have suggestions or ideas for this project.

## 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

### 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

"Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities."

~Voltaire

"Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide."

~John Adams

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