



April, 2007

The Voter

League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham

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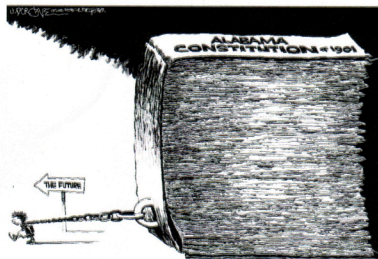
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Annual Members Business Meeting

Thursday, April 19
6:00 pm
Nabeel's Imported Foods
1706 Oxmoor Road

It's A Thick Book



LWVGB members gathered at the Homewood Library on March 29 for a screening of the new documentary by Lewis Lehe, "It's a Thick Book."

Using wry humor and serious research, "It's a Thick Book" traces the history of our voluminous 1901 Alabama State Constitution from its shady inception to its current tangle of almost 800 amendments. If you missed our viewing, check the Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform website at www.constitutionalreform.org for information on other screenings and how to order a copy of the DVD.

A Note from the President

As the League year draws to a close, it is time for our membership to come together for our Annual Business Meeting on Thursday, April 19th. We will adopt a new budget, vote on changes to our Bylaws and Program, and elect new leadership for the next biennium. Your input will help to determine the future of this league and is vital to the success of our organization. I strongly urge all members to attend.

It has been an honor for me to serve on the LWVGB Board of Directors over the past seven years. During this time, I have had the opportunity to work with a diverse and stimulating group of women, and have been greatly enlightened by the experience! I offer my sincere thanks to you –the members - for giving me the opportunity to serve as President and for your hard work and support of this organization. I am especially grateful to the members who have served on the Board during the last two years, for the leadership of Nancy Ekberg and Ginny Randolph as Vice Presidents, and for Beverly Nelson's outstanding job as **The VOTER** Editor and work with the Observer Corp.

On a more personal note, I want to acknowledge the support I have received from Jean Johnson and Becky Sylvester as previous League leaders. On numerous occasions, they have offered me counsel and encouragement in my role as president. They have also kept me from "putting my foot in my mouth" – as the old saying goes – and for that I am most thankful!

I am **so very** proud to be a member of the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham, and I pledge my continued support to this organization.

Respectfully,

Yvonne

Legislative Update

County Manager for Jefferson County

During the 2006 legislative session, a bill to establish a Jefferson County Manager position died in committee. This year three competing bills are vying for consideration. Legislators delayed a vote on HB110 scheduled for March 28 and asked Representatives DeMarco, Newton and Beeson to work together to reconcile their respective bills. Since a single member of the county delegation can kill a bill in committee, it is imperative that they agree on the final bill. In its April 4 editorial, *The Birmingham News* voiced support for HB110, the bill supported by LWVGB. Representative DeMarco, who introduced HB110, anticipates the bill coming back before committee in April.

Call for Constitution Convention Moves Forward

In this 2007 Legislative session, House Bill 98, calling for a constitutional convention, was filed in the House by Speaker Pro Tem Demetrius Newton and co-sponsored by 16 of his fellow House members. Similarly, Senator Ted Little filed Senate Bill SB 99 that calls for a constitutional convention and was supported by five Senate co-sponsors

If passed by the House and Senate, the bills will allow Alabama citizens to vote for or against a constitutional rewrite by citizen delegates. That vote will take place next winter during the Presidential primary.

Both bills are now before the respective House and Senate Constitution Committees and expected to be considered before the Legislative Spring Break beginning April 16, 2007. Projections are positive that both bills will pass the committees this year but it is never certain until the votes are cast. The sponsors and co-sponsors of the bills show bipartisan support.

House Bill 98: Speaker Pro Tem Demetrius Newton, (D) of Birmingham sponsored HB 98 and was joined by 16 Representatives; Alvin Holmes (D) of Montgomery, Bill J. Dukes (D) of Decatur, Mac Gipson (R) of Aliceville and Mike Hill (R) of Columbiana, Priscilla Dunn (D) of Bessemer, Thomas Jackson (D) of Thomasville, Pebblin Warren (D) of Tuskegee, James Gordon (D) of Saraland, Rod Scott (D) of Fairfield, John Knight, Jr. (D) of Montgomery, Sue Schmitz (D) of Toney, John Robinson (D) of Scottsboro, Alan Harper (D) of Aliceville, Barbara Bigsby Boyd (D) of Anniston, Patricia Todd (D) of Vestavia Hills and Mary Moore (D) of Tarrant.

Senate Bill 99: Senator Ted Little sponsored Senate Bill SB99 and was joined by five Senators; Roger Smitherman (D) of Birmingham, Bradley Byrne (R) of Fairhope, Steve French (R) of Birmingham, Linda Coleman, (D) of Birmingham and Vivian Figures (D) of Mobile.

To gain increased support and awareness for this bill it is essential for each of you to call the committee members and your legislators NOW. Ask each to support "Letting the People Vote" on whether or not to call a convention.

Below are the Committee members and their Contact information.

Senate Constitution, Campaign Finance, Ethics & Elections Committee:

Committee Chair, Pat Lindsey (D), District 22, Butler (205-459-2478) (334-242-7843) senbutler@aol.com

Deputy President Pro Tem, Wendell Mitchell (D), District 30, Luverne (334-335-3449) (334-242-7883)

wmitchell@faulkner.edu

Lowell Barron (D), District 8, Fyffe (256-623-2298) (334-242-7858) No email

Roger Bedford (D), District 6, Russellville (256-332-2880) (334-242-7862) senbedford@aol.com

Ben Brooks (R), District 35, Mobile (251-344-7744) (334-242-7882) benbrookssiii@aol.com

Parker Griffith (D), District 7, Huntsville (256-536-7433) (334-242-7846) No email

Arthur Orr (R), District 3, Decatur (256-345-3861) (334-345-3861) No email

Bradley Byrne (R), District 32, Fairhope (251-433-3234) (334-242-7897) Bradley.byrne@arlaw.com

Zeb Little (D), District 4, Cullman (256-775-7707) (334-242-7855) Zeb@zeblittlelawfirm.com

Myron Penn (D), District 28, Union Springs (334-738-4486) (334-242-7868)

Quinton Ross (D), District 26, Montgomery (334-242-7880) No email

Hank Sanders (D), District 23, Selma (334-875-9264) (334-242-7860) No email

House of Representatives Constitution and Elections Committee:

Chair, Randy Hinshaw (D), District 21, Madison (256-539-5441) (334-242-7733) no email

House of Representatives (continued)

Vice Chair, Tommy Sherer (D), District 13, Jasper (205-522-2348) (334-242-7694) tommysherer@yahoo.com

Jay Love (R), Ranking Minority Member, District 74, Montgomery (334-224-0822) (334-242-7716) no email
George Bandy (D), District 83, Opelika (334-749-0051) (334-242-7721) no email
Greg Canfield (R), District 48, Vestavia (205-824-4734) (334-242-7763) gcanfield@bellsouth.net
Randy Davis (R), District 96, Daphne (251-442-2552) (334-242-7724) rmdavis14@aol.com
Chad Fincher (R), District 102, Semmes (251-649-2722) (334-242-7778) Chadfincher@bellsouth.net
James Gordon (D), District 98, Saraland (251-476-7246) (334-242-7772) James@jamesgordon.com
Joseph Mitchell (D), District 103, Mobile (251-208-5480) (334-242-7735) no email
Mary Moore (D), District 59, Birmingham (205-322-0254) (334-242-7608) no email
Jack Page (D), District 21, Gadsden (256-549-8287) (334-242-7742) reppage@bellsouth.net
Patricia Todd (D), District 54, Birmingham (205-324-9822) (334-242-7718) retodd@gmail.com
Ken Guin (D), District 14, Carbon Hill (205-924-0061) (334-242-7674) no email
Micky Hammon (R), District 4, Decatur (256-350-0375) (334-242-7709) Mickyhammon@charter.net
Barry Mask (R), District 31, Tallassee (334-514-0904) (334-242-7782) Jandb1860@juno.com

If you know your legislators' names, e-mail them at their own name with a period between first and last name @alhouse.org or @alsenate.org. For example: Joe.Smith@alhouse.org. Many use a specific email. See the website <http://www.legislature.state.al.us/> for contact information for your Legislators.

Public Transportation

“*Transportation Means Business*,” a statewide conference on the need for public transportation is scheduled for April 18th in Montgomery. The event will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., in the capitol city’s Embassy Suites Hotel. Featured speakers will include Norman Mineta, former National Secretary of Transportation and Governor Bob Riley. The conference is sponsored by the Alabama Road Builders Association, and several other groups including the Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Birmingham City Council and the Jefferson County Commission. For information and to register, see www.transportationmeansbusiness.org.

Nancy Ekberg is representing our League in the planning committee, which includes more than thirty organizations and governmental units. Montgomery’s “Envision 2020” is coordinating the event.

Moss Rock Preserve Hike

Saturday, May 5, 8:30a.m.

Join the early birds and LWVGB members for a short hike at Moss Rock Preserve in Hoover. After the walk we will gather for coffee and conversation at Leonette Slay’s home. Meet at the preserve parking lot on Sulphur Springs Road, just off Shades Mountain at 8:30 a.m. A gentle hike of 1.5 miles will take us to the Boulder Field and back to the parking lot. Leonette’s home at 320 Albemarle Drive is a few minutes away, off Shades Mountain Road in Bluff Park. Those who choose to forego the hike to get a head start on the conversation can meet at Leonette’s at 10:00.

Moss Rock Preserve is a 250 acre public nature preserve owned by the City of Hoover. It contains natural features that have been lost to development in other areas of the city. Eight miles of trail expose hikers to a wide variety of natural plant communities within a compact area. The preserve lies in a highland valley made up of the south-facing slope of Shades Mountain and the north-facing slope of the much lower Pine Mountain. Boulder formations found here are normally associated with Lookout and Sand Mountains to our north. The most unique natural communities in Moss Rock are sandstone glades, which are composed of scattered trees, grasses, and wildflowers growing on large, pavement-like rock outcrops. We may come across small, stunted trees, natural bonsai that may be hundreds of years old.

Take advantage of this opportunity to take the League outdoors. Depending on member interest, we can arrange visits to other hiking destinations in the future.

League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham Annual Meeting
Thursday, April 19, 6:00 p.m.
Nabeel’s Imported Foods, 1706 Oxmoor Road

Your participation is important!

Your Ideas for the League

At the Annual Members Business meeting, scheduled for April 19th at 6 p.m. at Nabeel's the LWVGB will ask for member direction to the incoming board. We certainly hope you will be there. Here are some areas where we would appreciate your thoughts. If you are unable to attend, please submit your comments to admin@lwvgb.org or mail to the LWVGB 3451 Cliff Road South, Birmingham, AL 35205.

Rank the areas of importance to you for League focus (1 = highest importance)

- Advocacy on any local and state League position (to include member notification)
- Alabama Constitution Reform
- Education
- Environmental Activity
- Health Care
- Jefferson County Professional Manager
- Judicial Selection
- Observer Corp: County & City government, Water Works Board, Education Boards (circle)
- Transit
- Voters Service
- Other

What area of the **Environment** would you like LWVGB to focus on (through Voter articles, possible monthly programs, or special field trips)?

- Water:
 - conservation,
 - pollution causes and solutions,
 - flood control.
- Air quality.
- Land use management:
 - green space issues of development or preservation,
 - zoning.
- Other _____

Comments related to environmental activity _____

What areas of **Voters Service** should the LWVGB participate? (What can we do that differentiates the League in this area when so many organizations are registering people to vote?)

- Registering citizens as requested
- Seek venues to register citizens
- Prepare voter guides
- Speak on exercise of franchise and voters rights when requested
- Offer candidate forums
- Publish *Alabama Government at Your Fingertips*

Comments related to voters service activity _____

What area of **Health Care** would you like to see League focus?

- Study of local access issues
- Education to the community regarding resources

What area of **Transit** would you like to see League focus?

- Advocacy and community participation for developing solutions
- Education of issues

Other issues? Comments, suggestions are welcome!

LWVAL Convention 2007

All LWVGB members are invited to attend LWVAL Convention 2007. Contact Yvonne Brakefield at 205-516-8235 for details on convention speakers and workshops.

Hotel Reservation Information

Four Points by Sheraton Tuscaloosa Capstone
320 Paul Bryant
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
205 752-3200

You may reserve a room by calling 1- 800-368-7764 or (205) 752-3200. A special convention rate of \$95 per night, single or double occupancy, will be available through May 7th.

General Directions to the Hotel

Sheraton Four Points is located across the street from the Coleman Coliseum on the University of Alabama campus.

From East

Take U.S. Highway 82 West until you come to University Boulevard. Turn right off the exit and travel in the left lane and veer onto Bear Bryant Drive. Go approximately 1/2 mile and the hotel is on the right, just before Region's Bank and across from the Coleman Coliseum.

From North

From Birmingham Airport, take Interstate 59/Interstate 20 to Exit 73/McFarland Blvd. Turn right onto McFarland Blvd and proceed for approximately 2 miles and exit at University Boulevard. Turn right and stay in the left lane and veer onto Paul Bryant Drive. The hotel is approximately 1/2 mile ahead on the right.

From West

Take U.S. Highway 82 East to the University Boulevard exit. Turn right off the exit and stay in the left lane and veer left onto Paul Bryant Drive. Go approximately 1/2 mile and the hotel is on the right, just before Region's Bank and just across from the Coleman Coliseum.

From South

Take I-59/20 to exit 73. Turn left on to U.S. Highway 82 West. Drive approximately 2 miles and turn right at the University Boulevard exit. Stay and the left lane and proceed down Paul Bryant Drive. The hotel is approximately 1/2 mile ahead on the right, just before Region's Bank and across from the Coleman Coliseum.



The League of Women Voters of Alabama
2007 State Convention
Tuscaloosa, Alabama
Saturday, May 19- Sunday, May 20, 2007
REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

LOCAL LEAGUE _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

LOCAL LEAGUE DELEGATE _____

STATE LEAGUE DELEGATE _____

GUEST _____

MEMBER _____

FULL REGISTRATION (SAT & SUN)
(INCLUDES SATURDAY LUNCH & DINNER)

\$70.00 _____

FULL MEETING (WITHOUT MEALS)

\$20.00 _____

ONE-DAY REGISTRATION
(SAT. - INCLUDING LUNCH AND DINNER)

\$60.00 _____

ONE DAY REGISTRATION
(SAT OR SUN - WITHOUT MEALS)

\$15.00 _____

SATURDAY LUNCH ONLY

\$20.00 _____

SATURDAY BANQUET ONLY

\$30.00 _____

LATE FEE (AFTER May 7th) ADD \$5.00

\$5.00 _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED

\$ _____

Please send this form with your check no later than May 7 to

Ginnie Bennett
1028 E. University
Auburn, AL 36830

LWVGB Calendar of Events

Wednesday, April 18 th	Public Transportation Statewide Conference "Transportation Means Business" Embassy Suites Hotel 300 Tallapoosa Street Montgomery, AL	7:30 AM – 3:00 PM
Thursday, April 19 th	LWVGB 2007 Annual Business Meeting Nabeel's Imported Foods 1706 Oxmoor Road Dessert Room	6:00 PM
May 19 th -20 th	LWVAL Convention 2007 Four Points Sheraton Hotel Tuscaloosa, AL	
Monday, April 30 th	LWVGB Board of Directors Transitional Meeting Auxiliary Room, Chapman Burns Hall Samford University	6:00 P.M.

LWVGB
3451 Cliff Road South
Birmingham, AL 35205

