



January, 2008

The Voter

**Board of Directors
League of Women Voters of
Greater Birmingham**

205 583-5000

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Get Engaged! -- A Note from the President

Happy New Year! On behalf of your Board, may 2008 treat you well! We have some engaging activities planned, and first up is the interview of our local legislators. Elections will be held for several positions (second vice president, secretary, treasurer, and several directorships). Please consider tossing your name into the process during this election year. Our elections are civil and there are no early caucus meetings. Serving is rewarding and educational.

Our November meeting on Immigration and reaching consensus was lively as it was compelling. The board recommended that a separate letter be sent to LWV commenting on some issues LWVGB members had with the structure of questions, and some of the information found with the study materials. While we commend LWV for moving into the technology age, we found some of the format used was needlessly restricting. But that is one of the pleasant sides of the League, we try to discuss and work out issues and mechanisms.

The December 1 Holiday Luncheon was a success and our guest speaker, Mark White, President-elect of the Alabama Bar Association, provided interesting information about the Alabama Bar's stance on judicial selection. Judicial selection has received wide-spread interest as a result of the last Alabama Supreme Court race. More money was spent in Alabama for the Chief Justice position than in any other state. Mr. White asked that the League consider working with the Bar to change some of the steps in judicial selection. An early step may be in a recommendation for levels of experience as a requirement for judgeship.

Our meeting this month is the last Thursday, January 31st because the Homewood Library is closed our traditional day. The meeting will be another study with Initiative and Referendum for Alabama featured. It should prove to be another lively discussion. Information is available now on the web site.

You should see some League public service announcements about the upcoming primary elections. Our member Linda Verin has worked with Peggy Carpenter to produce visual PSAs which will be shown by various television stations locally and state-wide. The focus is to bring important dates and preparation to the minds of citizens.

Ginny

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Jefferson County Swamped with New Voter Registrations

Registrar Nell Hunter has asked for LWVGB's help now through the Presidential Primary registration deadline on Jan. 25.

Would you volunteer to help for a couple of hours - or more or less as your schedule permits? You can volunteer for one shift or several. The schedule is absolutely flexible. No previous experience is necessary.

Whatever time you can give would be gratefully appreciated! It's one of the most gratifying things you can do as a League member Just ask those who have done this before!

To volunteer, call the League at 205 583-5000 or email to admin@lwvgb.org.

Thank you in advance for your help!



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Congressman Davis Invites You to a Town Meeting

Who: Everyone

What: A town Hall Meeting will be hosted by U.S. Representative Artur Davis on Thursday, January 24th. The public is invited to attend and share concerns with the Congressman. No need to register

Where: Center Point City Hall, 2209 Center Point Parkway

When: Thursday, January 24th from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Contact League member Paulette Rowe if you have questions: Paulette.Rowe@mail.house.gov



Are You Ready to Run?

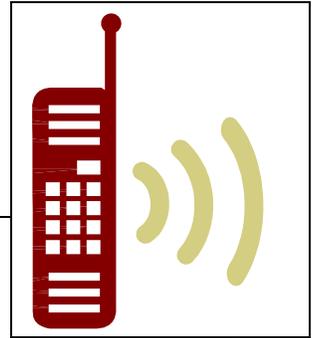
AAUW of Alabama's **Ready to Run** project will kick off its first sessions to train qualified Alabama women for leadership roles in government on January 12 in Birmingham and January 26 in Auburn and Huntsville. It involves five all-day training sessions for a fee of \$158.00. If you are interested but miss the first session, you can make it up during the summer session that will begin in Birmingham in July. Participants will learn about qualifying and filing appropriate documents, developing a campaign team, fund-raising, preparing and marketing a campaign message, and networking. Other sessions will be held in major cities in the state through June 2009. It is anticipated 150 women will enroll in **Ready to Run** with 20% running for an elected government position in 2008 and 2009 combined. For more information, go to www.aauw-alabama.org, or contact Cindy Bell, cindy.bell@stvhs.com.



Initiative and Referendum

Should Alabama consider adding these two processes?

Review the material (www.lwval.org/leagdemoc/ir_study_packet/) and come and discuss this with other members during the lively sessions planned for Thursday, January 31st and February 28th at 6:30 at the Homewood Library. The first session will feature discussion of the issues and the February session will focus on the consensus questions. *[Members can also discuss I&R online on the LWVAL Dialogue blog at www.lwval.org/wordpress/]* Any member who does not have internet access and wishes a copy of the Initiative and Referendum study materials, please call Nancy Ekberg at 967-2897.



On-Call Transportation Pilot Program

Plans for a pilot program that will provide an on-call transportation system for Central Alabama will be unveiled at a meeting in Montgomery on Tuesday, January 22nd from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It will be held at the Auburn University campus in Montgomery in Room 223 of the Taylor Center. A free lunch will be provided. The goal of the program is to expand throughout the state so that persons may make one call to access transportation in their area, wherever they live. On-call transportation systems are typically used by senior citizens and those who are physically or economically disadvantaged.

The League will have a display at the meeting and so will ACCR. If you can attend, you must register by calling Callie Greer at 334-356-1949 or 334 430 6348 or e-mail her at calliegreermtcorganization@gmail.com

The event is sponsored by Easter Seals of Central Alabama.

If you can help with the League display, call Nancy Ekberg at 205-967-2897 or e-mail her at naneberg@aol.com

Did You Know???

To learn more about constitutional reform link to:
<http://www.constitutionalreform.org/>

Did you know that when the 2008 Legislative Session begins, two new bills to allow the people to vote on holding a constitutional convention to rewrite the Alabama 1901 Constitution will again be offered? In the House, one bill will be sponsored by Speaker Pro Tem, Demetrius Newton. In the Senate a bill will be sponsored by Senator Ted Little. Watch for these bills and urge your State Legislators to vote to support them. If you see your legislators before then, let them know the bills will be offered and that you want them to vote in favor. The League supports the bills that were offered last year and the new bills will be substantially the same.

Speaking of bills, Representative Paul DeMarco will again introduce a bill to allow a manager form of government for our Jefferson County Commission. The League favors this form of government for our Commission.

Nancy Ekberg

LWVGB Welcomes our Newest Member

Welcome to new member Trecia Benefield of Jasper. Trecia is with the Independent Living Center of Greater Birmingham and has worked for public transit throughout the area.

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National League Program Planning

National League Program Planning for 2008-10 is Underway. In even-numbered years prior to national conventions, we, the grassroots, advise the national League board on program. (See the three program-planning options below.) After reviewing the program proposals from Leagues over the country, the national board will recommend program for the next biennium to the national convention to be held in Portland, Oregon June 13-17.

Program planning includes the following:

- A systematic review of existing positions. Leagues may propose for consideration a detailed review of the one position they think is most in need of examination.
- Propose a study of an issue not currently covered by a position. The study must fit into the category of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources or Social Policy. A League proposing a new study is asked to provide the scope of the study in 25 words or less.
- Propose a concurrence. Leagues may recommend that the LWVUS convention adopt a position of another League. A League that proposes concurrence must provide the title and scope of the position and the name of the League that did the original study.

The local program-planning committee needs your help as it considers the three program-planning options and develops its report to the LWVGB board of directors. As is League practice, we do our homework before we recommend. **Please [review the national positions and reply with your recommendation](#) by Monday, February 4.** For your convenience, the reply form has links to the national positions, in brief and in full, and their history. If you prefer, you may send your program recommendation by mail to Becky Sylvester at 604 Paden Drive, Birmingham, AL 35226.

Your recommendation will be included in the report to the LWVGB Board of Directors. If you have questions, email Becky at lwvus-review@lwggb.org or call 205 583-5000.

Nominations to the LWVGB Board of Directors

Nominations are open.

Nominate yourself or another LWVGB member for one of the following:

- second vice president
- secretary
- treasurer
- several directorships

Send your nominations to :

Betty Warnock, chair, Nominations Committee
bettywarnock@gmail.com
254.6052



Together We Can Build a Great Democracy!

**LWVGB Holiday Luncheon
The Club
December 1, 2007**



Mark White, President of Alabama Bar Association and Judge Pete Johnson



Ruth Wright, E.J. Stephens and Judith Hand all former Presidents!



LWVGB Upcoming Events

January	31	6:30 – 8:00	Member Meeting	Homewood Library 116	LWVAL Study: Initiative and Referendum
February	6	6:00 – 7:30	Board Meeting	Samford Chapman Burns Hall	
February	14		LWV Birthday		
February	28	6:30 – 8:00	Member Meeting	Homewood Lib 116	Initiative and Referendum

LWVGB
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