



July 2009

## The Voter

**Board of Directors**  
**League of Women Voters of**  
**Greater Birmingham**  
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Sarah McDonald, President  
Nancy Ekberg, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Cissy Bennett, Secretary  
Amanda McGriff, Treasurer  
Carol St. Lewis, Director  
Connie Arwine, Director  
Joyce Lanning, Natural Resources  
Joan Burroughs, Public Relations  
Ginny Randolph, Voter Services  
Karen Threlkeld, Editor  
*The Voter*  
Ann Smith, Nominating Committee  
Chair  
Jean Johnson,  
Off-Board Technical Director  
Ann Smith,  
Off-Board Observer Corps Water  
Works  
Angelyn Simmons, Off-Board Voter  
Assistant

### Looking for the Perfect Gift?

If you are looking for the perfect birthday, holiday, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandmother's Day, Thank You, or Any Day gift for someone who cares about Alabama and particularly, about what is happening in the Metropolitan Birmingham Area, how about giving that person a membership in the League? Make checks payable to "LWVGB" in honor of that special person and we will send a notification of your gift to the recipient!

### Annual Meeting Review

Our April 30 Annual Meeting was well attended! We put our members to work assembling and folding our updated **Fingertips** guides before dinner.



We awarded member Ruth Wright for her 50-year anniversary with the League!

Lastly, we voted in our 2009-2010 Board which includes:

President - Sarah McDonald  
1st Vice President - Nancy Ekberg  
Director – Joan Burroughs  
Director – Ginny Randolph  
Director – Karen Threlkeld  
Director – Carol Saint Lewis  
Treasurer – Amanda McGriff

Cissy Bennett, Connie Arwine, and Joyce Lanning will continue serving in their roles through 2010 and the 2009-2010 Nominating Committee will be Anne Smith (Chair) and Nancy Sales.

Lastly, the Board thanked Ginny Randolph for her service as President by awarding her with a small token of our appreciation. Board Members contributed toward a donation that was made to the League Education Fund on Ginny's behalf.



## League Agenda

The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham approved its Local Programs and Support Positions for 2009-2010. This documents our positions on Government, Transportation, Education, Administration of Justice, and Natural Resources. We have dropped the Study of Healthcare for the Uninsured and Underinsured in Jefferson County. With the current Administration's focus on healthcare in general, this topic may be resurrected next year. Our 2009-2010 Budget is organized a bit differently with the Education Fund items separated. Overall our income and expenses are reduced from 2008-2009 levels. All these documents are available in the "Members" section of the League Website. Contact Jean Johnson via email at [jjohnson@lwval.org](mailto:jjohnson@lwval.org) if you do not have access to the Members' Area.



## Legislative Update

In the waning days of the session, the Alabama Legislature finally passed a bill authorizing the Jefferson County Commission to hire a County Manager! Governor Riley signed the bill and it is now official. Thanks to everyone who contributed to making this happen....but we are not done! We now need to focus on asking the County Commission to hire a County Manager as soon as possible. Please write to the County Commission requesting them to act on this issue!

## Membership Update

A good message for someone who you think might be interested in League membership is the fact that her voice will be more powerful and credible by joining our voices. There is power in numbers and we can get more done in unison. Let us know about anyone who you think might be interested so we can contact them and/or send them a brochure. Call Nancy Ekberg at 205-873-2897 or send email to [naneberg@aol.com](mailto:naneberg@aol.com).



The League bids farewell to Kathryn Kerchoff, who served the Board as our VOTER Editor. Kathryn and her family are relocating to Atlanta. Thanks to Kathryn for her service to the League!!



## Don't Hang up the Phone!

One of our new members, **Norma Lehman**, may be calling you to remind you about the General Meetings each month. Thanks for Norma for taking this responsibility!

## State Convention Report

Several Birmingham League members attended the Alabama State League Convention on May 2-3 at the Highland Convention Center in Birmingham. We handled State League Business and heard some very interesting educational presentations by Elisabeth McNamara, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the National League who spoke first on the League's Agenda and later on League Membership; Dr. Juan Gilbert of Auburn University who spoke on Internet voting; League member Joyce Lanning who spoke on Climate Change; and Mary McGinnis of the Mobile League who did a very interesting and interactive presentation called "VOTE 18".



The evening banquet was highlighted by a presentation on Ethics by James L. Sumner, Director of the Alabama Ethics Commission.

The Sunday morning events continued and concluded official League business including adopting the 2009-2010 Budget, Bylaws, and Program and electing League Officers.

2009-2010 LWVAL Officers are Kathy Byrd of Tuscaloosa and Charlotte Ward of East Alabama who will be co-Presidents; Mary Lynn Bates who will serve as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; Scarlett Gaddy of Tuscaloosa who will serve as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; Sarah McDonald of Birmingham who will serve as Secretary; Virginia Bennett of East Alabama who will serve as Treasurer; and Directors Anne Permaloff of Montgomery, Joyce Lanning of Birmingham, Laura Hill of East Alabama, Hattie Kaufman of Tuscaloosa, and Jeanine Normand of Baldwin County.



## Planning Meeting & Virtual Council Report

The new Board met on June 13 to conduct a planning session for 2009-2010.



Later that day, the National League conducted its first ever “Virtual Council” meeting. This meeting was originally planned as a face-to-face meeting but in an attempt to reduce cost, the meeting was changed to an online format. The Board for our Birmingham League “dialed in” to the virtual council meeting to listen to the proceedings.

### McDonald’s Musings:

*A Word from President Sarah McDonald*

This issue of the Voter talks a lot about what has happened lately. The LWVGB Annual Business meeting and the LWVAL State Convention were important to the organization. At the state convention a re-study of the Health Care position was adopted. The current position (available at [www.lwval.org](http://www.lwval.org)) will be retained until a new position is adopted. At the local level we have no new studies. However, at our planning session it was decided to begin preliminary work on the feasibility of new studies on education and Shelby County Government.

The board is also excited about the decision to begin a pilot program using a service to receive dues payments and contributions on our website. After a year, the board will evaluate its usefulness.

Our Observer Corps under the direction of Ann Smith is expanding. Board members Joan Burroughs and Carol Saint Lewis will observe the Birmingham Board of Education and Metropolitan Planning Commission respectively.

Our first general meeting will be on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup> and the topic will be some aspects of the Health Care debate.

See you then.

## LWVGB Calendar

Month	Day	Time	Event
July	1		<i>Amendment XXVI passed in 1979 to lower the legal voting age to 18</i>
July	14	6:00pm	<i>District 7 City Council Candidate &amp; Community Forum, Five Points West Library, 4812 Avenue W, Birmingham AL 35208, organized by Greater Birmingham Ministries</i>
August	4	11:30am	<i>Board Meeting, 2100 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North</i>
August	18		<i>Ratification of Amendment XIX, 1920</i>
September	24	6:00pm	<i>General Membership Meeting, Location: Homewood Library</i>

### Help Wanted

Jean Johnson, our technical chair, would like to find a member who will help with updating and maintaining our website. She will train anyone interested in learning how to do this.

In the same vein, Amanda McGriff would like help with our Equality Day Card project which might involve some graphic design. This project needs to be done this summer as Women's Equality Day is on August 26<sup>th</sup>.

Anyone who is interested in either or both of these jobs can contact Sarah McDonald at [smcdonald3357@charter.net](mailto:smcdonald3357@charter.net).

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