



The Voter

March 2009

Board of Directors
League of Women Voters of
Greater Birmingham
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Nancy Ekberg, 1st Vice President
Cissy Bennett, Secretary
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Works
Karen Threlkeld, Voters Service
Amanda McGriff, Membership
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Spring Forward into LWVGB Business!

Thanks to Yvonne Brakefield and Judith Hand for updating our *Alabama Government at your Fingertips*. Jean has already posted it online. Actually we have two versions, one a short one to download and print as a tri-fold and a longer version with listing of city mayors and others. We will be printing "*Fingertips*" and asking members to distribute to local libraries.

The Board discussed the consensus from the February meeting (see article) and it will be submitted to LWV. Our consensus on off-site voting is now revealed in the LWV's new position statements that will be adopted at the LWV's Convention on May 2-3 in Birmingham (Hotel Highland at Five Points South).

This issue of the *Voter* has the information for our Annual Business Meeting scheduled for April 30th at Richard's BBQ on Acton Road by I-459.

Our March member meeting is scheduled with American Association of University Women on March 14th at The Club. Anna Blair will be discussing the "Economic Status of Women in Alabama". If you have not made your reservation please do so quickly. March 11 is the deadline for the reservation. (see article)

Ginny



March 14 Women's History Month Meeting and Luncheon

Saturday, March 14, 2009
The Club, Vulcan Room, Lower Level
Program will be at 11 a.m., Luncheon will be at 12 noon

Program starts at 11:00 a.m.
"Economic Status of Women in Alabama"
Anna Blair, Attorney and Public Policy Chair
AAUW of Alabama

Co-sponsored by
The American Association of University Women
and
The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham

Make your reservation by
Wednesday, March 11, 2009!
Go to www.lwvgb.org/women-history.html
If you have any questions, call:
205 951-0265 (AAUW) or 205 871-8194 (LWVGB)



April 30th Annual Business Meeting

5:30 p.m.

Richard's BBQ at I-459 and Acton Road

The following reports are submitted for the agenda:

- Nominations
- By-Laws
- Program
- Budget

No reservations required – But Your Presence is desired!

You, as an LWVGB member may nominated other people, including yourself, to the Board of Directors, make suggestions for other changes in the By-Laws, Program and Budget.

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Nominations for 2009-2010 Board of Directors

The Nominating Committee recommends the following nominees for 2009-2011 LWVGB Board positions:

President—Sarah McDonald
1st Vice President—Nancy Ekberg
Director—Joan Burroughs
Director—Virginia Randolph
Director—Karen Threlkeld

The Nominating Committee recommends the following nominees for unexpired 2009-10 LWVGB Board positions:

Treasurer—Amanda McGriff
Director—Carol Saint Lewis

The Nominating Committee recommends the following members for the 2009-10 Nominating Committee:

Chair—Anne Smith
Member—Nancy Sales

The following board members will continue to serve in their current positions during 2009-10:

Secretary—Cissy Bennett
Director—Connie Arnwine
Director—Joyce Lanning



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By-Laws Proposals

For the By-Laws, only the sections where changes are recommended are published here but you may refer to our current [By-Laws](#) on line. Additions are noted in green bold italics.

Article I:

Name

Sec. 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of ***Alabama and of the League of Women Voters of the United States.*** [~~the United States and of the League of Women Voters of Alabama.~~]

Rationale: the three League levels should be in order of scope.

Article IX Program

Sec 4. Program Changes

In the case of altered circumstances, program changes may be made provided that:

- a. Information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed and
- b. The proposed change is adopted by the membership by a majority vote at ***the meeting.*** [~~a subsequent meeting at which there is a quorum...~~]

Rationale: If an issue is important, it should not takes weeks to resolve.



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LWVGB Program Proposals

The Program review committee suggests keeping all current positions as currently existing with the following changes in two positions. You may refer to the [LWVGB Program](#) on-line as well as the [LWVAL Program](#) and the [LWV Impact on Issues](#) that has the LWV Positions. Additions are noted in green bold italics.

III. Education - The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham supports effective public education *in the various school districts of* Greater Birmingham including adequate financing of total needs, extension of public education prior to the first grade, encouraging public involvement in local schools, and encouraging efforts to accredit local schools.

Rationale: For clarity since we cover more than just the city of Birmingham.

V. Natural Resources

A. The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham recognizes that it is the responsibility of the local government to help assure health and safety of citizens and their environment through adequate funding to enforce local, state and federal regulations and strong regulations that are at least as comprehensive as federal regulations, and LWVGB supports regulations and enforcement of legislation in the following areas that promote environmental quality with provision of reasonable incentives and adequate financing at the local level for

Air quality

Water quality

Land and water related to Surface Mining

Transportation corridors with nuclear waste or other hazardous waste transport

B. For the areas listed above the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham supports

- zoning and subdivision regulation designed to protect flood plains and prevent flooding; and assessment of urban runoff to determine water quality problems resulting from urban and industrial runoff.*
- forfeiture of bond and denial of subsequent permits to owner-operators not complying with appropriate reclamation in surface mining.*
- availability of specialized equipment and trained personnel to handle local accidents involving hazardous shipments and reductions in shipments of hazardous materials through methods that reduce the generation of waste shipments.*
- efforts to focus public awareness on the dangers inherent in any serious accident involving shipments of high level, large quantity nuclear fuel and spent fuel wastes, and the inability of emergency procedures to prevent radioactive contamination. (Continued on the next Page)*

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LWVGB Program Proposals (continued from previous page)

- *tight control of transport of nuclear materials and waste, including pre-notification and other regulations that would enhance control.*
- *the power of local government to regulate nuclear transport in the absence of adequate regulation at the federal and state levels. This regulation might include, if necessary, controlling or banning shipments of high-level, large quantity fuel and spent fuel wastes.*

C. The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham supports parks and recreation and the acquisition of park land for public use and evaluation of proposed sales of park land with respect to potential use of land or money.

[Delete entire current version, much of it is already included in the National Positions and LWVAL Positions. Those not included are listed above to include for LWVGB

The Proposed LWVGB Budget

LWVGB BUDGET

	2008-9 YT D	BUDGET	2009-2010 Proposed
GENERAL BUDGET			
General Income			
General Contributions			
Member	105.66	400	200
Non-members	100	0	100
Member In-Kind	0	0	0
Non-Member In-Kind	0	0	0
Membership Dues	2727	3605	3030
Miscellaneous Income			
Sale of Merchandise	0	0	0
Holiday Luncheon	341	450	450
Ed Fund Reimbursements	0	97.5	0
From Reserves	0	1911.9	1114
Income Subtotal	3853.66		4894
Interest - MMF	13.96	400	20
Interest - CDs	372.17		850
Total General Income	4239.79	6864.4	5764

(Budget is continued on Next Page)

General Expenses

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	YTD	Budget	Proposed
General Expenses			
Advocacy	0	0	65
Citizen Education			0
Fingertips	0	150	150
Speakers Bureau	0	0	0
Voter Service			20
Voter Guides	18.52	0	0
Candidate Forums	0	800	0
Voter Registration	0	20	0
Program			
Resource Committees	0	50	0
Reaching Consensus	0	10	0
Observer Corps	0	10	10
Member Services			
Meetings	45	160	100
Hospitality	0	100	100
Holiday Luncheon	375.95	450	450
Membership Development			
Membership Brochure	0	150	150
New Member Packet	0	25	10
National Brochure	0	0	0
Recruit/Retain	63.84	80	65
Voter	180	225	240
Intra League Activities			
Nat'l Cnc/Cnv Delegates	0	1200	1500
State Cnv/Cnc Delegates	0	350	350
Support for the League			
LWVUS	911	2023.4	959
LWVAL	620	906	685
Administration			
Board Tools	7.4	50	20
Committees	0	0	10
Officers	0	0	0
Operations			
Bank Charges	34.13	0	0
Supplies/Printing	15.7	30	45
Postage	43.4	25	75
Telephone	312.16	650	540
Website Hosting	0	120	120
Finance Drive	86.4	80	100
Miscellaneous		0	0
To Reserves	0	0	0
Total General Expenses	2713.5	7664.4	5764

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Proposed Budget Continued)

ED FUND BUDGET	Proposed
General Income	
Member donations	500
Non-Member donations	400
Equality Day Project	600
Total Income	1300
General Expenses	
Reimbursements for Operations	97.50
PMP to LWV	959
Project Reimbursements	
Total Expenses	1056.50

Leaguers in Wonderland

The LWVAL State Convention will convene in Birmingham on Saturday, May 2nd. It will conclude on Sunday, May 3rd at noon. This biennial meeting will be held at the Highland Conference Center and Hotel (formerly the Pickwick)in Five Points South. The facility has been completely redecorated in a really funky style – sort of Alice in Wonderland meets Art Deco.

Everyone is welcome to attend all or part of the meeting. The business meeting starts at 10:00 am on Saturday and concludes on Sunday morning. There will be a luncheon and two workshops on Saturday afternoon. The Saturday evening banquet will feature another speaker. Spouses and friends are welcome on Saturday night. Please join League members from around the state in Five Points. Details and prices coming soon.

Welcome!

Welcome two new members:

- Ann DiPizio, a student at UAB
- JacQue Copling who moved here from Texas.

March 2009



Sunshine Week

Seven of our members will spread out across Jefferson and Shelby Counties to carry the word about the League's commitment to promoting transparency at all levels of government. This month, they will be attending commission, council and board meetings as more than observers. They will also deliver a message. In an announcement of Sunshine Week, March 15-21, our LWVGB representatives will describe the participants and purpose as a coalition of non-partisan organizations, including newspaper professional groups, libraries, broadcast media, schools, non-profits, and the LWVUS, all sharing an interest in openness and access to information.

The emphasis of Sunshine Week this year is on open records, especially at the state level. Locally, our LWV representatives will be encouraging the governmental bodies that they visit to make use of the Internet to provide more information to citizens. The LWV Education Fund will host its fourth Annual National Dialogue on March 20 in Washington DC at which a panel will discuss federal openness policies and ways in which people can use government information to make a difference in their communities.

Thanks to all who participate this month by attending a governmental meeting.

Ann Smith

League Discusses the National Popular Vote Compact

The February general meeting involved a discussion and subsequent consensus-taking on the National Popular Vote Compact. This movement aimed at a popularly-elected President is gaining notice nationwide. Arkansas, New Mexico and Vermont have now passed the needed legislation for the Compact.

In a nutshell, the Compact is made between states in which each member state's legislature passes a law giving all of its electoral votes to the winner of the popular vote in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. When enough states pass such a law as to add up to 270 electoral votes, the popular election of the president comes to pass.

League members in Greater Birmingham felt that this was a good idea and agreed that while an amendment to the Constitution eliminating the Electoral College was still desirable, the Compact concept was probably more achievable. Our League's consensus will be combined with local Leagues across the country. The LWVUS boards will tally the results and announce the results some time this spring or summer.

Sarah McDonald

Sarah McDonald and Wanda Godfrey moderated a great discussion regarding the National Popular Vote Compact





Lanning Updates on the Environment

The LWVUS has chosen Global Climate Change and Health Care as the two top priority issues for 2009. Our national advocacy team is working with many other groups on a joint statement for a national call to action on global climate change. When the statement is issued in the next few weeks, our state league can use it to help us shape communication with our Congressional delegation, and we can benefit locally from educating ourselves about the consensus the national league shares with our allies.

Click [here](#) to access the LWVUS global climate change web page. You can go directly to two recently-released one-page documents at [LWVUS Fact Sheets on the Climate Change](#). The first document outlines why the United States must support aggressive action on reducing greenhouse gases and the second outlines key elements in an effective cap and trade system.

In August of last year, the national League called for a 10-year moratorium on coal-fired power plants and stated that *"A 10-year moratorium on new plants, along with incentives – like Renewable Portfolio Standards and a federal Production Tax Credit – will encourage cleaner and less destructive technologies to grow. It will also allow time to test carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies, assess their commercial viability, and determine whether storing CO2 underground for hundreds of years is feasible and safe."* They also pointed out that *'New technologies can help reduce CO2 emissions from coal-fired power plants, but there is no such thing as "clean coal."*' (see [FAQ on 10-year moratorium](#)).

A national Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) would require that a certain percentage of each state's electricity must be generated from renewable sources (such as wind, solar, geothermal, biomass) by a selected date (usually 2020). The Alabama Permanent Joint Legislative Committee on Energy, co-chaired by Sen. Mitchell and Rep. Wren, has objected to recent proposals for a national RPS, although some version is in place in over half of the states. The Alabama Committee on Energy's position is that this legislation would be unfair to Alabama because it would not give credit for existing hydroelectric, clean coal, and nuclear capacity as renewable energy sources. However, coal and nuclear are not renewable resources, although nuclear can be considered an 'alternative' resource.

There is a major advertising campaign from the coal and power-generating industries to tout the advantages of 'clean coal' in spite of the reality that coal is far from clean. It is a major pollution source of carbon dioxide, among other wastes. For example, coal ash wastes stored in a pond in Kingston, Tennessee recently ruptured the dam, releasing a billion gallons of sludge and destroying over a dozen homes. The industry has been required by the Clean Air Act to reduce emissions of mercury, nitrous oxide, and sulphur dioxide (which causes acid rain) and has built scrubbers to remove some of these pollutants. Only in the past year has the Environmental Protection Agency been directed to make a determination about the harmful effects of CO2, but it has yet to act.

The national League's positions on global climate change and the call for a moratorium on coal-fired power plants will be important for us to support as Congress begins work on the energy, environment and economy priorities of the new administration.

Joyce Lanning



LWVGB Upcoming Events

Month	Day	Time	Event	Location
March	14	11 a.m.	Member Meeting with AAUW: Report on the Economic Status of Women in Alabama	The Club
March	22- 28		Sunshine week: Visit a government meeting	
April	30	5:30 p.m.	Member Business Meeting	Richard's BBQ on Acton Rd
May	2-3	10 a.m.	LWVAL Convention	Highland Conference Center and Hotel Five Points South

LWVGB
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