



The VOTER

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

NOVEMBER-2011

VETS AND SUFFRAGETTES

The nation's oldest Veterans Day celebration has a new participant - The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham! Adamson Ford is providing the League with a convertible for use during the parade, and LWVGB President, Ida Tyree Hyche will greet the crowds.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

The LWVGB is looking for suffragists and suffragettes to march in the parade on Friday November 11, starting at 1:30pm. Please contact Communications Director, Cyron dys Jackson, at cyron dysjackson@gmail.com, if you would like to join us!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 11, 2011: Veteran's Day Luncheon & Parade. Contact Cyron dys Jackson at cyron dysjackson@gmail.com for more information.

November 14, 2011: Monthly Membership Meeting, 6pm, The Forum at the BJCC, 2nd Floor Auditorium *(See story on this page.)*

November 17, 2011: Educational Consensus Meeting, 10am, Woodrow Hall, 5504 1st Ave N. *(See story on Page 2.)*

November 29, 2011: Special General Election / House District 45 which includes Leeds; parts of Irondale, Center Point, and communities in eastern Jefferson and Western St. Clair Counties.

December 7, 2011: Holiday Luncheon, 11:30am, The Club.

SEE YOU AT THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING!

The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham will host its monthly membership meeting on Monday, November 14th, 2011, at 6pm, at The Forum at the BJCC, 2100 Richard Arrington Blvd North, 2nd Floor Auditorium.

This month's meeting will feature Jefferson County House Delegation Chairs, Rep. Paul DeMarco and Rep. John Rogers, Jr. The two will address League members, as well as the public on the Legislature's role in working towards a solution to Jefferson County's financial crisis, share ideas and concerns. There will also be a question and answer segment.

The public is invited to attend, and an invitation has also been extended to the entire delegation. Your participation is also needed, and we hope to see you!

Please join us!!

Monday November 14, 2011

6pm

The Forum at the BJCC

2nd Floor Auditorium

**2100 Richard Arrington Blvd North
Birmingham, AL**



Education Consensus

Delegates at the 2010 national LWV convention voted to undertake a two year national study of the federal role in education. LWVUS background material and questions for consensus, developed by our national headquarters, are enclosed. To meet the national deadline for our input, we have scheduled a meeting to reach consensus on Thursday, November 17, from 10:00 to 12:00 at Woodrow Hall (5504 1st Avenue North Birmingham, AL 35212). The meeting will be held in the Magnolia Room on the Second floor. There is a parking lot adjacent to the building, as well as street parking.



"Consensus" is a process where agreement is reached using League responses to specific questions which all Leagues participating in the study have received. Consensus is not a simple majority, nor is it unanimity; rather it is the overall sense of the group as expressed through the exchange of ideas and opinions.

One of the strengths of the League is that we inform ourselves about the issue under consideration before making decisions or developing a position. This is what makes subsequent League action on the issue uniquely credible and respected.

Please carefully review the materials provided as well as the questions we are to discuss and plan to attend this important meeting on November 17th. Our answers will contribute to the development of a national position regarding what the federal role in education should be.

Consensus Materials

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/TemplateRedirect.cfm?template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=17606>
<http://www.lwv.org/AM/TemplateRedirect.cfm?template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=17607>
<http://www.lwv.org/AM/TemplateRedirect.cfm?template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=17608>
<http://www.lwv.org/AM/TemplateRedirect.cfm?template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=17610>

Consensus Questions

<http://www.lwv.org/members/education-study/>



Constitutional Reform Commission Update

The 16 member Commission had their third meeting two weeks ago and will have their next meeting Nov. 16th. They voted to approve minor changes to Article XIII, the Banking Article, and minor changes to Article XII the Corporation Article.

They did not vote on Article III, the Separation of Powers Article,

but no changes are expected. They will likely approve it on the 16th. They will deal with the structure of the Legislature as they tackle Article IV, the Legislature Article. This is the Article where home rule for counties could be introduced.

The State League will make a presentation at the meeting on the 16th. Ruth Wright and others are framing the League's position on home rule and Ruth Ott will read the statement. Members of the League would find the proceedings interesting. Come to room 617 in the State House on the 16th at 1:00 if you are interested.

Public Transit Update

The Alabama Transit Coalition has been meeting monthly, with new chair, Karen Peterlin who heads up the non-profit transit system, Kid One.

The Steering Committee (on which the League is represented by Nancy Ekberg) will meet with the new head of ALDOT, Director John Cooper on November 8th, and will plan to meet with the new head of the Department of Senior Services next month. The group plans to get on the agendas of the RPCs, COGs MPOs, League of Municipalities, County Commissioners Association and Mayors' organizations to access their support of public transit.

The group will be watching legislation in 2012 and support any that might provide transit assistance. We are also participating in a UTCA (University Transportation Center for Alabama) study of transit opportunities in Alabama.

Health Committee Update

The League's Health Committee has increased from one member to three! Thanks to Diane Marks and Debbie Hamby for joining Director Joan Burroughs on this important committee.

The group is currently reviewing the national position on health care reform as well as the September 2011 articles – *Published Rule on Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: Establishment of Exchanges and Qualified Health Plan* and *Educating the Public on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*.

Thanks to the League!

LWVGB has received another complimentary note from Mrs. Knight in Hueytown. She says, "I want to thank you for "Alabama Government at Your Fingertips". I so appreciate it as I have used it numerous times." Mrs. Knight requested information on a state senator from another part of the state, and the League has provided that information to her.

We will be doing an update of Fingertips after the 2012 elections; however, our web master Jean Johnson can update the Fingertips available on our web site as changes occur. League members are urged to send changes/updates to Jean as you become informed of them.



Natural Resources News

The LWVAL was a co-sponsor of the Interfaith Environmental Initiative of Alabama (IEIA) Forum, *Building Forward – Sustainable Communities Through Collaboration*, which was held from 8:30-3:30 on October 13, 2011 at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Over 90 people heard Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4 Administrator, Gwen Keyes Fleming, discuss collaboration activities at the EPA. She affirmed the work of IEIA for finding ways for individuals and groups with disparate environmental viewpoints to come together around a common purpose.

The morning sessions focused on tools and examples of collaborative action. Lessons for sustainable practices for water and energy efficiency from rebuilding efforts from the tornados were covered in the afternoon. The speakers looked ahead to what can be learned for future building projects. There were reports from the IEIA working groups and opportunities for discussion. The Forum program can be found at the IEIA website, www.InterfaithEnvironmental.org.

The LWVAL is submitting a recommendation to the Alabama Permanent Joint Legislative Committee on Energy Policy to create an energy plan as called for in their enabling legislation and to investigate legislation aimed at improving public involvement in the energy planning process. The reorganization meeting for the Senators and Representatives on that committee is November 15. Joyce Lanning represents the League on two of the subcommittees, Environmental Issues and Efficiency and Conservation.

The proposed revised legislative priorities for the Alabama League place Energy Policy in the first priority section. Other natural resources issues are in Priority Level II. They are: Maintaining water purity and air quality; Alabama water management plan; Coastal zone protection; and Recycling.



Holiday Gift Suggestion

Did you know that the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham gets to keep less than \$6 of every \$45 membership renewal? The rest goes to the state and national league.

We have the option, though, of paying up to half of these "per member payments" to National out of our Ed Fund. This money goes directly to the LWV Education Fund. It supports the same kinds of activities as our local Ed Fund – "Get Out the Vote" public service announcements; research, education and forums on public policy issues; and factual, non-partisan information on candidates and ballot issues – just on a national level.

Why is this important? Taking advantage of this Ed Fund to Ed Fund option allows us to keep more of your dues in the local league for regular operating expenses like meeting room rentals, materials for voter registration drives, maintenance fees for the website, and costs incurred while participating in advocacy work supporting LWVGB's positions. In addition to these operating costs, we can also spend money out of our operating account on education-related activities.

So, as the holidays and year-end approach, we are asking you to consider making a tax-deductible donation to the LWVAL Education Fund. There are two easy ways to donate. 1) Donate online at lwvgb.org or 2) make checks payable to LWVAL Ed Fund, and mail to: LWVGB, PO Box 530522, Birmingham, AL 35253.

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail Amanda McGriff, LWVGB Treasurer, at apmcgriff@gmail.com. Thank you all for your continued support of LWVGB.

Board of Directors, 2011-2012

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Diane Marks	Social Media (Off Board)

QUOTABLE QUOTES

Freedom is not the right to do what we want, but
what we ought.

~ *Abraham Lincoln*

The best index to a person's character is
a) how he treats people who can't do him any
good and

b) how he treats people who can't fight back.

~ *Abigail Van Buren*

I always believe that ultimately, if people are
paying attention, then we get good government
and good leadership. And when we get lazy, as a
democracy and civically start taking shortcuts,
then it results in bad government and politics.

~ *Barack Obama.*

League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham
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