



The VOTER

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

OCTOBER-2011

VETS AND SUFFRAGETTES

The nation's oldest Veterans Day celebration has a new participant- The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham! The League is a table sponsor for this year's luncheon, scheduled November 11, 2011, at 11:00 am, at the BJCC downtown. Seats for the luncheon are limited, but if you would like to attend, please contact our Membership Chair, Leonette Slay, at lwslay@cs.com. Tickets are \$23.00 per person.

Immediately following the luncheon is the Veterans Day parade through downtown Birmingham. Adamson Ford is providing the League with a convertible vehicle for use during the parade, and LWVGB President, Ida Tyree Hyché will greet the crowds.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 24, 2011: LWVGB General Membership Meeting, 6pm, Lincoln Professional Development Center, Speaker: Dr. Craig Witherspoon and Mrs. Phyllis Wyne.

October 27, 2011: United National Day Banquet, 6:00pm, The Club, Contact Dot Baker at 822-0655 for more information.

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

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.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

The LWVGB is looking for suffragists and suffragettes to march in the parade. Please contact Communications Director, Cyron dys Jackson, at cyron dysjackson@gmail.com, if you would like to join us!

ELECTED OFFICIALS MEET TO SOLVE JEFFERSON COUNTY PROBLEMS

Fourteen (14) of the nineteen (19) Legislators who make up the Jefferson Delegation and four County Commissioners met Tuesday, October 4 to hammer out a plan to rescue Jefferson County's finances. Commissioners told the group that they have cut 542 jobs from the general fund already and will need to cut more. They have closed the Bessemer Jail and Court House.

The meeting brought up the fact that there are parts of the County that are not included in the General Fund. Although the County pays the Sheriff's costs, his department is separate and not controlled by the County. A separate fund also covers



SEE YOU AT THE OCTOBER 24 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING!

Time: 6:00pm CDT

Topic: Education

Venue: Lincoln Professional Development Center
901 9th Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35204

Featuring Birmingham City Schools Superintendent Dr. Craig Witherspoon and Birmingham Board of Education President Mrs. Phyllis Wyne

Please join us!!

money for Cooper Green as well as the sewer debt and its operation.



Legislators said they wanted the whole picture, all the areas covered by county taxes and fees, before they can decide how to help. The Governor has said he will call a special session of the Legislature to help if Jefferson County legislators and its Commissioners can come up with a plan to solve their financial problems. Senator Scott Beason asked how much money the County needs for the general fund to be solvent. The Commissioners said they needed about \$43 million. Commissioner Jimmie Stephens said the fiscal year 2011-2012 allows no money for capital projects, and reduces funding to some county departments such as the Sheriff's Department, Senior Citizen Services, and the Board of Registrars.

Community Development and TASC will receive no funding this fiscal year. Legislators encouraged the commissioners in attendance to develop an agenda that included more than a temporary fix to the budget shortfall. Some discussed the likelihood of an occupational tax, un-earmarking taxes and adding taxes to services such as haircuts and leases on vehicles. Rep. Demetrius Newton said reinstating the occupational tax would be a renewal of a tax paid by the citizens for several years, and not a new tax. They plan to meet again on October 13.

Plan to attend the 2011 United Nations Day Banquet

Sponsored by the UNA-USA Greater Birmingham Chapter and co-sponsored by LWVGB

Thursday, October 27

The Club

6:00 p.m.

Guest speaker:

Douglas Casson Coutts, Distinguished Visiting Professor at Auburn University on assignment from the UN World Food Programme "Global Hunger and the UN's World Food Program in Action"

Cost: \$55.00

Reservations:

UNA-USA Birmingham Chapter

P.O. Box 661195

Birmingham, AL 35266

Information: Dot Baker 822-0855

Did You Know...

Jefferson County Sewer Usage by District

District 1- Commissioner George Bowman- 23%

District 2- Commissioner Sandra Little Brown-
25%

District 3- Commissioner Jimmie Stephens- 9.9%

District 4- Commissioner Joe Knight- 16.4%

District 5- Commissioner David Carrington- 25%

Information provided by the Jefferson County
Commission

ALABAMA TRANSIT COALITION NEWS

The Alabama Transit Coalition, a statewide coalition of organizations, including the League, will meet in Montgomery on October 18th. Nancy Ekberg represents the League on this Coalition. Our new chair is Karen Peterlin who is Executive Director of Kid One. The goal of the Coalition for this year and 2012 is to work for legislation that allows the state to have a statewide transit commission that allows for public transportation, and for legislation that will provide funding for statewide public transit.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LEAGUE FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN BRINGING A NEW FORM OF GOVERNMENT TO JEFFERSON COUNTY



Jefferson County now has a new County Manager, due largely to League effort together with Rep. Paul DeMarco. The former mayor of Hoover, Tony Petelos was voted in last Tuesday and took office on Saturday, October 1st.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION COMMISSION

The new Commission charged with the job of revising 11 of the 18 Articles of the 1901 Constitution, held their third meeting October 5th in the State House.

They discussed the Banking Article and the Corporations Article and plan to finish work on those at their next meeting, October 26th. They looked at Article III, which sets up the three branches of government in the State and will probably not make changes to it. Then they tackled the mother lode of Articles, IV, dealing with the structure and powers of the Legislature. This discussion brought out a presentation from Sonny Brasfield, Executive Director of the County Commissioners Association, who urged the group to bring some form of consistency to counties, and Jim Williams of PARCA who addressed the need for local governments to govern themselves. Voices of opposition to home rule were heard and the Commission will likely hear from groups opposing home rule such as the Rainey Day Patriots, an arm of the Tea Party and the Alliance for Citizen Rights, an arm of ALFA. Both groups were present and will probably address the Commission on the 26th.



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QUOTABLE QUOTES

I'm an excellent housekeeper. Every time I get a divorce, I keep the house.
~ *Zsa Zsa Gabor*

My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was much less competition.
~ *Indira Gandhi*

The Constitution is not an instrument for the government to restrain the people, it is an instrument for the people to restrain the government."
~ *Patrick Henry*

League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham
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