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League of Women Voters of
Greater Birmingham
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Busy, Busy Month! -- A Note from the President

We are delighted that Karen Threlkeld has agreed to oversee Voters Service. Karen has volunteered for the Voters Service activities several times, and she said that this is an area she feels is so important. She is right. Your League name is associated with our activities related to helping people vote by registering and by providing non-partisan information. She will need your help to continue the League's service.

September and October will be busy with the Mayoral Forum, voter service activities, our membership meeting and the beginning of the Immigration Study. Our Observer Corps will be following various commissions and would welcome anyone else who would like to be our eyes and ears at governmental meetings. Let us know if you want to participate (vrandolph@lwgvb.org or 583.5000).

Jean Johnson has worked so faithfully to make our web site a rich source of information for members, the Board of Directors and the public. Have you visited it recently? In addition to current and past issues of *Voter* you will find our member section which has our

- Bylaws,
- Policies,
- Minutes of Meetings of the Board of Directors',
- links to our upcoming Immigration Study,
- our Local Program Support Positions,
- information about upcoming events and meetings,
- a calendar of activities,
- our publication of contacts called *Alabama Government at Your Fingertips* and
- many other resources and links.

We also have information for you and the general public on voting issues, League membership, and how to register to vote or update your voting information when you move. I hope you will take a few minutes to visit it, and return often to www.lwgvb.org.

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September Meeting



When: September 27, 2007 at 6:00 p.m.
Where: The Cantina at Pepper Place Martin Biscuit Building
2901 2nd Ave. South, Birmingham
Parking is convenient
Bring a friend or two, even three!
Plan to network, visit, catch up on League activities and get involved.

President's Comments (Continued from page 1)

In September your Board concluded that we will work with our current partners to hopefully offer a run-off election candidate forum. Several things have to come together and of course, one of the candidates for Mayor of Birmingham may get a majority which would negate the need for a run-off election. We discussed our partnering with other groups for projects and the benefits this brings to all sides. The LWVAL wants us to participate in interviews of the Local Legislative delegation. You are needed so that we can interview them all. We will have more information next month. We had a healthy discussion on our role with the issue of Constitution Reform/Citizens Constitutional Convention. You will see the result of that with some information in each of our issues of the *Voter*. Board Meetings involve discussion, debating and planning and the results are published on our web calendar and in the *Voter*. We welcome any of you to the Board Meetings. If you plan to come and want an agenda ahead of time, just let me know (vrandolph@lwvgb.org or 583.5000) and I will be happy to send you one by email or mail you one.

I look forward to seeing you at the member meeting on September 27th. Please bring a friend with you. It is always a fun meeting.

Ginny



Mayoral Forum on September 18th

Qualified candidates for mayor of Birmingham will answer questions on many issues important to citizens of the Magic City on September 18. A forum will be held at WorkPlay in downtown Birmingham and will be televised on WIAT CBS 42. All qualified candidates (by September 10th) are planning to participate. The forum is convened by the [League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham](#) in partnership with [Catalyst](#), [Rotaract Club of Birmingham](#), [Birmingham Association of Black Journalists](#), [Sixteenth Street Baptist Church](#), [WorkPlay](#) and [WIAT/CBS 42](#). The broadcast is being underwritten by [Bradley Arant Rose and White LLP](#).

Free tickets are available while the supply lasts from either:

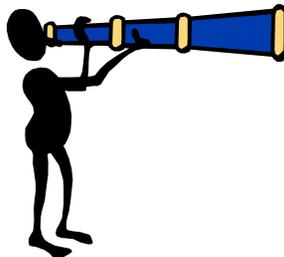
- **Urban League Office**
1229 3rd Ave N
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 326-0162
- **16th Street Baptist Church**
Office at 1530 6th Ave N
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 251-9402
- **League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham (LWVGB)** by calling (205) 583.5000

The audience for the Forum will be seated by 6:30 pm. The filming and webcast will begin at 7 pm. The broadcast will begin on CBS 42 at 9:00 pm. There will be no interruptions, no commercials and the Forum will be broadcast and webcast will be unedited.

And before watching the debate, check out...

[Debate Watching 101](#)

It offers helpful tips for watching and analyzing candidate debates for all levels of office. Get the most out of your vote! As always, this publication from the League of Women Voters is nonpartisan!



Observer Corps Report

The goals for the League's Observer Corps this year are to increase our numbers so that more governmental bodies can be monitored, to bring our LWVGB members more information, and to make our presence known in the community through increased activism.

At this time, the observers regularly attend meetings of the Jefferson County Commission, the Birmingham City Council, the Birmingham Water Board, the Personnel Board of Jefferson County, the Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority, and the Transit Advisory Committee. We would welcome anyone interested to join one of the observers for a "test drive". Visit one or more of the governmental bodies with one of us. We think you will enjoy **Observing Your Government in Action**, which, by the way, is the title of a great new publication from the LWV Education Fund that can be downloaded or ordered from www.lwv.org.

Birmingham Water Works Board Report (BWWB)

A few of the issues with which the BWWB has been concerned in recent months are:

- **Inland Lake** --- This is the source of about half of the water used by BWWB customers in a 5-county area. Preparation for a development, which will cover 3,500 acres with over 10,000 homes and businesses, has begun. A lawsuit was filed in Aug. by the BWWB, after large amounts of sediment were found to be flowing into the lake. A hearing began Aug. 22 and will continue September 12 in Oneonta. When we learned that the board was considering legal action in late June, the League president, after consulting with the advocacy committee, sent a letter to the BWWB stating our position on protection of natural resources, and use of best management practices in development. The letter urged the board to use all means available under Alabama law to protect this vital water source.
- **The Drought** --- We entered 2007 with drought conditions already existing. Inland Lake was 4 feet low in February, by May, 9 feet, in August 19 feet. Existing policy indicated that a stage 3 drought alert should have been in effect in May, but staff wanted to give stage 2 conservation efforts a chance to work while hoping for rain. Surcharges were instituted in June, with much confusion as to when these would go into effect. Consumer compliance with water use restrictions has been good. This record drought has been a wake-up call, pointing out our vulnerability and the importance of full-time conservation. (More information from ***The Birmingham News*** can be found at www.AL.com ; keyword "Inland Lake".)
- **New Water Sources** --- An urgent look at possible new water sources was the hot topic in June. Both short-term and long-term solutions were, and are still being studied. A contract was approved for the drilling of test wells south of Lake Purdy. A number of quarries will be considered. The Cross Town Raw Water Loop, which would connect untreated water sources and bring more water to the Shades Mountain Filter Plant, which is not operating at capacity, is one of the long-term improvements expected to provide some relief.

The Voter

September, 2007



Volunteer and Repeat the Rewards

You may easily volunteer with the League. The rewards are a sense of accomplishment, contribution to our community and enhancing democracy for others. Below are some of the areas that could use your expertise and time.

Observer Corps

- Jefferson County Commission -- once a month
- Birmingham City Council -- once a month but you may catch it on TV if you live in Birmingham
- Birmingham School Board
- Hoover School Board

Voter Service

- Register People to Vote
- Help at the Registrar's Office the week of election

2007 Mayoral Forum on September 18th

- Usher
- Set up and clean up
- Staff the LWVGB table
- Get signs made

Studies

- Immigration
- Initiative and Referendum

Public Relations

- Write Press Releases
- Contact media regarding our activities
- Write Public Service Announcements (mainly about Voting)

Volunteer by emailing us at admin@lwvgb.org or calling 583-5000 and leaving a message. Please be sure to leave your phone number.

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES:

- September 28:** Voter Registration Deadline for City of Birmingham General Election
October 9: City of Birmingham General Election
October 20: Voter Registration Deadline for City of Birmingham Run-off Election (if needed)
October 30: City of Birmingham Run-off Election (if needed)

Member Profile – Paulette Rowe

A native of Birmingham, Paulette Rowe has spent her life focused on community service and government. In fact she was recently honored by the YWCA for her contributions to our community. For the last two and a half years she has served as the Jefferson County Coordinator for Congressman Artur Davis, U.S. Representative for the 7th District of Alabama. She has also worked as a Program Director for Future, Inc. and Program Coordinator for John Rogers, where she wrote grants. Paulette has always been concerned about at-risk and homeless youths. She is very committed to access to healthcare for all citizens. In her work she has often seen that though there may be health services available, the people who need the services, either do not know about them, or have no way to get to the healthcare facility.

Paulette joined the League in 2005. She “got hooked” on the League when she attended a meeting in Tuskegee where Congressman Davis was the keynote speaker. The league members impressed her with their friendliness, and their knowledge and commitment to our democracy. She now serves on the board of the LWVGB and is the member who focuses on health issues.

In addition, Paulette serves on the board of the Arthritis Foundation. Incredibly, Paulette manages to make time to pursue a graduate degree in marriage and family therapy. She plans to finish her degree in 2008. Paulette is an example of how even very busy people can make room for the League in their hectic lives. The League improves the quality of your life, and the lives of the entire community!



Did you know ???

Constitutional Reform Talking Point:

Many Alabamians who say they fear that citizens who would write a new constitution for Alabama, would include things like a lottery, legalized gambling, new taxes and other things Alabamians don't want. These people are failing to recognize that Alabamian citizens who would write a new constitution know their fellow citizens would have to approve it before it became law. **SINCE THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN REJECTED BY ALABAMIANS BEFORE, CITIZENS ELECTED AS DELEGATES TO A CONVENTION ARE NOT LIKELY TO WRITE A NEW CONSTITUTION THAT IS SURE TO BE REJECTED.**

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

September, 2007



Immigration Study – Be a Part of History!

It is now time to study, discuss and reach consensus on the issue of Immigration. Seven League members from across the country have researched the issue, produced articles and other materials which we will use to educate ourselves on the subject.

This material is available on the web at www.lwv.org and in the print version of the National Voter. Please download or read this data before our first meeting on Oct. 25th at the Homewood Library. Our discussion will run from 7 to 8:30 p.m. that night.

We will then take consensus at a second meeting on Nov. 15th, again at the Homewood Library.

Responses from Leagues across the country will be compiled and shaped into our position on Immigration. This will allow us to shape national policy for years to come, just as we have been doing in other areas for 87 years.

Sarah McDonald

LWVGB Membership

Thanks to all of you who returned your dues after receiving letters from your League.

Ginny Randolph and I sent similar letters to several former League members, and are happy to report that as of this VOTER, ten have returned, and we have several new members.

Former members rejoining are:

Meredith Bond of Hoover
Mary Frances Reed Forbes of Mountain Brook
David Herring of Birmingham
Amanda McGriff of Birmingham
Grady Nunn of Homewood
Virginia Patterson of Mountain Brook
LaVerne Ramsey of Indian Springs
Katherine Rostand of Mountain Brook
Jeannine Spann of Birmingham and
Claudia Harris of Adamsville

And we have several brand new members:

Anne Mitchell of Birmingham
Judith Deegan of Birmingham
Audrey Salgado of North Shelby County

Welcome to everyone! We look forward to your involvement.

Nancy Ekberg

Global Climate Change

(posted on the League of Women Voters website: http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Global_Climate_Change)

Global climate change is one of the most serious threats to the environment, health and economy of our nation. Recent scientific studies show that global warming is already causing environmental changes that will have significant global economic and social impacts.

The League believes that now is the time to act on global climate change. We can reduce global warming pollution by using existing technologies to make power plants and factories more efficient, make cars go farther on a gallon of gasoline, and shift to cleaner technologies. Cities, states and individuals are already adopting many of these solutions, which also reduce our dependence on oil, reduce air pollution, and protect pristine places from oil drilling and mining. State and local initiatives are proving that answers exist.

To reinforce and expand on those efforts, the League urges federal action that reduces global warming pollutants on a national and global scale.

The Latest!

League Supports Statement of Principles on Global Warming - Nov 20, 2006

(http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Global_Climate_Change&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=7929)

Global warming is one of the most serious threats to our environment, our health and our economy. The League of Women Voters joins other organizations in calling for immediate action to curb the worst effects of global warming by enforcing reductions in global warming pollution and promoting clean and efficient sources of energy.

Look for an article in October by League member, Joyce Lanning, about her trip to the U.N. Conference on Global Climate Change.

See article on U.N. website to learn more about the conference.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=23502&Cr=climate&Cr1=change>





LWVGB Upcoming Events

Month	Day	Time	Event
September	18	6:30 – 8:00	Birmingham Mayoral Forum at WorkPlay
September	27	6:00 – 7:30	Membership Meeting at Cantina Martin Biscuit Building
October	2	6:00 – 7:00	Board Meeting at Samford Univ, Chapman Burns Hall
October	25	7:00 – 8:30	Member Meeting – Immigration Study – Homewood Library 101
November	15	7:00 – 8:30	Member Meeting – Immigration Study – Homewood Library 101

LWVGB
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