



**Save the Date:**

- **Hot Topics Lunch**  
Thursday, 8/22 @ 11AM  
Toomer's Coffee on S. College
- **Membership Meeting**  
Monday, 8/26 @ 6:30PM  
First Baptist Church
- **School Tax Forum**  
Tuesday, 8/27 @ 6PM  
AU Hotel and Conv. Ctr.
- **Auburn Downtown Plan**  
Wed., 8/28 @ 6PM  
Jan Dempsey Center
- **Hot Topics Lunches**  
Thursdays, 9/5 and 9/19  
@ 11AM, location TBD
- **General Meeting**  
Monday, 9/23 @ 6:30PM  
First Baptist Church

See Calendar on Page 6  
for more information

**Inside this issue:**

19th Amendment	2
Photo Voter ID Law	3
Education Update	4-5
Payday Loans	5
Calendar	6
Common Book	7
Observer Corps	7
General info	8

## League of Women Voters of East Alabama

<http://lww-eastalabama.org/>

### From the President: Why Join the League?

I often think back to why I joined the LWV in the first place. When I lived in Upstate New York, my best friend told me that the LWV of Geneva needed a treasurer and she somehow convinced me that I was the one for the job. I was hesitant at first. Unlike my friend, I didn't know much about politics and I rarely offered my opinion. Did I have to actually participate in conversations about politics? Was I expected to offer proof that I knew anything about anything related to government? Little did I know that the only real requirement of me, beyond bookkeeping and check writing, was an **interest in learning** about

politics and government. I quickly learned that, just by listening, I could learn so much from these intelligent and well-informed women and men. Fast forward seven years and here I am in Alabama... still listening. Now I even offer an opinion or two. How times have changed!

Many of you have told me that you joined the League to have intelligent conversations about something other than raising children! As evidenced by our first three events this season (our Summer Social, Social Media Workshop and Hot Topics Lunch), we have a lot to talk about! All three

events were well attended and yielded some great conversations. One thing is for sure: We have a lot of work to do!

Please join us for our Membership Meeting on August 26th (see calendar for details). We will provide a brief overview of the topics we will engage in this year including the Auburn school tax vote, photo voter ID law, Common Core and the Accountability Act. More topics will be covered as time allows. I hope to see each of you there!

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Kristen De La Fuente  
President, LWVEA*

### Welcome to the 21st Century...

#### **LWVEA Social Media Workshop was a #BigSuccess**

On Saturday, July 27th, thirteen members from the League of Women Voters of East Alabama (LWVEA) were joined by Jean Johnson and Leonette Slay of the LWVAL for a workshop on the ins and outs of social media. Jean Johnson, also of the LWV of Greater Birmingham, was the instructor and took audience members through

a three-part discussion: first speaking about what types of social media entities are available (and why we really DO need them), followed by the how-to of setting up personal accounts and finishing up with some actual use of the technology. Most of the comments after the workshop included how informative and helpful the event was to them personally. A big thank you goes out to Jean and Leonette and all of the

attendees for making the workshop a success!

#### **We Need Your Help!**

The LWVEA now has active [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts that already have posts and tweets. We need you to go to these sites and "Like" or "Follow" the LWVEA to increase our public presence and to join in the dialogue. We'd love to hear from you!

## A History of the Nineteenth Amendment by Charlotte Ward

---

*Virginia, the home state of President Woodrow Wilson, allowed no votes to women, and neither did the President. Then came Alice Paul.*

---

*...the League was actually founded six months before ratification at the convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, so it was ready to go when the moment finally came. And we are still going. Recent events show how much we are still needed.*

It was in July of 1848, 165 years ago, that 300 people, including some men, met in Seneca Falls, New York, to have the first serious public discussion of women's right to full citizenship, the right to vote. The names of the women who led the Woman Suffrage movement are legendary: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who did all that and raised six children as well; Lucretia Mott, the gentle Quaker lady who could be as bold as necessary for the cause; and Susan B. Anthony, for whom suffrage became her whole life. None of the three lived to see the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Nearly all the people who were involved in the woman suffrage movement were also active abolitionists. During the Civil War and its aftermath, they were persuaded that the abolition of slavery and the assurance of full citizenship for former slaves (at least the male ones) were paramount. For some years, the voices for suffrage were not silenced, but muted. Anthony and Stanton wrote the amendment that was first presented to Congress in January, 1878, by Republican Senator Aaron A. Sargent of California, who had met Anthony on what must have been a long train ride, but it did not even come up for a vote until 1887, when it was defeated, 16-34. For the next thirty years, nothing much happened in Washington with regard to woman suffrage.

As a third of a continent of new

states joined the Union between 1865 and 1912, the possibility of getting the vote for women looked brighter. Wyoming gave women the vote in state elections in its constitution of 1869, and Utah did so the next year. Washington territory followed in 1883.

By the time the First World War had begun in 1914, New York, Michigan, and all of the states west of the Rockies except New Mexico had granted full suffrage to women, and most of the upper Midwestern states allowed women to vote in presidential elections. Most of the former Confederacy – and Pennsylvania, where this nation was born – allowed no votes to women on any level. Virginia, the home state of President Woodrow Wilson, allowed no votes to women, and neither did the President. Then came Alice Paul. Her story, and that of the young women who joined her is told dramatically in the film “Iron Jawed Angels.” Paul and her friends chained themselves to the White House fence, were derided by the public, and went to jail. Paul went on a hunger strike and was force-fed. President Wilson finally changed his mind.

But by the time the war ended, politicians were beginning to see women as a source of votes in the 1920 election. After failing to pass the House several more times, the Nineteenth Amendment finally

made it with 42 votes to spare on May 21, 1919, and passed the Senate on June 4, 56 to 25.

Then began the battle to gain ratification by 36 of the 48 states. By the summer of 1920, 35 states had ratified. Two state legislatures of the Old South were considering it that summer. In July Louisiana voted no. Tennessee seemed likely to follow suit.

When the vote was taken in August 1920, the result was a 48-48 tie. One of those opposing the amendment was 23-year-old Harry T. Burns from McMinn County. But a letter from his mother, saying "Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put the 'rat' in ratification," changed his mind. His yes vote on August 18, 1920, made it the law of the land – and gave birth to the League of Women Voters.

Under the leadership of Carrie Chapman Catt, the League was actually founded six months before ratification at the convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, so it was ready to go when the moment finally came. And we are still going. Recent events show how much we are still needed.

Incidentally, Alabama became the 42<sup>nd</sup> state to ratify, on September 8, 1953.

## The New Law Requiring a Photo ID Goes into Effect in 2014

Due to the striking down of Section 4 (and, in effect, Section 5) of the Voting Rights Act by the Supreme Court of the United States, HB19 in the Alabama Legislature, which was signed into law in 2011, went into effect. All elections will now require a photo ID in order to vote beginning in 2014. Most people already have allowable identification. The secretary of state has proposed the following identifications to be acceptable:

- a) a valid Alabama driver's license;
- b) a valid nondriver identification card (with photograph) which was properly issued by the appropriate state or county department or agency;
- c) a valid Alabama Photo Voter Identification Card;
- d) a valid identification card issued by a branch, department, agency, or entity of the State of Alabama, any other state, or the United States authorized by law to issue personal identification, provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector;
- e) a valid U.S. Passport;
- f) a valid employee identification card containing the photograph of the elector and issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, the state of Alabama or any county, municipality, board, authority, or other entity of this state;
- g) a valid student or employee identification card issued by a public or private college, university, or postgraduate technical or professional school located within the state of Alabama, provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector;
- h) a valid U.S. Military identification card, provided that such identification card contains a photograph of the elector; or
- i) a valid tribal identification card containing a photograph of the elector.

A proposed form is also [available](#) for persons who are registered to vote but do not have any of the above requirements. At this time it requires a notary public's signature and documentation showing date of birth and a document that contains your full legal name.

When the LWVEA lunched at Chappy's on Aug. 1, Bill English (LWVEA member and probate judge) and Butch Brock joined us. Bill says that many details are still to be determined regarding the implementation of the law. He reported that each county will receive one machine for the Voter Registrar's office to use to make free photographs for those who do not have allowable photograph identification. All of these rules are up for comment so if you feel moved, check the [secretary of state's web site](#) for further information. The SOS currently has a request for [proposal](#) for vendors to implement the photo voter identification system.

The LWVEA will endeavor to provide the public with up-to-date information on this new law and how it is to be implemented.

Reported by Marilyn Garrett

---

*"The proposed rules for the Photo Voter ID efforts are open for comment until September 4th. Find the proposal online at the Alabama Secretary of State's website <http://www.sos.state.al.us>*

---

*According to Page 7 of [HB19 \(2011\)](#), if one applies for a Photo Voter ID but currently possesses a valid photo ID from the list, that "...application shall constitute a Class C felony."*

## The State of Education in Alabama: An Update by Ruth Wright

The League of Women Voters of Alabama supports maintaining and improving a system of free public schools in Alabama based on the belief that a free public education that provides equal opportunity for all citizens is an investment in the future. Two education bills were monitored in the 2013 Alabama Legislative session.

### Common Core State Standards

In November 2010, the Alabama Board of Education approved the adoption of the **Common Core State Standards** with selected Alabama [standards](#). In February 2013, [HB254](#) and [SB190](#) were introduced to repeal the standards and to forbid any other such agreements. These bills were eventually dropped by Senate leaders before the end of the session. The portrayal of the Standards as an attempted federal takeover was countered by leaders from education, government, corporations, and the Business Council of Alabama. They explained that a) the Standards originated entirely in the states, through the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief School Officers; b) no mandates were imposed on the 45 states adopting them; and c) Standards are only shared goals with possible teaching methods, reading lists, math problems, and assignments as illustrations.

In the future, new bills may be introduced to repeal the Standards. Another challenge will be the implementation of new methods for teaching critical thinking skills for math and reading/language arts. The move from rote memorization and multiple choice tests to these higher skills will require time and re-education. Core-based tests are expected in 2014.

### Alabama Accountability Act

The controversial **School Accountability Bill** was attached to a bill with strong support from educators, a Local Control School Flexibility Act ([HB84/SB54](#)). It allowed local school boards to contract with the State Board for waivers from state law and Board regulations for promising innovations and to accommodate different local needs. The new combination bill establishing the Alabama Accountability Act was produced without warning in a late-night Conference Committee meeting, and then passed by both houses with no examination or debate. The problems that soon revealed themselves were only partially addressed during the remainder of the session. Others will surely appear.

Fiscal concerns and uncertainties provoked an executive amendment from the Governor to delay implementation of tax credits, and that amendment was rejected. Although the Fiscal Office has yet to issue a statement of the bill's costs, its provisions deplete state funds in several ways. A refundable income tax credit (limited to 80% of the average annual state cost of attendance, or about \$3500) will reimburse parents who withdraw their children from a failing school and transfer them to a non-failing public or private school of their choice. Income tax credits authorized will be paid out of sales tax collections set aside in the Failing Schools Income Tax Credit Account within the Education Trust Fund. Additional assistance for qualified parents may come from scholarships provided by 501(c)(3) organizations. Although contributors to the scholarship organizations may not designate student recipients, other abuses might develop from interaction of schools and the scholarship organizations. The state will continue pay 20% of their per pupil costs to schools the students have left.

*(Continued on Page 5)*

---

## Education Update *(continued from page 4)*

Two amendment bills ([HB655/HB658](#)) protect successful public or private schools from being forced to admit students from failing schools. Although they must not discriminate or violate court orders for racial desegregation, it remains to be seen how the bill may segregate by parents' poverty, education or other class factors that now give children in public schools contact with diversity. HB658 attempted to clarify the definition of a failing school as one that has been listed three or more times during the then-most recent six years in the lowest 6% (adjusted from 10%) of public K-12 schools on the state standardized assessment in reading and math.

The most contentious unresolved question is whether parents of children already in private schools should be eligible for the tax credit. It remains to be seen how willing the public will be to allow the Education or Revenue Departments to settle this dispute and others that develop as unintended consequences occur.

LWVAL is monitoring these bills and has not taken any formal positions.

LWVEA will hold full meetings on the Common Core Standards and the Accountability Act this year.

\*Primary source: <http://www.lwval.org/takeaction/legreport2013/>

## Payday Loan and Title Loan Businesses are Prevalent in Alabama

---

*...Alabama has more title lenders per capita than any other state and there are four times as many payday lenders as McDonald's restaurants.*

Alabama is a 'paradise for predatory lenders' reports the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). Thanks to lax laws that allow an annualized rate of up to 456 percent for a payday loan and 300 percent for a title loan, vulnerable citizens become trapped in a cycle of high-interest debt. SPLC reports that Alabama has more title lenders per capita than any other state and there are four times as many payday lenders as McDonald's restaurants.

Alabama Appleseed Center for Law & Justice, Inc. proposed bills to the legislature last session that would cap APR at 36% but the bills were heavily lobbied against by the payday loan industry and nothing was passed. Included in the proposed

bills was a limit of 6 loans per 12 month period (including rollovers) using a single database (established and maintained by the Banking Dept.)

Alabama Arise reports that the Military Lending Act caps interest rates to service members (and their dependents) at 36 percent. The military successfully asked Congress to recognize the destructive effects of consumer debt on service families.

Other southern states, according to Alabama Arise, have banned the title loan practice of charging exorbitant rates. Arkansas, North Carolina and Florida have declared such rates as illegal exploitation. In Alabama, title loans can range up to thousands of

dollars. When borrowers are unable to repay within the 30-day loan period, they must renew their loan every month in order to avoid repossession of their cars.

For more information, the SPLC has a featured report, Easy Money, Impossible Debt: How Predatory Lending Traps Alabama's Poor. Other information can be found on the web sites of Alabama Arise and Alabama Appleseed.

Many groups will be advocating for reform in the payday loan and title loan business in the legislature next session. Keep this issue on your radar.

Report by Marilyn Garrett

## **Calendar of Events**

*We want to see you! Add these events to your calendars and get involved!*

**August 22 - Hot Topics Lunch** at 11AM at Toomer's Coffee on South College (behind Loco's). These informal meetings are meant to reconnect members with each other by engaging in open and lively discussions about current (Hot!) topics. Venture to the tables in the back room to join in!

**August 26 - Membership Meeting - Overview of Current Topics** Brief introductions to the Auburn school tax vote, Photo Voter ID Law, Common Core Standards and Alabama Accountability Act will be presented as well as updates to other topics of LWVEA interest if time allows. Join us at Auburn First Baptist Church (corner of Glenn and College). Social time starts at 6:30 with presentation beginning at 7PM.

**August 27 - Forum on Auburn School Tax Referendum** A forum sponsored by the AU College of Education's Truman Pierce Institute will be held at the AU Hotel and Conference Center from 6PM to 7:30PM. Questions/concerns generated at our meeting can be presented to Superintendent Karen Delano, Mayor Bill Ham and School Board President Matt Clegg.

**August 28 - First Public Meeting of Downtown Master Plan** Starting at 6PM at the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center (222 East Drake Avenue).

**September 5 and 19 - Hot Topics Lunches** Put these dates on your calendar! Locations and times to be announced.

**September 23 - General Meeting** Proposed topic will be Photo Voter ID Law. Auburn First Baptist Church, 128 E. Glenn Ave. Social time starting at 6:30PM with presentation beginning at 7:00PM.

**September 26 - Public Service Commission to hold session and public forum in Auburn** According to [Al.com](http://Al.com), Alagasco will present information during the day about more specific topics, such as pipeline safety and corporate risk. In the evening, the commission will hold a public forum and receive feedback from Alagasco customers. League members should plan to attend, if possible. Location, TBA.

**September 30 - LWVEA Board meeting** Start time is 5:30PM, location TBD. All members are welcome.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**August 30 - Tailgate at the AU Library** with Voter Registration Drive from 10AM until 1PM. Contact [Laura Hill](#) to volunteer.

**September 9 - LWVEA National Voter Registration Day** The actual day for the national drive is September 24th. Since the special vote on the Auburn property tax increase is on that day, we will hold our registration drive earlier to make sure voters can register in time to participate. Contact [Marilyn Garrett](#) to join us.

## Common Book at Auburn University *submitted by Marilyn Garrett*

*NOBODIES: Modern American Slave Labor and the Dark Side of the New Global Economy* by John Bowe

LWVEA members may be interested in the book chosen for the university community to study this year. I have agreed to coordinate a study of the book for OLLI. Though it does not directly coincide with League studies, it has very profound implications for us as consumers. Books are available at local bookstores.

The book was chosen partly because this year is the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement. It brings issues of immigration, labor laws, human rights, political influence and our global economy to one's attention.

A reviewer has written "from rural Florida to Tulsa to the U.S. Commonwealth of Saipan in the Western Pacific, Bowe documents coercive and forced labor situations that benefit us all, as consumers and stockholders, fattening the profits of dozens of American food and clothing chains..."

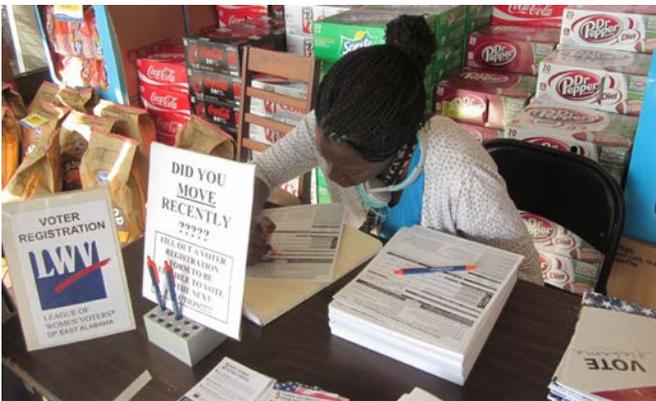
The author will be giving a presentation in Auburn on September 19. Watch for announcements.

### Observer Corps - Get Involved!

- [Auburn City Council](#) - 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of each month at 7PM at 141 N. Ross St.
- [Opelika City Council](#) - 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of each month at 7PM at 204 S. 7th St.
- [Auburn Planning Commission](#) - 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 5PM at 141 N. Ross St.
- [Opelika Planning Commission](#) - 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 3PM at the Public Works Facility, 700 Fox Trail
- [Lee County Commission](#) - 2nd and last Mondays of the month at 6PM (pre-meeting at 4PM) at the Lee County Courthouse

We also need observers for local school and water boards.

If you are interested in becoming an Observer, contact [Kristen De La Fuente](#) for more information.



Registering voters is a core component to the League of Women Voters. It is more important than ever to make sure that everyone who is eligible to vote has the opportunity to do so. We have several Voter Registration events planned so please add your name to the list of volunteers.

#### Voter Registration Drive at Kroger in Auburn, September 2012

*Photo above, left: A local resident registers to vote at our registration drive.*

*Photo above, right: LWVEA member Janet Clark (r) assists a local resident with his registration form.*

**LWVEA**

660 East Lane  
Auburn, AL 36830

E-MAIL:

[president@lwv-eastalabama.org](mailto:president@lwv-eastalabama.org)

**We're on the Web!**

Visit us at:

<http://lwv-eastalabama.org/>

Facebook:

[League of Women Voters of East Alabama](#)

Twitter:

[@lwveasta!](#)

**LWV of East Alabama Board of Directors, 2013-2014**

<i>Kristen De La Fuente</i>	<i>President</i>
<i>Sandy Robinson</i>	<i>Vice-President</i>
<i>Carol Daron</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
<i>Laura Newland-Hill</i>	<i>Treasurer &amp; Social Media</i>
<i>Linda Shook</i>	<i>Director - Membership</i>
<i>Marilyn Garrett</i>	<i>Director - Voter Service</i>
<i>Ruth Wright</i>	<i>Director - Education</i>
<i>Carolyn Carr</i>	<i>Director - Natural Resources</i>
<i>Neali Vann</i>	<i>Director - Public/Media Relations</i>
<i>Janet Widell</i>	<i>Director - Healthcare</i>
<i>Ann Moss</i>	<i>Director - The Voter Editor</i>
<i>Charlotte Ward</i>	<i>Website Management (off-board)</i>

**Dues are Due by September 30th**

Your dues go towards the functioning of the League of Women Voters at local, state and national levels. Locally, we use our portion of dues to send members to state and national conventions and councils as well as funding for voter services literature and registration drives.

**Individual members \$55.00****Household of two \$82.50**

Please send checks made payable to LWVEA to our Treasurer:

Laura Hill, 1317 Clearmont Cir., Opelika, AL 36801

*About the League of Women Voters of East Alabama...*

The League of Women Voters is a grassroots, nonpartisan, political organization that "has fought since 1920 to improve our systems of

government and impact public policies through citizen education and advocacy." Membership is open to men and women 18 or older.

Individual, family and student memberships are available. Join us today and help make a difference in the East Alabama area!

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN  
VOTERS OF EAST ALABAMA**  
660 East Lane  
Auburn, AL 36830

