

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ALABAMA

THE VOTER

FEBRUARY 2019

Come to LWVAL State Convention 2019!
Environmental Justice: It's About Democracy



Check out the promotional video at: <https://youtu.be/BDWWNR4H4hE>

Early Arrival Fun Friday, May 17 then...
Convention May 18-19
Embassy Suites by Hilton
2410 University Boulevard
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

[REGISTER NOW!](#)

Thank you, Convention Host
LWV Greater Tuscaloosa!

From the Gulf Coast ecosystem to the tar sands of North Alabama, official neglect and institutional prejudice have created a system that values profits rather than people. Now more than ever, protecting ourselves and our communities is a matter of civic, social, and public health. Come to LWVAL Convention in Tuscaloosa on May 18-19 and learn how to fight back with stronger public accountability and civic action.

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LWVAL Convention 2019 is for ALL members of our League. Yes, delegates will attend to business, but there are many opportunities to learn and enjoy at this convention. Members of the public are also encouraged to attend free of charge (no food included).

At the convention luncheon on Saturday, May 19, we are pleased to announce that **the keynote speaker will be Mrs. Catherine Coleman Flowers**. Mrs. Flowers is a Senior Fellow in Environmental Justice & Civic Engagement with the [Center for Earth Ethics](#). She is also Rural Development Manager with the [Equal Justice Initiative](#).

Immediately following lunch, **three outstanding panels will address our theme of Environmental Justice**. These are:

Panel 1 - Dirty Money: A look at the Drummond and Balch and Bingham corruption trial and the Northern Birmingham communities still devastated by environmental contamination

Panel 2 - Sacrifice Zones: How clean air, water and land are sacrificed for profit in rural and low-income Alabama neighborhoods

Panel 3 - The Rising Tide: Sounding the alarm on the impacts of climate change in Alabama

On Saturday evening, relax with league friends over wine and hors d'oeuvres during a cocktail reception at the historic [University Club](#). And a special guest might make an appearance that evening. We're awaiting confirmation. Stay tuned!

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Several special awards will be made, including the LWVAL's prestigious Transparency in Government Award made to recognize efforts to bring greater transparency to governmental decision-making in Alabama at any political level. [Find out more about these awards](#) and make your nominations by **March 15, 2019**.

What to do now

Make your hotel reservation at the Embassy Suites by Hilton by April 26 for special convention discount (<https://convention2019.lwval.org/hotel/>).

[Click here](#) to register for convention by **May 5, 2019**.

Offer to serve as a delegate for your local league. Contact your local league. ALL league members are invited and encouraged to attend. League delegates will vote on the business of the convention –program, budget, changes in bylaws, and election of the 2019-2021 Board of Directors. Those same delegates will also vote on the LWVAL Education Fund budget and Board of Trustees.

SAVE THIS WEBSITE!

convention2019.lwval.org

There you can register for convention, link to the Embassy Suites to make hotel reservation, get convention schedule, learn about our speakers, and the awards to be given. In other words, go to the convention website to learn about all things convention!

LWVAL Convention 2019 Awards Call for Nominations (Due by March 15, 2019)

The League of Women Voters of Alabama has three awards which are awarded at state convention based on the vote of the state board and one with fixed criteria for its awarding.

2019 LWVAL Transparency in Government Award

In 2015 the League of Women Voters of Alabama (LWVAL) created the Transparency in Government Award to recognize efforts to bring greater transparency to governmental decision-making in Alabama at any political level. Nominations for the award may be submitted by any individual or organization in Alabama or any local league, MAL unit, or member. This biennial award will be presented at the 2019 State Convention in Tuscaloosa, May 18-19, 2019.

LWVAL and its members believe that transparency in government is one of the major mechanisms for making government accountable to the people. It aids in creating an open and inclusive government and in enhancing public trust in government officials and their decisions.

Those nominated may include local and state political leaders, elected or appointed, and citizens and members of nonprofit organizations who have championed transparency in government.

[Submit a nominee for the 2019 LWVAL Transparency Award](#)

Joyce Woodworth Memorial Award

The Joyce Woodworth Memorial Award is presented to an individual or a League for outstanding work in League program. Program is the set of LWVAL positions that have been established through consensus or concurrence. LWVAL advocacy efforts are based upon program.

[Submit a nominee for the 2019 Joyce Woodworth Memorial Award](#)

Nominations should include the name and league membership of the person or local league/MAL unit submitting the nomination, the nominee's name and league membership as well as a description of the league work of the individual and why it merits recognition. Any local league, MAL unit or individual LWVAL member may submit nominations for the Woodworth Award.

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LWVAL Convention 2019 Awards - cont'd

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Jane Katz Public Service Award

The LWVAL Board established the Jane Katz Public Service Award in 2005 to recognize an individual or organization whose work strengthens democracy.

Nominations should include the name and league membership of the person or local league/ MAL unit submitting the nomination, the name of the individual or organization nominated as well as a description of their work on behalf of strengthening democracy and why it merits recognition. Any local league, MAL unit or individual LWVAL member may submit nominations for the Katz Award.

[Submit a nominee for the 2019 Jane Katz Public Service Award](#)

More information may be found [online](#). For all awards, direct questions to Kristen De La Fuente (awards@lwval.org). Award recipients are selected at the discretion of the state board.

The deadline for submissions is Mach 15, 2019.

President's Message

Submitted by Barbara Caddell

Happy Birthday to us!!! The League of Women Voters was "born" on February 14 and by the time you read this, we will be 99 years young. There is much to be proud of in our 99 years. I call your attention to an article by former LWVUS President Elisabeth McNamara that outlines 6 ways the league's work has improved the lives of Americans: increased access to the ballot, easy ways to register to vote, unbiased voter education information, a cleaner election system, cleaner air and water, and improved access to health care/ protection of reproductive rights.

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/elisabeth-macnamara/6-ways-the-league-of-women-voters-has-improved-the-lives-of-americans_b_6681058.html
During our birthday month, I challenge you to reflect on the ways that the league has impacted your life.

The league certainly is not a perfect organization. Sadly, our founders exhibited some of the racism of their times. Our current leadership has apologized and is determined to remedy this. We have made "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" an organizational focus. I am proud to announce that the League of Women Voters of Alabama will participate in training and will work with a Shur Fellow on ways to diversify (and increase) our membership. We know that we are stronger together.

In addition to celebrating the league's hundredth birthday in 2020, we also will celebrate the centennial of woman suffrage. The League of Women Voters of Alabama is collaborating with various organizations in Alabama to enhance the celebration. We have an impressive array of Alabama suffragists to celebrate: Frances Griffen, Pattie Ruffner Jacobs, Helen Keller, Adella Hunt Logan, and Mary Murry Washington are memorialized on the suffragist memorial in south Fairfax County, Virginia – and they are only a few of the Alabama activists. We look forward to learning about them and other unsung heroines.

In the meantime, this Voter contains some information about our upcoming biennial Convention in Tuscaloosa from May 17-19. Although each league will send delegates to participate in the business portion of the event, please remember that the convention is about more than business. Our planners have arranged an impressive array of speakers on various aspects of environmental justice and we encourage all leaguers to register, attend, and learn. See you in Tuscaloosa!!

Finally, I want to brag about two of our leagues - the League of Women Voters of East Alabama and the League of Women Voters of the Tennessee Valley have each received a grant from the LWVUS for youth voter registration. Well Done!!

Update from Mobile Submitted by Mary Anne Wilson

The Mobile League is off to an active start for 2019. In January we participated in a Unity Walk sponsored by L'Arche as part of the activities honoring the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. and registered voters at the annual Homeless Connect event along with the Baldwin County League. Members enjoyed a bus tour of the [Dora Franklin Finley African-American Heritage Trail](#) in early February.

Our luncheon speaker series resumed in January, with LWVM member Penny Dendy speaking on "Strategies for Bringing Communities Together: Shared Values as a Basis for Problem Solving".

In February, State Representative Barbara Drummond will give us a preview of the upcoming legislative session, and in March, our speaker will be City Council member (and LWVM member) Bess Rich. We have begun to record our luncheon speakers talks and you can hear them too via our Facebook page.

Our annual meeting and dinner this year will be held on April 11. Felicia Mason, Executive Director of the Alabama Press Association, will be our keynote speaker on transparency.

We look forward to seeing fellow Alabama leaguers at the State Biennial Convention in Tuscaloosa in May.

Update from Baldwin County Submitted by Jeanine Normand

Current activities of the League of Women Voters of Baldwin County:

On Wednesday, February 6, at our regular monthly board meeting at the Daphne Public Library, we had expected our BC Absentee Election Manager, Jody Wise Campbell, to address us, but she could not make it. We'll try to re-schedule her next month.

On Thursday, February 7, our LWVBC participated in the Volunteer Fair of the Eastern Shore in Fairhope, at the Nix Center (the municipally-owned senior center). We bring a dish of candy to attract people to our exhibit table with LWV membership forms, voter registration forms, info about our upcoming events, and our LWVBC brochures. This year, we had more people than any past years who were interested in our organization, many of whom filled out our forms to get on our announcements list.

On February 18, from 6:00 to 7:30 pm, our LWVBC is partnering with Alabama Arise to bring our country-wide elected officials for a legislative meet and greet on the campus of the University of South Alabama, Baldwin County site. USABC.

On Thursday, February 21, our LWVBC will gather at a Daphne restaurant at 5:30 pm for libations to celebrate the LWV 99 th birthday! Those staying can order dinner from the menu at 6:15. We're welcoming members and guests .

Update from Baldwin County - cont'd

On Saturday, February 23, at 11:00 am, as a second LWV 99 th Birthday celebration, our LWVBC members and friends will go on a "field trip" to Mobile for a guided tour of the special exhibition by Mobile artist, Monica J. Beasley: "Feminism and Magical Thinking," at the Mobile Museum of Art. Our group special admission rate is \$8 each. Afterwards, we'll go out together to a nearby international restaurant.

Our LWVBC voter services activities, to serve the underserved on voter issues including voter information and registration, remain our main focus. Libraries are some of our prime locations. We've also had notable success at two local food banks, where the more often we go, the more confidence we build between us and the citizens who want this info. Therefore, an increasing number of people are visiting our tables. Through our work with Legal Services and the Southern Poverty Law Center, we now have access to Alacourt, which helps us when assisting a felon to apply for restoration of voting rights. The good news: 76,000 felons have had their rights restored or they're re-registered statewide. Baldwin has done its share.

In March, we are beginning a study on civil asset forfeiture.

Earth Day Mobile Bay is coming up on Saturday, April 20, at the Fairhope municipal pier, where we will spend a lovely day sharing a table with the LWV of Mobile. We enjoy the exposure to the beautiful beachside park as well as the positive exposure the LWV gets here – it's a "day at the beach," but in the shade of a tent under trees and (usually) with a breeze. The Sierra Club has a large, cool tent, projecting all day the latest environmental documentaries (see www.earthdaymobilebay.org for schedules and more details). There are food trucks and a music stage. Many area newcomers stop at our table to get their voter registration updated. Even though this will be a holiday weekend (Easter Saturday), the Earth Day Mobile Bay non-profit board expects turnout in the tens of thousands at this all-day event.

Our Annual meeting will be held in April or May, and we have already considered Environmental Justice as our theme. We have several speakers from which to choose, including Robert Kennedy, Jr., former AL political candidate who is active in voter rights issues as well as environmental justice.

Update from LWV of Greater Birmingham Submitted by Jean Johnson

LWVGB held 11 voter registration events in October, 2018 prior to the Oct. 22 deadline for the General Election on Nov. 6. Several of these resulted from a new partnership with the CEO of area America's Thrift Stores, Ken Sobaski, who facilitated voter registration events in multiple stores in Jefferson and Shelby Counties. LWVGB promoted GOTV with "Voting is People Power" yard signs. LWVGB also kept election information online regularly updated with registration opportunities, election calendar, Vote411.org, and many other election information resources. LWVGB's Voter Services continued this work leading up to the Special Election on Dec. 12 for Alabama's vacant U.S. Senate seat.

In early October, LWVAB president Barbara Caddell and LWVGB president Leonette Slay began talks with Allison Skinner, a Birmingham attorney who is chairing the Alabama Bar Association's (ABA) multi-year task force to commemorate 100 years of women's suffrage in 2020. We look forward to working with the ABA and the other organizations that are coalescing to make this a memorable celebration.

LWVGB recently submitted a client proposal to an upper class marketing/mass communications class at Samford University to research transparency in local governmental agencies, with the goal of presenting findings in mid-March 2019 (coinciding with National Sunshine Week). The proposal also included a request to develop a marketing campaign to publicize student league memberships. LWVGB's proposal was accepted, and we are happy to report that LWVGB is now working with selected students to promote the importance of transparency in government.

In November, Jefferson County's Chief Election Officer and Probate Judge Alan King spoke to League members and the public about the 2018 mid-term election. He reviewed voter turnout statistics from the November 6th election and voting integrity, including choice of election sites, compilation of the inactive voter list, and hearings for disenfranchised voters. Judge King was recently a member of the now-dissolved Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity (sometimes referred to as the Kobach Commission). He shared his experience in being selected and serving on that commission.

At LWVGB's December Holiday Luncheon, LWVGB members and guests heard from Circuit Judge Robert S. Vance, Jr.. Judge Vance spoke about the ongoing financial shortage borne by the judicial system in Alabama and some of the difficulties and injustice this causes. He shared that therapeutic courts (e.g. mental health court, drug court) are alleviating prison overcrowding, rehabilitating defendants, reducing taxpayer burden, and decreasing the recidivism rate. Judge Vance also spoke on the inherent problems of partisan selection of judges. He emphasized the difficulties this poses on elections and the importance of a balanced political landscape.

At our member meeting in January, LWVGB focused on criminal justice reform in

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Update from LWV of Greater Birmingham - cont'd

Alabama and in the metro-Birmingham area. Guest speakers were Ala. State Rep. and retired Circuit Judge James E. "Jim" Hill, Jr., Officer Patrick Bishop with the Ala. Board of Pardons and Parole, and Prof. Emeritus Foster Cook, former Director of Government Affairs and Special Programs at UAB. League members and the public got a behind-the-scenes look at the Alabama criminal justice system and the consequences of financial, legislative, and administrative decisions made. Judge Hill discussed the juvenile justice bill that he will re-introduce in the 2019 Alabama Legislature. (Note: The state LWVAL will review this legislation. The League does not have a position on the bill at this time.) Professor Cook shared results of his extensive recent study of criminal justice.

On Feb. 21, LWVGB will host a public discussion of school desegregation in Alabama. Panelists are: Dr. Joe Bagley, teaching at the GA State Perimeter Campus and author of *The Politics of White Rights: Race, Justice, and Integrating Alabama's Schools*; Dr. Orletta Rush, Exec. Dir. of Special Initiatives with the Jefferson Co. Board of Education and overseeing the district's efforts to obtain unitary status; and Attorney Whit Colvin, partner in the Bishop Colvin Law Firm which has represented the Hoover School System since February, 2016. The panel will discuss the decades-old federal court orders monitoring the progress of school integration in Jefferson County.

We are pleased to announce that, at 80 members, LWVGB membership is now at its highest level in 20 years.

Legislative Advocacy: What You Need To Know

The Legislative Advocacy Team is reading and following legislation in 4 major arenas:

- Voting access and process (redistricting and election reform also)
- Government transparency and accountability - also money in politics
- Adequate funding of general fund (which funds various programs like Medicaid and Food Stamps)
- Education policy and funding

You can view additional information on the 2019 Legislative Priorities at <https://lwval.org/takeaction/legpriorities2019/index.html>. Visit this page weekly for reports on legislation related to our priorities.

Also, please be on the lookout for emailed action alerts!

Update from LWV Tennessee Valley Submitted by Kathy Jones

Over the last twelve months the League of Women Voters Tennessee Valley progressed from being a Member at Large (MAL) Unit to being recognized by the National League of Women Voters as a Local League (AL-020). Our League has proactively ensured that hundreds of citizens had the opportunity to register to vote, understood the state's ID laws and election systems, and were informed about the 2018 local and state-wide election schedules. As we continue to grow in membership, we plan to expand voter drives and services further across our five county region (Madison, Limestone, Morgan, Marshall, and Jackson counties) in 2019.

Our primary focus continues to be on in-school voter registration of high school seniors. For the past 2-1/2 years our members have conducted voter drives at public high schools across Madison and Limestone Counties to give students the opportunity to register to vote during their senior year and be ready-to-vote as they turn 18. We were very excited to receive a grant from the National League of Women Voters' Education Fund to help us succeed in carrying out this Spring's Class of 2019 High School Voter Drives!

For the 2018 midterms, our League introduced the LWV's Vote411.org system to the Tennessee Valley! Our Local League is proud to be responsible for funding and maintaining the Vote411.org software/database for our five county region in North Alabama.

In the Fall 2018 we participated in several community events including the Green Street Market, the Senior Expo at the VBC and the 2018 Huntsville Housing and Resource Expo. We partnered with several Masonic Lodges to conduct Voter Registration and Rights Restoration events in North Alabama. Leading up to the midterms, our members distributed thousands of non-partisan election reminder postcards and canvassed across the community to remind people to make plans to vote on November 6th. Then on Election day, League members provided rides to the polls for citizens who needed transportation.

In support of the August 2018 Huntsville Municipal Elections, we collaborated with the American Association of University Women Huntsville Branch and the United Women of Color – Huntsville Chapter, to hold a very informative City Council Candidate Forum. Candidates for all three districts participated and there were approximately 150 citizens who attended the forum in the Downtown Library Auditorium.

Our Centennial Committee is developing several outreach and educational events to raise awareness of the upcoming 100th anniversary of the League (in February 2020) and the 19th Amendment (in August 2020). Our goal is to raise awareness of the sacrifices made to gain and protect universal suffrage, build excitement about the anniversaries, and create a Get-Out-The-Vote enthusiasm for the 2020 General Election. The LWVTNV is partnering with the

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Update from LWV Tennessee Valley—cont'd

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WLRH public radio station to develop “The Struggle To Vote” podcasts. Also, the Centennial Committee is surveying libraries and archives across our region to develop educational displays for the Centennial. And the Committee is researching and developing a three part course related to the Struggle to Vote in Alabama for the Learning Quest organization to be taught the Fall of 2019.

In recognition of the National League’s theme “Making Democracy Work”, our members are conducting a Redistricting Study with a focus on Alabama’s redistricting process. With our first meeting in January 2019, our members are having educational readings, watching videos, conducting mathematical analyses, and interviewing elected officials and other experts in Alabama and across the country. Ultimately our members will develop a consensus on key issues and potential solutions for Alabama to achieve a more equitable redistricting approach. We would love to have other Local Leagues participate in this study too, to evaluate their community’s redistricting maps!

LWVUS Services for Leagues

About Us:

The League of Women Voters of the United States staff works to promote the League’s mission and work at the national level, and to support over 800 state and local Leagues in their work on League priority issues within the Campaign for Making Democracy Work®. The intended purpose of this document is to capture and demonstrate the work LWVUS does at the national level as well as to serve as a guide of the services LWVUS provides for local and state Leagues. This is a living document that will undergo updates and additions as it evolves.

What we do at the national office:

LWVUS Staff consists of 25 dedicated professionals in Washington, DC. We are a small team committed to advancing the organization’s priorities through advocacy, development, communications and messaging, executive administration, and more.

How we support state and local Leagues

LWVUS staff can support state and local Leagues in the following areas:

- Litigation & Advocacy
- Communications
- Technology
- Voter Services
- National Meetings
- Fundraising
- Organization Management

Visit the online guide at <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/policies-guidelines/lwvus-services-leagues>.



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ABOUT THE LEAGUE

The League of Women Voters is a citizens' organization that has fought since 1920 to improve our government and engage all citizens in the decisions that impact their lives. We operate at national, state, and local levels through more than 800 state and local Leagues, in all 50 states as well as DC, the Virgin Islands and Hong Kong.

League of Women Voters Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

League of Women Voters Education Fund Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters Education Fund works to encourage the active and informed participation of citizens in government to increase understanding of major public policy issues.