



Tennessee Voter

League of Women Voters of Tennessee, P.O. Box 158369, Nashville TN 37215-8369
<http://www.lwv-tn.org>

August 2009

President's Column

As the summer winds down we look to a year of challenges, opportunities, and, one hopes, excitement. The summer has seen no let up in the tumult of debate and furor over national issues—reform of health care and insurance in particular. The League promotes active citizen participation in government, but not the type that has predominated in the summer months. Name calling, shouting, and threatening words are not citizen participation as we use the words.

At times I feel almost naïve in urging discussion, listening to divergent views, and courtesy, but I do believe these are the ways we must conduct the public business. This is not easy. Nor is it tidy. Nor will it grab media headlines. However, all sides can emerge without being hurt, insulted, belittled, or worse. We should be able to state differences, explain reasons, and demonstrate efficiencies, savings or benefits without challenging the sanity, origins, and intelligence of those with whom we differ. Our mothers chided us to 'be nice', 'be polite'—not bad advice.

Having said all that, I urge you to speak up, participate, and let your representatives know what is on your mind. The health issue is dominant at the moment and very much in flux. The national and state Leagues have extensive position papers on health issues. There is a wealth of information for your use on websites of both League levels. Please contact your senators and representatives.

Later in the year when the Tennessee legislature reconvenes, there will be many issues that will be difficult to deal with in the face of large revenue shortfalls. We can look to a very busy season in Nashville. The importance of your participation cannot be overstated. We need to be heard. You need to be heard.

Our Fall Conference will deal with several issues of importance to us, both public policy issues and internal needs. (See article for more detail.) I urge you to attend the conference. In response to your representatives at the Spring Convention, we are having the meeting in a different part of the state. An optional tour of a local attraction is available—a dinosaur dig site. Now how often have you seen such a thing? Your board is working to put together another interesting and worthwhile meeting. Please come.
~ Nancy Stewart, Co-President

New Office Administrator

September Landers has assumed the office administration responsibilities in Nashville.

She transplanted herself to Tennessee 17 years ago from NYC to work in marketing for Warner Bros Records. After a 20 year career in the Music Business, she is now a stay at home mom for her 4-year-old daughter, Lytle, and happy wife of John Landers of Shelbyville, TN. She is excited to be able to put her passions for government and politics to use for the League of Women Voters.
Email: lwvtenn@gmail.com

Welcome aboard, September.

Economic Summit for Women

The Tennessee League will be a workshop sponsor to be held in conjunction with the Economic Summit for Women in October. Laurel Karp of Northeast will be a delegate to this meeting at which former Governor of Vermont, Madeline Kunin, and activist, Gloria Steinem will be speakers.

Open vs. Closed Primaries

Spring '09 LWVTN convention delegates adopted a new study that will examine the state League's longstanding position in support of closed primaries in Tennessee.

The existing language says that LWVTN supports "The principle of closed primaries, the governing of all primaries by state statute, and administration of all primaries by duly constituted election officials."

Each local League is encouraged to take part in the study. Guidance and materials will be provided for use.

Laurel Karp of the Northeast League will chair the study. Printed materials will be available at the Fall Conference. Questions, comments, and offers of assistance should be directed to Laurel. Her contact information is included in your new LWVTN Yearbook that has been delivered to each local League president.

We are grateful for the financial support we have received since the last newsletter

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Money in State Politics

The League of Women Voters of Tennessee has been contacted by the National Institute on Money in State Politics. They provide a valuable tool for local leagues and members at large.

The National Institute on Money in State Politics is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization who collects and makes available data concerning possible influence of campaign money on state-level elections and public policy in all 50 states. Their campaign-finance database and relevant issue analyses are available for free through their Web site: www.FollowTheMoney.org. They encourage transparency and promote independent investigation of state-level campaign contributions by journalists, academic researchers, public-interest groups, government agencies, policymakers, students and the public at large.

What They Do: Every two years, Institute data acquisition specialists collect, input and upload more than 90,000 contribution reports filed by 15,500 statewide, legislative and judicial candidates, 250 political party committees and 500 ballot measure committees in the 50 states.

Researchers standardize donor names and code over \$2 billion in contributions to 400 business

categories and other interests. Programmers create open access to the records and attract thousands of users to the information. Staff also introduced users to the tools and resources and work with dozens of reporters to answer questions and provide custom data sets for their investigation.

Research Reports: The Institute is currently compiling 2007 and 2008 political-contribution data.

Recent reports include:

- Updated research on payday lenders
- State laws that regulate disclosure of independent expenditures.
- Contributions by private-prison interests and prison legislation.

Membership Development

My name is Faith Tapp and I am your Membership Director for the next two years. My plan of work includes the following areas:

- Increasing the membership of local leagues
- Developing the leadership of local leagues
- Starting new leagues in areas where there are at-large members
- Re-vitalizing leagues that have decreased to low membership
- Facilitating the exchange of ideas throughout the state to share best practices in membership development

My goal is to grow state-wide league membership by 20% during this two-year period. Of course, I need the help of each and every member. Here is what I need for you to do:

- Put me on the mailing list for your VOTER
- Invite me to a special membership meeting you are having
- Call me to join you if you are having a workshop on membership or a special crisis
- Look around you for surrounding towns where they might have the potential for a league and pass the information on to me
- Attend membership workshops at Fall and Spring Conference
- Call me when you try unique membership activities and you have success

I am looking forward to visiting your Leagues and working with you. Please keep in touch with me
ph: 865/859-9236 Cell 865/705-6018

Email: gtapp99@comcast.net ~ Faith Tapp

LWV-TN Officers and Directors for 2009 – 2010

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LWVTN Fall Conference

Saturday and Sunday, October 24 – 25

Comfort Suites, Johnson City, TN

It's that time again—learn about issues of concern to the League, renew friendships, learn or refresh skills, meet fascinating folks, enjoy the scenery, and vary your routine—yes, it's Fall Conference time in Tennessee.

Speakers or sessions will deal with:
The state of healthcare in Tennessee
Immigration—problems with becoming a citizen
Tennessee's financial debacle
Lobbying update with our Lobbyist
Growing the League

A guided tour of the nearby Gray Fossil Site, a part of the East Tennessee State University Natural History Museum has been arranged for 9:00 – 11:00 on Saturday morning. Advice: wear old tennis shoes.

Please make your own reservations with the **Comfort Suites**, 3118 Browns Mill Road, Johnson City, TN 37604. To receive the special group rate, call your reservation in to **423/610-0010** and mention the group (Tennessee LWV), the group number **#2564**, and the room rate of **\$70+** taxes /night.

MEALS

BREAKFAST: A complete “deluxe” continental breakfast (waffle station and eggs) is included in the hotel room rate.

SATURDAY LUNCH: On your own. There are many restaurants in Johnson City and, in particular, close to Comfort Suites. Just ask.

SATURDAY DINNER/SPEAKER: Logan's Steakhouse, which is an easy walk (just across a driveway from the hotel). Everyone will order and be responsible for their own dinner. The advantage is that the gathering will be together to hear our speaker.

FALL BOARD/CONFERENCE OCTOBER 23-25, 2009

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY/ZIP: _____

LOCAL LEAGUE'S NAME: _____

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS: SEPTEMBER 18, 2009

Reservations must be accompanied by a check made out to LWVTN

Mail to: Judy Poulson
 10038 Dayflower Way
 Knoxville, TN 37932
 Phone: 865-694-9117
 E-Mail: jpoulson319@comcast.net

**ONLY CANCELLATIONS MADE BY
PHONE OR E-MAIL BY September 21
MAY RECEIVE A REFUND**

Registration Fee: \$15.00

Those interested in taking the East Tennessee State University and General Shale Natural History Museum and Gray Fossil Site Tour, should include an additional \$4.00 with the registration fee.

Driving directions to Comfort Suites, 118 Browns Mill Rd., Johnson City, TN 37604

1. Head **northeast** on **I-81 N** 56.5 mi
2. Take exit **57A** to merge onto **I-26 E/US-23 S** toward **Johnson City** 10.4 mi
3. Take **exit 19 - Old 36** for **TN-381** toward **Bristol/State of Franklin Rd** 0.3 mi
4. Slight **left** at **Oakland Ave/TN-381** 0.2 mi
5. Turn **left** at **Browns Mill Rd**

For those going to the Gray Fossil Musseum

1. Head **northeast** on **I-81 N** 56.5 mi
2. Take exit **57A** to merge onto **I-26 E/US-23 S** toward **Johnson City** 4.7 mi
3. Take exit **13 - Old 42** for **Suncrest Dr/TN-75** toward **Bobby Hicks Hwy/Gray** 0.2 mi
4. Turn **left** at **Suncrest Dr/TN-75** 1.8 mi
5. Turn **left** at **Fulkerson Rd** 246 ft

LWV-Tennessee 2009-2010

Date	Event	Location
Oct. 23	LWVTN Board Meeting	Johnson City
Oct. 24 - 25	Fall Conference	Johnson City



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