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## The Voter March 2019

Editor: Jogee Detchemendy

### Program Planning Workshop:

Approximately 20 League members braved the elements to attend a program planning workshop for the 2019/20 year. The purpose was to provide direction for our program of work for the upcoming year, and that direction will be subject to a vote by the members attending our annual meeting in June. This meeting was a great example of how the League is a member-driven organization. Thank you to all that attended and the Program Committee members Devita Harden, Carol Silverstrom, and Pat Landes.

Significant progress on our current program of work was noted, particularly for the mayoral forums, voter registration, robust advocacy on local issues, and increased visibility with new website and newsletter.

For the upcoming year there will be League meeting opportunities every month, and the following topics were identified and prioritized (priority indicated by number in parentheses) for those meetings:

- 2020 Census process (1)
- Changes in LR Board composition, and type and organization of government (1)
- Pulaski County Election Commission – what is it, how do they function (2)
- The election process – who works, the schedule, what are the barriers to voter participation, who trains – staff or commission (2)
- How to build better cities, good urban planning (3)
- Landlord/tenant rights, warrant of habitability *Could be state issue* (3)
- HR1@Congress, LWVUS supports (4)
- Human trafficking (5)
- Better consumer of news (5)
- Metro Plan (6)
- Immigration/naturalization process (6)
- Inequality of taxation (7)

## Welcome New and Recently Returning Members!



Susan Inman



Rebecca Zimmerman



Tara Shepard



Eleanor Nason



Art Browning



Latonya Laird Austin



Julie Steele Blackwood



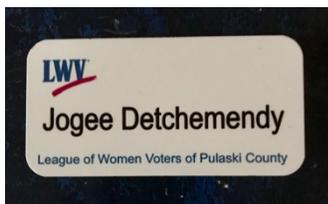
Katie Doyle

We are so excited to introduce our newest members and welcome some old friends back that have returned to the League. Please introduce yourself or say hello if you see them around town or at upcoming meetings. Not pictured Carolyn Shearman.

### Announcements:

- Our next meeting will be held Monday March 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm (doors open at 5:30) at Fletcher Library, 823 N Buchanan, Little Rock. League members and the public are invited to “Citizen’s Right to Know.” Professor of Law Robert Steinbuch will present information on the Freedom of Information Act, an important tool for citizens to be informed and engaged in their government. Professor Steinbuch was recently appointed to the newly created Arkansas Freedom of Information Task Force and is one of the authors of [The Arkansas Freedom of Information Act](#), a standard reference book for the bench, the bar, and journalists for guidance in interpreting and applying the state’s open-government law. The LWV believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation in government and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen’s right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible.
- As said in the last Voter, [Arkansas Legislative Session](#) is still going! To watch online, click the link and then click on the cameras under “Today’s Meetings.” It is always a good time to stay in touch with your public officials, but especially during Session. Let them know you are watching them, and give support for good bills. Be sure to explain why you oppose a bill, using facts, not opinions. You can always go to [lww.org](http://lww.org) for information from the national League on many bills that are introduced at the state level. Please contact your legislators regarding the bills listed under **Bills to Watch**.

- Saturday April 27<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 4 pm at First Presbyterian Church, 2400 Prince St., Conway, AR 72304 [The League of Women Voters of Arkansas](#) will hold State Convention to pass our budget, elect Leadership Team members and establish our program for 2019-2020. This is a great opportunity to meet leaguers from the other two leagues in the state, and hear from our national board liaison, Catherine Cotton. The breakout sessions have been planned by our member Pat Landes, so we know they will be great! The cost is \$10 per person, to pay for lunch and other materials. We will carpool for even more fun! Register on the [LWVAR Facebook page](#). Look under Upcoming Events, and click see all to get to the PayPal link. If you want to send a check, mail to Carol Young, LWVAR Treasurer, 712 Ash, Little Rock, AR 72205.
- We will be electing new Leadership Team Members at the LWV of Arkansas State Convention in April and at the LWVPC annual meeting this summer. It is not a large time commitment, and you will learn so much about how the LWV operates. If you have any questions or interest in this please contact our current leadership team! **(Leadership team is listed on the final page of this month's Voter.)**



- Carol would like to put in a second order for name tags. To receive a set price of \$10 per tag, she will need to order 15 or 20 people. So far only four people have responded. Please contact Carol if interested in purchasing a name tag. The fewer people ordering, the higher the price goes. Pictured left is an example of the name tags.

- Many of our members come straight from work to our meetings at 5:30. We like to provide refreshments to tide folks over during the meetings. We usually serve finger foods. LWV has plates, napkins and cups but we need help with these snacks/drinks. We usually have about 20 people at a meeting. Please see following dates and contact the League's email to volunteer.  
 Monday, March 18: Alfreda Brown- need one more  
 Monday, April 15: Devita Harden and Michelle Rhoden (full)  
 Monday, May 20: Ruth Bell- need one more  
 Monday June 17: Maybe a potluck for the Annual Meeting, or will need two people. Voice your opinions on this!

## Police Chief Forums:



Thanks to League member Alfreda Brown for attending the forums for the four candidates of Little Rock Police Chief. From left to right pictured above are Mayor Frank Scott with Assistant Police Chief Alice Fulk, Assistant Police Chief Hayward Finks, and Commander Todd Chamberlain with Mayor Frank Scott. Unpictured is the fourth candidate Chief Keith Humphrey who is the Police Chief of Normand Oklahoma.

## Bills to Watch:

- [HB1059](#) is a “Stand Your Ground” bill. While in theory this bill would help people defend themselves, opposers state this “shoot first” law would contribute to increased violent crime rates (specifically in domestic disputes). Please read this [study](#) by the Violence Policy Center that supports opposition to this bill. This bill is currently engrossed in the House.
- Two proposed bills we worried might limit free speech were [SB156](#) & [SB118](#). SB156 passed and is now Act 184. SB118 was referred back to committee.
- [SB115](#) is an act to add exclusions to the state minimum wage act which passed in November 2018. This bill would roll back minimum wage increases for anyone employed by a business with less than 50 employees, anyone employed at a school, college or nonprofit organization and anyone under the age of 18. Was engrossed but is now referred back to committee.
- We support [SB145](#) to expand renewable energy in Arkansas. Benefitting both small consumers and large corporations by allowing them to lease net-metered solar, wind, hydroelectric and geothermal electricity-generating equipment, versus purchasing it. The bill will increase the maximum allowable size of a solar energy system to one megawatt, from the current low limit of 300 kilowatts. It has passed the Senate and is now in the House.
- We support [HB1004](#) to improve voter registration and elections. This is a part of the legislature's responsibility to set the standards for voter photo ID, the newly passed constitutional amendment. LWV Washington County and LWV Arkansas are hoping to get laws passed that will allow online voter registration, among other voter modernization laws. This is in committee.

\*When a bill is “correctly engrossed” it simply means the bill is being updated/amended as it makes its way through the house or senate. Therefore, if it is still being engrossed, it has not yet been fully passed and our representatives will still be open to hearing from us about such bills.

## Observing Opportunities:

Please click links for calendar of each committee’s meetings. I am also putting names of current League members who observe these meeting. If you have any interest in observing these ladies would love your help! If there are any other committees/observation opportunities you would like to suggest to the League, please let us know and we will add it to the next newsletter.

### [Little Rock Planning Commission](#)

Meets every other Thursday at 3:30 for agenda meeting and the commission public meeting meets same day at 4 at Little Rock City Hall in the City Board Room. Contact Ruth Bell at 501.225.2538 or [rfbell@aristotle.net](mailto:rfbell@aristotle.net).

### [Little Rock Board of Directors:](#)

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6 pm. Agenda Board (to look at the items that will be discussed at the next board meeting) meets 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 4 pm (so the next agenda meeting will be Jan 29<sup>th</sup>). Both meet at Little Rock City Hall, 500 West Markham Street, Board of Directors Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Little Rock. Contact Kathleen Oleson at 501.664.2351.

### [County Planning Board](#)

Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month. Agenda discussion starts at 2:30 pm and actual meeting follows at 3pm. Held at Jeffery Hawkins Conference Room – Pulaski County Regional Center. 501 W. Markham Street, Little Rock. Contact Kathleen Oleson at 501.664.2351.

### [Quorum Court](#)

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month for agenda and then the full court meets 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday. Both meetings start at 6 pm at 201 S. Broadway 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Quorum Court Room. Contact Kathleen Oleson at 501.664.2351 or Ruth Bell at 501.225.2538 or [rbell@aristotle.net](mailto:rbell@aristotle.net)

*Observing Opportunities continued on next page.*

### [Central Arkansas Water Board](#)

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 2 pm at the 221 East Capitol, Little Rock. Contact Kathleen Oleson at 501.664.2351 or Ruth Bell at 501.225.2538 or [rbell@aristotle.net](mailto:rbell@aristotle.net)

### [Water Reclamation Commission](#)

Meets the third Wednesday of each month at 4 pm in little Rock Wastewater Offices, 11 Clearwater Drive. Currently no one is observing so we need someone to volunteer!!!!

### [Pulaski County Election Committee](#)

Meets at Pulaski County Election Commission, 501 West Markham St., Suite A, Little Rock. Contact Mary Wildgen at [mzwildgen@ualr.edu](mailto:mzwildgen@ualr.edu)

### [Little Rock School District](#)

Meet 5:30-6:30 at 810 Markham, Little Rock. Next Feb.28, March 28, April 28<sup>th</sup> and then May 16<sup>th</sup>. Contact Norma Johnson at [norma\\_johnson58@yahoo.com](mailto:norma_johnson58@yahoo.com)

### [MetroPlan](#)

Executive Committee meets at 501 West Markham St., Suite B, Little Rock on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every other month from 10 am-12 pm (next meeting is March. 21<sup>st</sup>). Board meets last Wednesday of every other month from 10 am to 12 pm (so next meeting is Feb 27). Contact Mindy Morrell at 501 951 7773 or [mindymorrell@hotmail.com](mailto:mindymorrell@hotmail.com)

### [North Little Rock Planning Commission:](#)

Meets the second Tuesday of every month at 4 pm at North Little Rock City Hall. Next meeting is Feb.12.

### [North Little Rock City Council](#)

Meets every other Monday at 6 pm at City Council Chambers at City Hall. 300 Main Street, North Little Rock. Not certain if anyone is observing this meeting.

### [North Little Rock School District:](#)

Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month from 5:30 to 7 pm at 2700 North Poplar St., North Little Rock Administration Board Room. Not certain if anyone is observing this meeting. Not certain if anyone is observing this meeting.

[All Boards and Commissions for North Little Rock Government](#) are broken down at this link.

## **League Links:**

[League of Women Voters \(National\)](#)

[League of Women Voters \(State of Arkansas\)](#)

[League of Women Voters of Pulaski County](#)

\*Special thanks to Michelle Rhoden for managing the LWVPC website. Please take a few minutes to visit the LWVPC's [updated site](#). From now on you will be able to find this monthly newsletter and an active calendar of our events on the website!

## **Leadership Team**

Carol Young: 501.680.3947 or [cyoung8151@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cyoung8151@sbcglobal.net)

Denise Ennett: 817.894.4628 or [ennettdenise@gmail.com](mailto:ennettdenise@gmail.com)

Ruth Bell: 501.225.2538 or [rbbell@aristotle.net](mailto:rbbell@aristotle.net)

Marcy Taylor: 501.951.3744 or [lm\\_taylor@att.net](mailto:lm_taylor@att.net)

## **Newsletter Help:**

If you would like to add any anything to the April newsletter please contact Jogee Detchemendy at [jogeeduzzi@gmail.com](mailto:jogeeduzzi@gmail.com).