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The Voter May 2019

Edited by Jogee Detchemendy

Upcoming Events:

- Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott Jr. will be the guest speaker at the League of Women Voters of Pulaski County monthly meeting held Monday May 20th at 6 pm at the Fletcher Library, 823 N. Buchanan, Little Rock. This meeting is open to all League members, as well as the public. The topic is “All About Change in Little Rock Government”, Mayor Scott will discuss possible changes in Little Rock form of government and board composition.

Information regarding possible changes may be found in a recently released 92-page report compiling recommendations from Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott Jr.'s transition team, described as a "playbook" for improving the city during the mayor's time in office. It's a culmination of work from eight resident-led subcommittees the mayor convened during his first months in office. The document is available online at littlerock.gov/scottscript.

- Our member Scharmél Roussel, has organized 18 non-profits to table at the River Market Farmers Market on Saturday, May 25th for [PeopleFest](#). This will be a great opportunity to showcase our state and local activities and get new members for the LWVPC. LWVPC is asking for two volunteers for each two-hour shift (7 am to 9 am, 9 am to 11 am and 11 am to 1 pm). Set up and break down will be taken care of. Please call or email Carol if you are interested volunteering.
- Remember our 5 successful forums with the Mayoral Candidates? Well, Nate Coulter, the director of the Central Arkansas Library System sure does. He has asked us to partner, once again, with UALR Public Radio, to host a series of forums entitled, “Issues That Matter”. We hope to host forums once a quarter at different branch libraries.

The first one will be at the Ron Robinson Theatre, on Thursday, May 30, at 6 pm. The topic will be “Beyond Recycling-The Environmental Future of Central Arkansas”.

Upcoming Events continued on the next page

As we have done in the past, we will need members to perform various tasks: two to four people to hand out audience question cards, and collect the cards, two people to assess the questions for submission to the panel, a timekeeper, and one to two people to sit at our LWVPC information table. Since this is not a political forum, we have more freedom to promote ourselves. There will be a sign -up sheet at the May 20 meeting, but if you know you can volunteer, please email lwvpc@lwvpc.org.

Announcements:

Report from the 34th Arkansas State League Convention:

The Pulaski County League was very well represented at the State Convention Saturday, April 27th, with 11 members attending. The newly formed Conway/Faulkner League were our hosts at the Fellowship Hall of First Presbyterian Church.

Nell Matthews, the State Convener presided over the meeting. Current State Leadership team members from Pulaski County were Kater Reynolds, Michelle Rhoden and Carol Young. Our three allotted voting delegates were Devita Harden, Tara Shephard, and Rebecca Zimmermann. Also attending were Alfreda Brown, Marcy Taylor and Robert Walker.

Nell introduced the three local league presidents and the Leadership Team. She welcomed our LWVUS liaison, Catherine Cotten, who traveled from Mississippi. Nell gave a report of state activities, including her lobbying at the General Assembly and her membership on the state Women Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee.

Our member, Pat Landes conducted two informational sessions. The first was on how to navigate the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org. Her second session was geared towards growing membership and leadership development. Pat and Carol will be sharing more on this in the next few Voters.

Each of the three local leagues gave a report on their activities in the past year. LWVPC members will get a copy of the report Carol gave as part of our Annual Meeting Packet.

Beth Barham from the LWV of Washington County, gave a report on our book *Government in Arkansas*. Beth is the point person for the new 10th edition. With the governor's reconfiguration of state government, there will be some editing required. There is also the issue of how to get the book to all the students in the state, and the challenge of providing online content as well as physical copies.

During lunch, Catherine Cotten spoke to the group about utilizing the staff at the national office when we need assistance. She issued a request for nominations to the national board, saying that you do not need to have been a longtime member to qualify to serve. She talked about the national league's emphasis on its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, (DEI) program and announced a training session to be held June 20-23.

The LWVAR by-laws were amended to state that State Convention will be held biennially, and the budget was also approved.

Both programs of action recommended by the Leadership Team were approved. One was to adopt a position in support of the proposed redistricting amendment to the Arkansas constitution. We will obtain a written agreement between all parties sponsoring the amendment, and make sure the amendment aligns with League values and principles.

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The second item dealt with the *Government in Arkansas* book. The delegates approved the recommendation to make the PDF version of the book available online, at no charge, and to establish a six person committee, with two members from each local league. This committee, along with Beth Barham will establish marketing and fundraising plan. The status of *GIA* will be reevaluated at the next convention.

A third item was put forth by the LWVPC. This would be a study of tenant habitability laws with the resulting action to be to lobby for such a bill in the next legislative session. It was adopted. Study material will be sent to each local league.

A new Leadership Team was elected. Nell Matthews, Michelle Rhoden and Carol Young from Pulaski County, Bonnie Miller Chloe Roane, and Catherine Dunlap from Washington County, and John Krebs and Jan Gaughan from Conway/Faulkner County.

Every Word We Utter:

A very important sculpture entitled *Every Word We Utter* will be placed in the [Vogel Schwartz Sculpture Garden](#) located in the River Market area of Little Rock. City Director, Dr. Dean Kumpuris, has included the LWVPC in his quest to bring this piece of art to our city.



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We, as a League are being asked to raise awareness of this tribute to the suffragettes who worked tirelessly to grant us the right to vote and many other rights we enjoy today. Dr. Kumpuris is adamant that women should raise the money for this piece. It isn't so much the amount you give, but that you want to honor the LWV, which grew out of the suffrage movement and continues the fight for important issues today. We will be collecting tax deductible donations through the non-profit:

“Sculpture at the River Market.”

C/O Jane Rogers, 5409 Hawthorne Road, Little Rock, AR 72207

Please indicate that your donation is through the LWVPC. Jane will keep a list of our donors. If your donation is or a Memorial or Honorarium, please also include: Whether donation is a memorial or honorarium, name of individual being remembered or honored, name and mailing address where gift notification should be sent.

Snacks:

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, May 20: Devita Harden and Rebecca Zimmermann

Monday June 17: Potluck for the Annual Meeting.

What's Happening at the Public Meetings LWVPC Observe?

Jacksonville

We are delighted to add another public body to our observation list. Rachel Howell, our new Jacksonville member, is observing the Jacksonville City Board. She attended her first meeting and introduced herself to elected officials. She found she already knew some of them. She has attended two board meetings where she learned of city ordinances and heard of problems Jacksonville citizens were having. Some parts of Jacksonville have problems with cars parked in front yards, or left parked on the street for weeks or months. Jacksonville has ordinances dealing with this and enforcement of was discussed. (Little Rock also has such ordinances and code enforcement officers give citations when violations are observed.) Rachel is looking forward to learning more about her city's problems and governance as she continues observing at Jacksonville City Hall. We appreciate Rachel volunteering to observe and report.

Little Rock

Scott's Script, recommendations from Mayor Scott Jr.'s transition team, is now available at littlerock.gov/scottscript. The Mayor plans to use the recommendations from eight sub-committees selected from Little Rock citizens as the outline for his goals for Little Rock. The sub-committees met privately to generate their recommendations. LWVPC members might like to review the *Scott Script* online before Mayor Scott speaks to us May 20.

The Governance Structure Study Group, established by a resolution of the City Board, has been meeting weekly. They have reviewed recommendations regarding governance from FUTURE LITTLE ROCK and VISION LITTLE ROCK. They have heard Professor Jay Barth speak about his study of current Little Rock governance of impact of ward and at large positions on representation, and heard from Jim McKenzie, former director of Metroplan, on Little Rock demographics. The executive director of the Arkansas Municipal spoke to them about various forms of city governance in our state.

What's Happening at the Public Meetings LWVPC Observe?

Members of the Study Group attended a meeting of the Neighborhood Connection where at-large city board members service to the City was discussed. Concerns dealt with at-large versus ward Board members, need for requiring a minimum percentage of a vote to win election to City Board, and how to make Board membership more representative of the demographics of our City. The group will make their recommendation to the City Board by June 30. Kathleen Oleson and Ruth Bell are observing these meetings.

Mary Wildgen, Mindy Morrell, Kathleen Oleson, Ruth Bell, Norma Johnson continue and Denise Ennett to observe Election Commission, Metroplan, LR Planning Commission and LR City Board, Quorum Court, County Planning Board, CAW Board, Little Rock School Board and Volunteers in Public Schools and will keep us informed on action on LWV issues at those venues.

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.

[Volunteers in Public Schools](#)

Meets September to May on second Mondays at noon in the Fair Park Early Childhood Center on Harrison St. Contact Denise Ennett at 817.894.4628 or ennettdenise@gmail.com.

[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.

[Little Rock Board of Directors:](#)

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

[County Planning Board](#)

Meets the 4th 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 2nd Tuesday of the month for agenda and then the full court meets 4th Tuesday. Both meetings start at 6 pm at 201 S. Broadway 4th Floor Quorum Court Room. Contact Kathleen Oleson at 501.664.2351 or Ruth Bell at 501.225.2538 or rfbell@aristotle.net

[Central Arkansas Water Board](#)

Meets the 2nd 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 rfbell@aristotle.net

Observing Opportunities continued on next page.

[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

Little Rock School District

Meet 5:30-6:30 at 810 Markham, Little Rock. Next meeting is May 16th. Contact Norma Johnson at norma_johnson58@yahoo.com

[MetroPlan](#)

Executive Committee meets at 501 West Markham St., Suite B, Little Rock on the 3rd Thursday of every other month from 10 am-12 pm. Board meets last Wednesday of every other month from 10 am to 12 pm. Contact Mindy Morrell at 501 951 7773 or mindymorrell@hotmail.com

[North Little Rock Planning Commission:](#)

Meets the second Tuesday of every month at 4 pm at North Little Rock City Hall.

[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 3rd 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

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