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## **The Voter January 2020**

Edited by Jogee Detchemendy

### **Upcoming Events**

- Tuesday, January 21, 5:30 pm: LWVPC General Meeting, Fletcher Library 823 N. Buchanan, Little Rock. We will welcome Pulaski County Election Commission talk about the Commission's function, the election process, and increasing voter participation as well as the new voting equipment.
- Monday, January 20 MKL Parade. please see Convener's Corner article below for more information.
- Wednesday, January 29- Sunday, February 2: Voter registration drive at the Arkansas Repertory Theatre for Ann. Please see Convener's Corner below for more information.
- Monday, February 17, 5:30 pm: LWVPC General Meeting, Fletcher Library 823 N. Buchanan, Little Rock. Celebration of 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the League of Women Voters! Join us at our February meeting at the Fletcher Library to celebrate this milestone and to hear how the League started, what we've done over the decades, how we have impacted our country, and how we will continue to empower voters and defend democracy. Please contact Pat Landes (309-648-3504 or [landes.pat@gmail.com](mailto:landes.pat@gmail.com)) if you have any photographs of past activities of the Pulaski County League that we could use for our celebration.
- Tuesday, February 18 EARLY VOTING BEGINS!!!

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## Convener's Corner

By Carol Young

I must say 2020 has begun in a big, busy way. We have so many opportunities to serve our community, plus we have the 100th birthday of the LWVUS to celebrate. We are glad Jogee, Voter Editor is back after taking time off to birth her little leaguer, Vivian. We are very grateful that Danielle Butler volunteered to step in for the past few months.

**Voter Registration for the play Ann at the Rep.** We are so happy to partner with the Arkansas Repertory Theatre to register voters at several performances of their show about Texas Governor Ann Richards. She was a real firebrand, and this play captures her in the most entertaining way. I saw the play at Lincoln Center in New York, with the author, Holland Taylor, in the title role, and I look forward to Elizabeth Ashley's portrayal in Little Rock.

We need two people at each of 6 shows in the opening week. Then we will add other performances as we see how it goes. If you volunteer for two performances, you will get a free ticket to the show. Here is the link to Sign Up Genius: [Voter Registration at Ann](#) or if you want to send me an email, I will plug you in. The address of the theatre is at 601 Main Street in downtown Little Rock. There is paid parking across the street. If you want reimbursement, just let me know. This should be fun!



**High School Voter Registrations.** Seven civic organizations sent representatives to a meeting at the Pulaski County Clerk's office on Thursday, January 9th. We each choose two high schools out of the 29, public, private and charter schools in the county. I chose Hall High and Episcopal Collegiate. More information on this to follow. Katherine Pope is helping coordinate this effort.

**New LWVPC VIPS Representative.** Big thanks to Pamela Whitaker for volunteering to be our new representative for Volunteers in Public Schools!

*Convener's Corner continued on next page.*

**Issues That Matter 2020.** We are proud to continue our partnership with the Central Arkansas Library System and UALR Public Radio to bring four new forums to the community in 2020.

- March 12- The Need to Read; Literacy in Arkansas, at the Hillary Rodham Clinton Children's Library 6pm
- June 18- How Private Are We- The Fine Line between Safety and Surveillance
- August 20- On the Ballot- Presentations on the Issues on the November Ballot
- November 12- Legislative Preview- What Bills are going to be hot topics in the 2021 Session

Mark your Calendars- We will need volunteers to staff our table, and hand out and collect question cards.

**MLK Day Parade.** The League has been asked by Mrs. Annie Abrams to participate in the MLK Day Parade on Monday, January 20th. We will work with AAUW and the Women's History Institute on a float, which is a flatbed trailer pulled behind a truck. League members will ride on the trailer, or back of the truck or walk along side holding signs. The idea is for the people riding are in period costume for the 19th amendment and the walkers are in modern day dress holding signs for issues yet to be solved. Nell is committing money from the LWVAR Redistricting Funds and signs for signs and candy with information about the Redistricting Amendment attached- who doesn't like throwing out candy from a float?? If you are interested in helping decorate the float, or want to ride or walk in the Parade, please let me know.

**Meeting 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.

## **New Member Spotlight**

### **By Jogie Detchemendy**

We'd like to welcome all our new members: Benjamin Phillips, Skye Adams, Barrett Goodwin, Ann Owen, Sydney Rasch, Lucy Thompson, Vicki Westerfield, Pamela Whitaker, and Janna Knight. Throughout the next few months we will be featuring a member or two in each Voter. Our first new member spotlight is Ann Owen.



Ann Owen is involved with various organizations in Little Rock, including Central Arkansas Master Naturalists, Pulaski County Master Gardeners, and the KLRE/KUAR Friends Board, for which she is the 2020 president. A member at Second Presbyterian Church, last fall she joined the staff as their first part-time Sustainability Coordinator. Ann has served local Young Adult Volunteer program site coordinator, as a municipal recycling coordinator in Texas, as a community relations representative at Heifer International, as an AmeriCorps volunteer at Pinnacle Mountain State Park. She and her husband Rick recently built a Platinum LEED-certified home which won the U.S. Green Building Council's national 2018 Residential Project of the Year. Ann earned a Master of Public Service degree at the UA Clinton School of Public Service in 2014.

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## **Little Rock School District Information**

**By Norma Johnson**

The following items were recommended by Superintendent, Mr. Poore and CAB Committee, and then approved and authorized to take place in 2020-2021 school year by Mr. Johnny Key (acting school board)

Action: Boundary Adjustment Option 2: High School Attendance Zone

Action: Continue adding one high school grade per year to Pinnacle View under the School of Innovation model until grades 9-12 are fully in place. Further, adopt a high school attendance zone, concurrent with the existing Pinnacle View Middle School zone at such time that the district provides a traditional high school in the area of the district.

Action: Create a magnet program at Southwest High School around the Ford NGL model.

Action: Establish Hall High School as a magnet school as described with no attendance zone: The District may consider implementing an appropriate shadow zone.

Action: the LRSD Community Blueprint modification to move the Rockefeller Elementary K-5 to the Washington Elementary campus for the 20-21 school year. Additionally, Rockefeller will be utilized as birth to pre-K center.

FOR MORE DETAILED information please visit [www.lrsd.org](http://www.lrsd.org)

## **Information from Our Observers Corp**

**By Ruth Bell**

**Central Arkansas (CAW):** For more than 60 years a pipeline carrying oil from Illinois to the Gulf Coast has run through the Maumelle Watershed and passed close to one section of Lake Maumelle. It was constructed there before Lake Maumelle was created. Several years ago a part of the pipeline close to Mayflower sprung a leak, damaged houses in a subdivision, and almost entered Lake Conway. The then owner of the pipeline closed it down following the leak. Now new owners of the pipeline have applied to the federal oversight board for pipelines carrying hazardous materials for permission to reopen the pipeline.

As part of that application they must present proof that the pipeline is in workable condition and not liable to leak again. Because this is an existing pipeline, a restriction in the Pulaski County Watershed Ordinance prohibiting pipelines does not apply. The decision will rest with the federal oversight board. Our understanding is that public input into the decision will not be sought by that board. Both CAW and LWWoters PC observers, Kathleen Oleson and Ruth Bell are following this very closely.

*Information from Our Observers Corp continued on next page.*

**Jacksonville City Council:** Several months ago three members of the Jacksonville City Council met privately to discuss police department salary issues. Such private meetings are contrary to the provisions of the State's Freedom of Information law, and resulted in Pulaski County Prosecutor Larry Jegley sending all Council members a letter stating there had been a violation of the FOI law and any further violations would result in greater punishment than a warning letter. Shortly thereafter a Council member met privately with the Jacksonville mayor, another council member and Jacksonville City Clerk to explain to them she was not actually part of the first illegal meeting.

Since FOI law was enacted, LWVoters has supported it strongly. We believe that public bodies should conduct the public's business in meetings which are publicized in advance, and open to the public and the media. In support of adherence to FOI requirements, LWVoters PC Leadership Team convener Carol Young sent a letter to Jacksonville Mayor Bob Johnson and Jacksonville City Council, asking them to add to the Council by-laws a commitment to adhere to the Freedom of Information law.

Many thanks to our observer of Jacksonville City Council, Rachel Howell, for calling our attention to this FOI issue.

**Little Rock City Hall:** We are told the study of AirBnB type lodgings and possible planning and zoning changes their existence might trigger, will be received by LR City Board at the end of January.

LR Planning Commission approved changes in planning, zoning, landscaping, land alteration, storm water detention and management ordinances and forwarded them to the City Board for approval. The intent of the changes is to place oversight of these functions directly in the hands of the mayor, and give him authority to assign these responsibilities to a city department of his choosing. There is continued informal discussion of reorganizing and reassigning responsibilities amongst city departments with the goal of making it easier for individuals or businesses to meet requirements (landscaping, land alteration, storm water management, planning and zoning) when they file zoning, planning, or subdivision applications.

We are seeking more information on possible restructuring of city departments.

Two vacancies on the Planning Commission were filled over the Christmas holidays, resulting in a group consisting of 10 men and 1 woman. Over the past twenty or more years the number of women members have varied from as few as two to as many as five. Since we feel women bring their own unique contribution to group discussion, as well as being a major part of the community demographic, we plan to bring this decline in representation to the attention of Mayor and City Board.

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## Observing Opportunities:

Please click links for calendar of each committee's meetings. Names of current League members who observe these meetings are also listed. 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 Pamela Whitaker at [pamela@ecawake.com](mailto:pamela@ecawake.com).

### [Jacksonville City Board](#)

Meets first and third Thursday at 6 pm. In the City Hall Council Chambers at 1 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville. Contact Rachel Howell at 501.942.3086 (H) 501.580.2782 (C) or [rachel\\_howell@yahoo.com](mailto:rachel_howell@yahoo.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](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. 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 [rfbell@aristotle.net](mailto:rfbell@aristotle.net)

### [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 [rfbell@aristotle.net](mailto:rfbell@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!!!!

*Observing Opportunities continued on next page.*

## 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. 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. Board meets last Wednesday of every other month from 10 am to 12 pm. Mindy Morrell resigned from observing due to pressure of other activities. We need a volunteer to take her place.

## [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 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.

## **Leadership Team 2019-2020**

Ruth Bell- one year remaining. 501.225.2538 or [rfbell@aristotle.net](mailto:rfbell@aristotle.net)

Jogee Detchemendy - new term. 662.312.9277 or [jogeeduzzi@gmail.com](mailto:jogeeduzzi@gmail.com)

Devita Harden- Treasurer new term. 770.617.3096 or [devita467@gmail.com](mailto:devita467@gmail.com)

Norma Johnson-new term. [norma\\_johnson58@yahoo.com](mailto:norma_johnson58@yahoo.com)

Carol Young- President one year remaining. 501.680.3947 or [cyoung8151@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cyoung8151@sbcglobal.net)

## **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.