



The League of Women Voters of Washington County

September 2017 Vol. 65. No. 348 www.lwvarwc.org P.O. Box 4, Fayetteville, AR 72702

Calendar of Events

- Tuesday, September 26, 2017 – National Voter Registration Day: 10:30 to 1:00 p.m. Fayetteville Public Library
- Wednesday, September 27, 2017 – Member Meeting: Strengthening the League of Women Voters as an Action Group: 5:30 to 7:30, Washington County Extension, 2536N McConnell Ave, Fayetteville, AR 72704
- Sunday, October 15, 2017 – Public Activity: Lifelong Housing Open House: 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Wilson Park Neighborhood, 423 W. Hawthorne St., Fayetteville
- Wednesday, October 25, 2017 – Public Program: Lifelong Housing: Learn from the Builders, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Washington Regional Pat Walker Senior Center Auditorium, 12 E. Appleby, Fayetteville
- Thursday, November 9, 2017: Stop Gun Violence, Help Save Lives; 5:30 to 7:30, Fayetteville Public Library

Message from the President

Going Back to the Future

“The right to vote is the right by which all other rights are protected.”

Thomas Paine

The League of Women Voters of Washington County is returning in force to its original mission of expanding and protecting voter rights, educating about voter issues and doing this in a non-partisan manner.

While our focus has occasionally shifted to many environmental, social wellbeing, and public education topics, this time in our country demands that we concentrate on voting and the protection of our democracy. All policy areas are important and require public involvement and political action but they rest on the foundation of civic participation through voting, as Thomas Paine so clearly stated. Recognition of the importance of developing informed voters acting in their best interest is the challenge before us. We feel that no other organization has a better capacity to achieve this but it will require greater support and much more member participation.

In three years, the League of Women Voters will celebrate its 100th Anniversary. The term suffrage means *the right to vote in political elections: enfranchisement*. This term first appeared in English in the U. S. Constitution, 1787. We must not forget the thousands of women around the world who **suffered** and continue to suffer to bring inclusion to the ballot. Today we are seeing an increase in efforts to disenfranchise voters and obfuscate information people need to know when voting. We are called on to protect what they fought for and expand on it.

The subject and task is huge. The League of Women Voters of Arkansas has approved the beginning of a statewide study on voter suppression in general and Arkansas’s method of managing voter rolls in particular. Any individual concerned about this subject and interested in participating is invited to join the committee working on this issue. For more information email Joyce Hale at joycehale43@gmail.com.

LWVWC Annual Meeting – August 29, 2017

Members of the League of Women Voters of Washington County elected the following officers:

President – Joyce Hale (2017-2018)

1st Vice President – Laura Kellams (2017-2018) (Programs Chair)

2nd Vice President – Beth Barham (2017-2019) (Facilities Chair)

Secretary – Angela Danovi (2017-2018)

Treasurer – Susan Rausch (2017-2019)

Director – Jennifer Neill (2017-2018)

Director – Sarah Gheen (2017-2019)

Director – Glenda Patterson (2017-2018)

NOTE: The Board may appoint four more Board Members.

Nominating Slate for 2018-2019 (One board member and two non-board members – two more will be appointed by the board after it convenes.) Laura Kellams, Chair, Nancy Denn, Rita Officer

Programs for the 2017-2018 League of Women Voters of Washington County

In the past LWVWC members have commented that they wished there were opportunities for more discussion among members about issues and political policy concerns. With board meetings and public programs having their own agendas, there was no opportunity for these conversations to occur. To provide the time for this, four members have volunteered to chair topic committees where a wide variety of subjects will be considered. All members are encouraged to be engaged in League programs and discussions. Call the committee facilitator to indicate your interest in attending or for more information.

VOTER ISSUES – Angela Danovi – 479-295-7717

What happened to our AR voter records?

What are the laws & can we change them?

Voter tracking software: ERIC vs Cross Check

Need for a Voter Polling place at the University

Redistricting & minority populations

EDUCATION – Michelle Wolchok – 801-560-6172

Alternatives to public schools & their public impact

Pre-K within public schools

Summer & after school programs

Sex Ed

SOCIAL ISSUES – Sarah Gheen – 479-871-5156

Homelessness & availability of information

Minority issues around juvenile justice

Lifelong housing and aging in place

GUN VIOLENCE – Patsy Ferritor and Priscilla Kumpe - 479-409-8174

IMMIGRATION – Open Chair

Strengthening the League of Women Voters as an Action Group

We have an exciting member meeting lined up this month with special guest, Pat Landes, of the Pulaski County chapter coming up from Little Rock. Pat recently moved to Arkansas from Illinois. She has a great deal of experience as well as training from League national that can be helpful in making our chapter the best it can be.

Pat will be covering:

- ideas for recruiting new members and building the chapter's outreach
- how the non-partisan position of the League works in action, and
- the process for moving a topic through a study and on to taking an official League position locally, at the state level and on up to national - vital information for our very active program committees.

There will be lots of time for Q&A and exchanging ideas. You don't want to miss it, so please join us! September 27 (Wednesday night) 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Washington County Extension, 2536N McConnell Ave, Fayetteville, AR 72704 If you are able to bring some cookies or a snack, that would be most welcome.

Stop Gun Violence, Help Save Lives

The League of Women Voters has a stand on gun violence:

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

For many of us, this is good but we truly want to see the end of gun violence. Now that Arkansas has a law to permit concealed carry on campus, a group of concerned members of the League of Women Voters of Washington County see the need to educate our members and citizens of the dangers of the proliferation of guns and raise awareness of safety practices that address this proliferation.

On Thursday, November 9, the League of Women Voters of Washington County will host a panel discussion and question and answer session in the Walker Room of the Fayetteville Public Library. Please join us at 5:30 p.m. to increase your knowledge base on gun violence and safety factors. Members of the panel will be Steve Boss, PhD, Professor of Geosciences at the University of Arkansas, Nicole Clowney, Advocate for Moms Demand Action, Steven Gahagans, Chief of University of Arkansas Police Department, and Greg Leding, Arkansas House of Representatives District 86. The panel moderator will be Ann Rosso.

. These experts and concerned citizens will discuss issues around gun violence, unsettling statistics and ways in which citizens can impact the reduction of gun violence. Members of the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions of the panelists. By the end of this discussion, the LWVWC wants each member of the audience to be better informed and ready to take the accurate information forward to share with friends, neighbors and family.

Question: Why should you attend?

Answer: Data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that on an average day, 93 Americans are killed with guns.

Lifelong Housing Open House Event

The best way to learn what is meant by Lifelong Housing is to see a home designed to accommodate the special needs of aging or disabled individuals who prefer to stay in their homes. You are invited to attend an open house tour Sunday, October 15, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. at 423 W. Hawthorne St., Fayetteville. The event is free but will require tickets for scheduled time slots to avoid congestion. Contact Beth Barham at beth.barham5@gmail.com or call 445-4116 to schedule a tour or for more information.

This house tour is in the Wilson Park neighborhood. Tour guides will assist. An information booth will have materials and spokespersons to share information. A video will be made of the tour. It is funded by AARP with assistance from groups like local AARP HUB members and will be available for use by AARP and other groups or individuals.

This LWVWC project is also co-sponsored by Sources, AARP Arkansas and AARP national.

Lifelong Housing: Learn from the Builders

Remaining in one's home rather than a care facility is the desire of most people. Steps can be taken to extend that time at home, if people plan ahead. A program to discuss the issue of building housing to meet the needs of an aging population will be held Wednesday, October 25, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Washington Regional Pat Walker Senior Center

auditorium located at 12 E. Appleby, Fayetteville. Panelists will include Tim Janachek, Janachek Remodeling of Rogers, Suzanne Lantz of the Stitt Group in Rogers, and one additional panelist TBD.

The February LWVWC program on lifelong housing kicked off activity with architects, builders, organizations and city officials that is ongoing to address this growing residential accommodations need. Actions they take have the potential of leading to legislation and policies supporting financial incentives for home construction that addresses special needs. There is no charge for attending this panel. Contact Beth Barham at beth.barham5@gmail.com or call 445-4116 for more information.

League of Women Voters Working Committee Reports

Gun Violence: Please see the program scheduled for Thursday, November 9, 2017

LWVWC Social Issues/Homelessness Meeting: Martha Ward hosted a discussion on homelessness in Northwest Arkansas at her home August 30. Attendees were Beth Barnham, Sarah Gheen, Martha Ward, Joyce Hale and Dr. Kevin Fitzpatrick. Plans were developed for a public program on the issues for March 15, 2018. Dr. Fitzpatrick, who has vast experience with the homeless issue as director of the Community and Family Institute and the Point-in-Time Homeless Survey, has volunteered to bring a panel of experts together for a program which will present facts and figures and address the myths that surround homelessness. Some of the solutions include: a living wage, affordable housing and policy advocacy. A meeting location for the March panel is TBD.

Voter Issues: There is interest in advocating for a Polling Site on the University of Arkansas campus. The committee proposed various strategies for working on this during the 2017-2018 academic year before the elections in 2018.

The committee has also begun to study the problems of voter suppression and what actions in Arkansas may be contributing to this. The work of this committee will contribute to a LWVAR study with a particular focus on the affect of voter issues in the way voter registration lists are updated. This Committee welcomes all members and will be meeting again Tues., Oct. 12 at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Nancy Denn. Please call Nancy at 443-3002, if you would like to attend.

Voter Registration Drive – Razorbash Campus Event, U of Arkansas, Fayetteville

The League of Women Voters of Washington County, AR participated in the annual Razorbash event on the U.niversity of Arkansas campus, August 24. This event targets students who are new to Fayetteville, in particular. Businesses, non-profits and government entities are on site to introduce the students to our town and region.

The following persons volunteered their time: Beth Barham, Nancy Denn, Fei Rubinelli (special thanks to Fei for bringing her tent!), Martha Ward, and Elizabeth Woods.

For this drive we wanted to:

Reach out to UA students to make sure they are registered, and to help them change their address to a local address if they are moving here

Answer student questions about voting locally. For example, what if they return home to live with their family in the summer? That is considered a temporary displacement for voting purposes. But it points out the fact that the student needs to make a choice: vote here, or vote at their family's home location.

Introduce students to the League. We explained our history as an organization, what we do and our process, and how to participate and join the League if they choose.

Statistics: 27 forms completed; approximately 100 handouts; 14 asked to receive the Voter Observations from this drive:

Razorbash took place just after the Charlottesville events, so students were wondering who we are. Some African American students were visibly distrustful at first, then happy to know we were there when they heard more about the League. It would be good to have a more diverse group of volunteers to better match the diversity of the student body.

We need to educate on the history of League.

Our chapter should be there for this event every year.

The Volunteer Action Center at UA, along with their software (GivePulse) is a very nice way to keep track of our hours volunteering.

Students appreciate learning where the County Clerk's office is located and how to vote.

Everyone seems excited to know how to connect their voting precincts (VoterView.org, maintained by the AR Secretary of State's office) with their elected officials currently in office (LWVARWC Guide to Elected Officials). We need to include the VoterView.org link on the Guide to Elected Officials in the future.

Respectfully submitted September 3, 2017 by Beth Barham, drive organizer.