

# ***The Voter***

League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area

*League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.*

March 2016

P.O. Box 68214, Jackson, MS 39286-8214

[http://www.lwv-ms.org/Jackson\\_League](http://www.lwv-ms.org/Jackson_League)

## **LWVJA March Meeting**



**When: 10:00 a.m., March 12**

**Where: Eudora Welty Library, 300 N. State Street, Jackson**

**Program topic: Human Trafficking in Mississippi**

### **Panelists:**

- **Paula Broome, Special Assistant Attorney General/Deputy Chief of Bureau of Victim Assistance. MS Attorney General's Office.**
- **Marjorie Whitmarsh, Victims Specialist, FBI, Jackson Division**
- **Mike Byers, Board President for the Center for Violence Prevention**
- **Patricia Ice, Director, Mississippi Immigrant Rights Alliance Legal Project**

Moderator: Dierdre Payne, Editor, LWVJA, *The Voter*

**Don't miss the meeting!** We are fortunate to have a well-informed panel to provide information on the practice of human trafficking in Mississippi. This crime does not happen somewhere else, it happens here. Invite friends and any interested groups or individuals to attend this very important meeting.

### **Statement of Position on Human Trafficking (Adopted at the LWVUS 2014 National Convention)**

*The League of Women Voters opposes all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking. We consider human trafficking to be a form of modern day slavery and believe that every measure should be taken and every effort should be made through legislation and changes in public policy to prevent human trafficking. Prosecution and penalization of traffickers and abusers should be established, and existing laws should be strictly enforced. Extensive essential services for victims should be applied where needed. Education and awareness programs on human trafficking should be established in our communities and in our schools.*

## Human Trafficking

(Excerpt from the Attorney General's website)



It is a sad fact that Human Trafficking is a heinous system in operation here in Mississippi today. **The Attorney General's Office is dedicated to pursuing and prosecuting those who engage in the trade of human beings.** Previously, many of us believed that only women from foreign countries were sneaked into **America for the sex trade, and that was the sum total of "Human Trafficking"** in this country. Sadly, we now know differently. Victims of human trafficking can be the girl next door, someone who fell into the trap of bondage through drug addiction or bad choices or someone who came to this country to work and make a better life for themselves and their families. One thing is certain: those who profit off of modern-day slavery, no matter for what purpose, deserve to be punished.....

Human Trafficking is broadly defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person, through the use of force, fraud or coercion, for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude or forced labor or services. Human Trafficking comes in many forms, but is most easily categorized as either labor trafficking or sex trafficking. Labor trafficking involves using force, fraud or coercion to recruit, harbor, transport, obtain or employ a person for labor or services in involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery, and victims of labor trafficking can be found in situations including, but not limited to, domestic situations as nannies or maids, sweatshop factories, janitorial jobs, construction sites, farm work, restaurants, and panhandling. Sex trafficking involves commercial sex act (which includes engaging in sex acts, the production of sexually oriented materials, or sexually explicit performances), induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which person performing the act is under age 18. Victims of sex trafficking can be found working on the streets as prostitutes, in massage parlors, brothels, strip clubs, escort services....

Mississippi state law requires anyone who suspects that a person under the age of 18 is being trafficked to make a report to the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS). The number for reporting suspected child trafficking to the MDHS is **1-800-222-8000**.

<http://www.ago.state.ms.us/victims/human-trafficking/>

## Member Spotlight – Carolyn Townes



LWV: Tell me a bit about yourself? My name is Carolyn Townes and I will be 76 on March 2. I was born in Hattiesburg, spent my married life in the Delta, and have been in the Jackson area since January 1976. I have a daughter, Caroline, and four grandchildren.

LWV: How long have you lived in Jackson and what have been your activities in Jackson (jobs, other organization memberships, etc.)? I am a social worker and worked 25 years for the Department of Human Services and then in hospital, home health and hospice agencies. I am semi-retired, but still do a little consulting work. My volunteer work now is with Stewpot and the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility.

LWV: When did you join the League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area, and what drew you to the organization? I was encouraged to join the League by my friend,

Judy Michael. We were both interested in the political process and believed strongly in the right to vote, so League was a perfect place to show that support. My actual first contact with League was when Joyce Dortch needed help with a mail-out and asked me to assist. I met at her house with lots of other women and we stamped envelopes all afternoon.

LWV: What were some key political issues in Mississippi and nationally at the time you first joined the League? I am very concerned about the educational issues facing this state. A quality education for ALL our children is essential if we are ever to move off the bottom of all the bad lists.

LWV: Describe your involvement in the League over the years (offices held, committee work, etc.). My work with League has been as treasurer of the League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area and now co-president of the League of Women Voters of Mississippi with Mary Ann Everett. I have worked on voter registration events and always take a shift on the hotline on Election Day.

LWV: Why has the League remained important to you? The League's lobbying efforts and partnership with others in support of equitable education have been very important to me.

LWV: How might the League reach out to new, younger, more diverse members? We need to expand the League's influence by attracting a more diverse and younger membership. I wish I knew how to do this, but we must figure out a plan.



## A Message from our President

I'm excited about League and what we are now doing. As of February 10<sup>th</sup>, we have 52 members on our roster; some returning and some new. It takes many to make League successful so when you are called upon, please do what you can. Human trafficking is the topic for our next general meeting, and our team has gathered state experts for the March 12<sup>th</sup> event. (Meeting notice on front cover and on Facebook.)

Lastly, it is time to seek new officers for the coming year. No one has agreed to be president, and I cannot serve another term under the bylaws. It is mostly a job to preside as we have many capable folk who agree to serve in other League positions. The president and voter service officers have to be nonpartisan while they serve.

If you are interested, contact me!

Marcia Weaver, president, LWVJA  
[ppinn@yahoo.com](mailto:ppinn@yahoo.com)

### Volunteers Needed!

The LWVJA will provide an Election Day Hotline for the March 8 primary election. Volunteers in three-hour shifts (between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.) will answer calls from the public. The most frequent calls are about where to go to vote or what is on the ballot. Information will be available so that even a novice can find the answer. If you can help, contact Barbara Powell (601-362-8577 or [barbarapowell1914@gmail.com](mailto:barbarapowell1914@gmail.com)). It is a pleasant way to get to know other League members and also provide a significant public service.



- There is talk of a League chapter forming in Hattiesburg. Interested?

Contact state co-presidents Mary Ann Everett and Carolyn Townes.

- **The Gulf Coast League's 6<sup>th</sup> annual Making Democracy Work Luncheon** is March 17<sup>th</sup>. For more information, Email [robinacooley@gmail.com](mailto:robinacooley@gmail.com)

## League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area 2016 Calendar

Mar. 12      **General Meeting**, Affordable Care Act Update

March 29    Board Meeting

April 23     **Annual Meeting**

May 21      **LWVMS State Council**



## Who are the members?

Membership in the League of Women Voters, the most respected and effective grassroots organization in the country, is open to men and women of all ages. Our members make a visible difference by serving as community leaders using their experience to create positive, lasting change in our communities.

## How do I join?

It's easy! Just fill out this form - [http://www.lwv-ms.org/join\\_form.html](http://www.lwv-ms.org/join_form.html). You can also contact us at [http://www.lwv-ms.org/Jackson\\_League.html](http://www.lwv-ms.org/Jackson_League.html) or at 601-372-8851. We'd be happy to answer any questions you might have.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
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Serving the people of the state of Mississippi.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, multipurpose organization of women and men that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences policy through education and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose candidates or political parties. We do provide a forum where all candidates to an office can state their own positions.

[www.lwv-ms.org](http://www.lwv-ms.org)