

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.

November 2015

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

http://www.lwv-ms.org/Jackson_League

November Meeting

The focus of our November 21st League of Women Voters-Jackson meeting will be discussion of the consensus questions from LWVUS on “Money in Politics”. Our September meeting was an update and review of this issue. (Refer to the September newsletter.) In the post Citizens-United political climate, this is an important and timely topic. Please make plans to attend this meeting and to participate in gaining consensus.

When: Saturday, November 21, 2015

Where: Willie Morris Library. 4912 Old Canton Rd. Jackson.

Time: 9:30 a.m. (The meeting will be called to order at 10:00 a.m.)

In preparation for discussion, please read the following articles:

- Money in Politics Consensus Questions
<http://forum.lwv.org/sites/default/files/mip_questions.links_1.pdf>
- MIP Study Guide:
<<http://forum.lwv.org/sites/default/files/mip_study_guide_cover_and_contents_0.pdf

Consensus is how League arrives at its positions, and is how members learn and grow in protecting our democracy. We look forward to seeing you on the 21st, and to gaining consensus with you on the subject of *Money in Politics*.



How League does consensus: Every member is encouraged to share views, although speaking time will be limited. Every member view has merit and will be respected. The idea is to learn and not to debate. Differences are useful to the learning process. Dissenters often hold the key to the wisdom of the group.

Meet the New Executive Director

Life can often throw us curveballs. Right when we are settling down into a situation and starting to get comfortable, opportunity comes knocking at the door. And, we are faced with the question, will we stay in our comfort zone or delve into the unknown world of possibilities? I recently chose to pursue the world of possibilities and excitedly accepted the position of executive director of the League of Women Voters.

I was drawn to join the League because of its noted impact on American history and politics coupled with my desire to continue to serve and support mission-focused organizations that work on issues about which I am passionate. I wanted an organizational home committed to principles that are important to me – inclusion and empowerment. And, I wanted to help protect the fundamental right to vote that my foremothers and forefathers made so many sacrifices to attain. I'm excited to help continue the League's fight to protect the right to vote, most notably our need to restore the Voting Rights Act which became law 50 years ago and ensured that every American citizen, regardless of race, ethnicity or language, had equal access to the right to vote.

Since starting just over three weeks ago and right before National Voter Registration Day, I have become more intimately familiar with the League's work, and as a result, my interest in and passion for the organization has grown. My closet activist from my college days has been reignited as I have come to understand better what is at stake in this next election cycle and how League supporters, like you, are integral to helping voters have a say on the issues that matter most to them.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wylecia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wylecia Wiggs Harris
Executive Director, League of Women Voters

Catch Up With Natalie Maynor

As reported by Carol Andersen



LWVJA: Tell us a bit about yourself (full name, age, address, where you are from, family) and a few details about your life (jobs, other organization memberships, etc.)?

NM: Natalie Maynor, 72 years old, 3715 Greenwich St, Jackson 39216, native of Jackson (but left in mid '60s and lived elsewhere until September 2004). Professor emerita of English, Mississippi State University. PhD in English literature from University of Tennessee, but moved into linguistics shortly after finishing PhD—most (of my) publications were in dialectology/sociolinguistics. Other involvement in organizations: OurFondren Neighborhood Association, Jackson 2000, Unitarian Universalist Church of Jackson, Mississippi Association for the Preservation of Smith Robertson Museum and Alamo Theater, Democratic Party, Craftsmen's Guild of Mississippi in one of the board slots designated for non-craftsmen, Common Cause and the ACLU. Lifetime member of MSU Association of Retired Faculty and Oktibbeha County Humane Society. Involvement with Animal Rescue Fund of Mississippi (ARF) and Community Animal and Rescue and Adoption (CARA).

LWVJA: When did you join the League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area, and what drew you to the organization?

NM: I joined shortly after moving back to Jackson in 2004. I had been a member of the LWV in Starkville for a while, but that chapter was not very active and at some point faded away entirely. When I moved to Jackson, I once again became aware of the good work of the LWV because so many of the people active in my church (UUCJ) were also very active with the LWV.

LWVJA: Describe your involvement in the League over the years (offices held, committee work, etc.).

NM: I was on committees in Starkville but don't remember exactly what they were or what I did. Shortly after moving to Jackson I was asked to be treasurer of LWV-MS. I did that for two years and then remained on the board with the very minor role of being in charge of social media (taking care of the Facebook group page and making announcements on Twitter). I regularly volunteer for the election-day hotline and for various voter-registration events.

LWVJA: Why has the League remained important to you?

NM: I believe that it's very important to have an organization dedicated to educating voters and staying on top of issues.

LWVJA: How has League membership given you an opportunity to make an impact on your community?

NM: I find myself frequently answering questions asked by friends and acquaintances about election rules and such.

LWVJA: Do you have a League memory you could share?

NM: Some of the calls I've answered when working the election-day hotline have been pretty funny, but telling them would probably not be appropriate. One League memory I have is of working at a voter-registration table on the Ole Miss campus before the McCain-Obama debate in 2008 and having to struggle to smile and politely hand out registration forms to people wearing stickers or shirts touting candidates I was personally against. I am very careful to remain nonpartisan when doing LWV business, but it's not always easy.

LWVJA: What are current political issues that particularly pique your interest?

NM: Medical care and education.

LWVJA: What do you see as the strengths of the League of Women Voters?

NM: It is one of few nonpartisan organizations actively engaged with events at both local and national level. The national leadership does an excellent job of keeping us informed, and members almost always seem to work hard.

LWVJA: What keeps the League relevant?

NM: The League's goals/missions will be relevant as long as democracy exists.

LWVJA: How might the League reach out to new, younger, more diverse members?

NM: That is a very good question. It would help if we could get one or more young movers and shakers interested in being involved. They would almost certainly attract others to join the efforts. I'm speaking locally, of course, but the same would presumably be true anywhere. I watched Jackson Friends of the Library almost vanish a couple of years ago because the members were mainly old and burned out. I don't know exactly how this happened, but suddenly there were several young, energetic, enthusiastic leaders of the group, and it's now going strong.

From the President -

The LWVJA has been active this fall. Consensus on a Constitutional Convention was considered in September and led by Savina Schoenhofer. League offered a voter registration activity at Wellsfest in October organized by Kay Brodbeck. The Voter Hotline championed by Barbara Powell was November 3. It takes many volunteers to do these activities and I am always amazed that we continue to have members to sign up for these important events. That is the reason I have continued to support League for some 40 years. I've named a few people in this note but there is a bucket more of unnamed people that helped with our activities. Thank you. And many thanks to a good board of directors working on our events. Oh, and let me say yea for the new members who have joined us! Y'all make me happy. Let's do more in the coming months.

How exciting that we had 16 folks working on the Election Day Nov.3 Voter Hotline. Hats off to three new members who worked: Jan Watson, Delores Underwood, and Alice M. Skelton. Well, we only got 12 calls including one from a great League leader, Fran Leber, who is always ready to serve League. Thanks to all who made our Voter Hotline successful and it was great to get to visit with our newest members.

Marcia Weaver

League of Women Voters – Jackson Area, president

League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area 2015-2016 Calendar

- Nov. 21 **General Meeting.** Topic: *Money in Politics* consensus study. Willie Morris Library, 4912 Old Canton Rd. 10:00 a.m.
- Dec. 1 Board Meeting
Deadline for consensus report on *Constitutional Amendment* study
- Jan. 4 Deadline for Voter articles
- Jan. 23 **General Meeting,** Legislative Issues, Willie Morris Library, 4912 Old Canton Rd. 10:00 a.m.
- Feb. 1 Deadline for consensus report on *Money in Politics* study
- Feb. 11 **State Legislative Day**
- Feb. 16 Board Meeting
- Feb. 22 Deadline for Voter articles
- 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. You can also contact us at http://www.lwv-ms.org/Jackson_League.html or at 601-372-8851. We'd be happy to answer any questions you might have.



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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