



**League of Women Voters
of the Jackson Area**

THE VOTER

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

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

September 2018

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



New Member Brunch



**Saturday, Sept. 15, 2018
Fondren Presbyterian Church
3220 Old Canton Rd, Jackson, MS**



Agenda:

9:30 am: Welcome, eat, mingle
10:00 am: Sign up for voter service and
lobbying activities
10:20 am: "Drawing the Line: Redistricting;"
speaker former U.S. Attorney Brad Pigott
11:00 am: Adjourn

*Members, Bring a brunch dish to share and please
join us! This event is open to the public.*



Message from The President



Carol Andersen

A team of new and returning board members has been at work since our last newsletter, planning a full and active year for the League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area.

First, let me introduce myself – your new president. I am the daughter of a long line of grain farmers from Iowa, I am a journalist by training but have been working in nonprofit programming for several years, currently with the Mississippi Humanities Council where I have directed a grants program since 2005. I am married to an epidemiologist who teaches in the Jackson State University School of Public Health, and we have two daughters, ages 13 and 14. We are a civically active family, we volunteer as much as our schedules will bear, we are involved members of Galloway United Methodist Church in Jackson and we are all passionate readers, debaters and occasional protestors. I am very excited to take a more active role with the League through my new position on your board.

Your other board members include Deloris Lee, administrative vice president; Elaine Talbot, membership director; Gene Everitt, treasurer; Anna Hall, vice president for voter services; Megan Tidwell, secretary; Alice Skelton, national issues director; Annie Reiher, state issues director; Savina Schoenhofer, newsletter editor; and Joy Parikh, social media and public relations director.

Our first meeting of 2018-2019 is a member recruitment brunch Saturday, Sept. 15, at the First Presbyterian Church in Fondren. All members are asked to bring a brunch dish to share; beverages will be provided. Our speaker is former U.S. Attorney Brad Pigott, partner in the Pigott & Johnson law firm

(continued next column)

in Jackson. His presentation, “Drawing the Line,” will examine the history of redistricting in Mississippi and he will discuss how the process might be managed better. Since this is a member recruitment event, we encourage you to bring a friend – or several friends – who may be interested in joining us in our work to inform and involve citizens in our democracy. Although we are the League of *Women* Voters, men are welcome as well!

A little later this month, September 25, the League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area will join the NAACP and the Beth Israel Congregation Criminal Justice Reform Group in hosting a candidates’ forum among court of appeals and circuit court judges. The forum will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Beth Israel Congregation, 5215 Old Canton Road, Jackson.

Please read through this month’s issue of *The Voter* carefully to learn more about what your local League is doing to increase citizens’ understanding of important public policy issues and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.



<https://www.facebook.com/LWVJA/>



@LWVofMs

LWV-Jackson Area Board of Directors 2018-2019

President

Carol Andersen

1st Vice-President Program/Administration

Deloris Lee

2nd Vice-President Voter Services

Anna Ingebretsen Hall

Secretary

Megan Tidwell

Treasurer

Gene Everitt

Elected Directors

Membership: Elaine Talbott

Voter Editor: Savina Schoenhofer

Appointed Directors

National Issues: Alice Skelton

State Issues: Annie Reiher

Social Media/Public Relations: Joy Parikh

CALENDAR 2018-2019

- Sept.15 **Member Recruitment Brunch**
Fondren Presbyterian Church, 3220 Old
Canton Road, Jackson
- Sept.18 **Board Meeting**, 6:00 p.m.*
- Sept.25 **Candidate Forum**, Circuit & Appeals
Court Judges, Beth Israel
Congregation, 7-9pm
- Oct. 9 **Board Meeting**, 6:00 p.m.*
- Nov.17 **Membership Meeting**,
Location and Topic TBA
- Jan. 8 **Board Meeting**, 6:00 p.m.*
- Feb. 12 **Board Meeting**, 6:00 p.m.*
- Mar. 12 **Board Meeting**, 6:00 p.m.*

* Unless otherwise noted, all board meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, 121 N. Jefferson St., Jackson. All meetings are open to the public.

New Member and Recruitment News

Please make welcome new member DeeJ Curry. After having a delightful conversation with her by phone I am convinced that she will be an enthusiastic addition to our growing Jackson League community. (see member profile)

Our September meeting focuses on new member recruitment. We are all encouraged to invite women and men who are interested in voting rights and good government to attend this and any League meeting. Please bring a guest or guests with you as often as you can. Thank you.



Elaine Talbott, Membership Director

http://lwv-ms.org/join_online.html

Report on National LWV Issues By Alice Skelton



For the past 2 years LWVUS has been holding stakeholder meetings and using outside consulting firms to guide us through the process. The purpose of this extensive study was to ensure LWV becomes stronger, more visible, and more relevant. There has been and continues to be input from local league leaders, LWVUS Council of 2017, several focus groups and analysis of similar outside organizations. The results to date are summarized in a document (which is a work-in-progress) called the *LWV Transformation Roadmap*.

The five main conclusions include:

1. Uncertain strategic focus;
2. Lack of sufficient organizational alignment;
3. A structure that is an impediment to organizational effectiveness and efficiency;
4. A culture that has failed to adapt to current trends in volunteerism and embrace diverse populations; and
5. Deficits in organizational capacity, specifically staffing, communications, technology and fundraising.

The national board adopted the following mission, vision and value statements:

- **Mission Statement:** Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.
- **Vision Statement:** We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.
- **Value Statement:** We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.

The *LWV Transformation Roadmap* is a 41-page document. It is worth reading. Here is a link to an [Executive Summary of the Roadmap](#) which is only 5 pages. The summary outlines the local, state and national roles in this Roadmap.

League of Women Voters – Jackson Area

Making Democracy Work Again

MEMBER PROFILE:

DEEJ CURRY



Deej Curry, between two best TX LWV

LWV: Tell me a bit about yourself (full name, where you live now, where you are from, family)?

DJC: My full name is Diane Jean Curry. My nickname and the name I use is Deej, shortened from my first and middle name by my mother the very first time I made her mad while I was still an infant to D.J. It was not the last time. It was further shortened by middle brother to Deej and that was that. I come from a large family that is very close. I was married more than 45 years. We chose not to have children. I have lived in numerous parts of the Pacific Northwest, most of them before the age of 4. I lived in and around Grants Pass, OR until I was 11. I still consider it my home town as I had family and still have friends in the area. From there my family moved to the San Francisco Bay Area where I grew the rest of the way up, started college, went to work, met and married. Over the years my husband's work took us to England, back to California, then Texas and finally Mississippi.

LWV: How long have you lived in the Jackson area and what have been your activities since living here (jobs, other organization memberships, etc.)?

DJC: I have lived here in north Jackson for 13+ years. I read, travel, keep up with family and friends and am active in many causes, but mostly I have perfected the art of doing nothing. If you were to ask me after a busy day doing what I want, I would say "oh, nothing much, you? I belong to Planned Parenthood, LWV, most of the museums in town and several animal organizations and museums elsewhere. I am an independent voter who chooses candidates and issues over parties.

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

DJC: After trying to get in touch with the Jackson LWV when I first moved here, with no luck, I was at the Ms. Civil Rights Museum in May, talking to one of their docents when I found out she was a member and got all the information I needed to join. I had been a member of both the California and Texas LWV since I became a voter. I even voted absentee while I was in England. I had my mom send me all the necessary information and LWV pamphlets. California's LWV publishes the initiative information pamphlet every year.

LWV: What were some key political issues in Mississippi and nationally at the time you first joined the League?

DJC: In California, it was Vietnam, women's rights, the start of the environmental movement, agricultural workers' rights and many others.

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

DJC: I held no offices. I worked on voter drives and membership drives at other protest events. I gave when I had the money.

LWV: Why has the League remained important to you?

DJC: They offer information and help on voter issues, they sponsor candidate forums and debates and forum on other voting issues, (continued on p. 8)

LWV-MS REPORT

Annie Reiher



The LWV-MS held its annual council at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Oxford, MS on May 18-19. The itinerary included two panel discussions, a LWV-MS business meeting and a keynote speaker. Oxford Mayor Robyn Tannehill welcomed the League of Women Voters and spoke about the Girl emPowerment Program, whose primary goal is to encourage dialogue among classmates with differing opinions at elementary schools. The first panel focused on Women Writers with a discussion of support and obstacles for women writers in Oxford featuring Ann Abadie, Sarah Frances Hardy, and Lisa Howorth.



The second panel focused on Women Leaders with a discussion of the obstacles and challenges facing women in leadership positions featuring Baretta Mosley, Katrina Caldwell, and Julia Thornton.



The Business meeting highlight included recognizing LWVOXNMS as a chapter of LWV-MS. The keynote speaker, Representative Jay Hughes, gave a speech entitled, “How Legislation is Made in Mississippi.”





PHOTOS FROM LVW-JA ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 2018
By JOY PARIKH, PR-Social Media Director

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MEMBER PROFILE: CEEJ CURRY

without bias or partisanship. They give you a place to understand without judgement.

LWV: Has League membership given you an opportunity to make an impact on your community? How?

DJC: Voter registration, mostly.

LWV: Do you have a particular League memory you could share?

DJC: Not one in particular but many moments of shared community and personal and social interaction. (note:

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

DJC: Voter rights, civil rights, immigration rights, education, environmentalism, not necessarily in that order.

LWV: What do you see as the strengths of the League of Women Voters? What keeps the League relevant?

DJC: Most importantly, its non-partisanship and its dedication to unbiased information. The need for it, and its new younger members.

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

DJC: Have programs and events at colleges and high schools, reach out to young people's groups that don't have voter programs or to help with the programs they have. Advertise in school newspapers, particularly online.

LWV: Anything else you would like for us to know about you? When you see me, just ask. I'm always willing to talk. Just remember that I'm not offended if you say "that's enough".

Voter Services

Anna Hall



Voter Services/ Registration Events

Sept. 25: National Voter Registration Day

Sept. 25: District and Circuit Court Judges Debate

Sept. 28: Wellsfest

Sept. 25 | 7-9 PM | Beth Israel Congregation
5215 Old Canton Rd., Jackson, MS



Learn about and ask questions of
Circuit Court Judge Candidates &
Court of Appeals Judge Candidates

Co-sponsored by the NAACP,
League of Women Voters, &
BIC Criminal Justice Reform Group

