

Lexington Voter

Volume 19-20, Issue 4, November 2019


The LWV respects and honors the service of of our military. Today and throughout the year, be sure to thank veterans and active duty military for serving our country!


★ ★

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF LEXINGTON, KY

Civics, Your Student, and You

Nov 17th 230-430, Village Branch Library

 Two local educators will be joined by two local high school students to discuss what civics education looks like today and why it is important to be civically involved!

 Refreshments will be served.

Stevie Lemons, FCPS Carly Muetterties, UK

★ ★



With regret , the LWV of Lexington Board accepted the resignation of Tammy Fagley at its November board meeting. Tammy dutifully served the Lexington League as President from 2008 to the present. She also served as a Co-President of the Kentucky League from 2011 until 2015 and was the Lexington League's representative to the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government Ethics Commission from 2014-2018. The board expressed its appreciation to Tammy for her many years of service and will honor her at a future meeting. Vice President, Jenn Jackson will step in to fulfill the duties of president for now.

League of Women Voters Annual Essay Contest for Teens Entries Due December 6th

The League of Women Voters of Lexington has invited all Fayette County 9th-12th grade social studies/history teachers to encourage their students to participate in the League's annual Jay Ogden Essay Contest. Entry information can be found on our website: <https://www.lwvlexington.com/essay-contest>
Essays are due by December 6, 2019, with awards presented in February, 2020. Should you have any questions about the contest, please email Theresa McCarty at lwvlexessay@gmail.com.



Why Elections Matter Even if You Can't Vote; There are many ways for students to get involved with the upcoming election on November 5

By Sadie Bograd

This article can be found in the Paul Laurence Dunbar *Lamplighter*, October 30, 2019, at <https://pdlamplighter.org/articles/features/2019/10/30/why-elections-matter-even-if-you-cant-vote/>.

For many years, I thought of Election Day as nothing more than a day off from school. I'd sleep in late, watch TV or YouTube videos all day, and let my parents tell me whether our government had been saved or ruined.

This response can feel natural to many teenagers. After all, we're too young to vote, so why bother staying informed, right? With all the academic and social stress that is a part of high school, it seems we shouldn't have to pile on additional worries about the state of our democracy.

That approach won't work anymore.

To be fair, it's not like it ever really did; informed and active citizens have been indispensable to this country's success since the first settlers landed at Jamestown. But especially in today's political climate, with parties more polarized than ever and life-threatening problems of climate change and gun violence, being disengaged simply isn't an option.

Youth activists around the world have shown students that our voices really can make an impact. Furthermore, they've proven that in many cases, we're the only ones who can. Just take the well-known example of sixteen-year-old Greta Thunberg, whose individual protests against climate inaction in front of the Swedish parliament led her to speak to (and call out) world leaders at the UN. Or look to the inspiring leaders of the March for Our Lives movement who led walkouts and demonstrations against gun violence, including one at Dunbar last year.

No matter the topic, youth leaders continue to display their bravery, intellect, and determination while legislators defer to their corporate donors. Their work should convince all of us of the need for students to advocate for political causes that matter to us.

This charge can seem daunting. After all, most of us don't know how to plan a rally or spearhead a protest. But that doesn't mean there's nothing you can do. With Election Day coming up, there are plenty of ways for students to participate, even if they're under eighteen.

"It's always good to inform yourself and talk to those that can vote about your opinions even if you

can't or don't vote," said senior Parker Smith who is on the leadership team of Dunbar's Young Democrats club. "Phone banking and event volunteering are also options, but they come on a limited basis."

Simply being an informed citizen, as Parker noted, is an integral first step. But how do you go about doing that? With political ads, bots, and memes attacking our social media feeds and news streams from every corner, it's difficult to know what's accurate and what's exaggerated. When in doubt, you can always trust a reputable news organization – articles from the *New York Times* or *The Washington Post* are typically more reliable than some stranger's blog or angry tweet.

There's also an even more direct source of information about a candidate's beliefs: the candidates themselves.

Cindy Heine is a board member of the nonpartisan civic organization Kentucky League of Women Voters. She advised that one way to understand candidates' positions is to listen to them in forums and debates rather than make decisions based on 30-second ads and sound bites.

"As a long-time organizer of forums for the League of Women Voters, I frequently get a very different impression of candidates when they spontaneously answer our questions," she said. "As contentious as the recent gubernatorial debate was, if you listen carefully, you will get a good sense of the priorities of and differences between the two leading candidates."

Understanding candidates' positions are especially critical if you're actually 18 years old. Voting is of the utmost importance. There's a widespread belief that local elections are unimportant because they're less publicized. In reality, though, it is local and state politicians who make decisions that most impact our daily lives.

"Every election is important in determining who sets priorities and policies at the local, state and national levels. These policies affect our everyday lives, from potholes and traffic to education, jobs, and national security," said Heine. "That is the key to a well-functioning democracy."

So where does that leave you? In short, with lots of options. Even if you can't vote this November 5, there are innumerable ways to get involved, from attending a rally, to phone banking, to simply reading the news (including your trusty PLD Lamplighter). What matters is that you do *something*.

Sadie Bograd is a staff writer for the student *Lamplighter* and junior at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School. She serves as the student member of the League of Women Voters of Lexington Board of Directors.

Reprinted with permission from the October 30, 2019 Paul Laurence Dunbar *Lamplighter*.



Be an ambassador for democracy everywhere you go with Vote earrings! There are several designs to choose from including the LWV logo, "Every Vote Counts" and "Vote". There are also various styles including clip-ons. These make great holiday gifts! You can find them on our website: www.lwvlexington.com

Henry Clay Center for Statesmanship Summit by Toni Reiss

I had the honor of representing the LWV at the Henry Clay Center for Statesmanship on October 19 for the culminating event of the Clay Summit on Kentucky Pensions. For this event, undergraduates from universities across the state came together for a weekend conference centered on bipartisan discussion of the issues involved in the current debate around changing the pension system. In the spirit of Henry Clay, these students were divided into teams that included individuals with diverse and often opposite views charged with collaborating to create an inclusive policy recommendation. Though the team presentations of their policy recommendations were judged, it was clear that everyone participating felt like a winner because of the experience. Students commented on how important the lesson in finding common ground for the common good was and ways that pertained to leadership and problem resolution. At the heart of the summit and the Center itself is the work to elevate and support civil discourse across multiple perspectives in our future leaders. From what I witnessed, the Center is meeting their mission successfully.

Want to support the work of LWV of Lexington, KY? Go to our website (lwvlexington.com) to become a member or to sign up as a volunteer for one of our events!

Gubernatorial Debate on October 15th by Liza Holland

League of Women Voters of Kentucky co-hosted a televised debate for the office of governor of Kentucky on the University of Kentucky's campus Tuesday, Oct.15, in the Singletary Center for the Arts in Lexington. Candidates Gov. Matt Bevin and Attorney General Andy Beshear took the stage. The UK Student Government Association (SGA) and Gray Television and its TV stations serving Kentucky co-sponsored with the League. Bill Bryant of WKYT and Shannon Cogan of WAVE moderated. The debate was feisty and drew some clear differences for voters to consider.

State President Fran Wagner of the League of Women Voters of Kentucky says having debates is important to the integrity of a true democracy. "The League of Women Voters of Kentucky is pleased with the interest in this debate and invites everyone to join us online to learn about these candidates for governor. Democracy only works when we all become active and informed, casting votes for the candidates of our choice," Wagner said.



Upcoming Events

November 13: Breaking the Bronze Ceiling Press Conference announcing artist, 11:00AM, Pam Miller Downtown Arts Center

November 13: Public Hearing for SB100 on Solar Energy, 9:00AM, Main Hearing Room at the Public Service Commission, 211 Sower Blvd, Frankfort, KY

November 15: Naturalization Ceremony, US District Courthouse 101 Barr Street. 11AM-12:30PM, arrive 10:40. Sign Up: <https://signup.com/go/FFcGFAU>

November 17: Civic Education Community Forum, featuring Stevie Lemons and Carly Muetterties, 2:30-4:30PM at Village Branch Library

December 4: LWV of Lexington Holiday Party, 6:30-8:00PM, RSVP to LexingtonLWV@gmail.com

December 17: LWV of Lexington Book Club meeting, 12PM at Boone Faculty Club, Book: Vote for Us by Josh Douglas, contact Terry Naydan, TerryNayden@aol.com

January 8: LWV of Lexington Board meeting, Open to all members, 6:30-8:00PM, Faith Lutheran Church

January 28: Film Screening of "Dreamers and Doers: Voices of Kentucky Women" followed by a panel on Women Leading Kentucky, 7:00PM at Lyric Theatre and Cultural Arts Center

Print Version

Copyright © 2019, League of Women Voters, Lexington, KY All rights reserved.

Mailing address: PO Box 22045, Lexington, KY 40522

Website: www.lwvlexington.com

Email: lexingtonlwv@gmail.com

Phone: (859) 494 - 3203



PO Box 22045
Lexington KY 40522

Return Service Requested