



VOTER

TAKE NOTE!

Jan. 7th - 7:00 p.m.
Dec. 2008 Board Meeting
Clairmont Place

Jan. 10th - 10:30 a.m.
Program Planning
Meeting
Carpe Diem Restaurant

Jan. 12th
Georgia Assembly
Session begins

Jan. 27th - 11:00 a.m.
Briarcliff Unit Meeting

Jan. 27th - 7:00 p.m.
General Board Meeting
Clairmont Place

Feb. 11th - 8:00 a.m.
League Legislative Day
Central Presbyterian
Church, 201 Washington
St. SW Atlanta 30303

Feb. 14th - 10:30 a.m.
Brunch-n-Learn
Carpe Diem Restaurant

Feb. 24th - 11:00 a.m.
Briarcliff Unit Meeting

Feb. 24th - 7:00 p.m.
General Board Meeting
Clairmont Place

March 14th - 10:30 a.m.
Brunch-n-Learn
Carpe Diem Restaurant

March 31st - 7:00 p.m.
General Board Meeting
Clairmont Place

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

~ *Susannah Scott, President*

As 2008 comes to a close and we welcome in 2009, now is a good time to reflect on what we've accomplished over the past year, and to begin planning for the coming year. In April we held our Community Luncheon, delving into the topic of "Cityhood and/or Annexation: Implications for Taxation, Education, and Resources". In June we participated in the League's Statewide Voter Registration Day, manning registration tables at the Chamblee Wal-Mart and the Avondale Estates' Wal-Mart. We also cosponsored a forum on the City of Dunwoody with the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce in June. June, August and September also found the League co-sponsoring candidate forums with Emory University, Clifton Community Partnership and the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce. Also in September we held a voter registration drive in Little Five Points. In November, our Lithonia Unit, under the guidance of Paulette Strain, held a candidate forum for the mayoral election. Additionally, we put out Voter Guides for both the Primary Election in July and the General Election in November. We also held five Brunch-n-Learns over the course of the year which featured interesting and informative guest speakers.

While we're proud of what we've accomplished in 2008, we now need to turn our attention to the future. Our Program Planning meeting is just around the corner, on January 10th. We hold this meeting every year to give members the opportunity to help the Board determine our focus for the coming year. We encourage all members to take a little time to think about what issues are most important to you. Are those issues something that the League can work on in the coming year, either on a local or state level? Do they require action? Study? Consensus? Are you willing to step up and help the League address these issues?

The League of Women Voters is a resource for its members and its community, but to be effectively utilized, we need your help in identifying the areas and issues that need our attention and focus, as well as your time, energy and skills in addressing them. Please join us on January 10th with your ideas and enthusiasm and help us make 2009 our best year yet!

HAPPY NEW YEAR

THE CITY OF LITHONIA MAYORAL CANDIDATES FORUM

~ Paulette Strain, LWVDK Member

The League of Women Voters DeKalb County co-sponsored the City of Lithonia Mayoral Candidates' Forum with the Greater Lithonia Chamber of Commerce (GLCC) on Monday, November 10, 2008. The forum was an opportunity for the residents and businesses of the City of Lithonia community to hear from each candidate on the issues that were most important to them. It also met two of the League's objectives: 1. to enhance citizen participation in local, state and federal government decisions; and 2. to increase citizen participation in the election process.

The theme was City of Lithonia – Planning the Future. All six candidates were invited and attended the forum hosted at Union Missionary Baptist Church of Lithonia, GA. The candidates were: Jackie Harbin; Deborah Jackson; Joyce McKibben; Larry Miller; Rhonda Peek; and Tonya Peterson. Local television stations Channel 2 and 11, *On Common Ground News*, and *The Granite Press* were invited to be on the panel of journalists and to cover this event. The panel of journalists asked questions on all of the key topics the forum promised. The issues included: City Planning and Staff, Economic Development, Public Safety, City Budget, Compliance, New Business and Infrastructure. In addition, citizen's questions were asked of the candidates during a Q& A period.

On November 18, 2008, the citizens of The City of Lithonia voted at Lithonia Middle School. Their voices were heard. Mrs. Tonya Peterson, a former City of Lithonia Councilwoman, was elected Mayor of The City of Lithonia. She officially took office on January 1, 2009.

The LWVDK wants to thank Paulette Strain, a resident of unincorporated Lithonia, for identifying the need for the forum, Doreen Carter and the GLCC for co-sponsoring this forum, and both organizations for working to pass out over 1000 flyers to promote the event. The League of Women Voters looks forward to working with the Greater Lithonia Chamber of Commerce and the community of Lithonia in the future.

NEW LWVDK WEBSITE

Change is in the air politically and in the crisp chill of the season. And lately, the DeKalb League of Women Voters has put a new face on their web presence.

How did this change come about? Last September a young masters degree student, Adelle Frank, approached our chapter about a new website. Our chapter president, Susannah, directed her to Anita Darden, Technology Chair for LWVDK. Adelle, an ardent proponent of voter education, proposed using her library program skills to research the candidates for the 2008 general election and her web skills to create a new interactive, online presence for LWVDK.org that includes detailed candidate information. After a meeting with the technology team in September and a vote of approval at the next board meeting, Adelle began to work to build the new site in time for the November election.

The outstanding features of the site are a crisp new look, a candidate research guide, and a tool that allows members of the board to update the site on their own. In the future, Adelle will continue to work with the tech committee to reach the goal of making our web site the very FIRST place that DeKalb citizens turn to for information about DeKalb political candidates. The addition of streaming video, a research guide, print copies of the Voter Guide to download, links to other sites that feature information about the candidates and politicians of interest should help us meet that goal and more. We like it! Thank you, Adelle!

Adelle Frank works at Emory University as a web developer, is both a web programmer and designer and is earning a Masters in Library and Information Science. Anita Darden, retired from a 20 year career in on-screen multimedia, is now the owner of a boutique training/marketing shop and is a producer and designer. Both are dedicated to voter education.

“SUSTAINABILITY” AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY

~ Belinda Pedroso, President-Elect

The greatest concept of this New Millennium is “Sustainability”! “Sustainability” along with “Eco-friendly environment”, “Going Green” and “Reducing the Carbon Footprint” are all terms designed to encourage people to embrace lifelong lifestyle changes that value and respect the Earth.

What if an entire Metro area could Go Green? The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) recently launched a 10-county, voluntary “Green Communities certification program”. The program is designed to encourage local governments to invest in long-term environmental programs to reduce waste, encourage recycling and use fewer resources. Through the certification program ARC will identify Georgia communities that enact sustainability programs, encourage innovation in sustainability projects and will honor those communities that create best practices and continued sustainability programs. Cities and counties gain points by initiating programs in any of the following 10 categories: Green Building; Energy Efficiency; Green Power; Water Use Reduction and Efficiency; Transportation and Air Quality; Land Use; Green Space and Tree Planting; Recycling and Waste Reduction; Education and Outreach; and Innovation.

What is DeKalb County doing to Go Green? DeKalb County can boast about its leadership in the Going Green movement. There are community gardens, a new recycling program, green space regulations and land use review processes. But most importantly, several county buildings are **LEED** certified or are on their way to achieving this designation. LEED, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System, was developed by the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) (USGBC) to provide standards for environmentally sustainable construction. Two of the more significant LEED certified buildings in DeKalb include:

- The Gregory A. Adams Juvenile Justice Center is a five-story, 110,000-sf building, housing the Juvenile Division of the DeKalb County Public Defender’s Office, the DeKalb County Child Advocacy Center, six courtrooms, 25 holding cells and various administrative areas. It is the first Silver LEED certified building in DeKalb County. Qualifying modifications include a roof drainage design that aids in landscape irrigation.
- Arabia Mountain High School, scheduled to open in January 2009, will be the first LEED certified public school in the state of Georgia. The construction materials are 10 to 20 percent recycled, and construction waste was sorted and recycled for use in the building and grounds. Other features include energy-efficient heating and air-conditioning systems, low-flow plumbing fixtures, waterless urinals, sink sensors and dual-flush valves for toilets. The landscaping system also conserves and recycles water outside the facility.

For more information about the Green Communities program go to the ARC Website at: www.atlantaregional.com/greencommunities

How are You contributing to the sustainability of your community? Please send your examples to me at: bpedroso@ascensionfinancial.net.

VETERAN'S DAY BRUNCH-N-LEARN

~ Rosemarie Neidel-Greenlee

On November 8 2008, the LWV of DeKalb County recognized Veterans' Day through its monthly Brunch N' Learn. Author and League member Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee, along with co-author Dr. Evelyn Monahan, has written four books on U.S. women's military history: *Albanian Escape: The True Story of U.S. Army Nurses Behind Enemy Lines* (1999); *All This Hell: U.S. Nurses Imprisoned by the Japanese*, (2000); *And If I Perish: Front Line U.S. Army Nurses in World War II*, (2003); and *A Few Good Women* (Fall 2009). Rosemary, a former U.S. Navy Nurse, described the conditions under which more than 100 U.S. Army and Navy nurses of World War II heroically carried out their duties in the South Pacific in the wake of the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor. During the Battle of Bataan, U.S. Army Nurses who had been evacuated from Manila to the Bataan peninsula cared for thousands of ill and injured American and Filipino troops. Army nurses treated soldiers in improvised operating rooms, tented hospitals and in hospital wards laid out on the jungle floor. After the fall of Bataan, these military nurses were imprisoned for thirty-seven months by the Japanese. *All This Hell* focuses on the little-known history of these heroic women who survived the hardships of war. Taking several excerpts from *And If I Perish*, Rosemary described the experiences of two U.S. Army Nurses in the European Theater of Operations at the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.

Based on interviews with active duty military women for the book, *A Few Good Women*, Rosemary described some of the forces that have changed the nature and scope of women's roles in the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, women in the U.S. have opportunities that are vastly expanded compared to their World War II predecessors. Lastly, Rosemary emphasized the importance of women's history. "Not documented, not done," was her mantra. Much of women's accomplishments and contributions to society have not been recorded and published, denying Americans a vast and rich history of approximately half of our population. The November program helped to honor America's female veterans and active duty troops.



ELECTION RESULTS

Due to the efforts of community organizations, including the League of Women Voters of DeKalb County, and the historic nature of this election, record numbers of DeKalb County voters cast ballots during this election cycle. Over 322,300 votes were cast in DeKalb County for the November 4, 2008 General Election. In the December 2nd run-off election, 186,760 voters cast ballots. With 417,537 registered voters in DeKalb County, turnout was at over 77% for the General Election while 44.5% of DeKalb County registered voters turned out for the run-off. The continuing efforts of the League are necessary to inspire voters to participate in the political process.

MEMBERSHIP

~ Jacquie Scott, VP Membership

Welcome to all new the League of Women Voters of DeKalb County (LWVDK) members. Thank you to all those existing and committed members who sent in their dues and renewed their memberships for the 2008 – 2009 membership year. It's not too late if you haven't yet done so.

I encourage those who are National members to consider renewing their memberships through the LWVDK when they renew in the future. A member of the LWVDK is also a State and National League member. By renewing with the LWVDK, our local League retains some of the dues for local education and advocacy projects.

If you have a phone number and an email address, please share it with the LWVDK. It helps when an urgent need arises for us to contact you. That doesn't occur often but it does occur. If you do not want your phone number or email address published in future Directories, please make that request known to me.

Look in the mail for the new LWVDK Membership Directory coming soon.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF DEKALB COUNTY

MEMBERSHIP and/or DONATION

Student \$25

Individual \$60

Household \$90

NAME(s) _____

FULL ADDRESS _____

PHONE(s) _____
Home Work Cell

E-MAIL _____

<http://www.lwvdk.org/joinus.html>

Calling All Members! JANUARY PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

January 10, 2009, 10:30 am
Carpe Diem Restaurant Decatur, GA

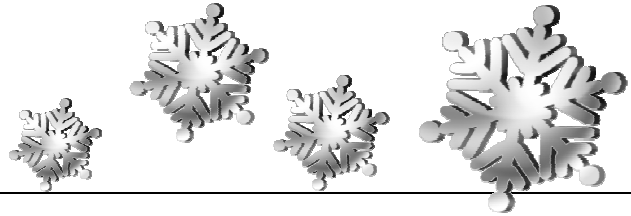
Every year in January, League members come together to conduct the business of the League: Program Planning. This is when we formulate plans and goals for the League's advocacy on issues and the study of new issues.

Plan to attend this very important meeting. For more information, check the website: www.lwvdk.org; phone: 404-321-0913; or e-mail: lwvdk@gmail.com.



HOLIDAY PARTY

Thank you to all who attended the League of Women Voters of DeKalb County's annual Holiday Party. On December 11th we enjoyed a great turn-out at the Decatur First Bank with members and elected politicians taking the time to meet and mingle while enjoying the holiday season. The annual Holiday Party was also an opportunity for the League to brighten the season for others by collecting canned goods and children's books for a local DeKalb County charity. Thank you for coming out, and we look forward to seeing you next year!



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF DEKALB COUNTY**
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