



# **THE VOTER**

**NOVEMBER 2020**

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

<https://my.lwv.org/mississippi/league-women-voters-jackson-area-inc>

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



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Meeting ID: 890 890 1890

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### **Or Dial In:**

312-626-6799

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Please join us for the last program meeting of 2020, an election analysis by LWV-JA member and Millsaps Associate Professor of Government and Politics, Dr. Nathan Shrader. Dr. Shrader served as legislative aide and deputy director of communications to Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor Catherine Baker Knoll, legislative aide to Delegate L. Scott Lingamfelter in the Virginia General Assembly and research analyst at Abrams Learning and Information Systems under General John N. Abrams (Ret.). He worked from 2009 to 2014 at the Center on Regional Politics at Temple University where he earned a PhD, and was an adjunct professor at Drexel and Neumann Universities. Shrader earlier served as legislative intern in Washington for United States Senator Arlen Specter, legislative intern to Pennsylvania State Representative Rod E. Wilt and as a clerk under Westmoreland County (PA) Recorder of Deeds Tom Murphy. He has also been a consultant, manager, staffer and volunteer on more than two dozen campaigns for federal, state and local candidates.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

KAY BRODBECK



## Looking back...

The League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area had a presence in the 2020 election, even with the cloud of COVID 19. Thank you to all the volunteers who posted 500 signs urging people to register to vote. The sign's flip side was a message everyone in a democratic society needs to believe: "Your Vote Counts". Our members pushed out registration forms to family and friends, Joanne Olson, Mary Ann Everett and Carolyn Townes met with Circuit Clerks, and Joy Parikh posted regularly on Facebook and Instagram. Willie Jones hosted election information programs on the Women for Progress shows. In-person events were held outdoors, from registering folks at the Jackson Mall and Tougaloo College to offering ballot notarizing before the deadline for absentee balloting. Thank you to Savina Schoenhofer for emailing members regularly with voter service opportunities.

## Looking forward...

As I write this, President-elect Biden is still hamstrung from proceeding with transition. A peaceful presidential transfer of power, especially from one party to another, is part of the bedrock of democracy. It shows that we are governed by law and not by individual rulers.

In the aftermath of this election, my yearning for peaceful transition of power does not come from supporting one party, but for supporting democracy. The numbers are adding up and there will be one winner, and one loser, albeit a sore loser at this point.

President Trump has done a disservice to America and to all the Americans managing this election. With his claims prior to the election, it was imperative that Secretaries of State pulled out all stops to make sure the system worked as intended. The election was peaceful and effective, with historic numbers of voter turnout, even during the pandemic. Now, that's admirable. Thank heaven, a key official in the Department of Homeland Security has stated publicly that this election "was the most secure in American history".

Trump's refusal to accept the inevitable is eroding the confidence that our citizens have in government institutions and it puts our national security at risk. It has revealed that more specific measures need to be placed in laws that govern presidential transition. The GSA administrator has power to "ascertain" whether a new president has been elected and to open the doors for transition, but this same person serves at the will and pleasure of the incumbent.

It has been disheartening to see the leader of our country intentionally delegitimize elections and our election processes, which are both at the heart of our democracy. The League will work to quash disinformation and will help rebuild confidence that **Your Vote Counts**.

# MEMBERSHIP NOTES



## Elaine Talbott

Even with all the distractions and noise your League continues to be relevant. While many service organizations are shrinking in number, LWV-JA continues to attract new members.

Please welcome Caitlin Brooking, Judith Thames, Phylandria Hudson, Sandi Beason, Arekia Bennett, Audrey Harrison, Sharon Lobert, Devin Klugh, and Cam Boyles as our newest Jackson Area League members.

Two of our new members have already gotten involved in League work. Sandi has been recruited by the Mississippi state board of LWV as our communications director. Cam and Caitlin answered the call for volunteers for our drive-through notary event in October. Thank you and we look forward to your continued service.

As the year draws to a close, we try to get all dues caught up for the year. If your annual dues have not been paid, we encourage you to do so now. If you are not sure of your annual anniversary date contact me at [elainental@gmail.com](mailto:elainental@gmail.com) or call or text me at 601-942-0401 to check. You may also contact Lakeeta Jones at [treasurerlwgja@gmail.com](mailto:treasurerlwgja@gmail.com).



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS - JACKSON AREA 2020-2021

**President**  
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**Voter Services**  
Willie Jones

**Secretary**  
Megan Tidwell

**Treasurer**  
Lakeeta Jones

**Elected Directors**  
Membership: Elaine Talbott  
Voter Editor: Savina Schoenhofer

**Appointed Directors**  
Social Media/PR: Joy Parikh  
National Items: (vacant)  
State Items: Annie Reiher

**Nominating Committee**  
Martha Phillips  
Margarett Barnes  
Dierdre Payne

## LWV-JA PARTNERS IN NOTARY DRIVE-THROUGH

While LWV-MS and LWV-JA have been working with the legislature and even litigating to make the voting process for absentee ballots more accessible to the voters of Mississippi, we also recognize the need to work within our arcane system until it can be changed. We have one of the most difficult and convoluted absentee ballots processes in the country. Both the ballot application and the ballot envelope must be notarized for a mail-in absentee ballot to count.

With COVID as a factor, getting those documents notarized was an even greater obstacle in the 2020 election. LWV-JA in partnership with Working Together Jackson organized and held a drive-through notary service on Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Jackson Mall and New Horizon Church International. This provided a low contact way for at risk voters to have their documents notarized without compromising their health.

A big thank you to notary Megan Tidwell and League members Cam Boyles, Caitlin Brooking and Martha Phillips for their help in this event.

“As a member of both LWV and Working Together Jackson I knew I could count on League members to help make this a success.”

— Elaine Talbott



Pictured left to right: Ivy Miller-Bush of the Jackson Medical Mall, Elaine Talbott and Caitlin Brooking of LWV-JA.

# MEMBER PROFILE

## SUSAN ANAND



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

SA: My name is Susan Anand and I live in Flora with my husband, one of my daughters and two dogs. I was born and raised in Goshen, IN. I am married to Vinod Anand and have twin daughters – Asha and Nina. My father ran for Congress in IN when I was 10 years old, so my introduction to politics came early. I have voted in every election since I turned 18.

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

SA: We have lived in the Jackson area since moving here in 1982. I am a licensed art therapist and have worked with children and adults in inpatient and outpatient settings since 1983. I work as a part-time faculty member in the Department of Psychiatry at UMMC where I provide clinical services and supervise/teach residents. I am also an art therapist with the MS Museum of Art where I work with two art therapy programs – Art in Mind for people with memory loss and their caregivers, and the Creative Healing Studio for adults with cancer. I have served on the board of the Women’s Foundation of MS and the Art Therapy Credentials Board. Currently, I am a member of the Board of Directors of the American Art Therapy Association and a member of CAPE with the MS Museum of Art.

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

SA: Recently, I renewed my membership because of the upcoming national and state elections and my strong belief that our vote is critical to making effective change in our government, change that will be positive for all people. The LWV has a long history of supporting voting rights, and we just celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment and women’s right to vote. Any time is a good time to join, but this moment in history was a nudge to get more involved.

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

SA: Voter suppression and the need to encourage voter registration in Mississippi and across the US.

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

SA: I have only been involved as a member.

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[MEMBER PROFILE continued from p. 5]

LWV: Why has the League remained important to you?

SA: Really for the reasons stated above – the LWV has a long history of supporting voting rights.

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

SA: It has in the sense that I learn more about what is going on with the upcoming elections and any changes through legislation that might change the voting process for our state. I enjoy reaching out to people to help them understand the importance of their right to vote and to encourage more participation in making effective changes to protect and increase voting rights for Mississippians.

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

SA: My membership is new, but I do remember attending a panel discussion a few years ago when state senator David Blount spoke about the difficulties that people in our state were having with the absentee voting process.

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

SA: There are many right now that have become more urgent: justice, truth and integrity in government, increasing voter protection and making it easier to vote, Civil Rights, Immigrant Rights and immigration reforms, criminal justice reform, addressing climate change, and increasing the number of women in leadership roles in our government.

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

SA: LWV works to increase and expand voting rights for all people, which ultimately increases participation in our democracy.

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

SA: Young people are extremely involved in promoting justice and seeking change, especially this past year – perhaps tying in to some of the movements that have younger and diverse members who would like to participate in helping to register and ensure people of the right to vote. Perhaps speaking to these groups about the organization and creating listening sessions to learn more about what other organizations are doing and how we could collaborate.

LWV: Anything else you would like for us to know about you?

SA: I have attended three Women's Marches – the first in Washington, DC in 2017, the second in Nashville in 2018, and the third in Washington, DC. in 2020. I believe in our right as Americans to peaceful protest.



# THANK YOU!

Mary Ann Everett  
Carolyn Townes  
Barry & Barbara Powell  
William & Susan Osborne  
Judy Wiener  
Joanne Olson  
Spencer & Nancy Gilbert



Joyce Dortch  
Julia Marks Young  
Mary E. (Liz) Hudson  
Dr. W Lamar Weems  
Sigrid & Jack Conway  
Savina Schoenhofer  
Deloris Lee  
Kay Brodbeck

PLEASE GIVE A ROUND OF APPLAUSE to financial supporters of the League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area! In this year when we could not hold our usual events, we created a visual presence and virtual presence. THANK YOU to these supporters who gave much needed financial backing to our efforts. We are proud to report that these donors gave a total of \$1,631.42. YOU ARE APPRECIATED.

## **ONE VOICE – a Grant for Voter Engagement**

The League of Women Voters of the Jackson Area was honored to receive a \$500 grant from the One Voice organization. Funding was to be used specifically for non-partisan, get-out-the-vote activities. Due to the limitation of face-to-face contact, League used these funds to help purchase the 500 durable plastic signs posted in the three-county area, urging the public to register to vote and to cast their ballot. The grant was made possible with funds from **One Voice, Vote Your Voice** and **Black Voters Matter**.



These signs will be re-used with each election – stickers will announce current voter registration deadline.