

# EAST ALABAMA VOTER

Volume 5, Number 4

November 2011

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Janet Clark and Charlotte Ward, Co- Presidents

Charlotte Ward, Editor

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## CALENDAR

November 14: General Membership Meeting on Federal Funding for Public Education, East Alabama Health Resources Center, 6:00 p.m. for meet and greet, 6:30 program

November 28: Board Meeting at Charlotte Ward's at 5:30p.m.

December 5: Christmas Social , Auburn Hotel and Convention Center, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

January 22: Legislators Forum at City Hall Room on Tichenor from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

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## PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

Education is the main focus of our general meetings this year. The LWVUS has done a study of the federal role in public education and given us consensus questions concerning the proper mix of national, state and local standards for American schools. At the October meeting, John Frandsen described the historical positions of the federal government in regard to education and presented the pros and cons of federal funding and mandates. He provided the national consensus questions for October's Voter so that you could study them in advance. We were able to discuss and come to agreement on about half of these questions. Unfortunately, our October meeting conflicted with the public forum on redistricting the Alabama Legislature, and many members chose to attend that meeting. Our November meeting will be devoted to completing the national consensus. If you were not able to attend the October meeting but want to be included in the consensus, please come to the November meeting with your ideas regarding the consensus questions and any questions you may have regarding our discussion. We want the input of as many members as possible.

Our February meeting will be devoted to reaching a consensus on Charter Schools in Alabama. Last year President Laura Newland Hill presented a very informative program on charter schools and why they have become the focus of attention. Now the state League of Alabama is calling for the local chapters to reach consensus on this issue. The consensus questions and instructions are posted for download on the LWVAL website: [http://www.lwval.org/resources/Charter-Schools-Study-Packet/Charter\\_Schools\\_Study\\_questions.pdf](http://www.lwval.org/resources/Charter-Schools-Study-Packet/Charter_Schools_Study_questions.pdf) and [http://lwval.org/resources/Charter-Schools-Study-Packet/LWVAL\\_Charter\\_Schools\\_Study\\_instructions.pdf](http://lwval.org/resources/Charter-Schools-Study-Packet/LWVAL_Charter_Schools_Study_instructions.pdf). Please examine both websites and come to give us your insights in February.

We are looking forward to our annual Christmas social in the Piccolo room at the Auburn Hotel and Convention Center on December 4 from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. Members will be able to choose whatever treats they desire from the menu. This will give us a chance to socialize and become better acquainted. Last year we had a great turnout and a wonderful time.

Janet Clark

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IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR DUES, PLEASE DO SO THIS MONTH. NATIONAL PER MEMBER PAYMENTS ARE CALCULATED IN THE MEMBERSHP REPORTED IN DECEMBER

## MORE ON THE NATIONAL EDUCATION STUDY

As noted in the article above, the small group attending the October meeting made great progress on the consensus questions on the study of federal aid to education. Discussion centered on criteria for funding and the desirability/possibility of a national curriculum. The remaining five questions will be the subject of the November meeting.

If you were not at the October meeting, you can still answer the questions considered there. Bring the questions and your answers to the November meeting. (you can change them if the discussion leads you to reconsider.) Consensus will be determined by the board at its November meeting after looking at all the answers submitted.

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## WEBSITE FOR NATIONAL STANDARDS

At the October meeting, the question arose about national core curriculum standards. To find out more, Google L WVUS education study. Click on the topic L WVUS Education Study: the role of the Federal Government in Public Education. This will give you a reference to a paper entitled Common Core Standards and Assessments by Janelle Rivers, a member of the study committee. The article will give you a general overview of the topic and further references.

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## OBSERVERS NEEDED

Traditionally, the League of Women Voters has maintained a corps of observers who attend the public meetings of the City Councils, County Commission, School Boards, Water Boards, and Planning Commissions. Councils meet bimonthly, the boards monthly. The role of an observer is to report to the League matters of interest relating to our positions so that appropriate action can be taken as needed. For example, our positions on clean water would allow us to lobby for clean water standards if some action of the water board or the planning board threatened the safety of the water supply. When the membership needs to be informed, the observer's report would be published in the VOTER.

Going to a meeting every month is quite a commitment, but the monitoring of any particular board or commission can be shared among several people. It's even more fun to attend in pairs. So think of which phase of local government interests you, find a friend with the same interest, and sign up for an observing schedule that fits your schedule.

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## LOOKING AHEAD

Save the fourth Sunday afternoon in January (January 22, 2012) to attend a reception for our legislative delegation. Take this opportunity to hear what they have in mind for the 2012 session and to express your concerns.

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