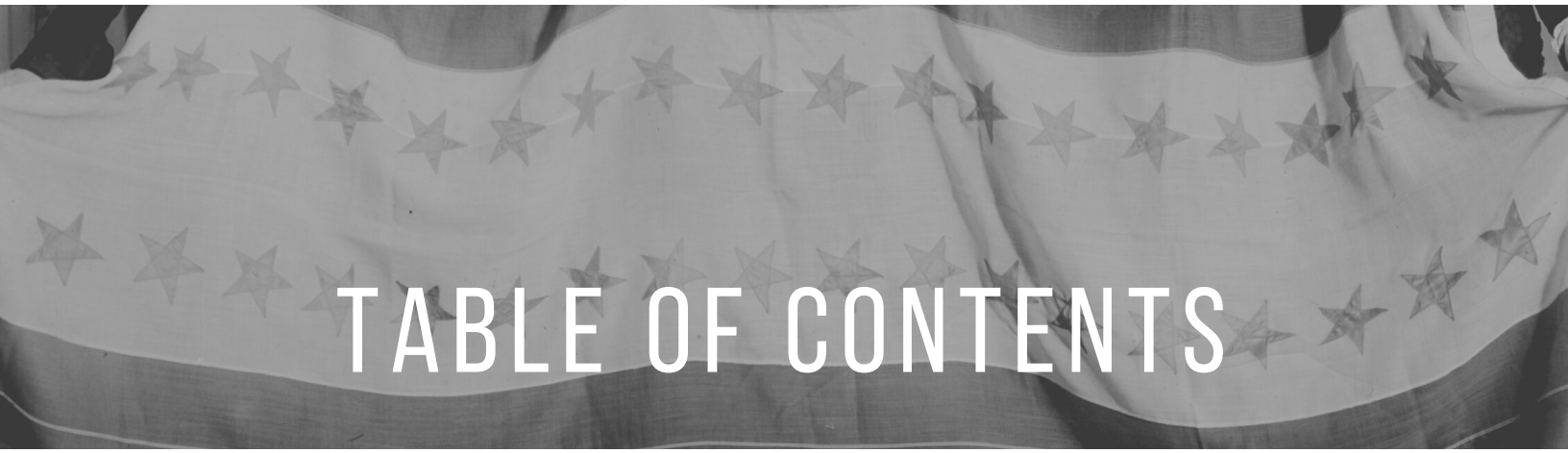
THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

TENNESSEE

RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT ON AUG. 18, 1920

1920 2020
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
CENTENNIAL
COMMISSION

1920-2020



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ABOUT

The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (WSCC) was formed by Congress to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote and the 19th Amendment.

Throughout 2020, the United States is celebrating the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which secured women's constitutional right to vote. Today, more than 68 million American women vote in elections because of the courageous suffragists who never gave up the fight for equality. This centennial is an unparalleled opportunity to elevate women's history and to commemorate a milestone of American democracy.

Use this toolkit as your guide to commemorating the centennial in your state and community.

ALICE PAUL IN FRONT OF THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY HEADQUARTERS, WASHINGTON, D.C., 1920.

LEARN THE **HISTORY**

SUFFRAGIST AND LAWYER INEZ MILHOLLAND AT A WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE PARADE IN NEW YORK CITY, MAY 3, 1913.

THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Suffragists began their organized fight for women's equality in 1848 when they demanded the right to vote during the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. For the next 72 years, women leaders lobbied, marched, picketed, and protested for the right to the ballot. The U.S. House of Representatives finally approved the "Susan B. Anthony Amendment," which guaranteed women the right to vote, on May 21, 1919. The U.S. Senate followed two weeks later and voted to approve the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919. The 19th Amendment then went to the states, where it had to be ratified by three-fourths of the then 48 states to be added to the Constitution. Tennessee became the 36th and final state needed to ratify the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920. On August 26, 1920, the U.S. Secretary of State issued a proclamation declaring the 19th Amendment ratified and officially part of the U.S. Constitution. Today, August 26th is celebrated annually as Women's Equality Day.

TENNESSEE QUICK FACTS

- Tennessee ratified the 19th Amendment on August 18, 1920.
- Tennessee was the 36th and final state needed to ratify the amendment for it to become law.
- Suffrage organizations in Tennessee included the Nashville Equal Suffrage League, Tennessee Equal Suffrage Association, and the Knoxville Equal Suffrage Society.
- Some impactful suffragists that called Tennessee home include Juno Frankie Pierce, Elizabeth Avery Meriwether, Lizzie Crozier French, Sarah Frasier, Sue Shelton White, and Anne Dallas Dudley.

LEARN THE **HISTORY**

ORIGINAL SOURCE: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

TENNESSEE AND THE 19TH AMENDMENT

RATIFICATION DATE: AUGUST 18, 1920

Women first organized and collectively fought for suffrage at the national level in July of 1848. Suffragists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott convened a meeting of over 300 people in Seneca Falls, New York. In the following decades, women marched, protested, lobbied, and even went to jail. By the 1870s, women pressured Congress to vote on an amendment that would recognize their suffrage rights. This amendment was sometimes known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment and became the 19th Amendment.

The amendment reads:
"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

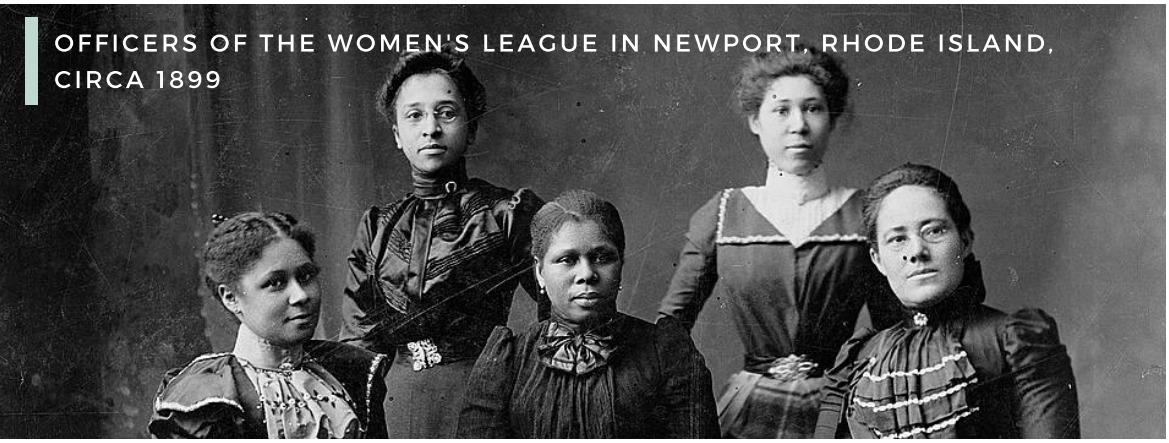
When members of the Tennessee state legislature debated on whether or not to ratify the amendment. The state senate voted to ratify, but in the state house of representatives, the vote resulted in a tie. A young man named Harry Burn cast the tie-breaking vote. Acting on advice from his mother Phoebe, Burn voted to ratify the amendment.

On August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the amendment.
With Tennessee's ratification, the 19th Amendment became law, ensuring that the right to vote could not be denied based on sex.

Tennessee Places of Women's Suffrage: Women's Suffrage Statue in Market Square

There is a Woman Suffrage Memorial in downtown Knoxville in Market Square to honor state suffragists. The square is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The memorial is dedicated to local white suffragists: Elizabeth Avery Meriwether (Memphis), Lizzie Crozier French (Knoxville), and Anne Dallas Dudley (Nashville). African American women also played a crucial role in the struggle for suffrage in Tennessee. Juno Frankie Pierce, for example, established voter education organizations. Pierce and others also helped register other African Americans in their communities. These women recognized that voter turnout was an important aspect of suffrage. airplanes and scattered suffrage pamphlets from the air.

Source: https://www.nps.gov/articles/tennessee-women-s-history.htm



OFFICERS OF THE WOMEN'S LEAGUE IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, CIRCA 1899

COMMEMORATE ACROSS YOUR STATE

Issue Proclamations or Executive Orders: Encourage your Governor and Mayors across the state to issue a commemorative proclamation or executive order to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or designate 2020 as "The Year of Tennessee Women." Find samples and templates at womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders.

Pass Resolutions: Encourage your state legislature, city councils, and town councils to pass commemorative resolutions to recognize your state's or community's role in the women's suffrage movement, designate August 26, 2020 as Women's Equality Day, or reaffirm your state's or community's commitment to the 19th Amendment and to uplifting women's voices. Find samples and templates at womensvote100.org/resolutionsandorders.

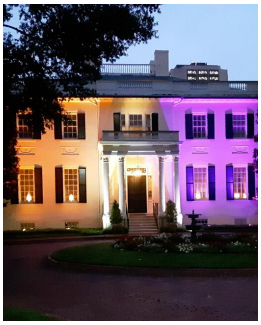
Join the Forward Into Light Campaign: On August 26, 2020, buildings and landmarks across the country will light up in purple and gold to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. This nationwide celebration of the centennial is named for the historical suffrage slogan, "Forward through the Darkness, Forward into Light." Work with leaders, organizations, and communities in your state to celebrate women's right to vote in the official suffrage colors of purple and gold, from the State Capitol to skyscrapers to bridges to city halls.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TENNESSEE

- **Governor Bill Lee issued a proclamation designating August 18, 2019 to August 18, 2020 as the Tennessee Women's Suffrage Centennial.**
- **From April 6, 2020 to May 25, 2020 the One Half of the People: Advancing Equality for Women traveling exhibit will be present at the Memphis Pink Palace Museum.**
- **From August of 2019 to August of 2020 the Hermitage Hotel will be presenting the Historic Women's Suffrage Exhibit. The display consists of the Hermitage Hotel's private collection of historic artifacts dating from the summer of 1920, when suffragists were headquartered in the hotel.**

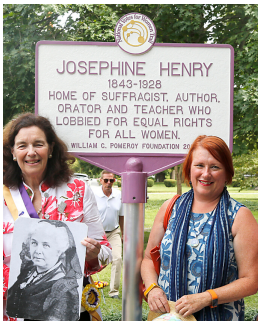
GET INSPIRED

COMING UP IN 2020



FORWARD INTO LIGHT

PROJECT 19 SKYDIVERS



VOTES FOR WOMEN TRAIL

CENTENNIAL RIDE

Forward Into Light: As part of the WSCC's Forward Into Light campaign, states across the country will light their buildings and landmarks in purple and gold on August 26, 2020, the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Some states started commemorating the centennial with lightings in 2019, including Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Virginia. Are you in for August 26, 2020? Contact the WSCC for more information.

Project 19: Led by the Women's Skydiving Network (WSN), Project 19 is a planned jump of 100 women skydivers in July 2020 outside of Chicago in celebration of the centennial of women's right to vote. The WSN also has a sponsored all-women Professional Demonstration Team, which is scheduling jumps (at no charge!) during 19th Amendment celebrations around the country throughout 2020. For more information, contact Team Captain Melanie Curtis at mel@melaniecurtis.com.

Votes for Women Trail: The National Votes for Women Trail is a project led by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to place historic markers at locations relevant to the history of the women's suffrage movement in all 50 states. The WSCC is partnering with the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites to complete the Trail in 2020. Visit womensvote100.org/votes-for-women-trail to follow the Trail and find historic sites in your state.

Centennial Ride: In honor of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, hundreds of women and men will participate in a cross-country motorcycle tour in 2020. Riders will leave from ten different starting cities around the country, and more than 1,000 riders will converge on Washington, D.C. on August 26, 2020. Learn more at www.centennialride.com.

PLAN AN **EVENT**

"WE KNOCK AT THE BAR OF JUSTICE, ASKING AN EQUAL CHANCE."

-Mary Church Terrell, suffragist & founder of the National Association of Colored Women, 1898

- **What:** Hold a press conference, reception, or public program commemorating the centennial of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. Keep reading for examples and ideas!
- **Where:** Host an event at your State Capitol or City Hall, or at a historic site, museum, school, university, or community center. Find a list of historic sites and places in Tennessee along the National Votes for Women Trail at womensvote100.org/get-involved.
- **When:** Events celebrating the centennial can be held anytime throughout 2020, but particularly important dates include Black History Month (February), Women's History Month (March), and June-August 2020, building up to the official centennial date on August 26, 2020.
- **Who:** Invite members of your community to your event, as well as state or local leaders such as your Governor, First Lady/First Partner, Members of Congress, State Legislators, Mayor, or local Council Members. Invite a guest speaker, such as a women's suffrage historian, and invite historic performers to portray famous women of history. Find a list of historians and performers at womensvote100.org/get-involved.
- **Additional Details:** The suffragists wore white dresses to display their unity, and the yellow rose became a symbol of the movement's ultimate victory. At your commemorative event, decorate the room with yellow roses, suggest your guests dress in white attire, and offer replica Votes for Women pins, which can be provided by the WSCC.

Relevant Organizations in Your State:

- Tennessee Woman Suffrage Heritage Trail: tnwomansuffrageheritagetrail.com
- Tennessee Women's Suffrage Centennial: tnwoman100.com
- Tennessee State Library and Archives: sos.tn.gov/tsla
- Tennessee State Museum: tnmuseum.org

PLAN AN **EVENT**

"MEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING MORE; WOMEN, THEIR RIGHTS, AND NOTHING LESS."
Susan B. Anthony & Elizabeth Cady Stanton, c.1868

MORE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IDEAS

Street Renaming: Through your Mayor's office, change the name of a street in your city in honor of a local suffragist.

Suffrage Exhibits: Work with your local historical society to create an exhibit about your community's suffrage story.

Purple and Gold Fireworks: At your State Fair, County Fair, or community gathering, feature a display of purple and gold fireworks.

Musical Performances: Hold a concert featuring female composers or original music from the suffrage movement, which can be found online through the Library of Congress's searchable archives.

Film Screenings: Host screenings of films focused on the suffrage movement or women's empowerment, such as Iron Jawed Angels, Suffragette, or A League of Their Own.

Suffrage Floats: Include a suffrage-themed float in state and local parades.

Community Murals: Hire a local artist to create a suffrage-themed mural in your community that tells the story of the suffrage movement in your state.

Suffrage Centennial Races: Take the lead from the National Park Service's Race to Ratification and hold a suffrage-themed 5K or 10k in summer 2020.

Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon: Work with Wikipedia to plan an "Edit-a-Thon" focused on your state and local suffrage history.

Suffrage Essay or Art Contests: Hold an essay or art contest for students on topics related to your state and local suffrage history.

Suffrage Book Club: Form a book club with a locally owned bookstore to read and discuss books about the women's suffrage movement.

Plantings of Yellow Roses: Plant yellow roses in your home, school, or community gardens and share photos on social media using the hashtags #WomensVote100, #SuffrageSisters, and #SuffraGents.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

STAY ENGAGED

- Follow @WomensVote100 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Check out the "Suffrage Sisters" YouTube channel
- Subscribe to our e-newsletter at womensvote100.org
- Keep an eye on our Tennessee page at womensvote100.org/tennessee

FIND RESOURCES

- womensvote100.org/learn
- womensvote100.org/news
- womensvote100.org/states

Use these hashtags on social media to engage with your community during this historic moment:

#WomensVote100
#SuffrageSisters
#SuffraGents

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Instagram

Facebook

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT KIMBERLY WALLNER,
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS
202-707-0106
KIMBERLY@WOMENSVOTE100.ORG