



THE VOTER

January 2018 Vol. 45 No. 1

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area
Serving the Citizens of Pickens, Oconee and Anderson Counties

Message from the President

The June primaries could be the most important elections of 2018. The primaries are the elections in which the two major parties choose the names that will represent them on the ballot in November,

Deadlines for prospective candidates occur early in the year. Candidate filing opens at noon on March 16th and closes at noon on March 30th. These primaries include candidates for US House of Representatives, SC governor and Lt. Governor, other state officials, SC House of Representatives and some county council districts. The Clemson City Council and County School Trustee are non-partisan and filing occurs later.



Political parties will devote the first three months of 2018 to finding candidates and convincing them to file.

If you think you would do a good job in one of these offices VOLUNTEER to run. If you are hesitant to volunteer, ask a friend to suggest your name to the appropriate group. Remember that we do not register by party in South Carolina. You are whatever party you say you are.

On April 1 the competition to win the June primaries begins. If you are interested in working for a candidate or a party, now is a wonderful time to become involved. We are posting contact information for the major parties and allied groups on our web pages (cited below).

The League will hold candidate forums in the spring and encourage people to vote in the primary elections. Stay tuned. We need people to help.

It is important to VOTE IN PRIMARY ELECTIONS because many races that should be decided in the General Election are actually decided in the primaries. In 2016, there were 12 Republicans running for 4 county council seats in Pickens County. The winners had no opposition in the General Election.

We urge everyone to PARTICIPATE. Become a candidate, work to support your party and candidates, help with League forums, and vote in the primaries.

Information for major parties and allied groups:
<http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/PARTISAN.html>

Eleanor Hare

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League of Women Voters Clemson Area
Serving the Citizens of Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson Counties

P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633
www.lwvclemsonarea.org

OFFICERS:

Eleanor Hare, Co-President
Janie Shipley, Co-President
Ann Russell, Secretary
Bill Hare, Treasurer

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Catherine Farris
Cheryl Lee
Janet Marsh
Fran Rundlett
Elizabeth Vogt
Patty Warner

APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

Cece Parker, Advocacy Coordinator
Linda Gahan Co-Program and Action
Holley Ulbrich - Co-Program and Action
Diana Stafford, VOTER Editor

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Reggie Turetzky
Elizabeth Adams
Christine Prado

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, Jan. 16, General Meeting - Dr. Leigh Martin will speak on the coming teacher shortage. 7:15 p.m. OLLI Building
- Saturday, Jan. 27, LEAD Day 10:00 a.m. Columbia, SC
- Tuesday, Jan. 30, Celebration of 50th Anniversary of the formation of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area 7:00-9:00 pm, Program at 7:30 p.m. OLLI Building
- Saturday, Feb. 3, 11:00 a.m., Ye Olde Sandwich Shoppe, Seneca, Program Planning (see P. 6)
- Tuesday, Feb. 20, - General Meeting - Climate Change in South Carolina 7:15 p.m. OLLI Building
- Saturday, Mar. 17, - Wine Tasting, Mill Creek Lodge, 5:00-7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, Mar. 27, - General Meeting - Health Care Update 7:15 p.m. OLLI Building
- Tuesday, Apr. 17, General Meeting - Growth Management 7:15 p.m. OLLI Building
- Saturday, Apr. 28, State Council Meeting Columbia
- May 8 Annual Meeting, Occasions at Wedgefield, 6 p.m.
- June 12 Primary Elections in SC
- June 28 LWV National Convention

OLLI Building, 578 Issaqueena Trail, 100 Thomas Green Blvd. Clemson (864-633-5242)
Mill Creek Lodge, 541 Pike Rd, Central
Occasions at Wedgefield. 1551 Mile Creek Rd., Seneca

LAST CALL FOR DUES!

LWVUS uses the paid membership as of January 31, 2018 as our official membership. Currently we have 81 paid, but more than 30 not yet paid. Please send your check to LWVCA, PO Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633. The dues are: \$60 for a first member, \$30 for a second member of household, and \$25 for a student member.

The Teacher Shortage: An Impending Crisis

At a time when public school enrollment is surging, a great number of teachers are retiring or leaving the profession because of dissatisfaction. Compounding this problem are working conditions that paint the teaching profession as less desirable than it once was (US News & World Report, 2016). South Carolina data parallels national data. Over the past three years, the number of South Carolina teachers who did not return to a teaching position increased by over 800 teachers. During the same time period, 200 fewer teachers graduated from a South Carolina teacher education program (CERRA, 2016). This and other data point to an impending crisis: a teacher shortage in South Carolina and across the nation. Dr. Leigh Martin will illuminate the imminent teacher shortage by providing an overview of national and state-level teacher data. The evening's discussion will focus on two issues related to the teacher shortage: recruitment and retention, including reasons why teachers leave the profession. Leigh will also share current policy recommendations. There will be time for discussion.

submitted by Leigh Martin

50th Anniversary Celebration

We are not good, just because we have been around for 50 years – we have been around for 50 years because we are good! On January 30, 1968 a group of committed women gathered in Clemson to sign their names to officially establish the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area. And we have been going great guns ever since! On January 30, 2018, we will have a special celebration of this event that took place exactly 50 years ago. Our charter members and other early members will be there to regale us with tales of those early days – and to remind us of why we are STILL working to make democracy work for everyone. Several members are helping to plan the celebration: Catherine Farris, Ann Russell, Ann Fuhr, Eleanor Hare, Linda Gahan, Bill Hare, and Janie Shipley. Please keep an eye on your inbox for an invitation to join in the celebration at OLLI on January 30, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

submitted by Janie Shipley

Holiday Party

On Dec. 19, League members gathered to enjoy the holiday spirit with light refreshments and companionable conversation. Once again, Catherine Farris and her team, including Ann Fuhr and Ansley Fraser, transformed OLLI into a festive holiday venue, decorated with candles and greenery. Mike Ellison and Jennifer Ruth added to the cheerful atmosphere, accompanying as we sang holiday songs and playing their own distinctive music.



Advocacy Workshop

Sponsored by LWVCA and Hosted by Abel Baptist Church

In November the LWV-CA sponsored an advocacy workshop at Abel Baptist Church in Clemson with its main goal to help our community acquire skills to better communicate their wants and needs to public officials. On the workshop panel of presenters were two elected public officials, Greenville City Councilwoman Lillian Brock Flemming and SC Representative Gary Clary. Also on the panel were two strong advocates for the public interest, Pickens County NAACP President Shelia Crawford and Lynn Teague, who is Vice President for Issues and Action and unpaid lobbyist for the SCLWV. Each member spoke for 20-25 minutes followed by questions from the audience. After all speakers had finished their formal presentations more questions from the audience followed.

The strongest message emphasized by all four panelists was most importantly — DO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS. The following actions were suggested to achieve the goal of communicating effectively with public officials:

- Be knowledgeable about your topic
 - Do your homework
 - Know what you want and don't be afraid to ask for it
 - Be honest; Be confident
 - Don't exaggerate; Don't argue
 - Avoid personality conflicts
 - Deal with facts and stay on issue
 - Know the committee or subcommittee your issue may be in
 - Know the chair and co-chair of those committees
- Follow up
 - Send thanks with a personal note
 - Go to city and county council meetings
 - Read the agenda and minutes of each meeting
 - Get organized
 - Call a press conference and get the media involved

More specifically each panelist spoke from his/her own experience. Gary Clary spoke from his experience as Representative in the SC General Assembly. He feels his role is to do the best possible job responding to the needs of his constituents without concern for re-election. He strongly advocated having face to face meetings with your representatives, but have a plan ahead of time and perhaps even practice your meeting. The vast majority of our representatives are very good and dedicated people who want to know your concerns. Often you have to educate your officials on issues on which they may not be well informed.

Lillian Brock Flemming spoke from her experience as a city council member and more specifically about the problem of zoning, effective land use for good quality of life, and the issue of gentrification. She strongly suggested attending council meetings in small groups. Pay attention to what is going on, not only in your neighborhood, but in other areas, too. Make phone calls and find out what is planned for the future. Don't be shy. And when you want your issue to gain public attention, plan a gathering, alert the media, and call a press conference. (continued on p. 6)

continued from p. 5

Lynn Teague spoke from her experience as an advocate for the positions of the LWVSC on such issues as they arise in the state legislature. Currently, ending gerrymandering and appropriate redistricting are the issues for which the LWV is leading a statewide coalition. The goal is to pass legislation before the next census that will create strong and effective criteria for the independent redrawing of all district lines in SC. This goal is to ensure that voters choose their representatives and not that representatives choose their voters. This is perhaps the strongest way to Make Democracy Work. And remember to vote; vote in EVERY election. Shelia Crawford concluded our panel's presentations speaking from her experience as a strong advocate for the needs of her community as a long-time member of the Pickens County NAACP. She re-emphasized several previous comments. Join organizations that already exist; there is power in numbers. Be persistent. It takes a group of well meaning, knowledgeable, determined people who believe in their mission to bring about a change. Most important is that the local level is where it all starts. For example, one local educational issue that is finally being addressed is that African American students may spend their entire educational career without once having an African American teacher. The effort to make hiring African American teachers a priority in Pickens County has been a long struggle, but the tide is finally turning. Finally, speak out; ask questions; it's OK to disagree, but be nice; don't burn your bridges as Ms Flemming and Ms Teague also stated.

The workshop drew an audience of about 65 people with many questions. One of the most passionately expressed issues concerned local land growth and development: zoning, lack of transparency in city real estate transactions, conflicts of interest in city government and development, and efforts by real estate dealers to take advantage of land holding members in the community.

If you would like to listen and see the workshop it can be found at the following website:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10156559817674298&id=517199297

submitted by Cece Parker

Program Planning Feb 3

Our annual program planning meeting will be held at Ye Olde Sandwich Shop in Seneca on Saturday, February 3rd from 11 to 1. You can order from the menu and have a brainstorming session about three aspects of program.

1. What do we want to have our delegates to national League support at the convention? We know, and generally agree, that making democracy work is our continuing focus. We have had requests from other Leagues to consider such issues as artificial intelligence and the electoral college. Some of us have also discussed a review of the primary system in presidential elections. The floor will be open for other recommendations. (State program is considered in odd-numbered years, national in even.)
2. Do we want to consider any proposed local program, drop or reconsider any existing positions? Our current positions on education and growth management can be found on the Clemson LWV web side under LWVCA positions..
3. What program areas would you like to see our local League focus on for next years in program planning?

Since this is a big election year at the state and local level, we will also spend some time planning voter service work--voter registration, primaries, general election, getting out the vote, candidate events, etc.

So mark your calendar and plan to be part of this very grassroots participatory process.

submitted by Holley Ulbrich

New Members



Linda Law has had a lifelong interest in politics, both domestic and international. She says her mother was a political "junkie," and this influence was reinforced by her public school education in Glastonbury, CT. To graduate from high school, every student had to pass a course called Current Issues. Every student was given a daily subscription to The New York Times, as well as subscriptions to TIME and the U.S. News & World Report magazines. Classes were large lecture sessions, followed by small group discussions. This formula hooked Linda on current events for a lifetime.

She has a B. A. in English from the University of Hartford, and a M.Ed. from Clemson University. Linda and her husband Harry moved to Clemson in 1971 when he took an assistant professor position in mechanical engineering. Linda did a wide variety of things at Clemson: assistant director of admissions, a fund raiser for the Minority Engineering Program, and her last 13 years were as advising coordinator for the General Engineering Advising Center. She retired in 2005, and Harry retired in 2013.

They have one son, Eric, who is pursuing graduate work at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, CA. He married his Chinese sweetheart after living in Guangzhou, China for 9 years. He too has the politics gene.

Linda confesses to being a "terrible local citizen," ignorant of state and local issues, always having focused on national and international matters. She hopes her involvement in the LWV will rectify that condition.

The Children's Health Insurance Program

The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a block grant and federal allotments program, was initially funded with bi-partisan support 20 years ago. This program provides medical care for children who do not qualify for Medicaid, but whose families cannot afford medical insurance. In FY2017 South Carolina received \$165 million in federal funds and South Carolina provided a match of \$50 million. Average monthly enrollment was 79,163 children.

Congress failed to reauthorize CHIP in September, but South Carolina has not spent all of its federal funds and has enough money left over to continue the program until April.

In November, the House passed a 5-year extension, which was funded in part by taking money from a preventive care fund in the Affordable Care Act and increasing Medicare premiums for higher income beneficiaries. The Senate is also working on extending CHIP for 5 years, but has not identified a source of funding. For 20 years CHIP was approved in bi-partisan agreement, but the source of funding is now a partisan battleground.

In South Carolina, CHIP has operated as an expansion of Medicaid, which requires that South Carolina continue to operate CHIP through FY2019. Congress included short-term money for CHIP in the stop-gap budget extension that expires Jan. 19.

Reported by Eleanor Hare

Voter Registration

Working with the Leagues in Spartanburg and Greenville, members of LWV of the Clemson Area completed voter registration for 660 new citizens in the past year. If you are interested in going to Greer on a second Friday of the month to assist in this project, contact Joanne Shalaby jeshalaby@gmail.com

submitted by Janie Shipley

Clemson City Council 1st and 3rd Mondays, 6:30 pm
 Seneca City Council 2nd Tuesday, 6:00 pm
 Pickens County Council 1st Monday 6,30 pm
 Oconee County Council 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 pm

Anderson County Council 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 6:00pm
 Pickens County School Board 4th Monday, 7:00,pm
 Oconee County School Board 3rd Monday, 6:00,pm
 Anderson School Board 3rd Monday, 6:00,pm

Contribution Form

League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area LWVCA, P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email address _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Phone (opt) _____

I wish my contribution to remain anonymous.

I wish my contribution to be tax deductible where allowed by law. My check is made out to the "*League of Women Voters Ed Fund*" which is a 501(c)(3) organization.

I wish to support the League's action priorities. My check is made out to the "League of Women Voters" and is not tax-deductible.

Visit our website at www.lwvclemsonarea.org and contact us at lwvclemson@gmail.com.

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