



THE VOTER

September 2018 Vol. 45. No. 6

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

Co-Presidents' Message

I hope everyone has had a good break over the summer and is ready to get back to the important work of the League. We had a lively Women's Equality Day/Welcome Back event on August 21st. We had an interesting and entertaining presentation by Elizabeth Adams, a speech by a "real Suffragist" in authentic costume (Martha Alexander), good music provided by some talented League members, and food and beverages provided by League members. We all had fun, but Women's Equality Day is about more than celebration. The important message of this event is that women still do not have equality. We are doing better, but that is not good enough. Women still lag behind in how much they earn in the workplace, representation in government, and we still do not have an ERA amendment. In this day and age, it is vital that women's rights be protected, and to ensure that future generations of women have equal opportunities to succeed. The League of Women Voters has been fighting for women's equality for ninety-eight years.



With the mid-term elections coming up in November, it's time to get serious about one of the things the League does best, educate and inform voters. We are busy working on candidates' forum events in Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee Counties. Other League members are working on updates to Vote411.

Our Voter Services committee will be busy registering voters, especially high school students who are eligible to vote in the upcoming election. It is one of our obligations as citizens of this country to vote. It is critical that we reach young first-time voters with this message. Life-long habits are formed early. Let's make sure voting is one of those habits!

The program committee has planned some presentations for September and October on a very timely topic, election security—something we should all be extremely concerned about, especially after all the confusing and disturbing news reports of recent weeks and months. We could all benefit from some accurate non-partisan information about this. Be sure to put these meetings on your calendar. Please note the time change for our programs. The meetings will start at 7:00 p.m. with the programs beginning at 7:15.

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

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APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

Eleanor Hare
Diana Stafford

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, September 18, 2018	Tracking the Troll Factory, 7:00 p.m. OLLI
Wednesday, September 26, 2018	SC House District 2 Forum, 7:00 p.m. Gignilliat Community Center, 621 N Townville St., Seneca
Tuesday, October 16, 2018	Election Issues *, 7:00 p.m. OLLI
Monday, October 29, 2018	Clemson City Council Candidate Forum. 7:00 p.m. City Council Chambers
Tuesday, November 13	Legislator Open Forum, 7:00 p.m. OLLI
December	Holiday Party. TBA

OLLI Building 578 Issaqueena Trail, 100 Thomas Green Boulevard, Clemson (864-633-5242)

* Security, State Government Structure, Superintendent of Education Appointed or Elected

SC Voters register by Party?, Winner Take All or Proportional Representation for Run-offs, Rank Order or Other Ballot Structures, Direct election of President, Dark Money

August 19: State Elections Commission Board Meeting

An update was given of the Election Security and Technology mandatory workshop held on Aug 7 and 8 for all country election administrators. Security partners were from the Election Infrastructure Sharing and Analysis Center and also Homeland Security and the FBI. All counties were represented at the workshop. Part of the training included security table top exercises. User IDs and passwords will be suspended unless users of the election system complete cyber security training. They are also looking at guarding against new phishing campaigns as well as new telephone call techniques to get access to systems.

The Department of Homeland Security will also be conducting physical as well as cyber security assessments, including secure storage of voting machines. Security assessments to be completed by October. SLED and local law enforcement are also involved in security and are helping to place law enforcement sensors on the networks.

Reported by JoAnne Day, Columbia

Check current information the web site, <http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/forums.html>

Women's Equality Day

I love an event that features good snacks, plenty of wine, lively friendly people and a good dose of history. The Women's Equality Day event delivered on all that and more. The speakers spoke of the challenges we face as women while celebrating the achievements we have attained. Original members of the Clemson League were recognized and others shared stories of their brave mothers and grandmothers who helped pave the way for all of us. At the "bring a friend event" guests who are serving our communities in public office and those who are running for office were recognized for their service.

The event ended with a challenge to identify antique household items and win a prize. We tried to do this on our own, but couldn't help laughing and sharing answers. And really, it was more fun that way. When things settled a bit we ended the evening with a rousing singalong of "This Land is Your Land." What's more fun than an accordion?

Submitted by Mary Tavalocci



Tracking the Troll Factory

In November, 2017, BuzzFeed News crowned @Jenna_Abrams the “Troll Princess” of Twitter. She had over 70,000 followers and had been quoted in dozens of mainstream news outlets. She was one of the most successful of the 2,752 accounts being operated by the Internet Research Agency, a Kremlin-backed contractor operating fake accounts from St. Petersburg, Russia. By June, 2018, that list had been expanded to include over 3500 accounts and my co-author Darren Linvill and I had completed our first analysis of the more than 3 million tweets they had produced. Our results suggest a complex “industrialized” strategy of propaganda production, which included at least 5 distinct account styles, responded to events opportunistically, and was fully focused on sowing division in political conversation of democratic nations all over the world.

The IRA troll factory produced at least five types of trolls: Right Trolls, who focused on immigration and crime, Left Trolls, who focused on police violence and racism, Newsfeeds, who purported to be local news aggregators in one of about 30 U.S. cities, Hashtag Gamers, who played a regular Twitter game in which participants riff on some pre-specified Hashtag, and Fearmongers, who tried to spread panic over some wholly fabricated disaster.

The behavior of the Left/Right Trolls (like Jenna—a classic Right Troll) is illustrative of the IRA’s overall mission—turning the extremes of the political discussion against each other and the middle. These extremists are no fans of the other side, but are equally contemptuous of moderates of all stripes, and try to bring to the center of the conversations real Americans who shared those extremist beliefs. As an example, the day with highest level of troll activity throughout the last 3 years was Oct 6, 2016, the day before Wikileaks released the hacked John Podesta emails. Their goal? All that activity was focused on the extreme left of the Democratic party. They discussed Hillary Clinton’s cozy relationship with Goldman Sachs, and how she had “private positions” and “public positions” on regulating finance. They were preparing the “battlefield” for the next day’s revelations by raising the Twitter profile (through retweeting and mentioning) of those actors they knew would react strongly to the release.

Every account on our list has been suspended, but there is still a lot we don’t know about their operation. And there is no question at all that new accounts have taken their places. The last operation ramped up about a month before the election, so be particularly aware in October of this year about whether the conversation you will see on Social Media is an unbiased representation of the true level of division in our nation.

Patrick L. Warren, Assoc. Professor of Economics, Clemson University (pwarren@clemson.edu)

Forum Help

If you would like to help with a candidate forum (greeter, question sorter, photographer, timer,) we need you! For the Sept. 26 forum send email to Ansley. For the Oct. 29 forum send email to Eleanor. Use contact emails at <http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/contact.html>.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY - SEPTEMBER 25, 2018

Do you want to make history, have a unique cultural experience, or just do your civic duty? Then the LWVCA needs you the week of September 24-28. This effort will likely register the most voters ever and be in time for them to vote in the November 6 elections. Each year since NVRD began, the numbers have risen and we here in the Clemson area plan to do our part. If you have not been in a high school class in many years, you will be pleasantly (for the most part) surprised. Many of you signed up at our Women's Equality celebration but we need more.

During that week and perhaps the week before, we will be visiting Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson County Schools and other venues. Below is a summary of our needs:

Anderson Schools - Michael Auston and Lynn Batizy are organizing this and we will post it on our league website later.

Oconee Schools - Linda Gahan and Pam Warren will work at SHS and WOHS

Right now we need 4 more at SHS on 9/20, Thursday, from 11:55-12:10. Also, we need 6 more at SHS on 9/21, Friday, from 11:55-12:10.

Tentative dates for WOHS are 9/24-9/25 and we need 3 more each day to cover this school.

Pickens Schools - Mary Tavalacci will work to coordinate all schools.

DHS is covered for 9/24 - 9/25. EHS needs 6 volunteers for 9/26 and 9/27. LHS needs 2 volunteers on 9/28 and 2 volunteers on 10/1.

We have registered voters at the School Success Workshop, Clemson University, and the Railroad Festival recently. There are plans in the future for registration tables at all four Tri-County Technical College sites, Anderson YMCA, Pendleton Spring Jubilee, Anderson University, Southern Wesleyan University, and other venues.

Please e-mail me at VoterService@clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org with your volunteer information and any questions you may have. You do not need experience--you will get that on the job--and you do not have to be a LWVCA member. This will be a great week/year for Voter Service.

Submitted by Cheryl Lee

Unless you have paid dues since January, the Treasurer would like your money: \$60 individual, \$30 additional member of household or \$10 for student membership.

New Members



Lillian Boatwright joined the League because she has always been involved in politics and now wants to also be involved in the community. She learned about LWV-CA through Facebook.

Lillian spent her early years in Greenville and moved to Clemson 11 years ago. She is a Daniel High School graduate. She and her 4 year-old daughter, Claire, live in Clemson.

In spring 2019, she will receive her Bachelor's Degree from Coker College in Business Management. Prior to this, she earned two degrees from Tri-County. In addition to parenting and coursework, Lillian works full time as Content Coordinator at Keymark, a computer technology firm in Liberty.

Interests include gardening, hiking and painting with watercolors.

Mary Tavalacci and her husband, Mike Quirk, moved to Williamston 3 years ago, settling on their 14 acre "hobby farm." They find much pleasure in their horses, chickens and Tennessee Fainting Goats. They started their family and careers in Rock County, NY where she taught high school English Literature for 30 years. Mike worked in IT at Revlon. They have two children, a son in New York and a daughter and three granddaughters in Anderson.

Following retirement, and before moving to Williamston, Mary and Mike spent 10 years farming 12 acres outside of Ashville, NC. There they raised heritage breed animals for farmers' markets.

Mary enjoys working out at the Anderson YMCA. She is also active at the St. George Episcopal Church, Anderson. She says that by joining LWVCA she will be rounding out her social (YMCA), religious (church) and political (LWVCA) needs.



Patricia Moynihan remembers the interesting people she knew as a League member in Ohio. She joined LWVCA because she wants to get involved with similar people again. She grew up in Batavia, NY, met her husband of many years in high school, and raised 8 children with him. She has 21 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren living across the United States and the Netherlands.

In order to send their youngest son to a private high school, she went to work at Prudential Financial Services as a salesperson and later a supervisor. (They were already supporting three children in college.)

She and her husband moved to Keowee Key 22 years ago, following his career with DuPont. Three years ago they downsized to a smaller home in Anderson. Her interests have been varied but these days she enjoys reading, the Anderson Y exercise program, Anderson U Life Long Learning art and history courses, and theater.



Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I think that most Americans recognize “common decency” when they see it. South Carolinians are more considerate and polite than any other place that I have lived. This is one of the reasons that I enjoy living here. So it’s breaking my heart to see us beginning to fall victim to the propagandists who are trying to change the way that we interact with each other. It is a deliberate strategy that we need to recognize when we see it.

They want us to use “labels.” You’re not a person who thinks differently than I do about a solution to a difficult problem—you’re a “liberal” or “conservative.” Labels are convenient because you can shut down a discussion immediately using labels. I obviously don’t need to hear what you think because I already know what you think.

Propagandists want to put us into “camps.” If you think one way on an important issue like immigration, you must be a racist or a Nazi. Again, this finishes the discussion, because I don’t need to talk to one of “those.” It is so simple to put this particular “spin,” especially on Twitter. It’s so called “easy” to read between the lines as to meaning with the limited number of characters.

The goal of propaganda is to manipulate your attitude and behavior. It’s used in politics to get your vote. But, I see something new happening. We, as a nation, are being manipulated to fight against each other. It feels like the Roman coliseum where they put the gladiators in a pit to fight each other for entertainment or more recently in the movie series, “The Hunger Games.” Someone is enjoying our infighting. But the new goal is to tear our democracy apart and make it impotent.

The constant fighting is exhausting, demoralizing and has the numbing effect of making us want to give up, not vote, and not care. The first lady’s jacket that read, “I REALLY DON’T CARE, DO U?” speaks volumes. Are we all going to start wearing this fashion statement because we give up? It’s tempting.

The propaganda war we’re experiencing is tiring, but we’re Americans and we’re strong. Don’t give in to those who are trying to make us quit because it is uncomfortable. We have some new people running for office. They have gotten up from their comfortable couches and are going door to door, attending town hall meetings and working very hard to help solve hard problems in Columbia and Washington, DC. Please don’t “label” them. Listen to what they have to say and then make up your own mind. And most importantly, cast your well-informed vote. Don’t be manipulated by the propaganda machine that’s trying to make you give up.

Submitted by Patty Warner

Ensure that you receive League emails. Add LWVClemson@gmail.com to your address book

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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