



# THE VOTER

August 2020, Vol. 47 No. 4

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

## Co-President's Message

### John Lewis, 1940-2020:

“Democracy is not a state. It is an act.... The vote is the most powerful change agent you have in a democratic society....” (NYT, July 30, 2020.)

I, like many of you, have been caught up in the events honoring John Lewis. I am grateful for the news spotlight turning from anger and destruction to hope and the belief in the good in people.

On what better note could we start our next round of League work on “empowering voters, defending democracy.” I look forward to the virtual celebration of Women’s Equity Day on August 26.

If you have not already received details about this event, you will. But I look forward even more to working with you all on preparing for the vote on November 3. We will have our first Zoom candidate forums and much more. There is much to do.

This issue marks the end of an era: **Eleanor Hare** turns over the Voter to **Michael Ellison**. Thanks to Eleanor for her dogged persistence in getting out *The Voter* and thanks to Mike for taking it over. And continued thanks to **Liz Vogt** for turning copy into an actual newsletter.

Thanks so much to **Sandra Gray** for helping me through my first year as President and to **Michael Wood** for agreeing to serve as Co-President this year.



**Ruth Reed**

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### *THE VOTER*

League of Women Voters Clemson Area  
*Serving the Citizens of Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson Counties*  
P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633  
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Janie Shipley, National Representative  
Holly Ulbrich, State Co-President  
Sandra Gray, Past Co-President

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 26, 2020	Women's Equality Day (see article below)
August 29, 2020	<i>SC Voter Deadline</i> – all articles due to Linda Powers-Bilanchone.
September 1, 2020	State Nominating Committee Meets
September 9, 2020 5:00 p.m.	Monthly Call with Local League Leaders and State Co-Presidents

## Women's Equality Day

Women's Equality Day is August 26th, the anniversary of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. Clemson's League has been celebrating this holiday with a party for several years now. This year, the 100th, will be a bit more subdued because of the pandemic. You will get an email invitation to watch a video recorded by **Sheila Haney** of Darlington, author of the new book *In Her Shoes* about the 100--year history of LWVSC, along with **Holley Ulbrich**, who edited the book and our reviewer **Laura Wolliver**, professor emerita of women's studies and political science at USC and president of the Columbia LWV. Watch it at your convenience and then we will discuss our state League's history at 7:30 on Women's Equality Day eve, Tuesday August 25th. If you are interested in buying a copy of the book, let **Ruth Reed** know so you can buy it for \$15 through the Clemson League (which makes a \$5 profit on each book it sells) or from the state League using the order form on the LWVSC website. If you want a Kindle version, you can order it directly from amazon.com.

Some of the planned statewide events have been cancelled or modified because of the coronavirus. There will be a vigil at the statehouse the morning of August 26th honoring those who fought and won our right to vote. This event is hosted by Historical Columbia Foundation with women's organizations participating. League members from around the state are invited to participate. There is also a press conference and proclamation by the Lieutenant Governor on August 18th with seven women's organizations speaking, including the League. I will speak for LWVSC. Finally, on August 23rd there is an SCETV program honoring women's leadership in voting and public affairs in South Carolina. So, party on, and then let's roll up our sleeves and dive into the work of making the November 11th election safe, accessible, and with a great turnout!

*Submitted by Holley Ulbrich, Co-President, LWVSC*

## A Tribute to Berniece Holt



**Berniece Holt** spent most of her adult life making South Carolina a better place. She attended college in her native North Carolina, then moved to Clemson with her new husband. In the 60s and 70s, her focus was civil rights. She and her husband of 70 years, Albert, were instrumental in founding the Clemson Chapter of the SC Council on Human Relations, a ground-breaking bi-racial organization that fought Jim Crow practices and voter discrimination and prepared Black children to integrate public schools. The Council organized the Clemson Child Development Center on whose Board Berniece served for many years; this organization thrives today, providing affordable, comprehensive childcare. Her actions in support of Black voters influenced Senator Strom Thurmond to switch to the Republican Party.

Throughout her life she sought to fight injustices, lobbying (and marching) to change unfair practices and discriminatory laws, opposing the wars in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, opposing capital punishment and nuclear proliferation. Berniece was very active in the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson and served as an ordained Lay Minister. She worked for the Clemson University Libraries on and off for several decades, retiring in 1991. In 1968, she helped found the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area. She worked tirelessly in support of voter protection laws, educating voters about pending legislation, registering citizens to vote and attending city and county council meetings. She was a strong proponent of women's rights, sensible gun control, affordable healthcare, quality eldercare and LGBTQ equality. Berniece passed on July 2, 2020 at the age of 93. The family invites those wishing to honor Berniece's memory to donate to her living legacy, the Clemson Child Development Center, 216 Butler Street, Clemson, SC 29631 or the charity of their choice. The world needs more Berniece Holts. She will be sorely missed.

## New Member Bios

**Bill and Allison Ranson** have resided in Pickens County since 1980 and live near Glassy Mountain. Bill grew up in Charlotte, NC and Allison grew up in New England. They met in Massachusetts, when Bill was a graduate student at UMass and Allison was an undergraduate at Smith College. Bill has just retired from a forty-one-year teaching career at Furman where he taught in the Department of Earth, Environmental, and Sustainability Sciences. Allison has worked as an environmental engineer in government, industry, and consulting positions, and currently works for BASF in Seneca. She will retire later this summer. Both are interested in environmental issues in the Upstate and are avid hikers and backpackers.



They have three daughters, all of whom live in Portland, OR. Their interest in the League comes from their concern about how our democracy is being undermined, the environment is being degraded, and racial equality issues continue to persist.

## Membership Dues: Announcing New Electronic Payment Option

Please pay your league membership dues now if you have not already paid for FY 20-21 (6/1/20-5/31/21): \$60 for the primary member and \$30 for each additional member in the household and only \$10 for students. Your dues cover our operating expenses, the publication of our newsletter *The Voter*, and your memberships in the LWV of South Carolina and the National League. When you pay your 20-21 LWV of the Clemson Area dues, you will be added to the National League Roster as an active member until Dec 31, 2021. To receive LWV-US League Update emails, sign up at <https://www.lwv.org/league-management>. With the launch of our new website, <https://my.lwv.org/south-carolina/clemson-area>, you now have an option to pay your dues by credit card through the linked PayPal account. There is a \$2 fee associated with the PayPal option to help us cover the PayPal fee. To start the process, click on Join/Renew from the left column menu. I will get an email when you fill out the information on our website and when your payment is processed.

Here are the options for paying your LWVCA membership dues:

- Pay by credit card via PayPal from our website.
- Mail a check to LWVCA, PO Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633. Please provide any changes in your address or email. You can find a “Printable Join Renew Form” at the bottom of the Join/Renew web page.
- Set up and send a payment to LWVCA, PO Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633 through the Bill Pay section of your bank or credit card.
- Email us at [lwvclemson@gmail.com](mailto:lwvclemson@gmail.com) to arrange to pay in person.

*Submitted by Elaine Laiewski*

## Book Review

*Drawing the Vote: An Illustrated Guide to Voting in America*, By **Tommy Jenkins, Kati Lacker** (Illustrator), **Prof. Martha Jones** (Introduction). Abrams ComicArts, 9781419739989, 208pp. Publication Date: April 21, 2020. This book describes how the history of American voting rights has shaped the way we vote today. Member **Pamela Davison-Smith** brought this book to my attention as an excellent resource for middle-school-aged students and their parents as an appealing way to introduce the subject of voting and voter suppression. We also enjoyed reading it. Quote from the grandson of a friend: “Way better than a history book!” Pamela’s daughter knows the author, **Tommy Jenkins**, of Raleigh, NC, who is the humanities division chair at Louisburg College in NC and an associate professor of English. Check this link for more information and a Teacher’s Guide: [https://www.abramsbooks.com/product/drawing-the-vote\\_9781419739989/](https://www.abramsbooks.com/product/drawing-the-vote_9781419739989/)

The publisher will sell the LWVCA the book for \$12.75 (list price on Amazon is currently \$18.45). If you like the book and want a copy or to donate a copy to local libraries, send Pamela your request before August 28 at [pkdsmith@live.com](mailto:pkdsmith@live.com). We think this book dovetails nicely with the League drive to combat voter suppression.

*Submitted by Ruth Reed*

## LWV Environmental Issues Update

### Lowering CO2 Levels

While we are all deeply concerned about our current pandemic and racial injustice issues, our state and national governments continue to ignore a major issue that will affect the futures of humankind: Climate Change. This issue is becoming more evident in weather patterns throughout planet Earth. Due to rising temperatures on Earth, Canada's last intact ice shelf collapsed into the ocean on August 8th releasing a sheet of ice larger than Manhattan. Sadly, this event will add to sea rise but take with it an ecosystem that cannot survive in salty ocean water. With so many pressing issues to address, candidates for office may not be pressed on how they will address climate change. Windows of opportunity are rapidly closing, and by 2050 changes to Earth may be irreversible and will impact every aspect of human life from food to disease. The only answer will be adaptation.

What can we do as LWV members in South Carolina? Opportunities are available for each of us to help work toward continued decreases in CO2 emissions. As a result of social isolation practices during the current pandemic there has been a temporary decrease in CO2 levels estimated at 17% - 26% worldwide. This has happened due to decreased industrial production, aviation, personal vehicle use and commerce. This is temporary and will change as restrictions are lifted and life returns to pre-COVID levels.

- **Encourage Solar Energy:** We can reduce our use of fossil fuels and fracked gas by considering solar panels for our homes, places of worship, businesses, schools, and commercial use buildings. This will also offer new job opportunities. Free estimates are available by several solar providers in our state. Check out this guide: <http://energy.sc.gov/files/SolarGuideHomeowners.pdf>

- **Protect Net Metering Now:** Net metering means that excess energy created by solar panels is sent back to the local electric grid and solar owners are compensated. According to Upstate Forever, "Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has agreed to consider a New England group's request that rooftop net-metering rates be regulated the same way large utility-scale solar farm rates are regulated. If approved, this would remove our state's ability to determine what net-metering compensation is fair. FERC would get to do that. Legal experts say this would effectively end net metering." You can read more here. Locally, Upstate Forever will be joining forces with Georgia Interfaith Power & Light, Appalachian Voices, and the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League, plus attorneys at the Southern Environmental Law Center, to intervene in this docket to defend net-metering in South Carolina. You can join Upstate Forever who provides weekly legislative updates at [www.upstateforever.org](http://www.upstateforever.org).

- **Consider an Electric Car:** Energy companies understand that automobile manufacturers are committed to producing more electric cars in the near future. Battery prices have gone down, and technology has reduced the need for recharging. It is the future of transportation as prices come down and more models are available in the near future. A push to install charging stations along major SC routes was abandoned, but there will be new efforts to encourage resurrecting this project that would also provide much needed high-tech jobs.

- **Reduce Red Meat Consumption:** Eating less red meat can have an immediate impact on some dangerous environmental issues. The Union of Concerned Scientists lists meat-eating as one of the biggest environmental hazards facing the Earth. Globally, animal agriculture is responsible for more greenhouse gases than all the world's transportation systems combined. Protein is available from plant sources including whole grains and beans. If you buy meat, consider using local organic sources. Local beef and pork are offered by the Clemson Area Food Exchange (CAFÉ) who also offer home delivery. Explore Meatless Monday.com for some recipes.

## LWV Environmental Issues Update Lowering CO2 Levels Continued

In addition, there is an issue of local impact we need to be aware of. The entire wood pellet industry ‘rents’ forest lands, clear cuts mature trees, pelletizes the wood that is then mostly shipped to Europe where it is touted as ‘green energy’. Unfortunately, the entire process disrupts the process that traps CO<sub>2</sub>, but then when burned releases it into the environment through home wood-burning furnaces. A major wood pellet plant in Greenwood, SC, is applying for an expansion permit for their wood pellet plant. Currently, the plant is limited to 550,000 tons of wood pellets from South Carolina forests per year, but they propose to expand the plant to 660,000 tons per year. That means logging would increase to cut 15,840 acres per year. The plant would then emit 1,422,057 tons of carbon per year, equivalent to over 273,900 extra cars on the road. At every level there are also major social justice issues from buying land at very low prices to contaminating neighbors with both toxic emissions and even sawdust particulate matter. Watch for action that you can take to help.

*Submitted by Ellie Taylor*

## The Case for Masks Kenneth S. Marsh, PhD, CPP, CFS

There is a controversy concerning wearing masks in public, whether staged in politics or personal rights or vanity. It is none of those. It is a matter of public health, consideration of others, and a recognition that we live in a society with others. The U.S. Constitution makes no mention of any right to not wear a mask but does include “promote the general welfare.” This article offers a perspective that should clarify the importance of wearing masks and slow this pandemic as experts with appropriate training have consistently promoted.

We all breathe – humans and animals. We take in oxygen and breathe out water vapor and carbon dioxide. In cold weather (even in South Carolina), we can see our breath if water vapor coalesces and condenses before it can disperse. We cannot see water vapor in air unless enough water combines and condenses large enough to see. Mist and fog have water clusters that may be 10 – 20 microns (1 micron = 1/1000 mm or 1 millionth of a meter) but can be much larger. For comparison, a human hair is 50 microns in diameter. As the water vapor coalesces and condenses, it slows down. Coronavirus has a diameter of 120 nanometers (1 billionth of a meter – a sheet of paper is about 100,000 nanometers thick), so the virus is 1/100th or smaller than the smallest mist we can see, and can therefore travel further than the breath we see in cold air. The virus can travel more than 6 feet, but the amount of virus that travels is significantly less at that distance. The recommendations to wear masks and maintain social distances of six feet, therefore, are well based in science and offered to slow the spread of the pandemic.

If someone gave you an open container of acid and asked you to throw it in the face of a stranger, you would all decline because of the obvious cruelty of such an action. But the very real chance of an asymptomatic person passing Covid-19 to someone by refusing to wear a mask is potentially more dangerous than that acid. So please, wear a mask whenever you venture forth in public. If vanity is a concern, there is an ever-increasing choice for designer masks. I ordered 4 last night to add a bit of fun to the standard masks I have been using. There are very good reasons to wear a mask, and very few to not.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the LWV

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential to the success of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area, engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy. There should be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, age, education, sexual orientation, culture, religion, political perspective, and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity. This means that we fully welcome the diversity of the human voice, in a manner anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-ageist, and anti-every-exclusionist-bias. An inclusive culture empowers all of us to connect, belong, and grow. In a recent OLLI class, I heard this description of multiculturalism: You are at a cocktail party where everyone looks more or less like you. When someone looking clearly different comes in, you go to that person, welcome them and stay with them until someone else comes to join you. Multiculturalism is basically a matter of making a person feel welcome. When I heard this, it occurred to me that this is the state of being that we hope for LWVCA.

Our democracy is not really best seen as a melting pot, melting copper and tin, for example, to make bronze. We are a quilt, each patch keeping its own unique identity while enriching the colorful quilt as a whole. Having many different perspectives is a strength and is fundamental to genuine democracy. But many people may experience themselves as outside the conversation, unseen and unheard. Several of us in LWVCA have volunteered to work on enhancing our state of diversity, equity and inclusion. As our country continues its struggle with addressing our racist past, we hope to make contributions toward making Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson counties healthier, as we further demonstrate that we are a welcoming League. If you are interested in this effort, please contact me at michaelwood6@icloud.com or call/text me at 864/546-1454. As **Representative John Lewis** recently wrote, to be published on the day of his funeral, "Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to help build what we called the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself."

*Submitted by Michael Wood*

## Report: Your Vote411 Team at Work

Before the Vote411 online candidate forum can be used by candidates and voters, questions appropriate to each race must be designed and entered, candidate data must be gathered from the state web site, and the association that connects candidates to the correct subset of voters must be communicated to the computer system. When we finish this phase of the Vote411 effort, the races and candidates will be made available to the public through Vote411.org. Clemson Mayor, Clemson City Council, school boards and watershed commissioner are among the new races that were not on the primary ballots in June. When filing is complete, and the computer system set up we will ask everyone to help by asking candidates to participate and share flyers about the election and Vote411.org with email contacts. Membership participation by making phone calls and emails to candidates resulted in increased participation by candidates and was a major factor in the success of our effort.

*Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

<i>Clemson City Council</i>	<i>1st and 3rd Monday, 6:30 pm</i>	<i>Pickens County School Board</i>	<i>4th Monday, 7:00 pm</i>
<i>Seneca City Council</i>	<i>2nd Tuesday, 6:00 pm</i>	<i>Oconee County School Board</i>	<i>3rd Monday, 6:00 pm</i>
<i>Pickens County Council</i>	<i>1st Monday, 6:30 pm</i>	<i>Anderson Co. School Board</i>	<i>3rd Monday, 6:00 pm</i>
<i>Oconee County Council</i>	<i>1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6:00 pm</i>		
<i>Anderson County Council</i>	<i>2nd and 4th Tuesday, 6:00 pm</i>		

### 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](http://www.lwvclemsonarea.org) and contact us at [lwvclemson@gmail.com](mailto:lwvclemson@gmail.com).

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