



# THE VOTER

February 2017 Vol.44 No. 2

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 shift to advocacy has begun, encouraged by the women’s march on January 21<sup>st</sup>, which energized people (especially women) to protect those policies that affect their lives and try to forestall those that they think will have a negative impact on them, or others they care about, or the country as a whole way. Advocacy is many things. It is informing people and raising their awareness of the impact of certain choices such as repealing Obama care or certain cabinet appointments. It is taking action, with telephoning the best strategy at the national level, personal contact at the state and local level. My daughter, Christine Prado, a new League member, has started Telephone Tuesday. Every Tuesday (it doesn’t have to be Tuesday) she calls Senators Graham and Scott and Congressman Duncan to urge them to support/oppose or vote for/against some pending legislation or appointment. (Note that only senators are involved in the appointment process.) Now there are at least a dozen of us that are practicing telephone Tuesday. You can find the contact information elsewhere in this VOTER. It is writing letters to the editor, getting the message across on Facebook. It’s finding reliable sources of information (the League is one) so that we can live up to our League purpose of informed citizen participation in government. It’s attending public meetings, which offer an opportunity in many cases to make a statement about pending decisions, but it is also a good way to learn what is happening. It may even mean getting yourself appointed to a local board or commission or preparing to run for a local office. The best defense is a strong offense, and that’s as true in politics as it is in football.



Being a League member means that you care about public policy—tax policy, regulation, public services, health care, international relations. Choose a few policies that you know about or are willing to learn about at the federal, state, or local level. For me, it’s education finance, tax policy, and home rule, which are mostly state issues. I can speak or write knowledgably on those issues. Others I care strongly about include climate change, health care, voter suppression and gerrymandering, where I depend on the expertise of others whom I trust to inform me when I take action or encourage others to act.

The League, and you, can make a difference.

Holley Ulbrich

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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

[www.lwvclemsonarea.org](http://www.lwvclemsonarea.org)

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 Holley Ulbrich, Co- President  
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 Patty Warner  
 Sandra Gray  
 Cheryl Lee  
 Janet Marsh

Catherine Farris

### APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

Paula Appling, Mem. Co-Chair  
 Elaine Laiewski, Publicity Chair  
 Diana Stafford, *Voter* Editor

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, Feb.21, General Meeting - Solar and Alternative Energy 7:15pm  
Olli Building
- Monday, Feb.20, People's March on Columbia 11 am.
- Monday, Feb.27, Earth Dialogue - Food Choices 6-7 pm Moe Joe's
- Tuesday, Mar 21, General Meeting - Justice System 7:15 pm Olli Building
- Monday, Mar. 27, Earth Dialogue - Managing Climate Change 6-7 pm  
Moe Joe's
- Saturday, Apr. 1, Wine Tasting Fundraiser TBA
- Tuesday, Apr. 18, General Meeting - Panel of Mayors 7:15 pm Olli Building
- Monday, Apr. 24, Earth Dialogue - Local Environmental Action 6-7 pm  
Moe Joe's
- Saturday, Apr. 29, LWV State Convention Columbia SC
- Tuesday, May 9, Annual Dinner Meeting TBA

### State Convention

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina will hold its biennial state convention in Columbia at The Inn at USC, a lovely place. Dates: April 29th and 30th. Speakers include the president of LWVUS, Wycleia Harris; Pamela Goodman, president of the Florida League, on their successful redistricting fight in court; Shawna Howell on using social media; Anton Gunn from USC on health care in South Carolina; and Senator (retired) Wes Hayes, recipient of the Spirit of Democracy Award. We have the usual business--budget, elect officers and directors, adopt program--as well as approving a position on health care. And you get to meet people from Leagues all over the state. So mark your calendars and plan to attend!

Olli Building 578 Issaqueena Trl, Clemson  
Moe Joe's Coffee Shop and Wine Bar 385 Old Greenville Hwy, Clemson

Check current information on the web site: [clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org](http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org)

## February General Meeting

### Update on Our South Carolina State Energy Plan

We hope to see you at our February 21<sup>st</sup> meeting to hear Trish Jerman, Program Manager for the South Carolina State Energy Office, talk about “An Update On Our South Carolina Energy Policy”. Prior to the meeting you may wish to participate in a solar tour from 6-7 p.m. offered by Ken and Janet Marsh at their home at 509 Anna Maria Boulevard in Patrick Square (\*directions below - new house so GPS will probably not get you there). As usual, there will be a social time from 7:00-7:30 followed by announcements and our guest speaker Trish Jerman.

In South Carolina two state agencies are primarily charged with developing the state’s energy regulation and policy framework. These agencies are the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (PSC) and the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS). The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (the state’s environmental regulatory agency), also plays an important role in South Carolina’s energy policy landscape.

The South Carolina Energy Efficiency Act of 1992 established the State Energy Office within the State Budget and Control Board in order to address energy issues in a consistent and professional manner. The Energy Office carries out the state policy and program mandates of this Act and also administers the State Energy Program funded by the United States Department of Energy. The mission of the Energy Office is to increase energy efficiency, enhance environmental quality and save energy dollars for South Carolina.

The South Carolina Restructuring Act of 2014 dissolved the Budget and Control Board and created the Energy Office within the ORS. This reorganization has not altered the legislatively mandated duties of the Energy Office.

The ORS is a party of record in all proceedings before the PSC and represents the public interest. It is the principal energy planning entity for our state. Section 48- 52-410 of the South Carolina Code of Laws describes the purpose of the State Energy Office as follows:

“There is established the State Energy Office within the Office of Regulatory Staff which shall serve as the principal energy planning entity for the State. Its primary purpose is to develop and implement a well-balanced energy strategy and to increase the efficiency of use of all energy sources throughout South Carolina through the implementation of the Plan for State Energy Policy. The State Energy Office must not function as a regulatory body.”

In 2016 Trish Jerman and her associates held several regional meetings to get input into the development of our first South Carolina Energy Plan. Several of us attended the July 26 meeting in Greenville where we completed surveys, asked questions and listened to several speakers representing the energy industry and citizens with a variety of backgrounds. The current draft of our first SC Energy Plan represents a first for South Carolina and is available at [http://www.energy.sc.gov/files/view/SC\\_Energy\\_Plan\\_20160729.pdf](http://www.energy.sc.gov/files/view/SC_Energy_Plan_20160729.pdf).

*submitted by Ellie Taylor*

*\*Turn into Patrick Square residential entrance, from Issaqueena, follow Keller Blvd to end, turn left on Thomas green Blvd, right on Sykes Ave and right on Anna Maria Blvd. 509 Anna Maria Blvd. 8647100557.*

LEAD day was held on January 28 at the South Carolina Education Association headquarters building in Columbia. This was my third time in attendance and once again I found a well organized and extremely informative slate of speakers and activities. After introductions and a lovely breakfast, Patrick Dennis, the Speaker of the House's Counsel, spoke on the intricacies of the legislature. We learned about the complex and insidious nature of "dark money," the workings of gerrymandering and the barriers to voting that all act to influence the political process. He concluded with encouraging us to apply our efforts to our OWN delegates and to do so by phone.

To help navigate the system, LWVSC has created a simple guide, [Advocacy 101](#). A few copies made their way home with us and it is also available on the website.

Next, Lynn Teague provided an update on the bills currently making their way through the statehouse.

1. Progress is stalled on a bill pushing for a voter verifiable paper ballot, but the League supports a bill that would stop straight party voting. The proof of citizenship issue may come up, hindering voting.
2. On the ethics front, there are two separate bills on dark money. The League supports Leatherman's bill aimed at an electioneering fix and the push to clarify terms concerning the disclosure of donors.
3. Efforts are afoot to separate legislative from judicial matters.
4. Voting - bills are in place to broaden opportunities.
5. Environment - the League opposes efforts to gut the automatic stay that delays building projects until the legislative process has been completed.
6. Going on an extended trip? Do you need more than a month's birth control? There is a bill for you in the works.

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## New Age of Activism - Meetings and Opportunities

2017 marks a new Age of Activism, I believe and I hope. It can be difficult to keep up with all of the meetings and get-togethers and impromptu discussions that are guiding how we can support the League platform issues. Each of us has our own passion and our own ways of being involved. These are a few things you may have missed in a very busy month. These groups are working to increase both indirect actions (calls to elected officials) and direct actions (marches, civil disobedience) to advance their causes.

The **Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)** started a chapter at Clemson University last fall (who knew?), and they are becoming more active. They will host an event each month, and this month's event was a talk by Dr. Todd May (philosophy) on Civil Disobedience and Grassroots Organizing in the Trump Era. On January 25<sup>th</sup> more than 150 people crowded into a Hardin classroom and in the hall to hear a fabulous talk about the intellectual side of building a grassroots change organization. As a lifelong resistance organizer, Dr. May is assisting some of the organizations, such as Indivisible Clemson, the way he helped the students with the Sikes sit-in last year. We are so fortunate to have both the SPLC and Todd in our area. (<https://www.facebook.com/cusplc>)

**Vote, Run, Lead** (<https://voterunlead.org/>), an organization committed to recruiting and training female candidates to run in state and local races, has also reported a surge in interest since November. They have already trained more than 15,000 women for political leadership. This group is savvy enough to use livestreaming for many events so that everyone can participate in their training sessions, regardless of location. However, they also host many traditional in-person events to build networks of women who want to run for office. Another great thing here - this is tailored more for first-timers in the political arena and at the local or state level. This organization seems to have a lot of potential, especially in our state where we desperately need greater representation by women.

While the League was doing LEAD Day on January 28<sup>th</sup>, the **ACLU of South Carolina** (<https://www.aclusc.org/>) was meeting at Furman. About 50 people attended the meeting, which was a review of the work they did last year, including the voter registration case from two Furman students. The ACLU only has one attorney on staff in the Charleston office, and I have to say they are a tad unsure of how to manage the new age of activism. BUT - this is a great partnership opportunity for the League because the ACLU is being asked to discuss voting rights. They are being asked questions that are really not in their regular job description. So let's step up and help!! The ACLU has had more than \$30 million in donations since the election and is seeking to expand their educational offerings.

**Indivisible Clemson** (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1638211239815254/>) has more than 600 members, and their goal is to generate activism around the electoral process. Like many others around the country, Indivisible Clemson is based on the Indivisible Guide (<https://www.indivisibleguide.com/>) on how to get our elected officials actually to listen AND to act on what we are demanding of them.

The new **Action Network** was the primary coordinator for the local edition of the Women's March where more than 500 (closer to 600) women, men, and children marched on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Many expressed interest in staying connected and powerful. This new group is also still coordinating efforts across multiple issues related to immigration, health care and equality. Feel free to communicate your interest using [tricountyswomensmarch@gmail.com](mailto:tricountyswomensmarch@gmail.com).

It's wonderful that so many in our communities are interested in being more active in the political process. If you have an idea or an initiative that you would like to share, please let Catherine Watt know at [Catherine.watt67@gmail.com](mailto:Catherine.watt67@gmail.com). We will strive to keep you updated on all the local events.  
*submitted by Catherine Watt*

### Tri-County Women's March

Participation in the Tri-County Women's March on January 21 was a very special way League members and others contributed to making our democracy work by exercising our political rights in a peaceful manner.

Along with over 600 "sister" marches throughout the US, it coincided with the Women's March in DC. A number of elements made these marches memorable: the far greater than expected turnout, the diversity of the marchers, and the number and size of marches across the globe.

In DC the marchers were reported to number as high as 3 million. The Tri-County March included over 500 people, walking from Littlejohn Community Center on Rt. 93 to the Strom Thurmond Institute (STI) on the Clemson Campus. City police positioned along the route and motorists passing by showed respect and appreciation to the marchers.

At the STI auditorium there were not enough seats so half of the marchers did not participate in the indoor rally of introductions, announcements and speeches. To stay informed, follow up with the Tri-County Women's March on its Facebook or Web Site.

Some many question the purpose of the march. I think there were multiple purposes: to rally with others so we feel united for future actions rather than alone and to make a statement on issues important to our country and its citizens.

*submitted by Janet Marsh*



The marchers to DC!



Christine Ulbrich Prado joined the LWVCA in November. She moved to Clemson at the age of two and graduated from Clemson University with a degree in design. She works for Clemson as a graphic designer. She is actively interested in politics and public affairs and also runs, knits, and teaches religious education. Christine and her husband Keith are the parents of a daughter, Bella, who is a senior at Daniel. She recently knit a slew of pink hats with ears for herself and others when they went to the Women's march in Washington, DC.

## ACA Benefits Medicare

### The Affordable Care Act Benefits Medicare

Medicare’s financial status has improved since the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was passed in 2010. The “insolvency” date of Medicare has been extended by 12 years and \$6.4 Billion per year is being added to the Medicare trust.

The annual growth rate of Medicare spending for individuals was 7.1% between 2000 and 2010. In the five years after 2010, the annual growth rate has been 1.4%.

Repealing the ACA would increase Medicare spending by more than \$800 Billion over 10 years.

Provisions of the ACA that benefit Medicare are taxes on individual income over \$200,000 and requirements for improved quality and efficiency of health care. The ACA also closes the “donut hole” in which prescription drugs are not covered. About 45% of the “donut hole” has now been closed, but would be reopened if the ACA is repealed.

Our Medicare page contains recent information, including two very important articles by the AARP and analysis of the impact of the ACA on the financial future of Medicare by the Kaiser Family Foundation. See:

[http://clemsonarea-members.sc.lwvnet.org/Advocate\\_Medicare.html](http://clemsonarea-members.sc.lwvnet.org/Advocate_Medicare.html)

*Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

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And there is much more! Many thanks to “our” Lynn Teague for her superpowers in Columbia. All of her hard work is for naught, however, if WE don’t follow through by opening emails from Columbia and acting on them! CALL your legislators today. Lynn says that “pop-up” email campaigns mostly function to capture names of those interested in that issue and that large public demonstrations may raise public awareness on issues, but don’t much affect the workings of the statehouse.

We were treated to lunch (including brownies!)

Amelia Thompson, an attorney for South Carolina Environmental Law Project gave us information on her organization which focus on environmental issues (primarily at the coast, but they also have a new upstate office). It is a watchdog organization working to enforce the laws that are in place, and to monitor legislation. Of major concern is the plastic bag ban ban, which would prevent coastal communities from banning plastic bags. She reports that offshore drilling has been held off and raised concern about the dam safety bill and the solar tax incentive.

We concluded the day engaged in a workshop sharing our experience and ideas on “Making Democracy Work” which was the theme of the day. I came away encouraged and inspired to do more and especially more PHONING!

*submitted by Elizabeth Adams*

### SAD NEWS

John A .Martin passed away January 25. John and Pat joined our League in 2015 and were our first members from Easley. John was very active in Easley First United Methodist Church, where sang in the choir for over 25 years. He was also active in other civic activities, including Meals on Wheels.

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

Anderson County Council 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, 6:00 pm  
Pickens County School Board 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, 7:00 pm  
Oconee County School Board 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 6:00 pm  
Anderson Co. School Board 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://www.lwvclemsonarea.org) and contact us at [lwvclemson@gmail.com](mailto:lwvclemson@gmail.com).

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