



# The VOTER

MARCH 2020

League of Women Voters-Corpus Christi



## Outstanding Events Bring Local Organizations, Public Together

The March 5 opening of a 22-panel historical exhibit on woman’s suffrage at the Nueces County Courthouse and the March 7 procession and rallies from the Courthouse to Artesian Park were signature events in celebrating this year’s 100th anniversary of “Women Winning the Vote.”

LWV-CC offers resounding thanks to the YWCA Corpus Christi, the American Association of University Women, and the Corpus Christi Alumnae of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc., plus applause to League and community

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Pictured, top and counter-clockwise: Teacher Laurie Turner from Gregory-Portland ISD is joined by Y-Teens and GPISD students in leading the March 7 procession; event partners pose with Judges Barbara Canales and Sandra Watts; the marchers gather at the Courthouse to hear special remarks; Judge Canales welcomes the media and public to the historical exhibit; Shirley Selz of AAUW introduces Judge Watts; Judge Watts holds her old (circa 1973) license plate urging passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.



**SPECIAL NOTE:** Nueces County Judge Barbara Canales has had to postpone her March 19 presentation to the League because of a community event that requires her attendance. LWV-CC will reschedule Judge Canales in a few months.

### “What Does It Mean To Agitate, Advocate, and Educate?”

Come join us on Thursday, March 19, from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. for a fast-paced 60-minute session that acquaints League members with the League’s focus “to agitate, advocate, and educate” on public policy issues. In addition, Tina Butler, a member of the Del Mar College staff and the CC Chapter of the Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education (TABPHE) will share information about her organization and the annual Juneteenth Celebration. Immediate past president Chris Davis Garcia will preside. No need to order lunch! Complimentary fruit and cheese trays, chips and dips, water, and desserts will be available.

**Monthly Luncheon Meeting-- March 19**

## LWV MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan, political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose candidates or political parties.

# President's Message

By Anne Stewart, LWV-CC President

**BRAVO!** LWV members and friends for your great celebration of 100 years of having the right to vote, of the history of women generally and women making positive history today. This month we've already seen at the Courthouse an excellent photo history of women working to get the right to vote, a march from the Courthouse to Artesian Park with addresses by two prominent women judges, and the YWCA's honoring of eight career women in our community who have made and are continuing to make a difference in all of our lives.

Three other events LWV-CC members will support in the next few weeks include a luncheon sponsored by the Coastal Bend Women Lawyers Association which will honor four of their members and four scholarship recipients; a luncheon sponsored by the YWCA focusing on equality of pay for women and their work; and continued voter registration drives throughout the community.

Again, **KUDOS!** to our community's organizations for empowering women and celebrating their accomplishments. We are with you!



**LOCAL NAVY ACTION--** Anne Stewart and Debbie Stevens joined other League members and City officials in attending the local US Navy well-water investigation session on February 26 in Flour Bluff. The Navy's goal was to arrange to sample water wells around local military bases to determine if so-called "forever chemicals" used on the bases decades ago have seeped into the water. A team of scientists from across the country also were in attendance.

## Katherine Goble Johnson, NASA Mathematician

Katherine G. Johnson, acclaimed NASA mathematician whose career at NASA from 1953-1986 was captured in the 2016 film "Hidden Figures," died February 24, 2020, in Newport News, VA, at the age 101. A high school graduate at age 14, Johnson graduated summa cum laude in 1937 from West Virginia State, with degrees in mathematics and French. Her calculations of orbital mechanics and trajectories were crucial to Project Mercury spaceflights and lauded by astronauts Alan Shepard and John Glenn. She received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015 from President Barack Obama.



**League of  
Women Voters--  
Corpus Christi**

**PO Box 8276, Corpus Christi, TX  
78468-8276**

**<http://www.lwv-cc.org>**

**Telephone Recorder 445-4436  
lwvcorpuschristi@gmail.com**

## **LWV-CC Board, 2019-2020**

### **President**

Anne Stewart, 361-850-0663; emlean@gmail.com

### **Secretary**

Rebecca Huerta, 361-826-3105 (wk);  
361-442-8745 (cell)

### **Treasurer**

Annell Neale, 512-771-3026; annell@ebns.us

### **Vice President, Member Services**

Sandra Heatherley, 361-876-4321;  
sheatherle@cs.com

(Chair, 100th Anniversary Planning Committee)

### **Co-Vice Presidents, Program**

Peggy Banales, 361-726-9404

Maria Jimenez, 361-888-7560

### **Vice President, Voter Services**

Paula Brighton, 970-820-0661; paulabr@mac.com

### **Director, Website/Social Media**

Debbie Noble, 410-271-1167;  
debleenoble@gmail.com

### **Director, Media/Communications**

Melody Cooper, 361-994-4952

### **At-Large Director--Lois Huff, 361-774-1500;**

Ich764@gmail.com (also Chair, 2020 Women's  
Equality Day Committee)

### **Appointed Director/Archivist**

Sylvia Whitworth, 361-853-9990

### **Immediate Past President (Non-voting)**

Chris Davis Garcia, 361-244-4193;  
garciachr1714@gmail.com

### **OFF-BOARD CHAIRS**

#### **Voter Registration Committee**

Raul Ramirez, 361-774-0937;  
raul.ramirez.05.rr@gmail.com

Ruth Falck, 548-2615

#### **Study Committee, "Potential for Lead**

**Contamination in Our Communities' Drinking  
Water"** Sally Farris, s.farris@att.net

#### **100th Celebration Committee (Historical Display):**

Sue Williams, 361-779-8593;  
aswilliams17@gmail.com

#### **VOTE411 Voters Guide: Kathryn Oler, 806-773-1535;**

Kathryn.oler@gmail.com

#### **Nominating Committee**

Peggy Duran, Chair, 361-696-9366

**Non-Board Members:** Brenda Hamby, Sylvia  
Campos. **Board Members:** Lois Huff, Maria  
Jimenez

#### **The VOTER Editor**

Chris Garcia, garciachris1714@gmail.com

# Photographs Capture Excitement of Centennial Celebration

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volunteers for their dedication in planning and executing the events. Many participants wore the "Votes for Women" sashes furnished for purchase by the League, and others dressed in period costumes representing the suffragists.

Special thanks to Corpus Christi Library staff for creating the historical panels and working with the volunteer researchers who worked for the past several months. Also thanks to the RTA for furnishing shuttle service from the Courthouse to Artesian Park.



## Come to the March 31 “Equal Pay Day” Luncheon Program

YWCA Corpus Christi, HWNT Corpus Christi, LWV Corpus Christi, EWI, and AAUW Corpus Christi will present the “2020 Equal Pay Day for Women” luncheon on Tuesday, March 31, at 11:45 a.m. at First United Methodist Church, at 900 S. Shoreline.

Registration and meal ticket information available at the YWCA website, [www.ywcacc.org](http://www.ywcacc.org). The cost is \$8 for women and \$10 for men. Janet Blanke is the keynote speaker.

Two proclamations (with group photos) are scheduled, and members (and friends) of all the sponsoring organizations are cordially invited to participate: Wednesday, March 18, 8:45 a.m. at the Nueces County Commissioners’ Court AND Tuesday, March 24, at 11 a.m. at Corpus Christi City Council Chambers, 1201 Leopard. Wear RED, and join us for the proclamations.

## LWVTexas Invites League Members to Convention

Every two years in even-numbered years in the spring, League members from throughout Texas have the opportunity to attend the League of Women Voters of Texas state convention. The agenda includes workshops, networking with other League leaders and members, keynote speakers, League plenaries, and the annual Making Democracy Work benefit dinner.

The 2020 convention will be held Friday noon through Sunday noon, April 17-19, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin (just north of 290 and IH 35.)

Go online to the LWVTX website at [www.lwvtx.org](http://www.lwvtx.org) and register.

Being honored at the April 18 dinner will be Raise Your Hand Texas and Stephanie Swanson, League of Women Voters of Texas Redistricting and Census chair.

If you are interested in attending the convention and serving as an LWV-CC delegate, please let President Anne Stewart know.

### April 18, 7-9 p.m. --“Making Democracy Work” Benefit Dinner “Political Organizers and Public Intellectuals—Texas Women’s Voices in the Twentieth Century”

Dr. Jessica Brannon-Wranosky, Ph.D. will lead a discussion on the forms of women’s activism, organizing, intellectual public space and lobbying in Texas history. She is a well-recognized suffrage historian in Texas and in the U.S. and serves as the Distinguished Professor of Digital Humanities and History in the Department of History at Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Panelists will include:

- Dr. Merline Pitre, Professor of History League of Women Voters of Texas and former Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Behavioral Science at Texas Southern University. She is the author and editor of numerous books about African American history in Texas and beyond, including *Black Women in Texas History, In Struggle against Jim Crow: Lulu B. White and the NAACP, 1900-1957*, and most recently *Born to Serve: A History of Texas Southern University*.
- Dr. Cynthia Orozco, Professor of History and Humanities at Eastern New Mexico University, Ruidoso. She is generally considered one of the earliest historians to work on Mexican American women’s history, and as such, considered a founder of the field. She is the author of numerous books about Mexican American and Mexican American Women’s history in Texas and beyond.
- Cecilia Gutierrez Venable, archivist and curator for the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate AND the Historian for the Texas NAACP. She is the author and editor of numerous books, including *Historic Photos of Corpus Christi, African Americans in El Paso (Images of America Series), Texas Women and Ranching: On the Range, at the Rodeo, and in Their Communities*. She often advises and works with groups on how to collect, preserve and maintain their history, and she will be speaking about that and about women reform activities in Texas history.

**SILENT AUCTION** ---Local Leagues are also invited and encouraged to support the LWVTX Silent Auction at the state convention. Silent Auction proceeds benefit the state’s Voter Services projects and other activities. Visit the state website to see how individuals and Leagues can help support the Silent Auction...even if you are unable to attend.



**The upcoming CENSUS really matters. How can you help? Talk to your friends, family members (both near and far), neighbors, employees, and other social, business, or organizational contacts and colleagues about how important the Census is. An accurate number really matters.**

# Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade



A small but enthusiastic group of League members and friends walked ahead of Raul Ramirez' truck decorated with a flag and other patriotic items. The League was one of about 100 units participating in the one-mile parade on North Padre Island. The League's banner captured the "100 Years of Women Winning the Vote" slogan. Thanks to Raul, Sue Williams, Sandra Heatherley, Paula Brighton, Gregory-Portland High School teacher Dr. Laurie Turner and her daughter, and flag-bearer and League friend, Anmar Albadri. Special thanks to Debbie Noble for her support.



# Voter Registration Is On-Going



LWV-CC voter registration continues at a hectic pace, reports Voter Registration Chair Raul Ramirez. Recent events included the Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade, Miller High School classes, the Women Wear White rally at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Galvan Elementary school PTA, and First Friday ArtWalk downtown. Thanks to our great group of deputized voter registrars.

Additional opportunities for voter registration will be shared by Raul as requests are received.

(At left) New League member Sandy Sterba-Boatwright helped man the TAMU-CC voter registration table on March 3, assisted by Annell Neale, Raul Ramirez, and Paula Brighton. (Below left) Sandra Heatherley, Annell Neale, Lisa Cuevas, Peggy Duran, and John Neale were available at the Barefoot Mardi Gras Parade and festival on Feb. 22. (Below right) The ArtWalk table at Artesian Park was manned by Nelda Garcia. Thanks to all these DVRs!



# February 20 Meeting Highlights



Community leader Libby Averyt spoke to League members and guests at the February 20 about her personal and career journey, sharing insights and reflections on the challenges she faced in her early years as a young newspaper reporter and then as an editor, president, and publisher. She shared “lessons I’m still learning” and books she recommended. Long-time colleague Nick Jimenez introduced Libby, who currently serves as President of the United Way and Chair-Elect of the United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce. She also serves as a Del Mar College Regent.

## IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER...

### MARCH

Wednesday, March 18: 8:45 a.m. at the Nueces County Commissioners’ Court (3rd floor meeting room, Nueces County Courthouse, 901 Leopard) for the proclamation in honor of the YWCA ‘s“2020 Equal Pay Day for Women” event; wear RED! (See story, Page 4.)

Thursday, March 19: 11:30 am-1 pm, LWV-CC Membership Luncheon, Del Mar College Center for Economic Development. (See story, Page 1)

Tuesday, March 24: 11 a.m., at City Council Chambers, 1201 Leopard, for the proclamation by the Corpus Christi City Council for the YWCA “2020 Equal Pay Day for Women” event; wear RED!

Tuesday, March 31: 11:30 am, “2020 Equal Pay Luncheon for Women,” hosted by the YWCA and partnering organizations-- LWV-Corpus Christi, Executive Women International, American Association of University Women, and Hispanic Women’s Network of Texas.

Thursday, April 16: 5:30-8 p.m., Lead Education Forum, sponsored by LWV-Corpus Christi (See story below)

## MARK THESE DATES!

### LOCAL ELECTIONS

**April 2** - Last day to register to vote for May 2 local elections (information available from the Nueces County website)

**April 20-28** - Early voting for local elections

**May 2** - Local Elections (information available on Nueces County webstie.

### PRIMARY RUN-OFF ELECTIONS

**April 27** - Last day to register to vote for Primary Run-off Elections

**May 18-22** - Early Voting for Run-off Elections

**May 26** - Primary Run-off Elections

### GENERAL ELECTION

**October 3** - Last day to register to vote for the November General Election

**November 3, 2020** -- Election Day

## Planning Continues for April 16 Lead Education Forum

Planning continues for the Lead Education Forum, sponsored by LWV-CC and scheduled on Thursday, April 16, from 5:30-8 p.m. at the Del Mar College Center for Economic Development. The event is free, and refreshments will be available, said Study Chair Sally Farris. The forum is a follow-up to the League study titled “Potential for Lead Contamination in Our Communities’ Drinking Water.”

Dr. Mary Jane Garza, past president of the League, will act as moderator at the Forum and Dr. Jim Klein from Del Mar College will join presenters from the League in making a wind-up presentation.

Invitations have been extended to local school districts, City of Corpus Christi officials, Public Health District staff, and the US Navy to participate as presenters and provide insight into opportunities for tracking, prevention, and education.

Updates in epidemiology will be discussed at the Forum, as well as simple and cost-effective steps to help guard against lead consumption from residential home taps. Please save the date of April 16 and plan to attend the forum. Be watching for additional information.

## U.S. Census Day Approaching; Residents Urged To Participate

By Linda Snider, Nueces Together

The U.S. Census Bureau will be making an even bigger effort in 2020 to get an accurate count of the population in every town and city than they did in 2010.

An organization named **Nueces Together** has formed to focus on the Nueces County population. By now, you have probably seen national ads on television and may have gotten something about the Census in the mail. The Census will be taken between March 12-July 31.

There are only 10 questions and the survey can be done by phone or online. Local public libraries will make their computers available if residents don't have access to a computer.

**There are three important reasons why an accurate count is critical to Nueces County:**

(1) **Allocation of Federal Dollars**--Every person counted in the Census represents \$1500-\$1900 in federal funding every year for the next 10 years.

(2) **Economic Development for Nueces County**-- Businesses determine if they will open or invest in our area based on its size and demographics.

(3) **Representation in Government**--The number of elected members that represent Nueces County in state and federal government depends on the population count.

For more information about the Census, go to [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov).

The local Census office in Corpus Christi is called Nueces Together, located at 1231 Agnes Street Unit A-9 ; phone 361-317-1456.

Temporary workers are still being hired to visit people's homes that did not respond) Workers will receive training and can pick their work days and hours; if interested apply online.

## League Presence Important to Community Engagement

Hats off to the League for promoting the historical exhibit and the March 7 processional through news media interviews. At right, Sandra Heatherley and Kathryn Oler shared information with "Domingo Live" host Rudy Trevino. (Thanks to Sue Williams for serving as photographer!)

Below, Sue takes the spotlight with a local news cameraman to promote the month-long exhibit at the County Courthouse.



Above, Lois Huff, Sandra Heatherley, and Peggy Banales dressed in white for the "Wear White Rally" at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. All three, plus several other League members, marched with the students, and Peggy brought greetings from the League at the rally held at the Hector P. Garcia Plaza.

## Save August 22 Date for Celebration!

A community-wide celebration you won't want to miss is being planned for August 2020! It's part of the yearlong celebration in 2020 marking the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment. (August 26 is the national date commemorating the Amendment's passage.)

Fun, food, speakers, and a silent auction are planned, with details being coordinated by committee members Sylvia Whitworth, Sandra Heatherley, Annell Neale, Anne Stewart, and Lois Huff, plus representatives from AAUW, YWCA, and the Corpus Christi Alumnae of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.

A Silent Auction is expected to be part of the fundraising. If you have an item to donate to the silent auction or wish to help plan the celebration, please contact Lois Huff, 361-774-1500. Lots of volunteers will be needed!



Be sure to **LIKE** and **SHARE** the posts on the League's Facebook Page.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



### WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS:

Sandra Sterba-Boatwright, Individual  
Patti Anderson, Individual  
Keren Costanzo, Individual  
Lisa Orsborn Hernandez, Individual  
Taylor Anne Jung, Student  
Kris Tovar, Individual  
Janna Shoe, Friend of the League  
Jeanne Leonard, Individual

### THANKS TO THESE RENEWING MEMBERS:

Libby Averyt & Charles Kaffie, Household  
Judge Greg Perkes, Individual

## *Your Membership Renewal Matters! Be Watching for Annual Meeting Announcement*

LWV-Corpus Christi was established in 1946 and is approaching its 75th anniversary. Your continued support of LWV-CC, through your annual membership dues, ensures that the League continues addressing its mission.

Did you know that your local League membership makes you also a member of the League of Women Voters-Texas (LWVTX) and the the League of Women Voters-US (LWVUS)? Both “agitate, advocate, and educate” when it comes to state and national policies, including voter suppression.

The League’s membership year is June 1 through May 31. Membership categories are \$100 Sustaining; \$90 Household (two persons in same household); \$60 Individual; \$5 Student; and \$30 Friend of the League (non-voting). Please access a membership/renewal form found on the League’s website.

Plan to renew your membership during the month of May and participate in the 75th Annual Meeting (details to be announced soon.)

The Corpus Christi League currently has 108 members plus three Friends of the League.

## LWV-CC Holds Candidates Forum

By Paula Breighton, VP/Voter Services

Fifteen candidates running in opposed primary election races were hosted at a Candidates Forum on February 13, 2020, in Council Chambers at Corpus Christi City Hall.

LWV-CC President Anne Stewart made opening and closing remarks; Paula Breighton, Chris Davis Garcia, and Kathryn Oler served as moderators; Sandra Heatherley, Linda Snider, and Sue Williams kept time for candidates’ responses; and Peggy Duran, John Neale, and Steve Schulz distributed and collected audience question cards.

Special thanks also to Pat Parr and Judy Telge who vetted audience questions and Peggy Banales and Annell Neale who chaired the candidate sign-in table. Sandy Hill and Sylvia Trevino greeted forum participants and distributed LWV materials.

Linda Snider also staged the dais and positioned name placards, and Debbie Noble took photographs and posted the forum in a FaceBook live format.



(At left) Kathryn Oler, Judy Telge, and Paula Breighton helped vet questions and pose questions to the candidates; (above) local Constable candidates sit on the dais.

## State and Local Voters Guides Distributed

The League ordered 6,000 local Voters Guide and 3,000 state voter guides (English and Spanish) and volunteers distributed the guides to 25 locations within Nueces County.

Special thanks to the following LWV-CC volunteers who handled the distributions: Annell and John Neale, Chris Davis Garcia, Kathryn Oler, Sue Williams, Liz Riggle, Del Ruisecco, Paula Breighton, Sandy Hill, Peggy Duran, Ruth Falck, Linda Snider, Peggy Banales, Anne Stewart, and Raul Ramirez. Their time, effort, and vehicles are much appreciated by the League!

A special shout-out to the Port of Corpus Christi for purchasing 300 of the local guides to share with its employees.

LWV-CC purchases (state), publishes (local), and distributes voters guides prior to the start of early voting in Primary, Mid-Term, and General Elections.

Discussion has already begun on the League’s plans to hold a Candidates Forum and publish a local Voters Guide for the November General Election. Expect a call in the fall when more volunteers will be needed.

**Engaging Voters. Defending Democracy.**