



# THE VOTER

Spring 2020, Vol. 47 No. 3

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

## Co-President's Message

Welcome to the spring issue of the Voter for the Clemson Area League of Women Voters. March, April, and May are collapsed into this single issue, our final issue for the 2019-2020 year. Since the February issue, Covid-19 has caused major changes in our lifestyles, and tornadoes severely damaged parts of Oconee County. Nevertheless, work by the LWV has continued.



**Ruth Reed**

My first Zoom meeting ever was for the chapter chairpersons for the South Carolina leagues. I then braved holding one for our board that went very well.

I am now planning a Zoom meeting for our annual meeting on Tuesday, June 23, at 2:00 pm. You should receive a Zoom notification about a week or two before that date. We will vote on the budget, slate of officers, and bylaw changes. We will be about a month late, but still within the state fiscal year 2019-2020.

The email with the bylaws and slate of officers was sent on May 20 to allow for the 30-day notice required by the bylaws. If you did not receive this email, let me know, and I will recheck your address. This information is also repeated in this issue of the Voter.

We will have much to do this coming year, from advocating for education funding to clean energy, from voter registration to candidate town halls, and much more. It is going to be an eventful year, I'm sure, and I hope we are all prepared to do what we can to make democracy work.

*Ruth Reed, Co-Chair*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Co-President's Message
- Calendar of Events
- Report from your Vote411 Team
- LVWCA and the 2020 Census
- Announcement for the 2020 Annual Meeting
- Social Justice and Organizational Work
- New Member Bio
- Poll Workers Needed
- Actions of the League

### 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)

### OFFICERS:

Sandra Gray, Co-President  
Ruth Reed, Co-President  
Matt Salzman, Vice President of Program & Action  
Rosellen Alegruie, Secretary  
Bill Hare, Treasurer  
Elaine Laiewski, Co-Treasurer

### ELECTED DIRECTORS:

Janet Marsh  
Mike Ellison  
John Dyar  
Shelia Crawford  
Kathy Barger  
Sandy Rosche

### SPECIALISTS:

Cheryl Lee, Voter registration  
Eleanor Hare, Vote411  
Liz Vogt, VOTER Editor

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Ann Russell  
Liz Vogt  
Ellie Taylor

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**June 23, 2020 Annual Meeting to be held online at 2:00 pm, 23 June of 2020, by Zoom. The proposed budget will be sent out in a separate email.**

### LWV SC Education Working Group

During 2020 the LWV SC Education Working Group has been reviewing existing policy positions on education while identifying and addressing concerns of LWV members. We will be reviewing the education bill the legislature will be considering later this year and developing a set of questions for local school board candidates for the Fall. Any Member who has input or concerns regarding education in South Carolina is asked to contact **Sandra Land** at SANDYL@PANET, our representative on the Working Group.

### Report from Your Vote411 Team

By the end of May we had 59% candidate participation participating in Vote411, the best since our local League began using it in November 2018. We sent email invitations to 36 candidates and postal letters to three candidates who did not list an email address. We followed with 30 reminder postcards, letters transmitted through delegation or county personnel and calls from our members. We think that every candidate was contacted at least once.

Our challenge is to communicate candidate information to voters. We have sent letters to the editor to the Sentinel-Progress (Easley), the *Seneca Journal* and the *Anderson Independent*. We have constructed a separate flyer for each county, giving the races in each county, which have been sent to members and a to a few groups with email distribution lists.

Success of our efforts now depends on our ability to share [www.Vote411.org](http://www.Vote411.org) with voters in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties. We ask all our members to help by sharing our flyers with people on their email lists.

*Submitted by your Vote411 team: Kathy Barger, Kathy Clark, Alice Flower, Eleanor Hare, Janie Shipley*

## LWVCA Efforts to Increase 2020 Census Response

The level of federal funding flowing to our communities over the next decade will be largely determined by the Census 2020 count – the number of households responding to the Census survey. Additionally, states will use these data in their redistricting process. Given Covid-19, the Census Bureau has extended the response period until the end of October. Go to [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov). We need more of our households to respond! As of May 25, 2020, the US response rate was 60.1%; South Carolina stood at 54.9%. A breakdown of Oconee and Pickens Counties, and by towns follows.

<u>Pickens County</u>	<u>56.6%</u>	<u>Oconee County</u>	<u>53.1%</u>
Central	43.0	Fall Creek/Cliffs/Keowee Key	62.8
Clemson	48.9	Salem	40.5
Easley	62.2	Seneca	57.1
Liberty	62.8	Walhalla	52.2
Norris	47.7	West Union	39.0
Pickens	55.6	Westminster	53.5
Six Mile	57.3		

League members have been working to improve the response rate of the 18,000 Clemson students living off-campus, with guidance from Census Bureau staff. Our work was interrupted by the virus causing us to stay home and most students to move home. Despite their move home, the Census Bureau considers them residents of their university community. Initially local League members tried to reach off-campus students through posters, social media messages and apartment complex managers. Later, we changed our strategy to helping to increase the overall response rate in Pickens County, the area in which Census officials asked us to work. Our major effort is designing and delivering Census stickers to 11 Clemson pizza shops, requesting that they affix them to pizza boxes. We are also reaching out through Next Door and LWVCA Facebook. Check out our Facebook video, designed by Heidi Williams' twelve-year-old daughter!!

If you would like to contribute to our purchase of more stickers, please let **Janet Marsh** know. We just learned that one pizza shop has only 30 of its 400 stickers remaining and has asked for more. Janet can be contacted at [jmarsh@clemson.edu](mailto:jmarsh@clemson.edu). The following statement comes from the 2020Census staff; please pass it on to anyone you think might be able to help spread the word:

*We are still accepting applications for temporary part-time positions with the 2020 Census. These positions offer competitive wages, flexible hours, paid training and weekly paychecks. It is the perfect opportunity to earn some extra income while helping your community. You can apply today at <https://go.usa.gov/xdKXD>. The health and safety of Census Bureau staff and the public is always a top priority. All employees will be trained to observe all social distancing protocols and will wear official government-provided personal protective equipment for their safety and the safety of the public. The Pickens County pay rate for a census taker is \$17.50 per hour, plus work-related mileage and expenses, where applicable. Temporary positions include census takers, recruiting assistants, office staff, and supervisory staff. If you're interested in being a census taker or another 2020 Census job, please apply by clicking the link provided above.*

## Announcement for the 2020 Annual Meeting

Meeting to be held online at 2:00 pm, 23 June of 2020, by Zoom. **The proposed budget will be sent out in a separate email.**

Our bylaws require 30-day notice of bylaw changes and slate of candidates for office. We will vote on these at our annual meeting. The proposed slate of nominees for 2020-2021 is given below as submitted by the nominating committee, Ann Russell, chair. Please "reply all" if you nominate someone (with that person's approval). Thank you so much to the nominating committee and those of you who have accepted nominations.

Nominees for office:

Co-Chair: **Michael Wood** (to replace **Sandra Gray**; **Ruth Reed** is Co-chair for 1 more year)

Vice Co-Chair: **Jill Gemmill** (to replace **Matt Saltzman**)  
**Holley Ulbrich** (as co-chair, appointed for one-year term)

Secretary: **Rosellen Alequire** (continuing)

Board members:

**Buzzy (Elizabeth) Adams**  
**John Dyar**  
**Janet Marsh**  
**Sarah McNeill**  
**Catherine Mobley** for 1-year replacement position

Continuing members:

**Kathy Bargeron, Janet Marsh, and Sandy Rosche)**

Nominating committee:

**Ellie Taylor**  
**Ansley Fraser**  
**Linda Gahan**

Two motions for changes in the bylaws. Please submit any changes in writing.

Bylaw changes (two proposed):

1. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, we need to consider including transacting business by electronic means (i.e., online). The following statement shall be added to Article VI. Meetings:

*Section 4. Official action and meetings may take place by electronic means (online meeting apps such as Zoom). Voting will be done by electronic polling methods integrated into the online meeting. The Board may elect to conduct votes by an electronic equivalent of "show of hands" where it is preferable to record the vote of individual members. Reasonable care must be taken to ensure security and the ability of members to participate. Meetings may be a combination of online and on-site means.*

*Continued on next page*

## Announcement for the 2020 Annual Meeting Continued

2. Once the appropriate legal steps have been completed by the state board and accepted by the IRS, the following section of the current bylaws shall be replaced with the italicized language below:

Article II. Purposes and Policy, Section 2. Policy

The LWVCA shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. LWVCA shall be a 501(c)(4) nonprofit entity. This designation allows LWVCA to lobby and donations are not tax deductible. The League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity. Donations to the LWVEF are tax deductible.

*The LWVCA is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States and of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, the LWVCA shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried out by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under such provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be attempting to influence legislation.*

Comments:

We discussed proposing this motion last year and decided to wait. There were concerns about the final sentence; after all, our mission is to "influence legislation." At the state annual meeting last year, the lawyer (husband of a League officer, I understand), warned against changing established legal language. In the legal sense, "no substantial part of the activities" means "activities amounting to 20% or less of the budget." Since the League's activities to influence legislation are volunteer, the League meets the requirement. For example, our state lobbyist, Lynn Teague, volunteers her work; she is not paid for it. Passing this first bylaw change will bring us in line with the rest of the state and will simplify bookkeeping and donations. Currently, donations to the Education Fund are tax-deductible; donations to the League itself are not. Passing this second change now puts us under the state umbrella, and we will not have to pay for legal counsel. If we decide to change later, we will need to engage and pay for our own legal counsel.

### Busy Summer for Readers

Our Summer Book Group met by Zoom on Tuesday, June 2, to discuss "The Moment of Lift," by **Melinda Gates**. On Tuesday, July 7, we will discuss "One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy," by **Carol Anderson**.

All discussions will begin at 5 p.m. If you have not read the book, join the discussion to decide if you want to read it. A third discussion is scheduled for Tuesday, August 4.

## Social Justice and Organizational Work Come Together

The recent collision of a pandemic and strong public reaction to horrific, apparently racially motivated, police brutality can be a time for profound change in what, when, and how we all work toward a ‘more perfect union.’

Reading a letter to members of the Conservation Voters in South Carolina (CVSC), I was reminded again that inherent and subtle racism can impact all organizations, including those focusing on environmental work. As our current CVSC Executive Director **John Tynan** points out, too often environmental organizations are dominated by white, affluent individuals. And we often separate our work into ‘the environment’ and ‘environmental social justice’ when they are actually always part of every issue.

Mr. Tynan also reviews that the CVSC new strategic plan states that “we believe that ALL people in South Carolina deserve clean air, clean water, access to unspoiled landscapes, and the benefits of clean energy. Yet, lower-income individuals and people of color are disproportionately affected by impacts from pollution and environmental degradation. If the voices of those most affected are drowned out or not included in the fight for pollution free communities, we cannot continue to say that we are fighting for the South Carolina we ALL love.” To that end Mr. Tynan is asking that CVSC “become a more racially diverse and just and equitable organization fully committed to changing external programmatic efforts and partnerships to ensure that environmental work is environmental justice work, without distinction.”

This is true for the many environmental organizations in South Carolina, and perhaps all organizations that I support. I see this as a time for reflection, awakening and learning. Are we willing to ask the right questions? Are we willing to find new ways to connect with those who are most affected by state and local actions? Are we willing to give power and voice to those who have had neither in the past? I am looking forward to being part of a revolution in how Americans see their work and purpose.

*Submitted by Ellie Taylor, Chair, Environmental Working Group*

**Lillian Boatwright** has been appointed to the Pickens County Board of Elections and chosen by her peers to serve as Board Secretary. In the first three weeks of activity, the new Board hired **Travis Alexander** to take on the role of Executive Director of the county Voter Registration and Elections Office.

As they anticipate the coming elections and primaries, the Board and Office are busy educating voters on absentee options, processing applications, and preparing for ballot receipt.

You can read more about Travis here: <https://pickenselections.org/about-us/department-staff/>

More info on the newly appointed Board members here: <https://pickenselections.org/about-us/>

## New Member Bio



**Michael Wood** was born and raised in San Francisco in a Spanish speaking home by a single mother working in a union position. This influenced Michael’s circuitous and long journey to a career as a child psychiatrist.

Michael followed a friend to Boston after high school and while working day jobs, attended evening classes at Harvard University through their extension program. His interest in Natural Sciences led him from classes in astronomy to advanced mathematics to pre-med.

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, he chose to devote himself to helping children and youth. He worked in that position at the Greenville Mental Health Center until retirement.

In retirement, he and wife, **Sheila**, enjoy travel and time to pursue various interests. He enjoys the Anderson History Book Club and developing his creativity through art.

Michael’s interest in the League was spurred by a presentation by a League member at an Anderson Democratic Party meeting about gerrymandering. He says “I like democracy; it’s important to participate in the process.”

### Poll Workers Needed

We have received an email from **Scott Dutkiewicz** with the following plea:

*As you know, Pickens County has taken a real setback with the resignation of the entire elections office. Those working in the office are from the county library. I have an affinity, since I am a librarian at Clemson University....*

*If you could refer me to anyone who would be willing to work the June 9 primary and the June 23 run-off (if needed), and November elections, please let me know.*

Pickens County is not the only one; the issue of helping to recruit poll workers was also brought up at the meeting of South Carolina League chairs. One chair at least was hesitant to put out a plea to members to apply for poll positions because her league had worked hard for the legislation to move to voting by mail because of the possibility of spread of Covid-19 by on-site polls. The irony of asking people to be poll workers after arguing that on-site poll centers were unsafe was not lost on us. This issue is clearly one that we will need to think about. Please contact the Pickens, Oconee and Anderson County Election Commissions if you’re interested in working polls in the upcoming elections.

## Important Issues Facing Americans Actions of the League of Women Voters

Making Democracy Work is the mission of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area (LWVCA). League members met at OLLI in Clemson February 29 to consider changes to its national and local priorities and policy positions for 2020-2022 that would further the organization's mission. These proposed changes will be voted on this spring at the National Convention of the League of Women Voters US (LWVUS) and the Annual Meeting of our Clemson Area League.

The first policy position recommended for adoption at the LWVUS convention is to "Support electoral systems at each level of government that encourage participation, are verifiable and auditable and enhance representation for all voters." This proposal supports electoral methods that encourage those with minority opinions to participate, including under-represented communities and that require the winner to receive most votes for executive and single-seat offices.

Local League members also endorsed an addition to the Arms Control section of International Relations relating to cyberwar which will be considered at the National Convention. After the current phrase "the US government shall give the highest level of importance to arms control efforts that ..." the following be added:

*.....provide international agreement on limits to the use of cyber weapons to attack critical infrastructure (including electrical grids, water supplies and other essential services).*

Along with this addition, Clemson Area members agreed that the LWVUS Convention be asked to approve a study of cyber weapons and cyberwar, including artificial intelligence, to better educate League members and the public on this poorly understood reality and threat.

Other priorities approved for consideration at the National Convention include greater LWVUS action on environmental issues and universal health care.

All policy positions approved at the National Convention are automatically accepted as positions of state and local Leagues. State and local Leagues decide the extent to which they work on issues, with guidance from the National League.

Clemson Area members also recommended a policy relating to the size of the Pickens County Council for acceptance at its May Annual Meeting. It states that Council membership be increased to seven members, elected from the same single-member districts as School Board members. Having fewer ballot types results in an election that is easier to administer. Simplification of the election process should save election costs.

*The League of Women Voters promotes political responsibility through informed and active participation in government. It does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. Its strength is in its diversity, welcoming all people regardless of gender, race or creed.*

*Submitted by Janet Marsh, Janie Shipley, Eleanor Hare, and Ruth Reed*



<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).

**League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area**

*Serving the Citizens of Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson Counties*

P. O. Box 802

Clemson, SC 29633