

LWV[®] VOTER

League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg

May 2020

REACHING LWVCM

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2020 Annual Meeting Edition

The Annual Meeting will go on June 4 —On your computer, your telephone, your tablet Take your pick!

Since we're living in a virtual world these days, LWVCM will meet virtually to handle its annual responsibilities of electing officers, approving a program and adopting a budget.

Save the date **June 4** and watch your email for the invite details about joining the meeting at 6:30 pm. Don't miss this opportunity to hear our President recap the state of the League and director and action team reports, as well as voting on new officers and proposals that will determine the direction of LWVCM for next year.

This most important meeting for all League members will use Zoom to meet and conduct business.

Annual meeting chair **Trisha Garcia** has planned League's first ever virtual annual meeting in lieu of its traditional festive occasion, knowing that most of the membership will want to continue social distancing due to the Covid19 pandemic.

Not sure how to use Zoom? You can watch a Zoom training video that explains the basics before the meeting using the following [link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>

Or you can simply call into the meeting, as you would a conference call, using the number that will be provided in the meeting invitation.

Look for a TEST meeting request in your email closer to the date as well as the ACTUAL meeting request. You are strongly encouraged to attend the test meeting to work through any learning curve before the annual meeting.

We look forward to seeing and hearing from all of you in June!



Trisha Garcia

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Find updates for League action and activities at
goleaguego.org

This Annual Meeting Edition of the Voter contains information you will be voting on June 4.

Also in this Voter, the numerous and significant activities of the LWVCM Action Teams working on your behalf.

Annual Meeting Rules (which must be adopted) and additional financial items are on the website [here](#).

Be sure your voice is heard June 4, 6:30 pm

President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

This year, 2020, which Leaguers so eagerly anticipated, is now in its second quarter.

The last major Charlotte Mecklenburg event had taken place in 2000, and we looked forward to 2020 as a year of great revelry, when a million League members and supporters across the nation would celebrate 100 years of the League's existence.



Delores Johnson Hurt

During eighteen months prior, a steering committee of former Charlotte presidents had planned a centennial gala for February 29, 2020. It was a fabulous social and financial success. Shortly after, however, came the U.S. COVID-19 assault on track now to kill more than 100,000 people. Our way of life tumbled.

As we shelter in place and practice social distancing, we face weighty decisions for ourselves and the nation: key local and national elections; voter suppression; an accurate census count; a new normal life.

The Charlotte League soldiers on, however, using as do others, the technology necessary to conduct business. While for now we cannot register voters in the community or at naturalization services, we remain in touch with Leagues around the country, and we attend or co-sponsor Zoom meetings and teleconferences to keep ourselves and our members informed.

What's next for us? Our Annual Meeting takes place via Zoom on June 4th. You will receive my "State of the League" remarks and team leaders' reports. You will vote for new officers and board members and give us directives for the new year. You will approve the 2020-21 budget.

The silver lining to this Zoom meeting is, of course, the opportunity to participate from the comfort of home. We hope to have many more than the 10% quorum necessary to proceed.

As we look forward to the end of this confinement and can feel comfortable socializing in person again, it may be possible to plan a festive dinner to start the new League year in September and reinvigorate our mission to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy.

Until then, stay safe.

Delores Johnson Hurt, President

Election Activity hasn't stopped

for the League of Women Voters at all levels—national, state and local—even during this Pandemic.

While no in person voter registration drives or naturalization ceremonies have been held recently, League has been actively working to protect voter rights here and throughout the nation.

See p. 5 for Voter Service Chair Regan Aduddell's report on alternate voter registration opportunities.

LWVNC has filed a motion to intervene and oppose the Judicial Watch lawsuit against Mecklenburg and Guilford Boards of Elections. The suit seeks to purge voters from the registration rolls. More information [here](#).

Leta Bosc is closely monitoring the naturalization registration opportunities and reports that USCIS has decided to remain closed to in-person services until at least June 4. Changes in USCIS procedures under consideration may result in changes regarding League involvement in future ceremonies. Leta will keep League members informed about this.

WELCOME To New Members

Laura Nkeupo

Beth Pickering

Proposed Slate of Officers for 2020-2021

Officers:

First Vice President 2020-2022 **Tom Murdock**
 Second vice president 2020-2021 **Pam Liebman**
 Secretary 2020-2021 **Suzanne Elsberry**, to fill an unexpired term
 Treasurer 2020-2022 **Kevan Woodson**

Directors: :

(1) 2020-2022 **June White**
 (2) 2020-2022 **John Lee**
 (3) 2020-2022 **Lucille Howard**
 (4) 2020-2021 **Carolyn Lyons** (to fill an unexpired term)

Nominating Committee: 2020-2021

Chair: **Donna Armbrister**
 Member: **Patti Kelly**
 Member: **Sylvia Ross**

Continuing for the last year of their terms are:

President: **Delores Johnson Hurt**, 2019-2021; Directors, **Cate Stadelman**, **Regan Aduddell** 2019-2021

Submitted by Nominating Committee **Tom Bowers**, **Rita Pendry**, **Sylvia Ross** and **Kevan Woodson**

Meet the Nominees



Tom Murdock

Nominated for a second term as first vice president, Tom Murdock is expected to continue his leadership of the League's popular Civics 101 program. Tom had served as a director on the board before he took his current position.

Pam Liebman

Returning to the board as second vice president will be Pam Liebman. She was elected secretary in 2018 but had to resign from that position. Prior to that, Pam had been a director and served League in various posts since joining the League when she moved to Charlotte in 2011. She is the designer of one of the League's brochures on governmental organization. She firmly believes the League can make a difference in civic participation.

Pam is a lifetime educator, teaching English, history and government in Arizona, Kansas and Texas for 42 years. She also was a National Education Association union leader all of her career.



Kevan Woodson

Kevan was first elected last year to serve as a director and has agreed to step into the role of treasurer for the next two years. He also serves as co-chair of the education action team.

Kevan's background includes a wide variety of business experience as well as being a former school board member in Illinois. He and his wife DonnaMarie are both graduates of Civics 101 and are very active in local politics.

See May 2019 Annual Meeting [Voter](#) for more complete background of Woodson, John Lee.

Nominees for League positions



Suzanne Elsberry

Well known for her portrayal of the anti-suffragist at the League's 100th Gala anniversary, Suzanne Elsberry brings her other skills to the board to fill the unexpired term for secretary. She had served the League previously as secretary, along with chairing the membership committee and a host of other positions, including coordinating Women's Equality Day events in 2014-15 editing and writing for the Suffragette newsletter the League published in 2014-15 and working on the 100th Anniversary Committee.

Suzanne was appointed to the Women's Advisory Board of the Mecklenburg County Commission for 2019-21. She is also a Democratic Precinct Chair, member of AAUW, NOW and Democratic Women of Mecklenburg County.

Manager of the Little Theatre of Charlotte 1975-78, Suzanne has performed throughout the region and especially enjoys portrayals of historic personages such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Queen Charlotte, Sojourner Truth and Gloria Steinem.

Carolyn Lyons

Carolyn joined the League in 2018 and has been active in various ways, including researching local history about the suffrage movement with the Voter Service Committee and parade participation. She has agreed to serve the one year unexpired term that was held by Kevan Woodson.

Born and raised in Fairfax, Virginia, Carolyn graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a BS in psychology, and went on to earn a PhD in clinical psychology from The University of Georgia. She has worked at the Medical College of Virginia, the University of Georgia Counseling Center, the Newington Connecticut Veteran's Administration Hospital, and the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. She has lived in Charlotte since 1998.

Married with one daughter in college, she currently volunteers with Charlotte Habitat for Humanity and the Charlotte Humane Society. She enjoys social activism, cooking & reading, crosswords, and long-distance hiking.



June White

A member of the League since 1990, June is nominated for her fourth term on the board, although she had been a board member many years ago too.

She was a speech pathologist and audiologist with various school systems and 15 years with Charlotte-Mecklenburg before retiring. Her interest has always been in educating the public on voting issues and promoting voting.



John Lee

John Lee is trading his responsibility on the board from treasurer to board member. First elected a year ago, John is fairly new to Charlotte and the League. Before moving here he operated an education consulting business and has held various national educational research policy positions. He serves on the League's Education Action Team and has worked on the group's Opportunity Scholarship study report and advocacy.

Lucille Howard

Lucille Howard has been a member of the League for 50 years, moving her membership here in 1974, and has served in numerous capacities since then, including co-president 2003-2007. She has been editor of the Voter since 2014. Nominated for a board position, she is constantly looking for a newsletter editor replacement.



Nominees for 2021 Nominating Committee

Donna Armbrister



Donna M. Armbrister is nominated to be chair of the 2021 Nominating Committee. She is a retired educator from Los Angeles who moved to Charlotte in 2016 and now substitute teaches for CMS. Since joining the League, Donna has been active on the Women's Issues Action Team.

Her passion is to uplift Charlotte's youth, and she serves as a recruitment coordinator and GGB (Girls Go Beyond) facilitator for the Girl Scout Hornet's Nest Council. In her roles, she leads non-traditional Girl Scout troops in underserved and disadvantaged communities throughout Charlotte. She is also a member of numerous women alliances and civic organizations in addition to caring for her two-year-old granddaughter.

Her retirement interests include cooking, reading, playing board games with friends and family and offering beauty tips to "seasoned women" as an independent Mary Kay Beauty Consultant.

Sylvia Ross

Sylvia Ross has been nominated for a second term on the nominating committee. She has been active on the League's Environment and Sustainability Action Team since it started. Sylvia's professional life was a combination of education and technology. Now retired, she and her husband Allan have volunteered with Odyssey of the Mind for almost 25 years. They are currently co-captains for the Spontaneous Problems at the regional level.



Patti Kelly-Jones

Patti Kelly has been nominated as a member of the nominating committee. She is from South Carolina and moved to Charlotte 20 years ago. She has a degree in biology. Now a stay at home mom to 2 boys, Patti worked in Environmental Consulting before becoming a stay at home parent. She is interested in environmental issues and education in Charlotte and is a member of the Environmental Action Team. She is active on the PTSO board at her kids' school and volunteers with CMS NorthStar reading initiative. She was on the board and served as communications director for LWVCM for the past year.

Promoting Voter Participation in November

Hello All,

I hope you are all safe, healthy and not yet stir crazy! I keep hearing how folks are cleaning and organizing their homes but somehow I can not open that closet yet...maybe next week!

Although it somehow feels like time is at a stand still I did want to give a little update on voter registration. Due to COVID-19 and "stay at home" the DMV is now offering stand alone online voter registration. All you need is a valid NC drivers license or NC issued ID. To register to vote or update your registration through the DMV go to <https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/offices-services/online/Pages/voter-registration-application.aspx> and click on the voter registration tab.

If you are unsure of your voter registration status Vote411.org makes it easy to check. Please encourage family and friends to also be aware of their voter registration status and if you know folks out of state you can let them know that Vote411.org has updated primary information at the COVID-19 tab so they have all facts.

Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 and it's effects in the fall **I would encourage you to request a mail in ballot** now for the November election. Just go to the meckboe.org and download the request for an absentee ballot. You will need to mail in the request and the ballot will be mailed approximately Sept 4th. If you know of anyone who maybe considered at risk please encourage them to do same.

Please share this information with your family and friends.

—Regan Aduddell, Voter Services Chair



Recommended Program for 2020-2021

The League's program consists of those governmental issues that the League has chosen (over the years) for concerted study and action at the local level. The program process is specified in the bylaws. At each annual meeting, members are asked to adopt the program consisting of issues on which League members reached a consensus. State and national League studies and consensus are considered at their respective conventions.

Positions must be readopted each year by League members at the annual meeting in order to remain on the program of issues for possible action.

- I. TRANSPORTATION
 - (1) Support regional transportation planning. (1994)
 - (2) Support policies which encourage the use of bicycles and other alternatives to the automobile to be included in any comprehensive transit/transportation system. (1994)
 - (3) Support a regional transportation plan should consider (a) all modes of transportation including air, rail, truck, bus, automobile, bicycle and pedestrian, (b) the cost, pollution, consumption of natural resources, (c) effectiveness in moving people, and (d) integration of transport systems. (1994)
 - (4) Support a distribution of public funds that puts a greater emphasis on alternatives to the automobile. (1994)
 - (5) Support incentives to encourage the use of alternatives to automobile and disincentives to discourage its use. (1994)
- II. GOVERNMENT
 - (1) Support consolidated city/county government (1971, 1991)
 - (2) Support of district representation on the Charlotte City Council, the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board and appointed boards and commissions (1977, 2006)
 - (3) Support non-residents sharing in financial responsibility of city revenue and the use of alternate sources of revenue in addition to property tax (1980)
 - (4) Support stated goals of 2005 Plan that are compatible with LWV(US) position on land use (1986, 1990)
 - (5) Support establishment of planning districts and city/county zoning policy (1986, 1990)
 - (6) Urge adoption of criteria for planning commission members and mechanism for citizen participation (1986, 1990)
 - (7) Support non-partisan city council elections with a primary (1998)
- III. EDUCATION
 - (1) Support equal access to a quality education for every public school student and endorse the premise that socio-economic and racial integration of schools is a necessary condition for providing an equitable and quality education for all students. (2016)
 - (2) Support and endorse concept of teacher-career development and improved teacher working conditions (1984, 1988, 1989)
 - (3) Support administrative career development (1988)
 - (4) Support early and continuing intervention for at-risk children and promote comprehensive community and parental involvement in early childhood education for at-risk students (1991)
 - (5) Support parental opportunity for controlled choice from among a wide variety of learning environments, options within schools, and learning styles within programs, in accordance with criteria designed to ensure both the quality and equality of educational opportunities, as well as socio-economic and racial integration. (1992, 2016)
- IV. HOUSING – Support use of public/private funding for assisted housing in scattered sites. (1989)
- V. SOCIAL POLICY – Support consensus study based on findings of the domestic violence Court Observation Project (2005).
- VI. ENVIRONMENT/GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE – Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.
- VII. HEALTHCARE REFORM – Support the LWVUS health care policy goals of having quality, affordable health care available to all US residents.
- VIII. HUMAN TRAFFICKING – Support the work of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Human Trafficking task force and provide educational information about the issue and work to support the passage of a bill to create a Human Trafficking Task Force in North Carolina. (2012)

Areas of focus recommended by the board for 2020-2021

- 1) **Voter Services: Education, Registration, Vote 411.org, End gerrymandering**
- 2) **Women's Issues: ERA, Wage Equality**
- 3) **Local Environment**
- 4) **Public Education: Support for public education with adequate and timely funding, equitable opportunity for a sound, basic education and Pre-K expansion.**

The program proposal was accepted by the board in a unanimous vote May 1, 2020.

LWVCM Financial Statement

LWV Charlotte Mecklenburg Income Statement July 2019 through April 30, 2020

	Actual	Budget	Over(under) Budget
Income			
Direct Public Support			
Contributions	\$ 2,637.03	\$ 5,000.00	\$ (2,362.97)
Dues	\$ 12,555.00	\$ 12,850.00	\$ (295.00)
Other Types of Income			
Room Rental	\$ 207.79	\$ 300.00	\$ (92.21)
Transfer from reserves		\$ 2,384.00	
Program Income			
Annual Meeting		\$ 800.00	\$ (800.00)
Civics 101	\$ 7,140.00	\$ 7,200.00	\$ (60.00)
Lunch with the Leage	\$ 164.30	\$ 400.00	\$ (235.70)
Program meetings		\$ -	\$ -
Fundraisers (WED, play)			\$ -
Total Income	\$ 22,704.12	\$ 28,934.00	\$ (3,845.88)
Expense			
Admin Operations			
Conferences & Workshops	\$ -	\$ 2,300.00	\$ (2,300.00)
Digital costs	\$ 310.00	\$ 210.00	\$ 100.00
Fundraising expenses	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ (200.00)
Holiday Party	\$ 195.29	\$ 200.00	\$ (4.71)
Mailings	\$ 465.91	\$ 550.00	\$ (84.09)
Membership committee	\$ 306.02	\$ 650.00	\$ (343.98)
President's Discretionary Fund	\$ 516.86	\$ 800.00	\$ (283.14)
Website Maintenance	\$ 400.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 150.00
Facilities and Equipment			
Operating costs	\$ 720.35	\$ 750.00	\$ (29.65)
Rent, LWV Center	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 9,840.00	\$ (1,840.00)
Per Member Payments (PMP)			
National PMP	\$ 5,152.00	\$ 5,152.00	\$ -
State PMP	\$ 1,932.00	\$ 1,932.00	\$ -
Program Expenses			
Annual Meeting	\$ -	\$ 900.00	\$ (900.00)
Civics 101	\$ 2,182.18	\$ 2,800.00	\$ (617.82)
Community Education	\$ 200.00	\$ 300.00	\$ (100.00)
Fundraisers	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ -
Lunch with the Leage	\$ 257.58	\$ 400.00	\$ (142.42)
Position development & support	\$ 67.24	\$ 400.00	\$ (332.76)
Program meetings		\$ -	\$ -
Voter Service *		\$ -	\$ -
Total Expense	\$ 22,005.43	\$ 28,934.00	\$ (6,928.57)
Net Income this year	\$ 698.69	\$ -	\$ 3,082.69

* See attached page for income & expenses for these line items from grants

NOTE: Attached pages can be accessed [here](#) on the website.

Proposed Budget for 2020-21

LWV Charlotte Mecklenburg Proposed Budget

	Approved 2019/20 Budget	Proposed 2020/21 Budget
Income		
Direct Public Support		\$ -
Contributions	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Dues	\$ 12,850.00	\$ 12,750.00
Other Types of Income		\$ -
Room Usage	\$ 300.00	\$ 500.00
Program Income		\$ -
Annual Meeting	\$ 800.00	\$ 900.00
Civics 101	\$ 7,200.00	\$ 3,500.00
Lunch with League	\$ 400.00	\$ 200.00
Fundraisers		\$ -
		\$ -
Transfer from reserves	\$ 2,384.00	\$ 4,889.00
Total Income	\$ 28,934.00	\$ 27,739.00
Expense		
Admin Operations		\$ -
Affiliations		\$ -
Conferences & Workshops	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 1,400.00
Digital costs	\$ 210.00	\$ 210.00
Website Maintenance	\$ 250.00	\$ 200.00
Fundraising expenses	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Holiday Party	\$ 200.00	\$ 500.00
Mailings	\$ 550.00	\$ 650.00
Membership committee	\$ 650.00	\$ 500.00
PresidentDiscretionaryFund	\$ 800.00	\$ 850.00
Facilities and Equipment		\$ -
Operating costs	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00
Rent, LWV Center	\$ 9,840.00	\$ 9,840.00
Per Member Payments (PMP)		\$ -
National PMP	\$ 5,152.00	\$ 5,296.00
State PMP	\$ 1,932.00	\$ 1,986.00
Program Expenses		
Annual Meeting	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
Civics 101	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 1,757.00
Community Education	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Position dev. & support	\$ 400.00	\$ 500.00
Lunch with League	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Voter Service		\$ -
Fundraisers	\$ 1,300.00	\$ -
Women Issues/ERA		\$ 1,500.00
Total Expense	\$ 28,934.00	\$ 27,739.00

Prepared by Budget Committee: Cate Stadelman, Kevan Woodson, John Lee
Submitted 4/25/2020

Proposed budget was accepted by a unanimous vote of the LWVCM board 5/1/20.

Action Team & Board Reports

Membership

As of 4/19/20 there were 215 members of LWVCM.

The Membership Committee is responsible the following:

Sending out New Membership “welcome” packets as people join.

Keeping the LWVCM and LWVUS membership rosters current.

Ordering lunches for Lunch with the League.

Orientation of new members.

Coordination/communication with the treasurer for notification when a new member joins.

In addition to the above, this year the committee was responsible for the annual Holiday party. One orientation meeting for new members was held in the fall, and another, planned in the spring, was canceled because of the C-19 virus. In addition a fund-raiser garage/yard sale was canceled because of the C-19 virus.

—Co-chairs: Peg Chapin and Margaret Howe-Soper

Education Action Team

The LWVCM Education Committee continues to advocate for strong public schools in North Carolina. Highlights of the 2019-2020 academic year are:

CMS Equity Policy

LWVCM advocated for a Community Equity Committee to provide transparency and community input to the newly adopted CMS Equity Policy. Tom Bowers was appointed to the Committee which first met in January 2020. He is on the Human Services, Leader and Staff Subcommittee which our Education Committee will support. The focus is that strong schools are based on strong leadership and these issues: (1) Stable, high quality staff, (2) Teacher absenteeism, (3) Long-term substitutes, (4) More experienced teachers, and (5) Increased % professionally licensed teachers.

Recognizing that staffing stability and experience/credentials of teachers and principals, significantly impact the ability of schools to be successful with all students, the committee has requested current CMS data in order to update its 2018 report. The Committee continues to communicate with others supporting the equity issues, including several school board members, and co-sponsored a forum with new Supt. Earnest Winston.

Advocacy for Accountability and Transparency with the NC Opportunity Scholarship Program

A subcommittee, led by Mary Klenz and John Lee, is advocating that the Opportunity Scholarship program (Senate Bill 609) be revised to provide greater accountability and transparency, so that (1) parents can make informed choices; (2) policymakers have the information to evaluate the program; and (3) the public is informed on the effective use of taxpayer money. A report “Opportunity Scholarships: What Parents and Taxpayers Should Know” is now posted on the League website. The work was presented to a gathering of fellow League Chapters in January and had been scheduled to be presented to the full LWV-NC board and Council meeting.

Increased Funding for NC Public Schools

The Committee has continued to advocate for increased funding for CMS and NC public schools with the County Commission and NCGA. The report, Sound Basic Education for All (WestEd consulting) provides updated data on the inequality of opportunities and the decrease in student funding over the past decade. We had meetings with several members of the NC General Assembly about funding for CMS schools. A key question is how is the total NC education budget determined. Tom Bowers will lead an investigation of the current process.

Pre-K Education

We established a relationship with Johanna Anderson, Executive Director of the Belk Foundation. One of their core issues is Pre-K to 3rd grade education. Trevor Fuller, County Commissioner-Mecklenburg County, has pledged to continue to push for expanded Pre-K education within the 2019-2020 budget. We also established contact with Smart Start of Mecklenburg County. Smart Start mobilizes resources, forges partnerships, and supports families to improve early childhood health, education and development - all to help ensure children are prepared for kindergarten. Their four areas of focus are early care and education quality and accessibility, family support, health and early literacy for children ages birth to five.

Led by Pat Siegfried, the committee reviewed the position paper and report by LWV- Lower Cape Fear.

—Co-chairs: Jeanne Smith and Kevan Woodson

Action Team Reports

Environmental

For the past year, the mission of the Environment Team has been to survey the environmental issues of importance to Mecklenburg County and North Carolina. To that end, we have spoken with members of local government and non-profit organizations who help educate the public about many critical issues.

Among people we met with at the Committee's monthly meetings were the following:

- Dena Diorio, Manager, Mecklenburg County
- Elaine Powell, Mecklenburg County Board, Vice Chair
- Taiwo Jaiyeoba, Assistant Charlotte City Manager and Director of the Planning Department Maitri Meyer, owner of the public services firm Actually Done and contractor for the County's Solid Waste Dept.
- June Blotnik, Exec. Director, Clean Air Carolina
- Dr. Richard Greene from Citizen's Climate Lobby (a national organization concerned with climate change) presented the "En-roads Climate Interactive Simulator" created at MIT.
- Sarah Haley from the Charlotte Climate Reality Project (on the subject of the science behind climate change and how it does or will impact Mecklenburg County)

The Committee hosted Taiwo Jaiyeoba, who spoke at the February Lunch with the League about the envisioned changes in the 2040 plan for Charlotte. In addition, the March League Talks (canceled because of the C-19 virus) was to have featured Maitri Meyer's presentation on proper recycling. Ms Meyer offered a webinar on recycling on Earth Day, April 22 for those who registered.

What we have learned is that there is a lot more to learn about local environmental issues and that the committee needs time in the coming year to focus on how we can be most effective. In addition, two people have graciously offered to help administer this committee: Margaret Fritze will be co-chair and Tom Bowers will take notes. Each committee member has brought a wealth of professional or volunteer experience, motivation and interest to serve. We have much to learn and are off to a good start.

—Margaret Howe-Soper, LWVCM Environment Team Chair

Women's Issues

The team started the fiscal year with plans to support ratification of ERA by educating the public about the Equal Rights Amendment, which most people believe is already a part of the US Constitution. Passage of the ERA would impact equality under the law, economic injustice, violence against women, and many other aspects of society. The group planned to create a presentation specifically geared for delivery to conservative groups, and a social media push. Soon after this, the NCGA relegated the ERA ratification bill to committee, and it became clear that it would not even be debated on the floor of the assembly. It was decided that LWVCM Women's Issues Action Team would be addressing other women's issues as they arise.

Actions to support ERA ratification:

- Research on potential impact of ERA
- Lobbying chain letter
- Direct lobbying of state senators

Other Issues:

- Get out the vote plan to send postcards to Mecklenburg women of both parties who had not voted recently did not happen due to insufficient funds. Gender Pay Gap/Living Wage
- Research on gap in NC and Mecklenburg County, Charlotte
- Research on pay equity at big local companies
- Organized the January League Talk on the subject
- Planning for a symposium or panel discussion entitled "Gender Pay Equity and How to Get There."

Members of the team participated in the Day of Action for the actual 100th Anniversary of the LWV on Feb. 14. The team had two social events, a Women's Equality Day celebration in August, and a team lunch.

The Action Team has a closed group on Facebook called Women's Issues Action Team LWV Mecklenburg (League members can request to join). The purpose of the group is to share research.

—Cate Stadelman, Women's Issues Chair



Cate Stadelman

Voter Service Action Team

I would like to first thank all of the those who have helped with voter services this year. Without the willing help of our volunteers we would not have been as successful as we were. Not only did folks step up to staff the tables, they also offered ideas for new ways to reach voters which proved both successful and a great way to meet members of our community.

Our work at United States Custom and Immigration Services (USCIS), attending all new citizen ceremonies and helping new citizens register to vote as one of the first things they do as Americans, was very successful. We sent out 5,600 "Remember to Vote" cards for the primary. **Leta Bosc** headed this up, and it is no small job! We attended at least four to six ceremonies a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays each requiring four volunteers. That is at least 64 volunteers a month.

USCIS is currently working on new guidelines for the ceremonies that will allow for social distancing and other safety measures. We have worked with them and have several ideas how we can offer new citizens a chance to register to vote while complying with potential new guidelines.

Our community outreach has been very successful, and, because the LWV is a respected non-partisan organization, we have been given some wonderful opportunities. One of these was partnering with the Greater Charlotte Apartment Association (GCAA). With the growth of our city I felt this was a great way to offer folks an opportunity to register in NC or simply change their address. We will continue to work with GCAA to find new ways to reach new residents.

We were asked to multiple locations and community events to register voters, including the YMCA, YWCA, Time out Youth, Florence Crittenton Center, several local breweries, the Levine Museum of the New South monthly presentations and their special events.

We had plans to attend the DSS monthly job fair and several other events that have been put on hold. We had hoped to host a day in May for the League members to work on a Habitat for Humanity house and then get the new residents and all residents of Habitat Houses registered. Other plans cancelled were marching in the Pride Parade and speaking at CPCC's Sensoria event..

We have had a busy year with high school registrations. Our most successful was Independence High School with over 150 new registrations/preregistrations. The kids were very excited, but I think candy helped bring them to the table. We attended several other schools this fall and one in Cabarrus County. We are hoping that we can resume registrations events soon. Information will be sent to the schools to remind seniors about absentee ballots and encourage the use of Vote411 as an informational guide.

We were very active with CPCC this year, attending all voter registration days on the main and satellite campuses, along with club days. In one week in the fall we were able to collect over 100 registrations!

Education is a key aspect to registering voters. We need our communities, especially those at risk, to understand the importance of why you need to vote. For that reason we partnered with Amplify Charlotte, a local non-profit, and had "civics bags" made to hand out at our registrations to new residents. These bags contained information such as who to call, what the various departments do, how to recycle and other information to help our newest residents. These were very well received. We had also worked with YWCA and Amplify to set up several "coffee table" talks to be hosted around Charlotte.

"The goal of these community conversations, now on hold, is to build citizen participation in the democratic process and to engage communities in promoting positive solutions to public policy issues through education and advocacy."

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of gaining the right to vote CPCC asked the Voter Service committee to present to the political science classes the history of the fight to earn this right. **Carolyn Lyons, Sandy Cross, Caroline Kelly, Cate Stadelman and I** worked for several months reading and learning about the history of the fight for suffrage and presented on March 3.

Going forward we will be looking at a "new normal," and my first concern is the safety and health of our volunteers. I will work with our partners to find ways to be present both physically as well as increasing our digital footprint.

We are encouraging people to request an absentee ballot NOW! These will give you the option of voting by mail or in person. Vote 411 is an valuable resource and I would encourage everyone to use this. We will be working on ways to advertise this to the community so everyone can take advantage of all that it has to offer.

—**Regan Aduddell, Chair Voter Services**

See the new Voter information flyer [here](#).

Action Team Reports

Civics 101

As with everything, Civics 101 has been seriously impacted by the Coronavirus 19 pandemic. We postponed the last two sessions of our Civics 101 Spring 2020 program as soon as the social distancing directives seemed probable. This was particularly unfortunate because we have an enthusiastic full class of 60 students.

The uncertainty related to the Stay at Home directive, the phasing of return to “normal”, and the possible resurgence of the virus in the fall, prevents specific planning. But from what we know, we have cancelled the Civics 101 Fall 2020 program. We have told the attendees of the Civics 101 Spring 2020 that the two postponed sessions will, if safe and permitted, be held in the fall.

For those who are interested in a future Civics 101 program, a waiting list exists, and those on it will be the first notified of a new program. This waiting list can be accessed by going to the link: <https://my.lwv.org/north-carolina/charlotte-mecklenburg/civics-101-program>.

Many feel that this pandemic and responding to it are highlighting challenges for government. This makes Civics 101 even more important for those who want to make a difference. For example, many political offices have or are filled by former Civics 101 attendees. Joining government committees or advocacy groups are other ways where the knowledge gained in Civics 101 can be put to use.

—Tom Murdock, Chair

Fair Districts

Harry Taylor, chair of the Gerrymandering Action Team (also known as Fair Districts), updated the League on Jan. 28 on the status of gerrymandering, fair redistricting, and assorted legislation. His key messages were:

- Gerrymandering is alive and healthy.
- Democracy is taking a violent beating.
- Three 2019 court cases – U.S. Supreme Court and two in NC courts forced the General Assembly to redraw 2020 maps for U.S. House and both NC Senate and House. Maps are still gerrymandered but not as severely as before.
- Census begins April 1 which will lead to new maps.
- Congressional and NC Legislature reapportionment will begin in 2021. Should we fail in efforts for fair redistricting by then, and if current majority retains control of North Carolina General Assembly, the gerrymandering and litigation will begin again anew.
- You can help LWV Fair Maps NC in the following ways:



Harry Taylor

—Endorse the Fair Maps NC 5 Principles for Reasonable Redistricting Reform here:

<https://www.fairdistrictsnc.org/endorse-the-5-principles>

—Solicit and secure speaking opportunities, especially in surrounding counties.

—Become a speaker. (We will train you.)

—Contact legislative leaders. Demand passage of Senate Bill 673 – a constitutional amendment (NC) that would create citizen-led committee to draw all maps.

—Ask every candidate their opinion on gerrymandering and fair redistricting. The more they hear that from voters, the more pressure they'll feel support change.

Please, please understand that your help and participation is crucial. Call or Email **Harry Taylor** at 704-366-0075 and hataylor@ccim.net...and thank you, thank you, thank you!

—Harry Taylor, Gerrymandering Chair

More ACTION on League issues you can take now:

Contact US Senators calling on them to support the “For the People Act” which will modernize our election system, reform redistricting and restore the Voting Rights Act. See request [here](#).

Follow and support the efforts of LWVUS as it supports the fourth Covid-19 Stimulus bill. Among many worthy causes, it includes funding for elections, economic measures and expanded internet access. See [here](#).

Contact NC House and Senate leaders to consider crucial changes in voting procedures to protect voter safety.