



VOTER

League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg

November-December 2018

REACHING LWVCM

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VOTING & WORKING



**It's not too late
to make a difference**



**Vote early (and register if you haven't already)
until 1 pm Saturday, Nov. 3**

**Inform yourself about where to vote
and candidates on your ballot at Vote411.org**

**Vote in person at your polling place
Nov. 6, 6:30 am-7:30 pm**

**Volunteer to be a non-partisan poll monitor
on election day**

Join the LWVNC coalition [here](https://protectthevote.net/?source=lwv):
<https://protectthevote.net/?source=lwv>

**Volunteer Now to call voters and provide rides
on Election Day**

**Work with Democracy NC Get Out the Vote Campaign
Go to <https://democracync.org/events/11-6-18-gotv-rides-to-the-polls-phone-banks-charlotte/>**

Contact Artie Hartsell at 980-230-8961 arthur@democracy-nc.org with questions.

In This Issue:

- Page 2 President's Message
- Page 3 Candidate Forums
- Page 4 FEAT, Education Reports
- Page 5 Vote411.org
- Page 6 On the TableCLT
- Page 7 Coming Events, Calendar

Find updates for League action and activities at
goleaguego.org

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, WOMEN AND MEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THIS COMMUNITY?

Go to <http://goleaguego.org/>

League Lunch: Election Wrap-up

Bi-partisan Perspective on the 2018 Election

Larry Shaheen, founder of Carolina Political Consulting and former adjunct professor of Political Science at UNCC, will share the Republican viewpoint.

Dan McCorkle, who has managed or consulted with over 55 NC campaigns in the past 32 years will offer the Democrat viewpoint.

Emma Schambach, a UNCC Political Science and Communications student who has been managing VOTE411.org student outreach for college campuses, sharing the students' perspective.

Wednesday, November 14, 2018 11:30am - 1:00pm

More information p. 7

Message from President Delores Hurt



Five months ago, sixteen non-partisan women's organizations, led by the League of Women Voters Charlotte Mecklenburg, gathered in Charlotte to plan candidate forums for November's general election. The idea was to pose questions to candidates on issues of concern to women - understanding that "all issues are women's issues and women's issues are everybody's issues." The group believed that local politicians would take seriously the power of women's voices, votes and coalitions and eagerly rush to take part in the three planned forums.

That did not happen. Most high-profile candidates running for US Congress and the NC Legislature declined the invitation. Most of those candidates were Republicans. Certain incumbent officeholders also declined.

2018 has been called the "Year of the Woman" and possibly the most powerful women's movement since women won the right to vote in the United States and the women's liberation movement of the '70's. Women's marches around the country, the highly influential #MeToo and Time's Up movements and the increasing numbers of women running for political office seem to give credence to that belief.

However, when sixteen women's organizations in Charlotte Mecklenburg cannot draw all candidates to forums designed to help voters choose who they want to represent them, we realize how far women - and all voters - have to go to induce office seekers to give them the respect they deserve. We shall see if this November's election moves us closer to gaining that respect.

—**Delores Johnson Hurt**



Upper left, Court of Appeals candidates Allegra Collins and Jefferson Griffin. Upper right Supreme Court candidates Barbara Earls and Anita Earls (bottom right). Bottom left, Congresswoman Alma Adams

Sparks Fly Around Candidate Forums

WFAE Radio's Steve Harrison produced a news story Sept. 19, 2018, about Republican candidates skipping the League of Women Voters forums, hosted with 16 other women's organizations. The candidates were claiming the League is biased. Harrison said that Republican political consultant Larry Shaheen told him that "everyone is out."

League President Delores Hurt told Harrison "(We) are an organization that is non-partisan, although we are political in that we take a position on issues and our goal is to educate the public and to get them involved in voting in the democratic process that we have in this country."

Since it was founded 98 years ago, the League has neither supported nor opposed candidates or political parties.

The *Charlotte Observer* followed up with an editorial Sept. 21 headlined ". . .the public loses" when candidates refuse to participate in forums designed

to educate voters about issues. The piece said the "League of Women Voters has been holding candidate forums in Charlotte for as long as anyone can remember". They also stated, "These candidates may or may not face off elsewhere. But for now, in one of the most pivotal NC midterm elections of recent years, voters are being deprived of hearing the issues debated in what has traditionally been one of the primary venues for that."

Several GOP candidates cited the League's lawsuits against the General Assembly over gerrymandered election districts as evidence of bias. President Hurt told the *Observer* editorial board that when there are efforts to suppress the vote, "then the League is going to take steps to see that everyone in this country has the opportunity to express their views."

League member **Jessica Schorr Saxe** wrote in a letter to the editor "The League is a nonpartisan organization that promotes discussion of different viewpoints. Candidates should welcome the opportunity to express their views and explain them to the public."

Cate Stadelman's published letter pointed out, "This event was not about the candidates' opinions of one of the sponsors; it was about the voters being able to see and hear the candidates. As voters, we deserve better."

The three forums attracted more than 350 people. A few Republican candidates did appear at the judicial forum, and four GOP candidates out of 20 contested county commission, NC House and NC Senate races attended and answered questions. Only one congressional candidate, Alma Adams, came. Only candidates with opposition were asked questions, and the others were allowed a two-minute statement.



County Commission candidates



Photos by Lucille Howard and Everett Blackmon

Fair Elections Action Team (FEAT)

Our FEAT is focusing on rolling out Phase 2 of the LWVNC's Reasonable Redistricting Reform project – we are determined to get Fair Districts for NC! Our goal is to reach out to as many members of the Charlotte community as possible so any contacts that our members can suggest would be hugely helpful.

Our League has a history of being at the forefront of making positive policy changes in NC.

We can defeat the scourge of gerrymandering that is destroying our democracy, but we must act NOW – before the census results are released, and we get trapped for another decade.

To find out how you can help or to share your ideas, contact **Debbie Snowdon**, Feat co-chair, at debbie.snowdon@yahoo.com FEAT has also been busy with GOTV (Get Out The Vote) efforts. You may have bumped into one of our FEAT members on the streets outside of CPCC – we may even have thrust a Voter Guide into your hands.

Our ever-active FEAT Team will be out at the polls, ensuring that voters have access to the polls and that all eligible voters are able to cast their ballots

There is still time to help with distributing information during early voting about the proposed constitutional amendments that will appear on the ballot, just contact Taylor Moss at taylor@democracy-nc.org

--by **Debbie Snowdon and Ashleigh Morgan, co-chairs**



Debbie Snowdon, left, and Jennifer Bremer gave a civic lesson about the way districts are split on the Francene Marie radio show.

Vouchers on Education Committee Advocacy Agenda

LWVCM's very own **Mary Klenz and Peg Chapin** conducted a workshop called "Making a Difference Through Advocacy" for members of the Education Committee on Oct. 27. The workshop began with a discussion of current education issues in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and NC as a whole, specifically related to factors that impact teacher retention.

After guiding the participants through a series of questions to narrow down a specific issue, surprisingly, the issue that rose to the top was the **Opportunity Scholarships (vouchers)**-- the lack of accountability for all private schools that receive these funds and substandard curriculum offered by some of the private Christian schools.

Equally important was a focus on the political lay of the land. Who does this issue impact? Who are the decision makers? What/who are the barriers? Who are the allies? What's the history?

Based on these questions the participants identified people and organizations that can provide answers to some of the questions and others that can be allies. The next steps will enable the participants to move "from the paper to the pavement," and individuals at the workshop volunteered to contact identified people and organizations to obtain additional needed data and support.

Ultimately, the desired outcome of these efforts will be greater accountability and transparency of the schools that receive taxpayer money through these Opportunity Scholarships and evidence that students attending these schools are college or career ready upon high school graduation.

—by **Cheryl Milam, Chair**

(Note: the Education Committee meets on the first Wednesday at the League Education Center, 1:30 pm)

Welcome to New Members

Boosting the League roster to more than 200 members are:

LaRita Barber	Doris Chevalier
Laura Gruppo	Catrice Hill
Kathleen MacDonald	Alista C. Watkins
Carole S. Pelchat	Beverly Klyn
Kathy West	Roberta Tindall
Alice Ross	Leslie Sellers
Jenny Sperry	Emily Plauche
Jean and Andrew Swanson	Tim Tindall

VOTE411.ORG

At the time I'm writing this article, election day is a week away. We're making a real push this year in Mecklenburg County to publicize our online voter guide at www.vote411.org, and our efforts are paying off. **In the last 28 days, our site has had almost seven times as many hits from Mecklenburg County as it did during the same time period before the May primary election.**

The last week before election day is when our media advertising will be the heaviest. That's when about 60% of the website usage is expected.

This year we have two print ads each in Creative Loafing and the Charlotte Post, along with 30-second radio ads on WSOC, WPEG and WBAV. Would we like to have more to reach other groups? Sure. But media advertising doesn't come free.

We've spread thousands of bookmarks and flyers around the area. We're using social media and some limited digital advertising. It's not easy to cut through the clutter and get people's attention, and, let's face it, studying candidate information is not fun and sexy. But it's important, and we're pleased to see the interest in our site continuing to rise. A sample quote: "Thank you so much for your email. I just participated in early voting last week and used Vote411.org to successfully do so! I loved the site and actually shared it on Facebook with friends and family."

We are very grateful to the following members for contributing over \$100 each to the VOTE411 match contribution drive:

Harvey Wood

Beth Springston

Delores Johnson Hurt

Lucille Howard

Thanks also to everyone else who contributed. We wouldn't have been able to do this advertising without your help.

—**Beth Springston**, LWVNC, Co-director Vote 411

Editor's Note: Fantastic publicity for Vote411.org came from **John Oliver** on his HBO "Last Week Tonight" diatribe on candidates for attorney general in many states. He urged viewers to leave his program and go to Vote411.org to find out information about candidates and **scrolled the Vote411 logo for a full two minutes.** An internet news site said Vote411 use spiked 2000% after his plug!



Voter Services

Numerous voter registration drives were sponsored by LWVCM during the past few months in the familiar venues of naturalization ceremonies at Homeland Security and the Courthouse and new locations at the Levine Museum, History Museum, businesses, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center and CPCC, among others.



Registration at East Meck High School

Registrations took place at the Habitat Restore and Goodwill campus on National Voter Registration Day. League member **Tom Bowers**

spent hours registering voters and completing absentee ballot request forms at a number of retirement communities. Others worked with high schools and area universities to register students.

Pop-up Village registration opportunities also were covered by League volunteers. **Marian Silverman** coordinated these efforts.



Voter Registration at Derita Community Day

On the TableCLT: *The Legacy of Segregation and its Continued Impact*

“Engagement is action! When we come together to learn from and with each other, we have the power to impact communities.” So reads the introduction to **On the TableCLT**. On Oct. 24, groups of people all over Charlotte came together at various venues to examine the legacy of segregation in Charlotte’s history and in the present, including the LWVCM.

A group of 15 League members and others of diverse races and ethnicities met at the League Center to discuss personal experiences with segregation and discrimination now and in the past. We pointed out that various venues where segregation is present include housing, transportation, employment and religion. The most egregious example of segregation in employment was recounted by one attendee: names of employees were marked with coded letters to signify their races.

I commented on the fact that my subdivision in southeast Charlotte was all white, with one African-American residing there for a brief time. I also noted that when I conducted voter registration at a park on the west side, all the attendees were African-American.

Other examples were cited from within Charlotte and in our past in other communities in various states.

Even Hawaii, noted for its tolerance, had definite discriminatory and derogatory name-calling practices, according to one attendee reflecting on her experiences growing up there.

We were asked what we could do, as individuals, to ensure people have the same access and opportunity for success in work, housing and education today and, as a group, to identify one Charlotte-area specific action we can take to help address the legacy of segregation.

Responses ranged from holding the door for others and starting a conversation with a stranger, to such

civic minded activities as voting, working to pass the affordable housing bond issue and monitoring the funds to ensure that they target at least 20% of recipients to those earning 30% of the average median income. Others suggested holding elected officials accountable, large white churches meeting frequently with African-American churches with the goal of getting to know one another better, coordinating the activities of various social action groups, working toward more equitable pupil assignments and getting rid of school vouchers.

It seemed a strong coincidence that the On the Table/CLT events, which were “intentionally open-ended in order to encourage participants to share varied perspectives, listen carefully to each other’s stories, and to act with each other in mind,” took place on National Unity Day, with its themes of kindness, acceptance and inclusion. Hopefully, the events helped us identify challenges and will lead to real plans for action that address and diminish the legacy of segregation!

—by **Linda Levy, Program chair**



HELP WANTED

Use your decorating, organizing, planning, food tasting, advertising, fundraising skills on the 100th anniversary committee which is working on the 2020 celebration of the founding of the League of Women Voters. Call Delores Hurt at 980-355-0054 or deloreshurt@yahoo.com

COMING EVENTS—CALENDAR

League Lunch: Election Wrapup

Wednesday, November 14, 2018 11:30am - 1:00pm

See page 1 for program details; RSVP to email invite

Or go to goleaguego.org/events



Holiday Lunch Wednesday, Dec. 12, 11:30 am-2 pm Invitations will be in the mail!



Join your League friends Dec. 12, 2018, for the LWVCM annual festive Holiday Lunch. It will be held at 1817 Central Ave., Charlotte NC in Rm 210 from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm. Lunch will be served buffet style with a variety of dishes available, including a vegetarian entrée.

To add to the fun and purpose of the day, two options are available: A “50/50 Raffle” will be held with tickets at \$5.00 each. Half of the proceeds will go to the winner and half to a charity for Hurricane Florence relief. In addition, guests have the option to donate an unwrapped book suitable for children between the ages of 0 and third grade. The books will be donated to the CMPD’s Christmas Project which ensures children from needy families have holiday gifts.

Look for your invitation in the mail in November. —Margaret Howe-Soper, Membership

CALENDAR

- Nov. 3 (Sat) Last Day to vote absentee in person (also register) before 1 pm
- Nov. 6 (Tues) ELECTION DAY 6:30 am-7:30 pm
- Nov. 7 (Wed) Education Committee meetings: Equity, 12 pm; New Initiatives, 12:45 pm, full committee 1:30 pm
- Nov. 7 (Wed) League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central **Note DATE CHANGE**
- Nov. 14 (Wed) Lunch with the League, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave., p.2
- Dec. 4 (Tues) League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.
- Dec. 14 (Wed) HOLIDAY LUNCH, 11:30 am, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.
- Jan. 8 (Tues) League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.

All events are at the LWV-CM Center, 1817 Central Ave., Room 210, Charlotte 28205 unless otherwise noted. Click [here](#) for driving and parking directions



Civics 101 graduated 56 students. Left, **Leta Bosc** greets a student. Below, former **Mayor Jennifer Roberts** addresses the class.



League speakers have been: **Councilwoman Dimple Ajmera**, left, and **Dr. Jessica Saxe**, below.

