

LWV VOTER

League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg

July-August 2019

Empowering Voters.
Defending Democracy.

Celebrating 100 Years
of the League of Women Voters
and Women Voting in 2020

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

Encouraging
informed and active participation
in government through

Education

Advocacy

Voter Services

Civics

Vote411.org

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OfCharlotteMecklenburg

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No Summer Break for Action

ERA/Women's Issues

LWVNC Action Team leaders have called for a blitz of contacts and letters urging legislators to move bills **ratifying the ERA Constitutional Amendment** out of committee and onto the General Assembly floor for a vote.

In Charlotte, Women's Issues Chair **Cate Stadelman** is working on a "get out the vote" campaign aimed at women. Read More [p. 3](#).

Fair Elections Action Team

Despite the disappointing Supreme Court decision striking down LWVNC lawsuit seeking to end partisan gerrymandering, FEAT continues to speak to civic organizations in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties and send out our postcards to encourage voters to **demand a fair process for drawing electoral districts** in NC. Read more [p. 3](#).

Voter Registration

League members again will be registering voters on the **Fourth of July** at the Charlotte History Museum. Registration events pop up constantly.

Environment

This new action team continues its orientation by meeting with **Mayor Vi Lyles**, City Planning Director **Taiwo Jaiyeoba** and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Commission chair **Heidi Pruess**. Read more [p. 4](#).

Education

Work continues on a report about **lack of accountability** for many private schools which have students receiving tax-funded vouchers. [p. 4](#).

Join one of these teams to help League Defend Democracy.

"The State of Our League is Good"

President's Report to the Annual Meeting

Tonight, I'm pleased to report that the state of our League is good. Our finances are sound; and membership continues to grow.

We have big plans for celebrating 100 years of the League, and we have

(continued p. 2)



Special Speaker Invited for Lunch Sept. 11

President's Annual Report (continued)

wonderful group of volunteers doing the work of the league. Truth be told, however, we need involvement by many more members - on our action teams and committees, at parades, at lunch with the League and League talk.

Our great online [Voter](#) newsletter keeps us up-to-date on all our activities, so in my remarks, I'll note just a few highlights of the year to date.

Last year, a directive to the board was that we increase our presence on social media. Mark that done.

Our Facebook page has vastly improved from this time last year. It is updated several times weekly. We have just under a thousand people who follow us and 900 who like us. You should go online and like us, too.

Meanwhile, our twitter site is under construction. We don't yet have a communications director for the coming year, so volunteers are welcome.



Thanks to donations from you over and above dues - and grants from national for new citizen and high school voter registrations - we are fiscally sound - for now.

We were able to negotiate a new three year lease for rent, but we know that we'll need fundraising in the future to remain solvent.

Our education action team successfully lobbied for a Citizen's Equity Advisory Committee to oversee the work of Charlotte Mecklenburg schools as it seeks to provide an equitable education for students, regardless of zip code. The team showed great persistence. They sent letters to the board and made many appearances at school board meetings to make their point. Congratulations to them!

In the fall of 2018, another success was the first ever collaboration of the league with 15 other women non-partisan organizations to put on three candidate forums during the general election season. The forum theme was "A woman's perspective on issues: women's issues are everyone's issues, and everyone's issues are women's issues." For that project, we received recognition at last month's state League convention in Chapel Hill and considerable media coverage here at home.

We continue to increase our visibility in the Charlotte community by attending other organizations' events, participating in local parades and community activities and appearing on local media.

With the help of paid advertising, our vote411 website increased viewership exponentially, and we added two new action teams - women's issues and environment.

Recently, for the first time, we sent the membership a demographics survey. About 55 members have responded so far. Thank you for that. We're looking for more responses because we need a physical picture of who we are and input on what members most want from us.

Finally, let's talk about our biggest new challenge. **In February 2020 the League will be 100 years old.** On **February 29**, we plan a gala fundraiser celebrating not only the centennial of the League but also the 100th anniversary of the right of women to vote in the US.

Here's what we need you to do. **SAVE UP AND BUY** a \$100 ticket. That amount represents one dollar for each year we've been around. Ask family and friends to do the same.

We have six months of hard work to raise money for the gala and pull off an event you'll be proud of. You'll be hearing much more about this as we move forward. **You can actually purchase tickets right now on our [website](#).**

It's been an honor serving you as your President for the last three years, and I look forward to serving two more.

—*Delores Johnson Hurt*

A graphic with a red and white zig-zag border. Inside, the logo for the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg is displayed. Below the logo, the text reads: "SAVE THE DATE FEBRUARY 29, 2020 LWVCM 100TH Gala Fundraiser LeMeridien Hotel, Charlotte, 6 pm Celebrating 100 years of the League of Women Voters and Women's Right to Vote".

Action Teams/Advocacy

ERA/Women's Issues

As of June 26, "NC Adopt ERA" Bills are not dead! Action is needed!

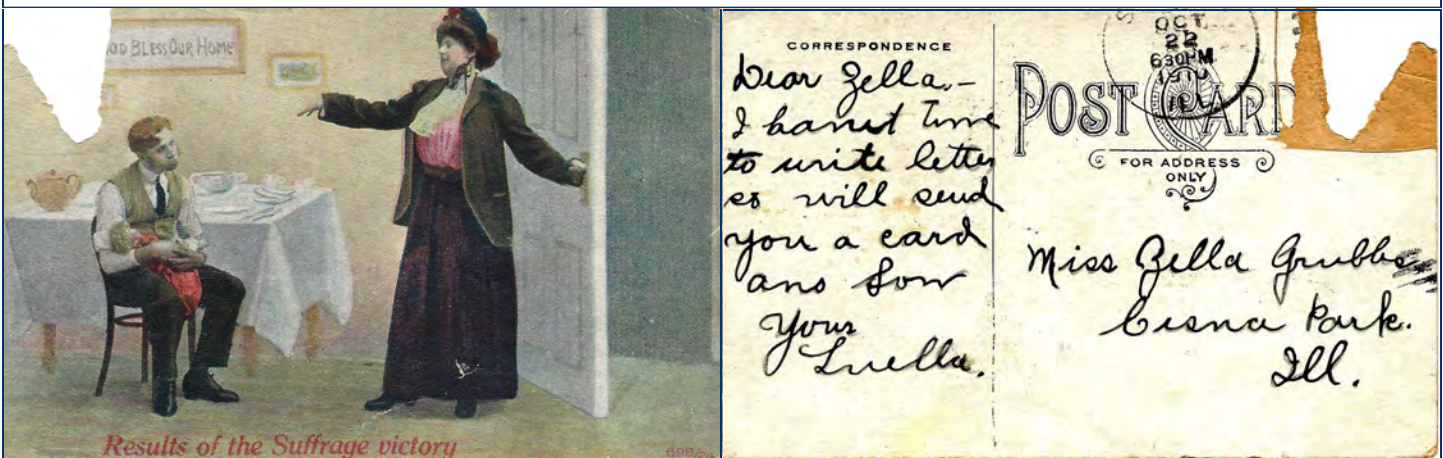
The ERA Alliance has sent an urgent request that women and men act immediately to send these messages to committee chairs in the General Assembly:

—House Judiciary Committee Chairs Rep. Ted Davis, Jr. and Rep. Sarah Stevens to hear **HB271** in your committee, lead it to a favorable decision and send the bill to the floor for a vote as expeditiously as possible.

—Senate Rules and Operations Committee Chair Sen. Bill Rabon and Vice Chair Sen. Harry Brown to send **SB184** to an appropriate committee (such as Judiciary) to be heard favorably and sent to the floor for a vote.

The next ERA/Women's Issues team meeting will be July 23. Beginning Aug. 26, the team will meet on the **fourth Monday** of each month, all at 6:30 pm in the League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave., Rm. 210.

A dire warning on a postcard mailed in Illinois in 1910.



Fair Election Districts/Gerrymandering

The US Supreme Court struck down North Carolina's partisanship gerrymandering case 5-4 in *Rucho v. League of Women Voters of North Carolina* ruling **that no fair test exists for courts to determine when partisan gerrymandering has gone too far.**

"Today's decision is devastating to the voters in North Carolina who have lived with **unconstitutional** districts in the last four federal elections," said **Janet Hoy**, co-president of the League of Women Voters of North Carolina and a named plaintiff in the case. "While we were hopeful that the Court would set a standard to address extreme gerrymandering cases like ours, we will continue to work on getting fair maps for North Carolinians through other means."

"By failing to set a standard for this unconstitutional practice, the Court is essentially endorsing unfettered partisan gerrymandering," said **Allison Riggs**, senior attorney at the Southern Coalition for Social Justice and co-counsel for the League. She argued the case before the Supreme Court.

Writing for the majority, **Chief Justice Roberts** noted that "The districting plans at issue here are highly partisan, by any measure." He said the court "neither condones excessive partisan gerrymandering nor condemns complaints about districting."

LWVUS declared, despite the decision, there is a way forward. And that is to pass HR1: For the People Act 2019, which would create fair redistricting standards for the entire country.

All League members are urged to contact their representatives with this message.



NC Leaguers in DC for the gerrymandering arguments.

Action Teams/Advocacy

Environmental Action Team

Margaret Howe-Soper, chair of the Environment Action Team, reports that the group is learning about the environmental landscape in Mecklenburg County by meeting with public officials and others to gain knowledge about priorities and where the League can advocate for policies to protect the environment.

In June, four members of the team met with **Mayor Vi Lyles** in her office to hear her thoughts about changes in Charlotte's administrative functional structure with the goal of realizing greater efficiency in staff and committee time. Mayor Lyles had combined



Margaret Howe-Soper, Christine Danis, Regan Aduddell, Nancy Carter, Patti Kelly, Sylvia

the former stand-alone Council Environment Committee with Land Use and Transportation. She indicated a willingness to meet with our Environment Action Team again in the future.

Heidi Pruess, chair of the Mecklenburg Park and Recreation Commission, also spoke with the Team. She discussed a brief history of the County's growth since 1976 in relation the amount of population, open land available for parks and greenways and the degree of financial support for public land protection over time. Of particular concern is the quality and quantity of water available for Charlotte's citizens in the near future.

(Both Mayor Lyles and Heidi Pruess are League members.)

Several members spoke at the County budget hearing advocating for more funds for parks and recreation.



Heidi Pruess

The Team will meet soon with **Taiwo Jaiyeoba**, Director of Charlotte's Planning Department, about the 2040 (Master) Plan now being developed.

Check the calendar at goleaguego.org for the next committee meeting.

Education Action Team

With new co-chairs, **Jeanne Smith and Kevan Woodson**, the Education Action Team continues to focus on equity and adequate funding for public schools as well as accountability for private schools that receive tax dollars in the form of vouchers, called Opportunity Scholarships.



Mary Klenz

Mary Klenz spoke for the League at the County budget hearing about including specific items not recommended in the manager's proposal that would move the district toward its goal of providing equity to every student, regardless of where the student lives.

The group celebrated the Board of Education's vote to adopt an equity policy and advisory committee with the aim of closing racial, economic and ethnic gaps in student achievement. Board members also voted to establish a community advisory committee to review district data and monitor progress.

Team members have continued meetings with educators and others working on ways to promote equity in the school system. Guests in the past two months were **Dr. Devonya Govan-Hunt**, President of the Black Child Development Institute, who discussed mutual efforts toward equity in CMS, **Albert Horne**, **Rev. Dr. Dwayne Walker**, pastor of Little Rock AME Zion Church who chairs an informal group of black pastors concerned about equity in education, and **Rev. Fred Robinson**, executive director of Mecklenburg Ministries.

Next meeting is scheduled for Aug. 6.



Dr. Walker



Dr. Govan-Hunt



Rev. Robinson

2019-20 Leadership Team

Officers:

Delores Johnson Hurt, President
 Tom Murdock, First Vice President
 Erin Giardi, Secretary
 John Lee, Treasurer

Directors:

Cate Stadelman
 Regan Adudell, chair, Voter Services
 Lucille Howard, Voter Editor
 Kevan Woodson, co-chair Education Committee
 Tricia Garcia
 June White
 Peg Chapin co-chair, Membership Committee

Nominating Committee:

Reita Pendry, Chair
 Tom Bowers, Sylvia Ross

Cheryl Bruins to Lead Vote411.org



A newcomer to LWVCM, Cheryl Bruins, has agreed to head the League's Vote411.org after running Vote 411 in Oakland County, MI for three years.

She lived in Lathrop Village in the Detroit metropolitan area.

Cheryl retired from Ford Motor Co. after 31 years in

manufacturing engineering. She moved to Denver, NC in Dec, 2018.

Jeanne Smith co-chairs Education

Jeanne Smith will join Kevan Woodson as co-chair of the Education Action Team. Before retiring, Jeanne taught chemistry at Olympic High School for 13 years.

Prior to teaching, Jeanne worked in product development and new business development at Celanese. With a background in textiles and fiber, Jeanne was recruited from Hartford, CT, to join the Charlotte company.



Join LWVCM [here](http://goleaguego.org) at goleaguego.org
 Contact leaders to join teams [here](http://goleaguego.org) at goleaguego.org

Action Team Leaders

Cate Stadelman Women's Issues
 Jeanne Smith, co-chair Education
 Kevan Woodson, co-chair Education
 Margaret Howe-Soper, Environment
 Karen Bean, Health Committee
 Tom Murdock, Chair, Civics 101

Additional League Leaders

Margaret Howe-Soper, co-chair Membership
 Leta Bosc, chair, Voter Registration
 Cheryl Bruins, chair Vote 411.org
 Lucia Lane-Trevino, Webmaster

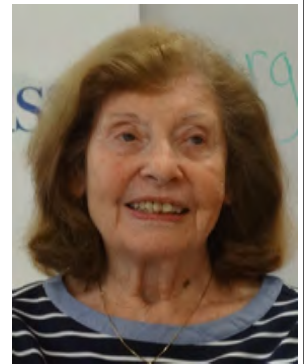
Peg Chapin appointed to LWVCM Board

Peg Chapin, a former co-president of the LWVNC, has been appointed a director on the LWVCM board to serve as co-

chair of the Membership Committee. Peg's advocacy work is legendary. Among the many successful issues she advocated was the **nation's first program of public financing for judicial and some Council of State elected positions** until it was ended by the Legislature in 2013. She also has worked on voting improvements such as same day registration, early voting, no-excuse absentee voting.

Peg just retired from heading the LWVNC Membership, Leadership Development program and worked with coaches guiding Leagues throughout the state.

Peg is a physical therapist and was the **first female PT** at Presbyterian Rehabilitation. She later worked for home health care agencies.



FOURTH OF JULY PARADE & CELEBRATION

League members will register voters at the naturalization ceremony July 4 at the Charlotte History Museum as part of the 51st Hickory Grove festival.

The parade starts at 10 am at Lawrence Orr School on Shamrock Drive and proceeds west on Shamrock to the Aldersgate fields for fun, food, contests and music 11-3 pm.



2019 Annual Meeting featuring Supt. Wilcox



Board & newly-elected officers: L-R, Tom Murdock, June White, Lucille Howard, Reita Pendry Sylvia Ross, Erin Giardi, Kevan Woodson, John Lee, Regan Aduddell Tom Bowers, Cate Stadelman, Delores Johnson-Hurt.



Annual meeting pix courtesy of Everett Blackmon. See more at <https://winningimages.photography/>



LWVNC Convention



Delores Johnson-Hurt & Peg Chapin

Charlotte's delegation to the LWVNC convention included eight members and outgoing state co-president **Karen Bean**. Attending were **Beth Springston, Delores Johnson-Hurt, Cate Stadelman, John Lee, Mary Klenz, Sandra Cross, Peg Chapin and Lucille Howard**.

Peg Chapin was honored for her years of service leading the state's Membership, Leadership Development Program. LWVCM won an award for partnering with 15 women's organizations in Charlotte to produce candidate debates.

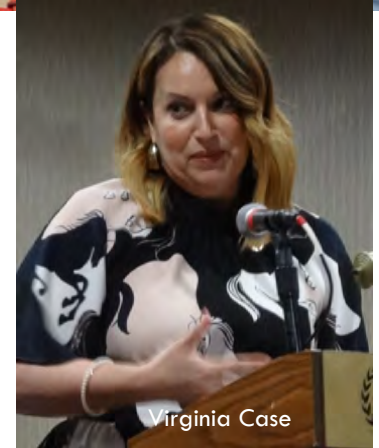
Allison Riggs discussed possible outcomes and the difficulty of waiting to learn the Supreme Court decision on NC partisan gerrymandering which she had argued at the court. LWVUS CEO **Virginia Case** also addressed the convention. A session on implementing the League-wide emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion highlighted two days of caucuses, workshops, business meetings, social gatherings and awards. Issues for emphasis adopted by the convention were redistricting reform, voter protection, ERA ratification and Voter Services.



Allison Riggs



Co-presidents Janet Hoy & Karen Bean



Virginia Case

Civics 101

Civics 101 will operate a fall session for the third year, starting in late September through October. Civics 101 continues to be a welcome resource to increase residents' awareness of how local government works.

Tom Murdock, chair of Civics 101 announced that the team will have several new members including **Tina Brownlie, Amy Farrell, Terese Kelly, Heidi Pruess and Steve Nader**. They join **June White** and **Margaret Howe-Soper** who are long-time team members. Organizational meetings are planned for early July.

Get on the waiting list for the fall session by emailing Tom at tmurdock471@gmail.com.

WELCOME
To
New Members

Christine Brownlie
Cheryl Bruins Rozier



1817 Central Ave., Rm. 210
Charlotte, NC 28205

Dated Material

Forwarding Service Requested

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

July 5 (Fri)	Education Action Team
Aug. 6 (Tues)	League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.
Aug. 23 (Fri)	Environment Action Team, 11 am, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.
Sept. 3 (Tues)	League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.
Sept. 4 (Wed)	Education Action Team, time TBA, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.
Sept. 11 (Wed)	Lunch with the League, 11:30 am, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave
Sept. 24 (Tues)	National Voter Registration Day
Oct. 2 (Tues)	League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.
Oct. 15 (Tues)	League Talk, 6:30 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave

Check our [online calendar](#) for up-to-date LWVCM events and meetings at goleaguego.org.