

# LWV<sup>®</sup> VOTER

League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg

January-February 2020

## AN ANNIVERSARY TO REMEMBER

### LWVCM Celebrates Feb 29 100 Years of League 100 Years of Women Voting

Be sure to have your ticket for this Gala Event

You joined the League to empower voters and protect democracy.

Now be on hand Feb. 29 to honor the successes of our foremothers and support the work still ahead to accomplish this mission.

Dinner, Cash Bar Reception and Celebration, 6 pm,  
Le Meridien Hotel, 555 S. McDowell St.  
Tickets \$100. Pay at [www.goleaguego.org](http://www.goleaguego.org)

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Find updates for League action  
and activities at [goleaguego.org](http://goleaguego.org)

**Vote411.org**, your source for non-partisan candidate information, is expected to go live on the internet Feb. 5-13. Get informed [here](#) before you vote.



Cathy Bessant

Special recognition of Mecklenburg  
County women elected to office since  
2000

Keynote speaker Cathy Bessant,  
Bank of America Chief Operating and  
Technology Officer

Former LWVUS President Carolyn  
Jefferson-Jenkins, previewing her  
book on women of color in the  
League



Carolyn  
Jefferson-Jenkins

Details, p. 2, 3, 4

For more information contact Delores Johnson Hurt, at [president@goleaguego.org](mailto:president@goleaguego.org)

Plan now to join your friends & the Charlotte Community to celebrate history.

# President's Message

## Happy New Year! 2020 Is Finally Here!

This much anticipated alliterative year will reveal if our country and her citizens will reach new heights or lowest of lows when it comes to empowering voters and defending democracy.

I'm especially excited at 2020's arrival because we are now just two months away from celebrating the centennial of women's right to vote in the United States and the League of Women Voters.

**Those two monumental historical events are big deals to us in Charlotte because of the sheer magnitude of those accomplishments, and because we've been planning a League gala for well over a year.**

ALL CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG SHOULD CELEBRATE WITH US! Who can deny the role women have played in moving our democracy forward?

We expect 400 guests to be on hand at Le Meridien Hotel on February 29 at 6 pm. It would be wonderful to see you there.

**Best wishes for the New Year!**

Delores Johnson Hurt, LWVCM President



## January - February Programs Coming Up

### League Talk Tuesday, Jan. 21, 6:30 pm: The Gender Pay Gap

**Dr. Diane Schneider**, co-president of the Charlotte branch of American Association of University Women (and a LWVCM member), will lead a discussion about the big effect on the economic status of women at the League Talk, Jan. 21.

Diane's talk will be based on the extensive research about the gender gap which AAUW has concentrated on for several years. The gender pay gap most commonly refers to the median annual pay of all women who work full time and year-round, compared to the pay of a similar cohort of men.

As AAUW's research shows, women of every race and ethnicity experience a gender pay gap that ranges from 90% to 54% of men's pay. Altogether, in the US as of 2019, the median salary for men is roughly 21% higher than the median salary for women.

Diane received her MA and PhD in education from the University of Virginia. She is a former classroom teacher in both public and private schools and is now an education consultant and tutor in the greater Charlotte area.

League Talk is held at the League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave., and is free and open to the public.

### Lunch with the League Wed., Feb. 12, 11:30 am: 2040 Master Plan

**Taiwo Jaiyeoba**, Charlotte Assistant City Manager and Chief Planner, will address League members on the city's 2040 Master Plan. Sponsored by the LWVCM environment action team, the program will highlight one of the issues which the committee has been exploring.

Watch for an email invite if you want to purchase a lunch for \$10. The program is open to the public. While no reservation is required if you are not buying a lunch, it is always appreciated.

### League co-sponsors Conversation with Supt. Winston, Thurs, Jan. 23

Hosted by CharlotteEast, new CMS Superintendent **Earnest Winston's** appearance will be at Charlotte East Language Academy, 6108 Wilora Lake Road. Time: Reception 6 pm, Conversation with the public, 6:30 – 8 pm.

Questions may be submitted in advance to [Cleatboard@gmail.com](mailto:Cleatboard@gmail.com).

The program is free and open to the public.

## Powerful, Dynamic Women To Share Their Story

### Catherine P. Bessant

Catherine P. Bessant, Chief Operating and Technology Officer at Bank of America, known for her comments about “strong women” will be the featured speaker when LWVCM celebrates the 100th anniversary of the League and women’s right to vote.

Profiled in the Nov-Dec 2019 Voter, Ms. Bessant has led Global Technology and Operations for the bank since 2010. She is in charge of 95,000 employees in 35 countries.



Cathy Bessant and her partner Josh Hall raised \$255,536 for Novant Health, Buddy Kemp Cancer Support Center and the Charlotte Ballet in the 2015 “Charlotte Dancing with the Stars.”

Ranked No. 1 among the “25 Most Powerful Women in Banking” by American Banker, Bessant also received the 2019 Women in Technology and Data Trailblazer (Lifetime Achievement) Award from WatersTechnology. She has also appeared on Working Mother magazine’s “50 Most Powerful Working Moms” list.

Bessant led the formation of the Council on the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to address ethical and policy issues related to the development and deployment of this rapidly evolving technology. In addition, she is a member of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST).

According to BOA, she has been active in the community and region, receiving the Distinguished Service Award from UNC Charlotte along with other prestigious awards.

Her address will be a highlight of the League’s 100th Anniversary Gala.

### Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins

**Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins** is the only woman of color to lead the LWVUS in its first 100 years. She served as president and chair of the LWV Education Fund 1998-2002, with oversight of several significant projects of the League, including Get out the Vote, Wired for Democracy and developing a strategic plan. Before that, she had held a variety of positions on local, state and the national board.

Her career in public school and higher education spanned more than 40 years. At the time of retirement, Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins continues to be an advocate and activist for civil rights, social justice, educational excellence, and stronger citizen participation in the electoral process for underrepresented populations. She is currently an adjunct assistant professor in the School of Education at UNC Chapel Hill.

Her remarks at the anniversary gala, “**The Power of Our Story: Passion, Purpose, and Perseverance**”, may include the role of black women in the suffrage movement and the need now for more diversity.

**On the day of Charlotte’s gala, her book, The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters will be released.** In it she explores ways in which these women have been marginalized and recognizes how their contributions will positively influence the organization as it moves into its next 100 years.

#### BOOK FEATURES:

- Celebrates the 100year history of the League of Women Voters and the contributions of women of color.
- Provides an accurate, comprehensive account of history in this grassroots membership organization.
- Explores the unique challenges that women of color faced in the United States and in its mainstream organizations.

See p. 8 for information about obtaining a copy of Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins’ book.



Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins with Thereasea Elder and Delores Hurt at the 2017 Women’s Equality Day event sponsored by LWVCM.



# HONORING MECKLENBURG ELECTED WOMEN

## 116 women to be recognized at Anniversary Gala

From 1920-2000, 130 Mecklenburg women had been elected to public office

Since 2000, some 116 Mecklenburg County women have been elected to office, two at the national level.

**It's been an explosive two decades of women winning elections since the League last honored women serving in public office.**



Congresswoman Sue Myrick  
1995-2013

Winning the right to vote 100 years ago put women on a steep trajectory toward participating in government where decisions are made affecting citizens' daily lives.

And in the past two decades, multitudes of women have put their names on the ballot and many have won. Women from this county have secured every spot except US Senate and president at some point, from US Congress to district magistrate.

All 116 women have been invited to be recognized at the Feb. 29 Anniversary Gala and will be listed in the commemorative journal available at the event. Of course, everyone is invited to attend.



Congresswoman Alma  
Adams 2014-

## Celebrating the Founding of the League 1920

In 1920, the year that the **19th Amendment** prohibiting federal and state government from denying women the right to vote passed, North Carolina native **Gertrude Weil** of Goldsboro, called upon women "to hold together whatever local organization you have. We shall need it to carry out the work that lies before us."

A well-known suffragist on the state and national level, Gertrude Weil continued her work to improve the political system, and she established the North Carolina League of Women Voters in 1920, dedicated to educating women about the political system and their newly won rights. She also became a leader in the Legislative Council of North Carolina, organized to advance progressive social reforms. Weil died at the age of 91, just 24 days after NC finally ratified the amendment in 1971.

A group of Charlotte women who had been involved with the NC Equal Suffrage League also started meeting in 1920 "to develop the woman citizen into an intelligent and self-directing voter and to turn her vote toward constructive social ends." **Gladys Tillett** be-



Gertrude Weil, left, with NC suffragists at a march.

came the president after the first three months.

The League, according to Mrs. Tillett, had a role in the passage of a bill raising the age of consent from 14 to 16 years and another bill increasing funds for the NC College for Women.

Tillett was elected president in 1920, 1922 and 1923, according to Jean Johnson's History of LWVCM—the Early Years. She became politically active in the 1940's and was the first woman to address the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1944. More information about Gertrude Weil can be found on NCPedia, a digital resource stewarded by the State Archives of North Carolina. Just follow this [link](#)! Gladys Tillett information is also on NCPedia.



Gladys Tillett

## Voter Services

### LWVCM Questions Purchasing Expensive ES&S Express Voting Machines in Mecklenburg County; Recommends Hand-Marked Ballots

Mecklenburg County Commissioners are scheduled to vote soon to spend up to \$15 million dollars for new voting machines. **The League believes the county can save millions of dollars by purchasing machines which use paper ballots, thus eliminating the need to buy 2500 machines which use ballots with questionable bar codes.**

The League is asking the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections and the Mecklenburg County Commission to reconsider any decision to proceed with the purchase and use of ExpressVote voting equipment manufactured and sold by Electronic Systems & Software (ES&S).

**We believe the county should use already tested and approved DS200 tabulators for hand-marked ballots, along with an approved and tested ballot marking device for ADA voters.** During hearings last summer, experts from a variety of sources expressed concerns about the ExpressVote machines. Recent evidence from the November election in Northampton County, PA are worrisome and point to problems that may occur in here. The standard logic and accuracy tests done for that election (similar to North Carolina State Board of Elections testing) did not uncover the problems that resulted in a flawed election process.

In an era where some candidates and incumbents try to challenge or discredit a close loss by questioning the system, either with unfounded allegations of voter fraud or claims of a “rigged” election, the proper functioning and security of election machines has never been more crucial.

On Oct. 17, the NCSBE introduced a major initiative, “How North Carolina Secures Elections for Voters.” **We support this effort** and recognize the need for this important initiative. The foundation of our democracy rests on the confidence of voters showing up on election day and being confident in election outcomes. The League wants county leaders to put voters first. Recent election experiences have demonstrated that existing testing and evaluation protocols are not sufficient to prevent malfunctions in ES&S ExpressVote machines.

We need a safe and secure voting system in 2020 – hand marked paper ballots are being used by all other large counties in North Carolina. Voting problems that may appear to be confined to one county will ultimately impact the election outcomes of all of North Carolina and potentially all the United States.

—Delores Johnson Hurt

### No Voter ID Required for 2020 Elections

A US District Court judge has temporarily blocked NC from implementing its law requiring voters show an approved ID at the polls for 2020.

### Primary Registration Deadline Feb. 7

League volunteers are scrambling to work all the voter registration drives that the committee has been asked to provide. With the earlier March 3 primary, election deadlines are coming up soon, including the deadline for voter registration: **Feb. 7.**

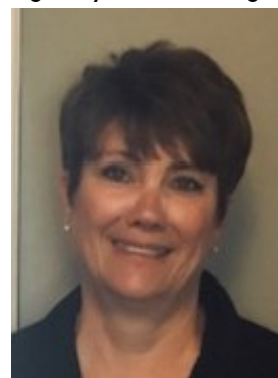
Feb. 7	Deadline for registration
Feb. 13	In person absentee voting/same day registration starts
Feb. 25	Last day for absentee by mail
Feb. 29	Last day for in person absentee voting/same day registration
Mar. 6	Last day to receive absentee ballots with a Mar. 3 postmark
Mar. 3	PRIMARY ELECTION

### Voter Service Committee Going to CPCC class—to teach

Several League members are diligently researching the history of the 19th Amendment for a 60-minute presentation at CPCC classes March 3.

CPCC invited the League to talk about the struggle to get all women the right to vote, including how the amendment came to pass, the hardships that women went through to achieve victory and how women had to continue to fight for access to the ballot. Women had to get past state roadblocks and access for minorities. Full voting rights were not granted to all citizens until the 1960's Voting Rights Act was passed.

If you have worked on a program like this, taught a class with this material or are just interested, there is still time to help with this project. Contact Voter Service Director **Regan Aduddell** [here](#).



Regan Aduddell

## League in Action

### Civics 101 Gears Up for Spring Session

The schedule for LWVCM Civics 101 has been announced and applications are being taken now for the classes. Sixty spots are available for the session. The fee is \$60, which includes materials and graduation dinner at the final meeting.

CITY GOVERNMENT Monday, Feb. 24

COUNTY COURTS Tuesday, Mar. 3

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS  
Tuesday, Mar. 10

COUNTY GOVERNMENT Tuesday, Mar. 17

GRADUATION & CHARLOTTE OBSERVER  
Tuesday, Mar. 24

To register, click [here](#) or go to [goleaguego.org](http://goleaguego.org) and find the Civic 101 link under Action Teams.

### Voter Registration Wide-Reaching

LWVCM volunteers will participate in the Jan. 29 Point in Time Mecklenburg County effort to contact homeless and sheltered citizens to offer voter registration.

Voter Services committee also is pursuing plans to register airport employees and others in temporary housing. Chair **Regan Aduddell** asks that anyone with ideas about increasing LWVCM outreach contact her [here](#).

### Education Action Team

The LWV Education Committee is studying the recently published consultant report, **Sound Basic Education for All**, which investigated the educational status and needs in NC and developed an action plan. The report provides recommendations to help the state achieve compliance with its constitutional responsibility to provide every student with an equal opportunity for a sound basic education, as stated in the Supreme Court of North Carolina's decision in *Leandro v. the State of North Carolina* (1997) (*Leandro*).



Jeanne Smith

The extensive report covers **Finance and Resource Allocation, Effective teachers, Qualified principals, Early Childhood Education, High Poverty Schools and School Assessment**. The Education Committee is reviewing the report's data and recommendations to determine how they can be applied to CMS, especially with the viewpoint of equity. —**Jeanne Smith**, co-chair

### ERA Action Alert

Contact your US Representatives and Senators to urge them to support H.J.Res. 53 (115th): Removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment. **DO IT NOW.**

With Virginia poised to become the 38th state to ratify the ERA, opposition has reawakened and several states have moved to stop it.

A Los Angeles Times editorial, Dec. 24, 2019, offered this analysis:

"With passage looking more and more likely, opponents have suddenly conceded that yes, the ERA would have real ramifications. And chief among their concerns seems to be that it would allow women to fight back against the onerous abortion restrictions adopted in several conservative-leaning states. That is the message being sent by the Republican attorneys general of Alabama, Louisiana and South Dakota who have sued, arguing that the ERA should be stopped in its tracks because of an expired congressional deadline and the efforts by five states to rescind their previous support.

"If the ERA passes, the opponents warn in their court papers, 'Activists would urge courts to use the amendment to overturn legitimate regulations of abortion and to mandate state funding of abortions.' They add that it might even confer protections on people based on sexual orientation and gender identity."

Women's Issues Action Team chair **Cate Stadelman** announced the next team meeting will be a conference call Monday, Jan. 27, 6:30 pm. Contact Cate [here](#) for details about joining the call.

### Environment & Sustainability Team

Several members of the Environment Team met with Mecklenburg County Manager, **Dena Diorio** in November. They learned about the county's action plans for energy, environmental sustainability, environmental priorities, coordination with Parks and Recreation as well as with Charlotte's 2040 plan.

At the next meeting Jan. 24, 11 am, **Sarah Haley** of the Charlotte Climate Reality Project will give a presentation on climate change, including what local governments are doing about it. Anyone interested is invited to attend and bring your lunch.



## Member News

### WELCOME To New Members

Janice Quintana

Mary Love

Wendy Morato

Samuel Sgroi

Darlene Head Reeves

Dorothy Hunt

Charles Love

Page Lee

### Membership Committee

Reminder to LWVCM members: If your contact information changes, it helps us to communicate with you if you let us know your new name, mailing address, email address and telephone number.

If you are looking for League activities, check out the Action Teams (p. 6) and join one to get involved. More information is available at [goleaguego.org](http://goleaguego.org).

### Congratulations to

LWVCM member **Elyse**

**Dashew**, elected chair of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education.



### Thank you . . .

To these individuals who have contributed to the League since July 1.

Harvey Wood

Mary Monahan

Lucille Howard

Preston Aldri in honor of Mary Klenz

To these women who have contributed to the Vote411.org fund:

Becka Tait

Becky Carney

Cheryl A. Demaio

Linda Levy

Joyce Waddell

Jeanne Smith

Malyn Pratt

Jill Blumenthal

Lucia Trevino-Lane

Pat Sweet

Patricia Boike

Sheila Rondeau

Sue Peck

Sarah Johnson

Wilma Pinter

Regan Aduddell-Mahoney

Contributions also were received from Foundation for the Carolinas and Wells Fargo in matching funds.

### Travelers

**Lucille Howard**, left, and **Beth Springston** cruised the Duoro River in Portugal. Shown at the Belem Tower in Lisbon.



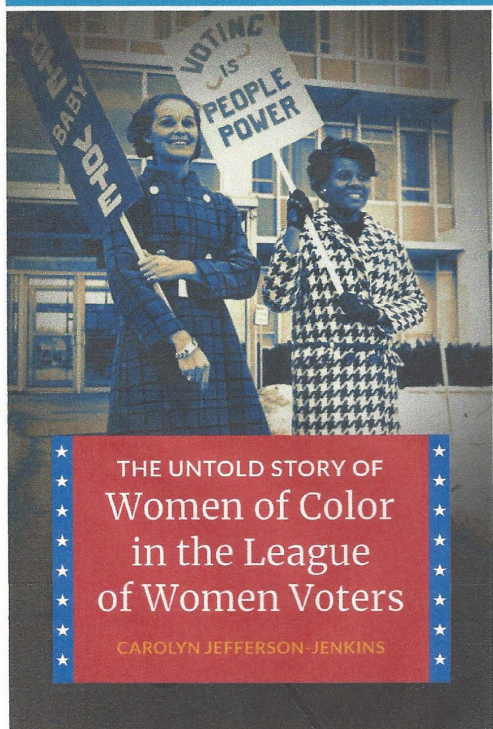
**Erin Giarda**, right, and her mother **Mary Alice Giarda**, at Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain, overlooking the cathedral.



A holiday party, above, was among the many events hosted and co-hosted by the League last month, including a candidate forum prior to the Nov. 3 election, a reception for women serving in elective office and a discussion about the 2020 census.



**20% Off** Promo Code:  
Q12020  
Expires: 6/30/2020



February 2020, 240 pp, 6 1/8x9 1/4  
Hardcover: 9781440874499  
~~\$50.00~~ \$40.00  
eBook: 9781440874505  
eBook pricing available upon request

## The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters

Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, Foreword by Gracia Hillman, Formerly served as Executive Director, LWVUS and LWVEF; Commissioner, U.S. Election Assistance Commission and Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, U.S. Department of State

### 1 VOLUME

*The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters* explores ways in which these women have been marginalized and recognizes how their contributions will positively influence the organization as it moves into its next 100 years.

### FEATURES

Celebrates the 100-year history of the League of Women Voters and the contributions of women of color

Provides an accurate, comprehensive account of history in this grassroots membership organization

Explores the unique challenges that women of color faced in the United States and in its mainstream organizations

Argues that the League must learn from the past and make intentional decisions to change for the future to remain relevant in the next phase of its history

**Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins**, PhD, is adjunct assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

### ABC-CLIO Order Form

Order online at [abc-clio.com](http://abc-clio.com) | Call 800-368-6868, Fax 805-685-9685,  
or return form to ABC-CLIO, PO Box 1911, Santa Barbara, CA 93116-1911

## CALENDAR

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

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Jan. 7 (Tues)        | League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.                   |
| Jan. 8 (Wed)         | Education Committee, 11:30 am, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.                        |
| Jan. 21 (Tues)       | League Talk, 6:30 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave., page 2                         |
| Jan. 23 (Thurs)      | Conversation with CMS Supt. Winston, 6 pm, Charlotte East Language Academy, 6108 Wilora Lake Rd. |
| Jan. 24 (Fri)        | Environment & Sustainability Action Team, 11 am, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.      |
| Jan. 25 (Sat)        | Charlotte Women's March, 11 am, First Ward Park  |
| Jan. 27 (Mon)        | Women's Issues Action Team, 6:30 pm conference call. See p. _                                    |
| Feb. 4 (Tues)        | League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.                   |
| Feb. 7 (Fri)         | Deadline for primary registration  |
| Feb. 12 (Thurs)      | Lunch with the League, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave., see p. 2.                     |
| Feb. 13 (Fri)        | First Day Absentee voting (in person)  |
| Feb. 29 (Sat)        | Last day of absentee voting (in person)  |
| <b>Feb. 29 (Sat)</b> | <b>100th ANNIVERSARY GALA, 6 pm, LeMeridien Hotel, 555 S. McDowell St.</b>                       |
| Mar 3 (Tues)         | PRIMARY ELECTION DAY 6:30 am-7:30 pm   |
| Mar. 17(Tues)        | League Talk, 6:30 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.                                 |