

# VOTER

League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg

September-October 2017

## REACHING LWV-CM

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## A Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

For how many of us will the image of white men carrying lit torches on the University of Virginia campus in 2017 be forever etched in memory? Images reminiscent of the hate-filled demonstrations of the Ku Klux Klan in the late 19th through mid 20th century America, intended to terrify those of us of darker hue and promote a (non-existent) white supremacy so flaunted by those fearing to lose what they believe is the essence of their being?



Delores Johnson Hurt

I won't forget. And neither will the world. And neither will those who condemned those actions in Charlottesville and staged counter-demonstrations asserting that this is not how America is supposed to be.

I am proud to be a part of an organization that works to make America a place where everyone is valued. An organization - though not flawless because we humans are flawed - nevertheless has its heart in the right place. We take strong positions on policies affirming that all women and men are created

equal and use legal means to see that our government of and by the people (but too often led by those who don't have that philosophy) doesn't push us too soon off the proverbial cliff most civilizations eventually fall.

As we began this fiscal year, the League of Women Voters Charlotte Mecklenburg has hit the ground running. We've provided activities to challenge, entertain and inform. Not sure that is the case? Go to our website [goleaguego.org](http://goleaguego.org) and look back on our activities of just the last two months. Then, check the calendar to see what we've lined up for September and October.

My concern is that many of our members are not taking an active role in the League. I'd like to see more of you at Lunch with the League or League Talk, for example. With just those two activities, we try to accommodate members who prefer to be active during the day and those who work. I too often see the same faces at those and other of our functions. I am thankful for those familiar faces, but I also really want to have us benefit from the fresh eyes and ears - and ideas - of newcomers. Please let me know how I can help in that area.

Best wishes, Delores

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

**Find out how our public schools are funded/Why Support Bonds**  
East side forum: Oct. 14      West side forum: Oct. 21, see p. 2

## Coming Events

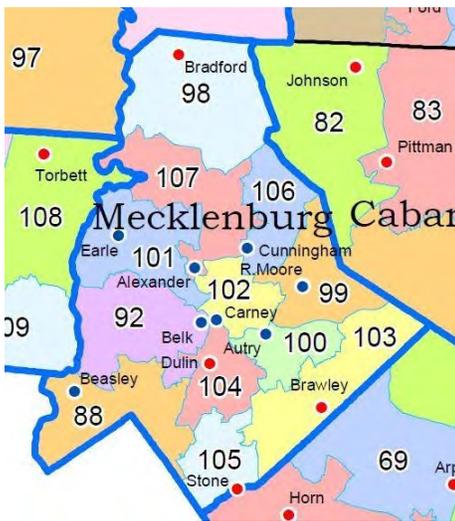
### Redistricting Update at September Lunch with the League

**Barbara Bleiweis** and **Tricia Garcia** will update the League about the Legislature's redistricting activities and, possibly, a final decision on new NC House and Senate maps at Lunch with the League, Wednesday, Sept. 13, 11:30 am at the Midwood League Educational Center. They will also report on the LWVNC Fair Elections Action Team strategy aimed at support for a non-partisan redistricting commission.

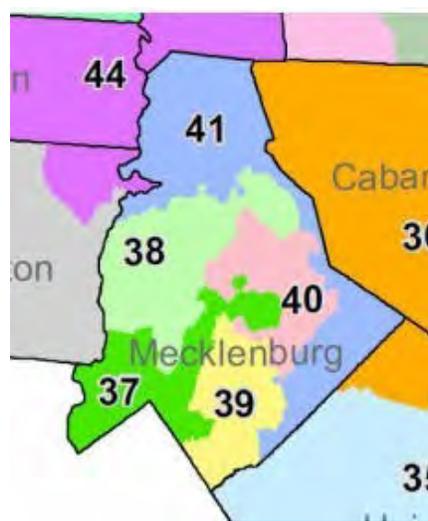
Barbara gave the League's statement at the recent legislative redistricting public hearing held simultaneously in several locations across the state. Other League members also spoke at the hearing as individuals, including Tricia Garcia and Louise Woods. Several other members were in the audience where more than 200 citizens signed up to address legislators.

**See p. 4 for Barbara's description of the event and read her statement.**

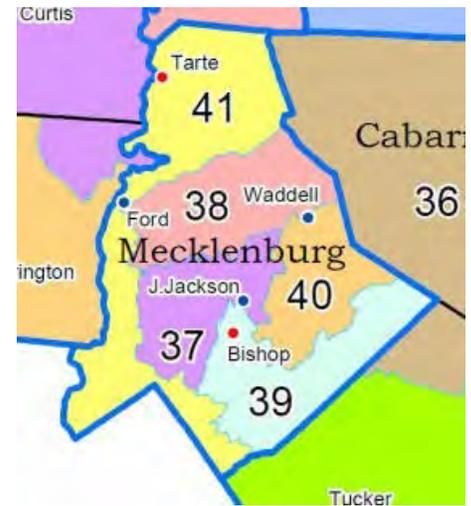
**Watch your email for an e-vite with details on ordering lunch.**



Proposed NC House Map



Old NC Senate map



Proposed NC Senate map

## October League Meeting: School Funding Forums

School funding remains a mystery to many Charlotte newcomers as well as long-time residents. Why doesn't the school board just raise the tax rate to pay for the schools?

Well, they can't.

Find out why—and just who does approve the dollars for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and why voters should approve the proposed school bonds in the November election—at one of two forums sponsored by the LWVCM education committee on Oct. 14 and Oct. 21.

**EAST SIDE FORUM Oct. 14: Amity Presbyterian Church, 2831 N. Sharon Amity Road; enter the parking lot from Pearson Drive to access Johnston Hall (in the back), 9:00-11 am**

**WEST SIDE FORUM Oct. 21: Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, 3400 Beatties Ford Road, just north of I-85, 9-11 am**

**Charles Jeter**, Government Relations Coordinator for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, will lead the audience through the maze of school funding sources and the elected officials responsible for each. Jeter lives in Huntersville and was twice elected to the NC House. He represented District 92, which stretches down the Catawba River from Huntersville to Lake Wylie, from January 2014 until last year when he was appointed to the CMS staff.

The urgency to pass the school bond issue will be voiced by **Brandon Neal** who is on the bond campaign committee. Information about the bonds can be accessed [here](#).

## League Election Action

### Get prepared for Charlotte's city election with Vote411.

See the League's local voter guide Vote 411 with election dates, candidate information and their answers to League questions about city issues.

Candidates for mayor and city council at large and district races have responded to the League's primary voter guide. Go to [www.vote411.org/ballot](http://www.vote411.org/ballot) to see the answers and get your specific ballot information. Use the scroll bar close to the candidate information to see their answers to questions on revitalizing the west and east sides of Charlotte, public safety, infrastructure and affordable housing, among others.

Check back at the website after the primary for information about candidates in the general election. Then the website also will include candidates for school board and non-partisan mayor and town council races in Cornelius, Davidson, Huntersville, Matthews, Mint Hill and Pineville.

Beth Springston heads the Vote411 effort. With a grant from BlueprintNC to promote the site, the League is planning to have a presence at various events around the county handing out bookmarks, magnets, balloons etc. If anyone wants a supply to hand out, or has suggestions where we should be, please contact Beth Springston at [bethspr@gmail.com](mailto:bethspr@gmail.com).



Beth will be driving her Solara convertible in the parade

Join with the League in the 11 am Sept. 4 Labor Day Parade on Tryon Street from 9th to the Square. To march behind the float, make a sign, meet at 10:30, 618 College.

### Debates

If you missed the WTVI airing of the League's Primary Mayoral Debate, you can view it at this [link](#).

Candidates for mayor who will be on the general election ballot will debate in October. Airing is scheduled for **Tuesday, Oct. 17 at 8 pm** and 11 pm Go to WTVI website for a link to more showings.

### ELECTION SCHEDULE

Sept. 9 Last day to of early voting  
 Sept. 12 PRIMARY ELECTION  
 Sept. 15 Registration deadline for Matthews primary  
 Oct. 10 Matthews primary  
 Oct. 13 Registration deadline for General election  
 Oct. 19 First day for early voting  
 Nov. 4 Last day of early voting  
 Nov. 7 General Election for city offices and school board  
 Go to the county [Elections Board](#) website for more information

### National Voter Registration Day Sept. 26

In advance of this year's municipal and statewide elections, 2,000 groups across the country will mobilize to celebrate National Voter Registration Day on Sept. 26, 2017.

LWVCM is a registered participant, and so far we are scheduled to host voter registration tables at the ReStore on Wendover and the Asian Corner Mall (Sugar Creek and Tryon). Working with the Southeast Asian Coalition of Charlotte (SEAC), we will have tables at the Compare Grocery and the Asian super markets in the mall.

Our members in the Huntersville/North Charlotte neighborhoods are getting started with an event in their areas.

To help at these events, contact Voter Service Director Marian Silverman at <http://goleaguego.org/contact.html>

The Voter Services Committee continues its double ceremony schedule at the Naturalization Ceremonies with League volunteers present four times every week.

—Marian Silverman

The LWVCM has joined with the Chamber's Bond Campaign to support investment in kids!



## Redistricting Battle Continues

By the time you read this *Voter*, the Legislature may have taken final votes on new maps for the NC House and Senate which some predict will also end up in court. Meanwhile, previous maps wind their way through the judicial process, including a hearing by the NC Supreme Court Aug. 28 on Gov. Cooper's lawsuit resulting from SB68 which changed the make-up of state and county Boards of Elections and the Rucho case involving racial gerrymandering. Need an explanation of "efficiency gap"? Click [here](#)

The Legislature finally drew new maps and submitted them for public comment. League members flocked to the seven hearing sites and spoke against the maps. Barbara Bleiweis spoke on behalf of the League's Fair Elections Action Team.

### August 22, 2017 —Public Statement League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg

My name is Barbara Bleiweis and I am the Fair Elections Chair for the LWVCM. The League was formed in 1920 from the movement -that secured the right to vote for women. The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that movement is approaching **and yet we continue to fight** for fair elections.

I represent one of over 2,000 League chapters nationwide and one of 18 in North Carolina. We educate voters on election issues including gerrymandering and how it rigs elections.

Today the fight continues to end gerrymandering and reform the redistricting process in order to create fair maps. Our position on gerrymandering is well documented and-- to a large extent--validated by the **Supreme Court's unanimous** decision in June, --to uphold the lower court's ruling that existing districts violate the constitutional rights of North Carolina voters. New maps were ordered with submission to the court by Sept 1, 2017.

Since then, the League has watched legislators continue to manipulate and politicize the process. We are appalled. We received notice on Aug. 17 to provide public comment on Aug. 22. We received maps on Aug. 19 and 20 using criteria *the net result of which continues to disenfranchise groups of voters* using partisanship as a thinly veiled cover for race. The decision to limit response time and meeting space only reinforces the belief that you have NO interest in what we have to say. Your effort to be transparent is disingenuous. It erodes the public trust in you and undermines the democratic process.

These hearings lack the **authenticity we need** and the **accountability we deserve** from elected leaders. This isn't about Republicans versus Democrats. It NOT about retribution for the past. It's about **integrity** and **fairness** to the voters now. The good news is you have the chance to make things right. On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg, we urge you to FIND A WAY to make maps **that are** fair, that **respect** voter laws, and **ensure** that ALL our votes will count.

### Barbara's edited Summary of the Redistricting Hearing Event:

*. . . It was tremendously empowering to have so many LWVCM in attendance today!*

Seven locations throughout the state served as host sites for the hearings. Legislators present at CPCC were Rep. Mary Belk, Senator Joyce Waddell; Sen. Dan Bishop; Rep. Andy Dulin; Rep. John Torbett (Gaston Co.), Rep. Becky Carney and Congressman Robert Pittenger.



What was not clear until we arrived at CPCC was that legislators intended for all seven locations to network "live" and in a round robin fashion have speakers deliver their statements. The logistics and technical challenges of such a plan made the event cumbersome, to say the least.

Adding to the frustration of the audience was the warning from Rep. David Lewis (in Raleigh) to refrain from any applause because such applause cuts into speaker time. Many of us ignored his reprimand as we considered it just another form of suppression. Indeed, a Baptist pastor from another site stated precisely that sentiment— to a round of applause.

Although Rep. Lewis asked for feedback on the maps and specific suggestions on what to improve upon, he got almost universal objection to the lack of data and time given the public to provide any meaningful feedback. Various speakers accused the NC General Assembly of bad faith and expressed outrage at the money spent on litigation and continued use of map consultant Thomas Hoefeller who had drawn the illegal racially gerrymandered maps.

The LWVCM was well represented with at least nine members in attendance. It was clear from the energy in the room that North Carolinians will fight for the end of gerrymandering and will not stop until fair maps and a fair process to draw them become law.

## League News

### THEATER OUTING FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Join your friends and fellow League members Thursday, Sept. 21, for a night at the theater watching a dress rehearsal of "The Bridges of Madison County." Described as an "epic love story" performed as a musical by CPCC's renowned theater students, "Bridges" was one of the best-selling books of the 20th century and hailed by critics as "lyrical, sensuous and sensitive."

The musical, presented in Halton Theater at 1206 Elizabeth Ave., will begin at 7:30 pm. Free parking is available at the CPCC employee/theater garage at 1225 E. 4th St. Cost for the show is \$12.00.

Go to [goleaguego.org](http://goleaguego.org) to get your ticket. Print your receipt for proof-of-purchase to show at the door. Tickets must be pre-purchased.



*Thank you* to our contributors who add a "little extra" to dues and outright generous gifts that keep the League operating. Every donation helps the League carry out its mission.

|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| Mary Sutter  | Lucille Howard |
| Ann Foster   | Janice Valder  |
| Sue Peck     | Rollin Raymond |
| Linda Levy   | Malyn Pratt    |
| Wilma Pinter | Becka Tait     |

### Welcome new members

|                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Latonia Barrett  | Leta Bosc       |
| Larry Bosc       | Douglas Cosby   |
| Carolyn Dunand   | Marsha Ford     |
| Maxine Howard    | Keirstein Huth  |
| Page Lee         | Ann McDermott   |
| Melody Myers     | Cambria Nielsen |
| Liza Pratt       | Marcia Ramouter |
| Jane Roberts     | Allen Schorr    |
| Ceretha Sherrill | Van Snowden     |
| Samantha Stiehl  | Tiffani Teachey |
| Polly Seiss      | Mary Kaczmarek  |
| William Soukup   | Erin Giarda     |

## League Opportunities

### CIVIC 101 OFFERS NEW FALL SESSION

#### Leaguers get registration priority Sept. 4-9

Due to popular demand, a second Civics 101 class in 2017 will be held this fall. The class will meet on five consecutive Tuesday evenings Sept. 26-Oct. 24.

Most of the class will be filled by those on the spring session's waiting list who will have a reserved registration period until September 4. After that, League members can register until September 9 at which point the program will be open to the public.

This program's sessions are City Government, County Courts, CMS Board of Education, County Government and graduation with the *Charlotte Observer* as the fifth and final session.

We are excited to have thought-provoking speakers including former Mayor Richard Vinroot, former CMS board member Trent Merchant, and executive editor of the *Charlotte Observer* Sherry Chisenhall.

At the Women's Equality Day Celebration in August, three current candidates for election this fall spoke positively about taking Civics 101, including Mayor Jennifer Roberts. Perhaps, as in prior classes, there will be future political leaders among the attendees in this fall session.

Register [here](#).

—Tom Murdock

### Support School Bonds Nov. 7

Our public schools are among Charlotte-Mecklenburg's most important assets. We must continue to invest in them to give our children their best opportunities to learn and succeed, and to keep the local economy and quality of life strong. CMS has \$2 billion in long-range capital building needs. The \$922 million bond package will fund the **29 most pressing projects**, including new construction to relieve overcrowding and replacing seven campuses that are more than 60 years old. Because of sound financial management, the county can issue the bonds without raising taxes. The LWV has joined with other community leaders to ask voters to vote **YES** for the bonds.

# Gerry Birthday Party



L-R, Harry Taylor, Beth Springston, Ashleigh Morgan, Barbara Bleiweis, Page Lee and Isabel Cosby



Barbara Bleiweis

Mary Cox, along with Barbara Bleiweis, has penned another poem about redistricting.

### **“Redistricting ABC’s a Poem for the People”**

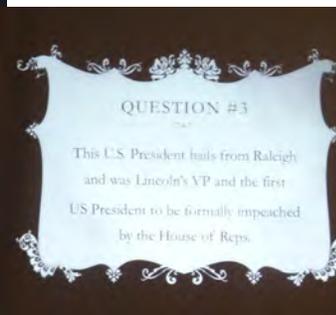
Read it [here](#)



Democracy Bob Harrison, Gerry Mander, Harry Taylor



Ashleigh Morgan conducts the trivia quiz



# Women's Equality Day 2017



Mayor Jennifer Roberts



Emcee Debbie Snowdon



Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins



Democracy Bob Harrison, Barbara Bleiweis



Left, lunch for Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins, Debbie Snowdon, Lucille Howard, President Delores Johnson Hurt, Maxine Eaves

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG

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



**Advocate—Educate—Empower**

Visit LWV-CM's Website:  
[www.goleaguego.org](http://www.goleaguego.org)

**Dated Material**

**Forwarding Service Requested**

*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.*

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Sept. 4 (Mon)    | Labor Day Parade 11 am  |
| Sept. 5 (Tues)   | League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.              |
| Sept. 12 (Tues)  | PRIMARY ELECTION DAY—GO VOTE  |
| Sept. 13 (Wed)   | League Lunch, 11:30 am, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.                          |
| Sept. 21 (Thurs) | Theater fundraiser, 7:30 pm, CPCC's Halton Theater, 1206 Elizabeth Ave.                     |
| Oct. 3 (Tues)    | League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.              |
| Oct. 12 (Thurs)  | Mayoral debate taping, WTVI   |
| Oct. 13 (Fri)    | Registration deadline for general election  |
| Oct. 14 (Sat)    | LWV Education Forum, Amity Presbyterian Church, 2831 No. Sharon Amity Rd., 9:00 am          |
| Oct. 17 (Tues)   | Mayoral debate aired on WTVI, 8 pm and 11 pm  |
| Oct. 21 (Sat)    | LWV Education Forum, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, 3400 Beatties Ford Road, 9:00 am |
| Nov. 7 (Tues)    | GENERAL ELECTION—GO VOTE  |
| Nov. 7 (Tues)    | League Board of Directors, 6:15 pm, League Education Center, 1817 Central Ave.              |

