

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write this, **Judge Ketanji Jackson Brown** has the votes to be appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States. Despite strong opposition, there has been no rioting and no credible threats to overthrow our government from those opposing her nomination. Our former president made a major effort to invalidate the last presidential election, but our government has held.



Ruth Reed

So far, democracy is working. But it appears fragile. And Russia's attack on Ukraine only highlights the importance of democracy and a free press. I'm glad to be a member of the League during these times: at least I feel like there is something I can do. What I can do may seem insignificant but knowing that there is a network of League members (and people in other organizations, as well) working with me give me hope. I can't do much for Ukraine on my own, but I can work in our community of Oconee and Pickens Counties and the state of South Carolina to foster good governance. And that work at the grassroots is the key to the strength of our United States. I'm particularly proud of our League's work with the election commissions of our two counties—work that is particularly suited to the League. This work doesn't happen if there isn't a good infrastructure to support the vision, and I have been particularly worried about communication efficacy during my time as a co-president during the covid pandemic. Worrying about the website, email lists, how to get information out—not the exciting work of an organization, but crucial. I'm delighted to report that our website is well on its way to being useful again. The website, www.lwvop.org, can become our "home base." Facebook, newspapers, radio, social media community groups, and whatever else we can uncover can then be means of disseminating messages to various groups.

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THE VOTER

League of Women Voters of Oconee and
Pickens Counties
*Serving the Citizens of Oconee and
Pickens Counties*
P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633
lwvop.org

OFFICERS:

Ruth Reed, Co-President
Linda Gahan, Co-President
Jill Gemmell, Vice-President
Ellie Taylor, Secretary
Elaine Laiewski, Treasurer

ELECTED DIRECTORS:

Buzzy Adams
Kathy Bargerone
Carolyn Bishop-McLeod
Sheila Crawford
Sandy Land
Janet Marsh
Sarah McNeill

APPOINTED BOARD:

Mike Ellison, *Voter* Editor
Alice Flower, Vote411
Eleanor Hare, Policy Advisor
Cheryl Lee, Voter Registration
Allison Ranson, Webmaster
Janie Shipley, Policy Advisor
Holly Ulbrich, Policy Advisor

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| | |
|----------|---|
| April 5 | Pickens County Board of Voter Registration & Elections, 4:30 pm at Pickens County Administration Facility, 222 McDaniel Ave, B-9, Pickens, SC 29671. |
| April 7 | Candidates Forum for the Westminster City Council Special Election, 6:30 – 8 pm. at American Legion Post 107 on 205 Lucky St., Westminster **Recap to be featured in May <i>Voter</i> . |
| April 19 | LWVOP program: Penny Cothran will speak about her work with Sierra Club. <i>Is SC Ready for a True Energy Democracy?</i> - virtual at 7 pm. |
| April 26 | LWVOP Board Meeting at 5 pm by Zoom. |
| April 28 | Oconee County Board of Elections & Voter Registration, following the 10:00 a.m. Canvass Hearing at 415 South Pine St. Walhalla SC. |

CO-PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE CONTINUED

The communication group has developed a good plan for coordinating this work. Our first test case is the candidate forum on April 7 for the Westminster city council, our first forum of 2022. This may be my last co-president’s message—and I feel good about stepping down with this communication effort in place. If we can foster good governance in Oconee and Pickens Counties and in the state of South Carolina, we will be doing our part for an effective United States and a better world.

Submitted by Ruth Reed

Proposed By-Laws Changes

1. Change the name of the organization from League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area to League of Women Voters of Oconee and Pickens Counties in all places it appears in the By-Laws. In the cases where it is abbreviated, change LWVCA to LWVOP.
2. Change the first day of the fiscal year from June to July to conform with LWVUS fiscal year:

Article IX. Financial Administration

Section 1. Fiscal year. *The fiscal year of the LWVOP shall commence on the first day of July each year.*

PREVIEW OF APRIL MEETING

What is energy democracy? At the intersection of social justice, equity, clean energy jobs, and family-sustaining livelihoods is a newish term called energy democracy. Enabling community ownership and control of energy resources, with shared decision-making authority that involves all stakeholder groups, has yielded sustainable, healthy, resilient communities in nine+ states across the country. Community choice programs have made energy affordable and hastened renewable energy development, all while confronting racial oppression with a decentralized energy model. "The struggle is not simply to decarbonize the economic system, but to transform it," say energy democracy gurus **Denise Fairchild** and **Al Weinrub**.

Penny Delaney Cothran is the Sierra Club community organizer for the "Ready for 100" campaign, described in the accompanying document in this *Voter*, based in Columbia, S.C. You can follow along on Facebook @RF100SC. She joined the Sierra Club in 2018, having worked in the nonprofit sector since 2003 in a variety of marketing and communications roles, including editing three award-winning magazines. Among other duties, she sits on the City of Columbia's Climate Protection Action Committee, helping the city fulfill the promise of 100% clean, renewable energy. As a strategic thinker in her community, Cothran has served on several nonprofit boards outside of work, primarily in the realm of homelessness and poverty alleviation. In 2014, she was recognized for her volunteerism as an Influential Woman in Business by the Columbia Regional Business Report.

Annual Meeting

Tuesday, May 17, at 6 pm
Buffet dinner at 6:30 pm
Occasions at Wedgefield
1551 18 Mile Rd
Central, SC 29630



We are delighted to announce our first in-person meeting since before Covid! Dinner will be followed by the business meeting to vote on a slate of officers and the budget for 2022-2023, our program, and updated bylaws. We plan also to review local League work. The program will be renewing friendships over good wine, compliments of our Board members. Ticket price: \$20. Friends and family are welcome.

Contact **Cheryl Lee** to reserve your place: cheryl_lee1234@bellsouth.net.
 Reservation deadline: May 3, 2022

The cost of \$20 per person will be collected at the door. Email **Ruth Reed** at reed.juniata@gmail.com or call/text 814 251 4163:

- If you would prefer to check in by Zoom.
- If you need a ride.
- If you can provide a ride.

LOCAL LEAGUE PROGRAM

League Program to be Presented for a Vote at the Annual Meeting, May 17, 2022

Education

Adequate financing of education, greater fiscal autonomy for school boards, and structure of Pickens County School Board.

Position In Brief:

- The LWVOP believes our schools should be adequately financed. Therefore, we support increased taxes, if necessary, for Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson County schools.
- The LWVOP supports greater fiscal autonomy for the School Boards of Trustees in Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson Counties.

Growth Management

We support intentional and collaborative growth management in the three-county area (Anderson, Oconee, Pickens) of South Carolina.

Position In Brief:

- We support intentional and collaborative growth management in the three-county area (Anderson, Oconee, Pickens) of South Carolina.
- We encourage regular consultations among public agencies related to growth and development and local elected bodies -- city councils, county councils, and school boards. We also encourage an open and frequent dialogue between those agencies and the public on growth management.
- We support the concept of managing growth to preserve and enhance quality of life for all residents, old and new, through the effective and coordinated use of such land use management tools as conservation easements, purchase of development rights, development impact fees, and zoning where appropriate.

Representative Government

Support for odd number of members of committees, commissions, and councils and seven member Pickens County Council

Position In Brief:

- We support that committees, commissions and councils consist of an odd number of voting members.
- We support increasing the membership of the Pickens County Council to seven members, elected from the same single-member districts as the School Board members.

READY FOR 100

The “Ready For 100” campaign of the Sierra Club advocates for an equitable and affordable energy system powered by 100% clean, renewable energy by the year 2050. The Sierra Club envisions healthy, thriving communities across the United States, powered by affordable, community-based, and 100% clean, renewable sources of energy; where our energy system is predicated on racial, economic, and environmental justice: where a thriving workforce has access to secure, safe, and sustainable jobs; and where there is democratic accountability to ensure that the energy industry is fair, just, and aligned with the public interest.

Communities across the United States are committed to leading the transition to 100% clean, renewable sources of energy, like wind, solar, and battery storage. As civic and religious leaders, students, parents, frontline workers, business owners, educators, mayors, and beyond, Sierra Club is nurturing a diverse movement in cities and towns across the country to pursue the solutions needed to develop strong, healthy, resilient communities.

Renewable energy is cleaner, healthier, and more affordable than dirty fuels like coal and fracked gas—it creates family-sustaining union jobs, lowers bills, and is available right now. It’s time to put power back in the hands of our communities and leave fossil fuels behind. Mayors advocating for a 100% renewable energy future include Columbia, SC, **Mayor Steve Benjamin**.

POLL WORKERS NEEDED FOR PICKENS COUNTY



If you (or someone you know) are interested in working at the polls in either June or November, please use the survey link below, or provide the Pickens County elections office (see below) with your (or their) contact information, so that we can get in contact. Pickens County will need additional poll workers to reach the 300 plus workers needed for the June primaries.

At this time, managers will be paid \$135 (\$75 for working election day and \$60 for completing training) and clerks will be paid \$195 (poll manager pay + \$60 for additional training and responsibilities). *All poll workers will be required to participate in training.*

Survey link: <https://forms.gle/nUk1SVieUVyEQMid6>

You are welcome to call (864-898-5948) or email (vrpickens@co.pickens.sc.us), if you have any questions.

CHECK OUT LWVOP'S UPDATED FACEBOOK PAGE!

<https://www.facebook.com/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Oconee-and-Pickens-Counties-120397393402>

The recently formed Communications Committee, **Heidi Williams**, **Cherie Walker**, and **Pat Spurlock**, is at work, striving to improve our Facebook presence. It is designed to grab people's interest, help them stay up-to-date, and send them to the LWVOP website (or other sites) for more detailed information. March posts included:

- Westminster Candidate Forum
- *Freedom of Information Act*
- LWVSC Action Alert regarding the Education Scholarship Accounts Bill
- Events on expanding health care access, 2 webinars from LWV Charleston, and LWVOP monthly meeting

Facebook benefits to LWVOP and you:

- Message is immediate, so LWVOP can keep up on rapidly changing issues.
- Audience increases, even among non-League members, making our collective voice stronger.
- User can share items of importance with their friends and networks, increasing LWVOP and its reach exponentially.

How you can help:

- Like the page. Facebook uses this to suggest the page to people with similar interests.
- Share posts. This will make the posts visible to people you are Facebook friends with.
- Suggest posts that are appropriate for our page. For example, something you saw on another League page or elsewhere.
- Suggest improvements that will broaden our reach. Look at other Facebook sites and let us know what appeals to you, particularly what prompts you to act.

The LWVOP website (<http://www.lwvop.org/>) is also being updated, thanks to **Cherie Walker** and **Carol Asalon**. More on the website updates next time. Contact **Cherie Walker** at mom.walker@gmail.com.

The slate of officers from the Nominating Committee will be emailed to members once it's finalized. If you would like to serve in the upcoming year, please contact **Patty Warner**, Nominating Committee Chair at: patty.warner15@gmail.com.

TREASURER’S REPORT AND PROPOSED BUDGET

| Income | Budget 21-22 | Actual YTD- March | Projected Year- End |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Member Dues | \$4,590 | \$3,870.99 | \$3,871 |
| Contributions (including Ed Fund) | \$1,500 | \$1,012.00 | \$1,309 |
| Fundraising/Sales/Activities | \$310 | \$0.00 | \$0 |
| LWVOP Reserve Funds | \$2,600 | \$0.00 | \$2,600 |
| Total Income: | \$9,000 | \$4,882.99 | \$7,780 |

| Expenses | Budget 21-22 | Actual YTD- March | Projected Year- End |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Nat'l Per Member LWV Dues | \$2,192 | \$2,192.00 | \$2,192 |
| SCLWV Per Member Dues | \$959 | \$959.00 | \$959 |
| State/National Meetings | \$2,000 | \$0.00 | \$600 |
| Printing | \$800 | \$1,097.80 | \$1,258 |
| Postage/Mailing | \$700 | \$203.44 | \$395 |
| Annual Meeting - May | \$300 | \$0.00 | \$300 |
| Meetings (zoom)) | \$400 | \$0.00 | \$400 |
| Web (Hosting, URL) | \$430 | \$820.16 | \$820 |
| Program/Action | \$400 | \$0.00 | \$400 |
| VOTE 411 | \$350 | \$355.73 | \$356 |
| Co-President's Misc. Fund | \$269 | \$0.00 | \$0 |
| Membership | \$100 | \$0.00 | \$0 |
| Voter Ed/Services | \$100 | \$0.00 | \$100 |
| Total Expenses: | \$9,000 | \$5,628.13 | 7,780 |

TREASURER’S REPORT AND PROPOSED BUDGET

Proposed Budget 2022 - 2023

| INCOME | | EXPENSES | |
|------------------------------|----------------|---|----------------|
| Member Dues | \$4,590 | LWVUS Per Member Payment | \$2,240 |
| Contributions | \$1,000 | LWVSC Per Member Payment | \$980 |
| Fundraising/Sales/Activities | \$1,300 | State/National Meetings(conven- tions) | \$1,400 |
| LWVOP Reserve Funds* | \$2,110 | Printing | \$800 |
| TOTAL INCOME: | \$9,000 | Postage/Mailing | \$300 |
| | | Annual Meeting | \$400 |
| | | Meetings (zoom & meeting room) | \$825 |
| | | Web (Hosting, URL) | \$425 |
| | | Program and Action | \$530 |
| | | VOTE 411 | \$400 |
| | | Co-Presidents' Fund/Supplies | \$500 |
| | | Membership | \$100 |
| | | Voter Ed/Services (Forum; supplies) | \$100 |
| | | TOTAL EXPENSES: | \$9,000 |

I think we will end this fiscal year under budget. Our checking account balance as of 3/31/22 is \$12,486.82 and our LWVUS Ed Fund balance is \$667.36 after paying our VOTE411 fee. During the year, some of our former members transferred to the newly formed Anderson League. We were not able to get the \$868 donation for the printing of PPOs. (This list of contact information of representatives in three counties is compiled after elections every two years.) Due to a billing cycle change by the LWV of California, we had to pay an additional \$400 for our MYLO web fee. Also, thanks to Ruth for paying the zoom fee to conduct our monthly meetings online this year.

Upcoming costs include paying for two delegates to attend the LWV National Convention online and renting space for a voter forum in Oconee County. The board has approved to reallocate our meeting budgets to help pay for our Annual meeting on May 17 with a dinner social to end our year with an in-person event.

For next year, the budget committee included rent for meeting space, supplies for our new name change, and projected costs to increase our community outreach. In closing, I ask you to come to the annual meeting and vote in favor of the by-law revision to change our fiscal year from June 1-May 31 to July 1–June 30.

Submitted by Elaine Laiewski