



THE VOTER

August 2022, Vol. 49 No. 6

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Oconee and Pickens Counties

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The League of Women Voters of Oconee and Pickens Counties will resume in-person meetings this fall at the OLLI Building located in Patrick Square. We have entered a Community Partnership with OLLI, having education as our common goal. League will contribute \$250 and host/teach/organize three OLLI courses and OLLI



Linda Gahan

will furnish a meeting space and advertise our programs. In addition, we agree to follow the rules, a win-win for both partners.

It has been a busy and productive summer for LWVOP's Reproductive Rights Committee chaired by **Sandra Land**.

In the wake of the Supreme Court's decision to strike down *Roe v. Wade*, LWVOP has advocated for reproductive choice as the South Carolina Legislature moves forward with a total abortion ban. League members have participated in marches, testified at the House Ad Hoc Committee on abortion in Columbia, written *Letters to the Editor* in three county newspapers, met with legislators to discuss the issue, formed partnerships, engaged the community, and more.

The programs this fall promise to be informative and relevant – new voting and election laws, recycling, and the teacher shortage.

We will host multiple candidate forums in the two counties, and we will need a host of volunteers to pull this off. A party will celebrate the end of 2022 and our new name.

Come and support your league.

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League of Women Voters of Oconee and Pickens Counties
P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29631
<https://my.lwv.org/south-carolina/oconee-pickens-counties>

OFFICERS:

Linda Gahan, President
Holley Ubrich, Vice-President
Ellie Taylor, Secretary
Elaine Laiewski, Treasurer

ELECTED DIRECTORS:

Kathy Bargeron
Carolyn Bishop-McLeod
Sandy Land
Janet Marsh
Sarah McNeill
Pat Spurlock
Cherie Walker

APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

Past President	Ruth Reed
Policy Advisor	Eleanor Hare
Policy Advisor	Janie Shipley
Voter Reg	Cheryl Lee
Vote411	Alice Flower
Web Master	Allison Ranson
Web Master	Carol Asalon
NAACP Liaison	Sheila Crawford

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 15	National Voter Registration Day, Technical Campuses in Easley, and Seneca
September 20	Program on “ Voting and Elections and More ”, 7 p.m., OLLI
September 27	Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Zoom
October 18	Program on “ What’s Happened to Recycling? ”, 7 p.m., OLL
October TBD	Multiple Candidate Forums in Pickens and Oconee Counties, TBA
November 15	Program on “ The Teacher Shortage ”, 7 p.m., OLLI
December 13	Holiday Party

VOTE411 Candidate Information

VOTE411 Candidate Information will be available on VOTE411.org after September 19. This is a good website to find out how candidates running in various county, city and school board races respond to questions on various issues.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

It’s time to pay your LWVOP membership dues: \$60 for a primary membership plus \$30 for each additional household membership, \$10 for a student membership. Your LWVOP membership dues cover our operating expenses in your local area, and your memberships in the LWV of South Carolina and the National League.

Bring your dues payment to a meeting in August or September or

- mail a check to: LWVOP PO Box 802 Clemson, SC 29633.
- click on the JOIN button at the top of our website to renew your membership via PayPal. There is a \$2 fee.
- use the Bill Pay section of your bank or credit card.

Submitted by Elaine Laiewski

LWVOP SEPTEMBER PROGRAM VOTING, ELECTIONS AND MORE

As the midterms approach, it is all hands-on deck for election work. At the meeting, we will discuss the role of primaries and how they could be made better as well as changes in South Carolina election laws taking effect this year. We will have some interesting elections this year in the upstate, including municipal, county council and school board races as well as state legislators and a U.S. Senate race, statewide races including Governor, Superintendent of Education, and several other constitutional officers. There's also a constitutional amendment on the ballot addressing rainy day funds.

We want to encourage people to help with upcoming candidate events and voter registration opportunities. We also invite you to sign up to be a poll worker, and to let everyone know about the information they can find on VOTE411. Our September meeting is just seven weeks before the election. Let's be ready for what may be the most intense midterm elections in recent memory!

Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

Join us on LWVOP Social Media

Website: lwwop.org

Facebook: [\(20+\) League of Women Voters of Oconee and Pickens Counties | Facebook](#)

There's an easy way to enjoy both: Go to the website and then click on the Facebook button in the upper left-hand corner.

Carol Asalon (Website) and **Cherie Walker** (Facebook) are working hard to improve the structure of these media as well as ensure up-to-date messages for you. They are assisted, as needed by **Alice Ranson** and **Heidi Williams**, as well as the entire Communications Team. Additionally, our first "Speaker's Bureau" engagement is this month, with **Pat Spurlock** speaking to the Walhalla Diversity Committee.

Recently, the Team has been helping promote the Health Policy Committee's advocacy on abortion with *Letters to the Editor* in the *Seneca Journal* and the *Sentinel Progress* (Easley). Our website and Facebook are also carrying the message.

Soon the Team will be supporting the Candidate Forums and VOTE411 by alerting our members and the public to their important mission - Making Democracy Work!

If you would like to join the Communications Team, or have suggestions for it, please contact **Janet Marsh**, jmarsh@clermson.edu.

VOICES ARE NEEDED NOW TO STOP ABORTION BANS

The LWVOP has been working since June to protect reproductive rights in South Carolina through public education and advocacy in Oconee and Pickens Counties. It appears that the Legislature is acting quickly to pass something out of both houses before the election in November, because after election day they are no longer able to continue work initiated by this General Assembly.

LWVOP Members, with other individuals and community organizations, have

- organized the Reproductive Rights Group with LWVOP Members and others;
- disseminated the excellent and timely information from LWVSC Action Alerts;
- published five *Letters to the Editor* in local newspapers, including one from our President, **Linda Gahan**;
- attended the rally in Columbia when the House Ad Hoc Committee held the hearing;
- provided written testimony to the Ad Hoc Committee of the House, to the House Judiciary Committee, and to the Senate Medical Affairs Committee;
- joined three rallies in Seneca spearheaded by an 11th grade student and her mother
- and, helped, via zoom and at a local pub, for constituents to communicate with Legislators, regularly updated our social media (web page and Facebook) to put the reproductive rights issue in the forefront.

Actions have targeted the Senate Medical Affairs and House Judiciary Committees to try to prevent movement of abortion ban legislation forward. As well as letters to the committees, phone calls and visits have been made with **Senator Thomas Alexander** (Medical Affairs) who covers most of our area, and **Representatives Cox and Collins** (House Judiciary) who have constituents in Pickens County. So, we are positioned well potentially to make a difference, especially if we link up with Greenville and Anderson who also have legislators on the committees.

We have been energized by the news from Kansas of the successful referendum to protect abortion rights. Unfortunately, we have been told that our state constitution does not permit citizen initiatives. Rather, such a referendum would have to start in the General Assembly.

An encouraging sign is that one of our local Legislators, **Representative Neil Collins** of Easley (Pickens County), Member of the Senate Medical Affairs Committee, has expressed sincere concerns regarding the real impact on women of restrictive abortion bans like the Fetal Heartbeat Law which he voted for earlier this year.

All LWVOP Members are encouraged to act when they receive the alerts from LWVSC. If a member wants to participate in the activities of the LWVOP Reproductive Rights Group, contact **Sandy Land** at sandyl@pa.net or call 717-491-7483.

Submitted by Sandy Land, Chair LWVOP Health Care Team

2022 LWVUS CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

The 55th National Convention of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) took place in Denver, CO, and online June 23 – 26. **Dr. Deborah Ann Turner** was re-elected as the LWVUS board president for the next biennium, in addition to a new national board of directors.

Campaign for Making Democracy Work®

The Campaign for Making Democracy Work® was adopted for the new biennium and amended to add language around the ‘election of the president by popular vote.

The ERA Added to LWVUS Program

Delegates voted to add the *Equal Rights Amendment* to the LWVUS program so that resources and focus can be used to accomplish its passage and further our mission. This will be a continuation of the work we are already doing on the ERA.

New and Updated Policy Positions

Delegates voted to retain all current positions and adopted two new positions by concurrence (Criminal Justice and Digital Equity) and updated a third position by concurrence (Health Care) These will be published in the 2022 – 2024 edition of *Impact on Issues* before the end of the calendar year.

Bylaw Amendments

Four bylaw amendments passed.

Two of these were part of the Structure Transformation Plan and will be implemented over the coming months and years. Leagues will be presented with engagement opportunities as this work unfolds.

- Amendment 1: Unified Membership System; Elimination of Per Member Payment (PMP)
- o Article XIII. Financial Administration. Sec. 2. Financial Support.
- Amendment 2: Updating Apportionment of Delegates at Convention
- o Article IX. Convention. Sec. 2. Composition.

Two other amendments were adopted to modernize the LWVUS Nominating Committee and LWVUS Board operations.

Budget and PMP

The biennium budget was adopted as presented to invest in the future of the organization and our mission. The Per-Member Payment rate will remain the same until the new membership system is in place, no sooner than 2024.

Resolutions

Resolutions express the will of the delegates at the time of the Convention and are powerful declarations of the organization's values and acknowledgements. At the 2022 Convention, delegates overwhelmingly passed resolutions on Abortion, Immigration, Climate Emergency, DC Statehood, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous People

NEW MEMBER BIOS



Prior to her early retirement in 2001, **Cindy Blair** was employed in a variety of educational pursuits. First, as a Special Education teacher, working primarily with students who struggled with learning disabilities and social/emotional issues.

After receiving an MA in Educational Administration, she moved into positions of supervision, a principalship in an alternative junior/senior high school and ended her career as a director of Pupil Personnel Services. Although she thoroughly enjoyed working with students, creating new programs and curricula, she saw the future of education changing drastically with the “no child left behind” movement. She was relieved to retire to

South Carolina and pursue other, less fraught job opportunities. After she and her husband finished building their dream home on the lake, she worked with several local contractors at some new and more creative jobs, including marketing, customer service and my favorite, a faux painting venture.

Things took a drastic turn in 2007 when her husband was diagnosed with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. After his passing, which was thankfully quick, she reassessed her priorities. She sold the lake house, moved to a small farmette with a tiny house and 5 acres and began to refocus her life. During the ensuing years she has been a volunteer with several group and ultimately settled into creating barn quilt blocks through the Upstate Heritage Quilt Trail, as well as managing the Pickens studio for UHQT. She also has a business-hobby of taking used items and repurposing them, thoroughly enjoying nurturing her creative side!

A native of Dallas, Texas, **Claiborne Linvill** has lived in Clemson since 2005. She holds a B.A. in Communication from Wake Forest University and an M.A. in Professional Communication from Clemson University. She served as PR and Marketing Director of the South Carolina Botanical Garden before founding Rock Creek Communications, a marketing consultancy that serves several clients at Clemson University as well as many Upstate-area businesses.



Claiborne has been active in local nonprofits, including as a board member of the Community Foundation of Greater Clemson and an appointed member of Keep Pickens County Beautiful. She was active in the PTAs at Clemson Elementary and Lakes and Bridges Charter School, the first public, tuition-free school in the Southeast for children with dyslexia, where she was a founding member. Additionally, she was a member of the South Carolina Democratic Party’s **James E. Clyburn** Political Fellowship Class of 2021, which gave her the inspiration to run for office. She is currently the Democratic candidate for Pickens County Council, District 1. Claiborne is married to **Darren Linvill**, associate professor of Communication at Clemson. They have two daughters, **Sylvia** and **Amelia**. Claiborne enjoys hiking, taking dance classes, reading, and playing board games.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION MONTH - SEPTEMBER

We have a lot of work to do before October 7, the last day to register to vote in the November 8 election. We will all be busy from now until then with September being **National Voter Registration Month**.

On September 15, we will be registering voters at Tri-County Tech campuses in Oconee and Pickens Counties from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We have volunteers for this but if you would like to come along, we could certainly use your help.

All high schools in Oconee and Pickens County are looking at their schedules to let us know when we can come to their campuses. Some schools still do not allow visitors so we're waiting to hear from them; however, Pickens High School has invited us on August 29 to register their students. We need volunteers for this site.

We are working with Clemson University student organizations as well as the football team to give them a chance to register to vote.

There are other opportunities that come up at civic organizations and city functions in which we will participate. Experiences with these young people will certainly broaden your horizons.

Submitted by Cheryl Lee

2022 MEMBER SURVEY COMING SOON!

Watch for the 2022 MEMBER SURVEY coming to your email box soon. The information we collect from our members will help us offer enhanced programming, improved communications to you and better outreach to our communities.

Thanking you in advance! -----**Janet Marsh**

A new member will be featured in next month's edition of *The Voter*.

Martha Murtiashaw joined LWVOP in July 2022. She lives in Walhalla, murtiashawm@bellsouth.com.

SENECA RALLY AROUND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS



LWVOP members joined High School student, Cadence Braunsdorf who organized a pro-choice rally in Seneca, SC on July 20, 2022. The new wave...