

League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

LEAGUE LINES

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Mark Your Calendar

UPCOMING EVENTS



Sunday, October 6: Last Day to Register to Vote in November Election (check hours)



Tuesday, November 5: Municipal Elections in SC – see Vote411

FUTURE PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEONS ON THURSDAYS:

October 17, Women's Reproductive Health, Lynn Teague and Debbie Billings
→

November 21, Gun Safety
January 16, Program Planning



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PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON Thursday, October 17, 2019



LYNN TEAGUE, LWV COLUMBIA AREA LOBBYIST,

AND

PROFESSOR DEBBIE BILLINGS, USC PUBLIC HEALTH, ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH TODAY.



We are at a somewhat perplexing juncture in women's reproductive health. Our ability to make our own decisions is

protected as a constitutional right. Polls show that the standards established in Roe v. Wade retain the support of a majority of Americans. However, those rights are under constant attack nationally and also in the South Carolina General Assembly. At present, H.3020, the "fetal heartbeat" bill, has passed in the SC House and is being pushed through the Senate. The speakers will place this in historical and social context and discuss our fight to stop efforts to undermine women's reproductive health in South Carolina. Debbie has written on international women's pregnancy, birth, and motherhood issues.

All League members are welcome.

RESERVATIONS for a catered lunch are required no later than Wednesday noon, October 16. Cost of lunch: \$10.00 (attendees may bring a lunch).

Please RSVP to Susan James:

sc.susanbjames@gmail.com or call 256-6822

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

“SOCIAL CAPITAL: WOMEN’S WORK, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND GERRYMANDERING” - “Alone, we can go faster. Together, we can go further,” Keller Barron reminded attendees at the September Public Policy Luncheon “Think Globally, Act Locally.” The audience grinned and nodded in agreement and understanding.



Keller discussed the work of women who create social capital worldwide. They provide training and jobs, clean water, safe refuge from domestic violence, access to health care, and much more. That was the global part.

At Keller’s invitation, local NGO (non-governmental organization) leaders and members also attended the forum. They introduced their groups and briefly discussed their missions. That was the local part.

Details of who attended and what was discussed are in Sally Boyd’s report within this issue of *League Lines*. You will enjoy reading it.

Many of the groups are direct care providers. They provide safe refuge from domestic violence, training and jobs, food and nutrition, basic health care, and access to education in our community. That was “women’s work” plus the social capital part.

Direct care providers, even if not advocating for social justice explicitly, do so indirectly through their efforts to fill the gaps in our social safety net, thus shining lights on these shortfalls. They ameliorate some results of women’s social and political inequalities, and disproportionate poverty. Here we have social capital mixed with the social justice parts.

Some of the NGOs provide direct care and explicitly advocate. One example is Planned Parenthood. The groups at the Public Policy Luncheon were advocating for a range of issues. None of them were “niche” or “minority” or “special interest” issues. They were all interwoven in women’s politics, which – by the way – should never be framed as a “special interest.” Women are the majority of this country, state, city, and county. In politics, how an issue is framed often determines who will control it. Women’s issues are the concerns of the majority and include gun safety, access to quality public education, clean elections and government, and fair democratic representation. That is the political part.

The work these great women and their teams do to raise money, provide care, protect democracy, and take care of “the least” of their fellow humans takes enormous energy,

time, personal resources, and stamina. Why is it so hard to advance systematic policy reforms which might ease the burdens on women, girls and their families – and reduce the burn out many social justice leaders, workers and volunteers often experience? After all, the issues are majority-based, and public opinion polls show majority support for changes which might alleviate these social problems. That is the gerrymandering part.

Malapportionment skews our representative system from majority. It helps to ratchet open the often small divisions between us. People understand this. It is reflected in polls which display deep cynicism and distrust for many levels of our government. That is the League of Women Voters part. It also includes dozens of other groups working on fair districting as well.

The League of Women Voters of the United States will be powering up ongoing efforts to inform the public about the problem of gerrymandering. The LWV for years has advocated for nonpartisan commissions to draw political boundaries at every level of our democracy after decennial censuses. Some states have reformed and improved their systems. Others, like South Carolina...not so much.

Our League has been part of the effort to inform the public and policy makers about the dire effects of gerrymandering. The League will continue to discuss the problem and offer viable reforms. We are planning an evening program in March of 2020 on the 2020 Census and fair redistricting. More details will follow.

If South Carolina and the U.S. House of Representatives had a more open and nonpartisan system of districting, many of the issues the good people at our Public Policy Luncheon care so deeply about might be advanced. That is the “Alone, we get there faster. Together, we go further” part that Keller Barron highlighted. Together, let us all push for healthy participation in the 2020 Census and for fair redistricting in 2021 and thereafter.

Many thanks to all the group leaders, staff, and volunteers who came to the luncheon. Good luck with all your work. As you work, please ask the “powers-that-be” to help you in the long run by providing more chances for people to be less cynical and discouraged, and for some of the people and causes you care about to see future public policy changes on their behalf. Finally, but not least, thank you to Keller Barron and her colleagues, especially the **VOTE411.com** team, for taking us further. In appreciation,
Laura R. Woliver

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RECAP OF SEPTEMBER PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON: Keller Barron focused on the significance of the theme of the 63rd Conference, UN Commission on the Status of Women: “Think Globally, Act Locally.” Last March, she was one of 20 League delegates to the 9000-registrant international conference in the UN headquarters in New York. She explained, “As I thought about the theme, I realized that we may be more globally aware than we are locally aware. So, this program evolved as an opportunity for us to share our missions.” Barron created a backdrop for examining local actions by summarizing some of the history and highlights of the conference. The UN Commission on the Status of Women, established in June 1946 as part of the UN Economic and Social Council, weighed in that year on the drafting of the Declaration of Human Rights, successfully arguing against using “men” as a synonym for all humanity. The result saw “All men are created equal” changed to “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” The efforts continued over time; the platform adopted unanimously by 189 countries at the 1985 Beijing conference, “Women’s Rights Are Human Rights,” remains the key global policy document on gender equality. She illustrated the scope of the two-week conference by spotlighting several side events and parallel forums, leading up to sharing the “UN Blueprint for Human Rights Progress to



Transform Our World-2030,” a list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

ANN WARNER, CEO of WREN and KELLER BARRON

Barron then turned the focus from “Thinking Globally” to “Acting Locally” by presenting representatives from public service organizations in the Columbia area that serve primarily (though not exclusively) women and girls, each of whom talked briefly about her organization’s

mission. As the presentations unfolded, the audience became more and more impressed and moved by the breadth and depth of the passion-driven service that benefits our area. Organizations whose work we learned of include Junior League, Dining for Women, AAUW, Church Women United, Delta Sigma Theta, Fact Forward (formerly SC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy), LWV, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Moms Demand Action, NOW, Philanthropic Education Organization, Planned Parenthood, WREN, SC Christian Action Council, SC Women in Leadership, Women of Many Faiths, and Women in Philanthropy. After citing the quote, “If you go alone, you may go faster, but if we go together we can go further,” Barron closed her presentation by noting that at the Conference on the Status of Women she attended and in the room where she was speaking, there are those, according to Eleanor Roosevelt, to whom “the future belongs” because you “believe in the beauty of your dreams.” Sally Boyd



MIDLANDS GIVES: Anita Baker attended a debriefing for Midlands Gives, and we are already on the list for May 2020. **Donations may be given throughout the year.** Anita is resigning as our Midlands Gives chair to work with a suicide prevention NGO. She will remain on the Midlands Gives Committee, but we need a new chair.

HELP WANTED: The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area is looking for a volunteer from our membership to lead our committee for the Midlands Gives 2020 fundraiser. The leader would work with our treasurer, Ann Maletic, and be responsible for updating the online profile, leading promotional activities, and recruiting volunteers. Please contact Anita T. Baker at 803-414-2564 or abaker31@sc.rr.com for more information on the position, and contact Board President, Laura Woliver, to express an interest in serving in this capacity. Thank you!

_Anita

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OTHER NEWS



COLLEGE STUDENTS, YOU DECIDE! A street address is required to register to vote in South Carolina. College students can vote using either their dorm address or prior residence. It's your choice! REGISTER TO VOTE BY OCTOBER 6! To vote at school, ask your college registration office for your dorm address. You can use your student ID to register, but you'll need a [federal or government-issued ID](#) to vote. To vote absentee using your home address, apply online to have an absentee ballot mailed to you at school. [VOTE411.org](#) is your one-stop shop for voting information. Check it out!



RICHLAND COUNTY TO RELEASE DOCUMENTS FROM TRANSPORTATION CONTRACTOR soon. TERRACIO.ALLISON@richlandcountysc.gov forwarded the information "In response to County Council's request, the transportation contractor turned over more than 1.5 million pages of documents. The sheer volume of records presents a reviewing, redaction and release challenge that, like the transportation program itself, is unprecedented for the County..." (From the press release, PIO@richlandcountysc.gov).



EXTRA READING

HERE ARE SOME EXCERPTED VOTING STATS/INFO THAT ARE OF INTEREST...WITH THANKS TO ANNE MELLEN, ARCHIVIST, LWV/SC:

Deduction of voting by gender election on **1920**

17,254,150 men	(67.0%)	voted out of a possible 27,245,000
9,457,033 women	(35.1%)	voted out of a possible 26,920,000

Less than one-half of one percent of the non-voting women gave fear of disclosing their age as the reason for remaining away from the polls, and less than two percent cited objections of their husbands to women's voting.

And in 1928, in a remarkable development, the daughters of two of the nation's most powerful men of the previous generation—men who worked on opposing sides in the storied presidential race of 1896—both won election to the US House of Representatives. Ruth Hanna McCormick, the daughter of William McKinley's campaign manager, Marc Hanna, won election from **Illinois** as a Republican and advocated for Prohibition, farmers' interests, and isolationism during her single term of service. Ruth Bryan Owen, daughter of "Cross of Gold" orator William Jennings Bryan, won election from **Florida** as a Democrat and earned praise for her advocacy of child welfare as well as Florida's agricultural interests. Owen's father, the three-time Democratic nominee (and three-time loser) for the presidency, might have smiled from beyond the grave at his daughter's accomplishment. Owen joked about her win: "There! I am the first Bryan who ran for anything and got it!"

If full suffrage produced less change than suffragists had hoped and Antis had feared, perhaps that was partly because women did not vote as a bloc and, indeed, sometimes did not vote at all. Establishment politicians soon learned that, for the most part, they did not need to worry about women voting because there was no such thing as "the women's vote," meaning that ballots cast by women increased the total but rarely changed the outcome.

And, local variations aside, the overall turnout numbers for women voters were indisputably lower than men's. This fact appalled former suffragists and seemed to validate the Antis' claims that women never wanted the vote in the first place. (A Minnesota suffragist put it plaintively: "What, oh what, is Suffrage if you women will not vote?") Determined that woman suffrage would not be proved a flop, in 1924 the League of Women Voters began massive campaigns of advertising and education to "Get Out the Vote" (Figure 2), a program that, by the end of the decade, would evolve into the organization's main mission.

Despite its limitations, the Nineteenth Amendment over the next century helped women assume a role in public affairs that would be hard to imagine without it. Women gradually closed the turnout gap between the sexes, and in every presidential year since 1984, they have exceeded men in voter turnout. In 2016, the Democrats nominated Hillary Clinton to run for president, the first major party to nominate a woman as its standard-bearer. In 2019, women occupied 9 governorships, 24 seats in the US Senate, and 102 seats in the US House of Representatives. A century after ratification, it is clear that though the Nineteenth Amendment did not perfect American democracy, it advanced gender equality in important ways.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN RECENT VOTER TURNOUT - In recent elections, voter turnout rates for women have equaled or exceeded voter turnout rates for men. Women, who constitute more than half the population, have cast between four and seven million more votes than men in recent elections.

VOTER TURNOUT IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS - In every presidential election since 1980, the proportion of eligible female adults who voted has exceeded the proportion of eligible male adults who voted. In all presidential elections prior to 1980, the voter turnout rate for women was lower than the rate for men. The number of female voters has exceeded the number of male voters in every presidential election since 1964.

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PHOTO GALLERY

Rachel Dieter joined Elizabeth Jones for a voter registration drive at Allen University on International Democracy Day. Mayah Williams, president of the pre-law honor society, invited the League. We registered 12 new voters and 1 change of address. We enjoyed building community relations with Allen University.



Rachel Dieter helps a student complete his voter registration form.



Elizabeth Jones prepares some resource material for this newly registered voter.



**NAACP Voter Registration &
Yard Sale: Charmaine Clowney, Elizabeth Jones, Laura Woliver**

***Sharon Ayling registered
voters at Spring Valley
high School's open house
on September 17, 2019.***





**Women's Equality Day –
Anita Baker, Lady June
Cole, Laura Woliver**



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Websites:

National: www.lwv.org/

State: <http://lwvsc.org/>

Columbia: www.lwvcolumbiasc.org

Facebook: *To see our Facebook Page:*

1. Go to YOUR Facebook page and begin typing "**League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area**" in the search box until a list pops up.
2. Click on the name **League of Women Voters of Columbia, SC** with the familiar blue LWV Logo on the left.

That's it!

Twitter:

1. Go to YOUR Twitter account and search for the League of Women Voters Columbia Area and connect.

Facebook and Twitter email address:

[@LWVColumbiaSC](https://twitter.com/LWVColumbiaSC)

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Columbia City Council

1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM City Hall 1737 Main Street Columbia, SC 29201

Check website at www.columbiasc.net

for more information.



Lexington County Council

Meet: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 4:30 PM 2nd Floor County

Administration Building 212 South Lake Drive Lexington, SC 29072

For confirmation of meeting dates, please call 785-8103 or check website www.lex-co.com

www.lex-co.com



Richland County Council

Meet: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM 2nd Floor County

Administration Building 2020 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29202.

For more information, please contact the Clerk of Council Office @ (803) 576-2060 or check:

www.richlandonline.com

