

The Voter: January 2025

From League of Women Voters of Oconee and Pickens Counties <lwvop1@218343882.mailchimpapp.com>

Date Mon 1/6/2025 8:09 AM

To Carol Asalon-Retired <carol.asalon@retiree.furman.edu>

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Calendar of Events

January 21: LWVOP Program Planning

4:00 pm, United Methodist Church

300 Frontage Road, Clemson, SC 29631

Tuesday, January 21, 4:00 p.m.

LWVOP Monthly Meeting: "State and Local Program Planning"

Clemson United Methodist Church

300 Frontage Road, Clemson, SC

Saturday, Jan. 25, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 noon

**Special Community Program: "Education Priorities in the 2025-26 SC
Legislature"**

Central-Clemson Library Community Room

105 Commons Way, Central, SC

February 1, 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

South Carolina LEAD (League Education & Advocacy Day)

Midlands Technical College--Beltline Campus

Columbia, SC

Local Public Meetings

New Meeting Time

Starting in January (and through April), monthly membership meetings will begin at 4:00 pm instead of 7:00 pm. They remain the third Tuesday of the month.

The Board hopes this will allow members to avoid night driving but still accommodate members who work. This policy will be evaluated by the board in May. Comments or questions, [Janet Marsh, Membership Chair](#).

Program Planning

Happy New Year, Oconee Pickens League members. Here is your first Q and A for 2025!

What is “Program”?

The League’s Program is its education and advocacy platform. It consists of the policy positions that the League holds as well as the priorities it selects for action, advocacy and education.

What is “Program Planning”?

Program Planning is the process that leads up to and culminates in the adoption of a Program at the upcoming convention. We are now embarking on the Program Planning process in connection with the May 2025 convention.

What is the local League’s role in Program Planning?

All local Leagues are enthusiastically encouraged to participate in LWVSC Program Planning.

When will this process happen?

During our regular meeting January 21, 4:00 pm

What else will happen at this meeting?

Our League will plan our local program and priorities.

What else do I need to know?

You will receive planning materials prior to the January meeting.

Looking forward to seeing everyone soon! —*Your management team*

Legislative to Local Education Update 2025

Join us Saturday, January 25, 2025 to hear from ACLU of SC Advocacy Director, Josh Malkin, as he talks us through legislation impacting public education and libraries that has been pre-filed by lawmakers this session. Then hear from members of Community Advocates For Education (CAFE) as they discuss the local impact of legislation and their advocacy to protect the freedom to read and learn. Included in the conversation will be ways you can get involved.

Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 noon
Central-Clemson Library Community Room
105 Commons Way, Central

Cosponsors for this event include: CAFE, LWVOP, NAACP Pickens County Branch, NAACP Oconee County Branch, ACLU of SC, E3 Foundation, and ProTruth SC
— *Reba Kruse*

A New Year's Resolution

Would you consider a totally different kind of New Year's resolution? One that increases your ability to affect your local government? Would you resolve to attend a single meeting of local elected government? You have many to choose from: county council, school board, election commission, or city/town council. You may be surprised at the topics discussed and the extent to which these meetings affect you and your community. And, when the meeting is over, resolve to introducing yourself to your representative and thank them for their service. Our elected representatives put in many hours preparing for meetings themselves and meeting the needs of our neighbors. They don't get thanked often enough. You could even super-size your resolution by attending a second meeting (or more!). Best wishes for an informed and interesting New Year.

[Click here for a list of public meetings.](#)

VOTE411

Nationwide, between January 1 – November 5, over 9.1 million voters accessed VOTE411! On the local level, 4,877 voters in Oconee and Pickens counties accessed VOTE411 over the same period. I'd like to thank all the people who helped with this project, including Eleanor Hare, Ruth Reed, and Buzzy Adams who came up with questions for the candidates; Buzzy, Ken Marsh, Carol Kozma, and Ann Fuhr who called candidates; and Janet Marsh who helped with publicity. If I have missed anyone, please accept my apologies.

I think we've done well, but I also feel we could do more. I am stepping down as VOTE411 chair, which might be a good thing. Someone new could bring new skills and ideas to the project. If you feel that this is something you would like to be involved with, please let the management team know. I will be happy to help someone learn the ropes and there are very good training materials available.

Please don't be intimidated. It's not that hard! — *Alice Flower*

Voter Registration and Education Results

Carol Asalon and Shelia Crawford presented an ambitious Plan of Action for voter registration and voter education to the LWVOP Board during our summer 2024 annual retreat. The plan was implemented during the 2024 election cycle.

Here's what we did per our Plan of Action:

- Visited Pickens and Oconee High Schools: distributed posters with voter registration information, held voter registration events and provided voter education presentations.
- Held voter registration events and provided voter education handouts at Clemson University, Tri-County Technical College at Easley and Pendleton, and at many local events.
- Reached out to retirees, minority groups, and inactive voters through mailings and calls.

- Created Social Media Posts for LWVOP Facebook and Instagram that included voter information and registration reminders.
- Created NAACP educational “Do You Care” Facebook postings on voter issues.

Here are our Results:

- Number of Volunteers: 51
- Poll worker applications requested by HighSchool students: 25*
- Total Registered: 138
- Total contacts through mailing and calls: 5,604
- Total contacts at all other events: 1,392
- Total contacts: 6,996

Our mission is voter registration, and it is always ongoing. We learned that voter education and participation are needed. We successfully shared voter education and information with nearly 7,000 residents within Oconee and Pickens counties.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped implement our Plan of Action. We could not have accomplished any of this without each of you. We extend a special thank you to the NAACP Pickens County Branch for building the foundation of this Plan of Action.

* Poll worker application requests increased considerably compared to 2023. Students are participating in the political system, which is exciting news! — *Carol Asalon and Shelia Crawford*

Medicaid Expansion Moves Forward

A number of studies have reported that both of the health of South Carolinians and the state’s economy would improve if Medicaid were expanded to include 360,000 residents with very low incomes. Most recently, the Milken Institute School of Public Health detailed the benefits for both the state and each county, citing the following data:

- number of people covered by Medicaid by county,
- level of new federal funding to each county,
- economic impact of this change, growth of economic output,
- increase in employment, both health care-related and non-health employment and

- *increase in county and state tax revenue caused by the growth.

Despite the detailed and persuasive data, South Carolina remains one of ten states that has chosen not to cover this population made up of people with incomes between 67-100% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$17,300-\$26,800/year for family of 3).

COVERSC, a coalition of 200 organizations in the state, will be working during this legislative session to pass Medicaid expansion legislation. Some changes in the federal and state political environment may pose increased challenges. LWVSC and LWVOP will be issuing a call in the near future – “all hands on deck!” Please respond!
— *Janet Marsh*

Member Dues

Did you pay your dues in 2024? If you are not certain, please reach out to treasurer Wanda Sheehan.

In order to remain on the League’s active roster, your dues need to be paid by January 15. Payment can be online. \$2 is added for the PayPal fee.

- \$60 for individual membership
- \$90 for joint membership
- \$10 for student membership

You can also send a check made out to LWVOP to: LWVOP, PO Box 802, Clemson, SC, 29633.

Please let us hear from you. We have a lot to accomplish and we need you now more than ever!

New Member

Torrie Landon

Torrie grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana and attended college at Miami University. She graduated from Indiana University Southeast with a B.S. in special education. She taught special education for six years in southern Indiana, the metro Atlanta area and finally Charlotte, NC. During their 35 years in Charlotte, Torrie and her husband, Jeff, had three children. Torrie homeschooled her children for several years and worked in the office of a Christian school before returning to school to obtain a Master of library science from East Carolina University. She worked as an elementary school media coordinator for 11 years until retiring in 2022. She and her husband moved to Keowee Key two years ago and enjoy traveling, boating, hiking, mountain biking and pickle ball. Torrie also loves dancing, reading, cooking and gardening. Over the years, Torrie has donated time and resources to Special Olympics, Saint Philomene School in Haiti, Girl Scouts, Habitat for Humanity, Common Heart, and Trips for Kids (mountain biking for youth). She is currently working with a family through BabyRead and serves the community with St. John's Lutheran church in Walhalla. Torrie joined LWV to become more educated and active in issues affecting our community, especially for securing open access to voting and equitable voting districts in our state. She looks forward to meeting and learning from other LWV members.

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