



## Calendar of Events

[Click for a list of local Public Meetings](#)

We must show our interest and determination to make a difference in the current political environment. Please make an effort to attend some of these meetings.

We will take a summer break on *The Voter* for July. Look for us to return in August.

## Get Involved in your League!

The League is run by volunteers. We have many opportunities to get involved and help save democracy! Right now, we are seeking your help in developing our Action List. [Please send any suggestions for the Action List to Cherie Walker.](#)

## Help Connect Us to Community Groups

At the January 2025 monthly program meeting the [“Priority: Civic Education and Engagement”](#) was approved and included the following goals:

- Promote Community Dialogues to bridge political divide.
- Establish Observer Corp to determine where electorate and public officials are lacking information/civic education.
- Continue existing voter education activities (Vote411.org, Candidate Forums, The Voter, letters to the editor.)

Currently, the working group, Voter Registration and Civic Education, will be focusing on the first goal and our first task is to develop a civics education curriculum to be used when speaking to community groups. The other two goals will be addressed soon.

**We need your help in identifying community groups** to which we could speak in both Pickens and Oconee counties. Some ideas may be church groups, women’s groups, civic/community organizations, social clubs, etc. ***All ideas are welcome.***

[Please send your ideas to Carol Asalon.](#) Your help is greatly appreciated! It is so incredibly important during these times to connect with our local communities to bridge the political divide. You can make a difference with your suggestions! Thank you!

# LWVOP Annual Dinner Meeting Recap



May 20, 2025, found 52 people at Occasions at Wedgefield in Central, SC, gathered to share a meal, enact our business, and listen to Dr. Don McKale explain “How Autocracies Happen.” Those 52 included 42 members (12 of whom joined this year) and 10 guests.

After the meal, member and singer/songwriter **Buzzy Adams** sang her composition, “Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton,” to get us into the mood for “saving democracy.”

President **Carolyn Bishop-McLeod** (management team member) gave a report of the year’s activities, available at [LWVOP.org](http://LWVOP.org). It was a busy and successful year. She then recognized **Wanda Shehan** for her service as treasurer and **Allison Ranson** for her service as secretary. Carolyn noted the passing of **Sandy Land** last November and read praise for Sandy’s work in health care from Theresa Arnold, state lobbyist for health care.

Management team member **Ruth Reed** presented the Spirit of Democracy award to **Alice Flower** for her service, including acting as our treasurer for several years, spending a large number of hours updating our website from the old site to our current site and managing Vote 411.org almost singlehandedly for many years. League Board member and Chair of the Pickens County Branch of the NAACP **Shelia Crawford** presented a certificate of appreciation to **Carol Asalon** for her service to voter registration and services. Further information on Sandy Land, the Spirit of Democracy award, and the NAACP citation will be archived with this issue of the *Voter* and will be available at [LWVOP.org](http://LWVOP.org).

With a membership of 109 and 42 members present, we exceeded the 27 required for a quorum. Carolyn Bishop-McLeod led the business meeting. We passed the local program for 2025-26, which details our program (platform) and the 2025-26 budget unanimously. These documents are available at [LWVOP.org](http://LWVOP.org).

We then accepted the report of the nominating committee by acclamation. Our officers for 2025-26 are as follows:

- President: Pat Spurlock
- Vice President: Linda Gorry
- Secretary: Carolyn Bishop-McLeod
- Treasurer: Margie Barnes
- New Directors (two-year terms): Kathy Barger, Sue Blount, Janet Marsh, and Jane McLamarrah
- New Director (one-year term): Janie Shipley
- Continuing Directors: Christine Prado, Carol Asalon, and Cherie Walker.

Following the business meeting, **Dr. Don McKale**, Professor Emeritus and Class of '41 Memorial Professor of the Humanities at Clemson University, spoke on "How Do Autocracies Happen?" Dr. McKale provided an analysis of pre-WWII Hitler (Germany), Mussolini (Italy), and Stalin (Russia) and compared the situation to current autocrats Putin (Russia), Orban (Hungary), Erdogan (Turkey), Modi (India), and Trump. He pointed out that all of these autocrats arose from democracies. Currently, the legislative branch has given power to Trump, leaving the courts to uphold the law and protect democratic institutions. Whether the courts will be able to do this remains to be seen. Dr. McKale expressed deep concern, as has our national League, declaring the US is in a constitutional crisis. Following this sobering presentation, Carolyn called on all of us to continue to be "valiant activists."

## LWVSC Convention Recap



The 37th biennial convention of LWVSC was held in Greenville, May 16 and 17th on the CU-ICAR campus. Greenville co-hosted the meeting, together with the Leagues of Anderson, Oconee-Pickens, and Spartanburg Counties.

Over 100 participants joined to elect officers, amend bylaws, adopt a two-year budget and approve the 2025-27 Program and Action agenda. L WVOP delegates were **Carolyn Bishop-McLeod, Ruth Reed, Kathy Barger, Pat Spurlock, Shelia Crawford, Carol Asalon** and **Janet Marsh**.

Also attending from L WVOP were L WVSC Board members **Cherie Walker** and **Janie Shipley**, **Ken Marsh** as the L WVOP photographer, and **Holley Ulbrich**, who served as parliamentarian.

The convention schedule included a Friday evening dinner and keynote presentation by **Dr. Kimberly Hamlin**, an historian, professor, and member of the board of L WVUS, who spoke on the history of the struggle for women's suffrage in the years leading up to the passage of the 19th Amendment. The Saturday agenda included the business sessions, workshops, a presentation by **Dr. Courtney Tollison** of Furman University, who spoke on the history of the women's suffrage movement in South Carolina, and a panel of three journalists, **Mary McCarthy** (former news director for WYFF TV), **Mary Bullard** (current assistant news director for Fox Carolina), and **Matthew Hensley** (editor-in-chief for the Post and Courier Spartanburg), addressed "Democracy and the Decline of Local News."

Be sure and read more details about this convention in the L WVSC Voter later this June.

## Reflections and Actions from L WVOP Membership Committee

L WVOP growth in membership has been amazing, 26 new members since January 1, 2025! WE ARE DELIGHTED! Most positive occurrences, however, have a downside.

The "downside" is that it is difficult for our Membership Team of four to keep up with the welcoming protocol we want to follow with new members. We believe our members are our most valuable resource; our welcoming protocol reflects that. To briefly highlight a number of accomplishments of new members:

- Assumed management of the all-important VOTE411 website of election/voting information.
- Videoed demonstrations in Seneca and Anderson that appeared on our social media and the social media of others.

While naming these contributions is important, just as important is clearly saying that L WVOP welcomes everyone and whatever they can contribute. (Personally, I didn't contribute much to L WVOP until I retired.)

So, what is the protocol that we follow to welcome members?

1. Send a welcoming email of information and offer to visit over coffee, etc.
2. Visit at time and location of member's choice.
3. Receive a brief bio and photo from new member to appear in L WVOP monthly VOTER.
4. Invite to a group orientation to the League (held quarterly).
5. Introduce at monthly meetings and other occasions, including sponsoring "neighborhood" gatherings.

Have we missed you in one or more steps of our protocol? For example, did our welcoming email get sidelined somehow? Do you have questions about the League? Would you like ideas about how you can get involved? Would you like to talk with a person on the Membership Team?

After the Annual Meeting May 20, most LWVOP activities will cease (including the VOTER) until August when we gather for our traditional Welcome Back/Women's Equality Day Party. However, some LWVOP activities will continue through the summer. Certainly our website, Facebook and Instagram will continue with current information, and probably the weekly Action Alerts. Member's attendance at local Boards and Committees across the two counties will continue, an important aspect of Making Democracy Work!

Please let us know if you have any questions or comments that will help you feel more engaged! That goes for ALL members, not only new members! Reach out to any of us: [Janet Marsh](#), [Ann Fuhr](#), [Kathy Barger](#), and [Janie Shipley](#).

## Want to Submit to the Voter?

We are always looking for great content to share with our members. If you have something you wish to share, including the great work being done by League members, let us know! We need the content submitted by the 21st of each month for inclusion. You can email your submissions to [Pat](#) or [Christine](#).