



The Voter, March - April 2026

Calendar of Events

Saturday, March 28, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

No Kings Rally

Seneca City Hall, 221 E North 1st Street, Seneca, SC

Wednesday, April 1, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

LWVOP Board Meeting

Zoom

Contact Pat Spurlock for Zoom link.

Monday, April 6, (New Date & time), 4:00 p.m.

LWVOP Public Meeting “Why Primaries Matter”

Clemson Central Library, 105 Commons Way, Central, SC

Wednesday, April 29, 4:00 pm

Ready! Set! Vote!

Prep for the polls with the SC Election Commission

Seneca Public Library, 300 East South 2nd Street, Seneca, SC

[Note: see ad in March 16 Take Action]

Tuesday, May 19

LWVOP Annual Meeting

Place and time TBD

[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.

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President's Message

Just like spring flowers and bugs, League members are emerging from their warm winter shelters to face the sun! Too cute? Well, that's how it feels to me.

Last Saturday, six of your League leaders attended a day-long meeting in Columbia to prepare us for the fall elections. LEAD was not a rah-rah motivational experience. It was five hours of "this is what you need to know as you prepare voters and face the opposition." We will share more of what we learned in the coming weeks.

In this issue of *The VOTER*, you will find several opportunities to shine. Choose one (or two) that fit your schedule and interests. The best way to get involved is to attend our monthly meetings. The April 6 meeting is the final meeting before our May Annual Meeting. Please check the Calendar of Events to confirm dates, times, and locations for the two remaining meetings. We have had to change them to accommodate our speakers' schedules.

The state League chose your local League to locate a digital billboard! You can view the VOTE411 message beginning May 1. Our Oconee County members may recognize the location in the following photo. It is strategically located on Hwy. 123 at the Walmart intersection facing west to travelers from Westminster and Georgia. Yes, we get a lot of regular shoppers from northeast Georgia counties.

We shine during election season! **Now, Let's get out the PRIMARY vote!**

Best Regards,
Pat Spurlock, President LWVOP



LWVOP representatives at the LEAD event: Sue Blount, Meredith Burr, Ruth Reed; front: Carol Asalon, Janie Shipley, and Pat Spurlock.

LWVOP April 4 Meeting

(Note the new date and time.)

"Why Primaries Matter"

SC State House Representative Neal Collins and LWVSC Board Member Lawson Wetli

Monday, April 4, 2026, 4 pm

Clemson Central Library, 105 Commons Way, Central, SC 29630

The public is invited.

Most people picture November when they think about elections. But the candidates who appear on that ballot are chosen months earlier in primary elections. When turnout is low, a small number of voters can shape decisions that affect schools, roads, health care, and local leadership.

The League of Women Voters of Oconee & Pickens Counties encourages all eligible voters to learn about primary elections and take part. Voting in a primary is one of the most direct ways to have a voice in who appears on the ballot.

To learn more, the League invites the public to a nonpartisan community discussion on April 6 at 4:00 p.m. at the Central Clemson Library, 105 Commons Way, Central, SC 29630, featuring SC State House Representative Neil Collins and South Carolina LWV Board member Lawson Wetli.

LWVOP Begins Using SignUpGenius

We are pleased to share that LWVOP has started using SignUpGenius to help make event sign-ups and volunteer coordination more efficient.

You should have received a SignUpGenius invitation for our April 6 program, “Why Primaries Matter.” If you do not see it, please be sure to check your junk or spam folder, since emails from a new platform sometimes land there.

You can access SignUpGenius directly through the invitation email by clicking the included link. Over time, we hope this tool will provide an easier and more organized way for members to sign up for events, volunteer opportunities, and other League activities.

We are still exploring the best ways to use SignUpGenius, but we are optimistic that it will improve efficiency and make participation easier for our members.

If you have trouble finding or opening your invitation, please reach out to [Sharon Burns](#) or 856-472-0556.

Looking for New Community Partners for Upstate Votes

One of the League’s strengths is the partnerships we have built across our community. Collaborations with organizations such as the local Democratic Party, Clemson University, and the Pickens and Oconee County branches of the NAACP have helped make possible some excellent programming and co-sponsored events.

As part of the Upstate Votes initiative, we would like to build on that foundation by developing additional partnerships with organizations throughout Pickens and Oconee

Counties. By connecting with more community groups, we hope to expand our visibility, reach new audiences, and strengthen our voter outreach efforts in a nonpartisan way.

We welcome member suggestions for organizations, institutions, congregations, nonprofits, civic groups, student organizations, or other community networks that may be interested in partnering with us. If you belong to a group that you think would be a good fit and would like to make an introduction on the League's behalf, we would be glad to provide sample outreach language and talking points.

If you would prefer for the League to handle the outreach directly, we are happy to do that as well.

Please reach to any member of the Board or the Upstate Votes Core Working Team (Carol Asalon, Carolyn Bishop Mcleod, Kathy Barger, Linda Gorry, or Sharon Burns).

Thank you for helping us grow the reach and visibility of Upstate Votes through strong community connections.

Submitted by Sharon Morganroth

Monthly Upstate Votes Steering Committee Meetings

At the Upstate Votes kickoff meeting, the Core Working Team shared its plan to hold monthly steering committee meetings open to all League members. We are pleased to invite members to take part in these meetings, beginning on April 1, 2026.

These meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom, immediately before the League's regular Board meeting. A brief update will be circulated before each meeting so members can stay informed and prepared.

If you would like to learn more about what Upstate Votes is working on and explore ways to get involved, we hope you will join us. These meetings are a great way to stay connected, hear updates, and see where you might like to contribute.

League Board meetings are also open to all members, and we encourage you to attend those as well.

Submitted by Sharon Morganroth

"Lost the Youth Vote? Let's Talk About Why"

Meeting Recap

March 10, 2026

What an event! It was a captivating, insightful, and introspective discussion that offered the audience a meaningful glimpse into what young people think about registering to vote and why young people, ages 18 – 29, are consistently voting at a lower rate than older people. The students expressed their frustration with the government and the political climate, shared their thoughts on civic education and described how they feel about a political system largely shaped by older generations.

While photographing the audience, Ken Marsh remarked how intently everyone was hanging onto every word the students said. During closing remarks, Pat Spurlock said, "That was the best [darn] League program we've ever had."

The panel featured Rylie Deweese—LWVOP's spring intern and the event's moderator—alongside four student panelists: Taylor Burrus, Charlotte Griffin, Chase Rigler, and Alex Vega. Rylie, a graduating senior double majoring in Political Science and Communications, took the lead in organizing the event by coordinating academic credit for both the panelists and attending Clemson students and recruiting a group of thoughtful, articulate students who shared insights on how to better reach and motivate young people to register to vote. I'm genuinely inspired by these students—their intellect, composure, and confidence are remarkable.

Recap of the Panel Discussion

Why Young People Aren't Voting — Students highlighted barriers and influences shaping their voting behavior:

- **Limited understanding of voter registration and politics** — Many feel uncertain about how to register or may not fully understand how the political system works.
- **Need for easier access** — Students suggested pop-up voter registration events in places where young people hang out.
- **Social media as a motivator** — They felt voter registration could be made "cool" through social media campaigns that meet young people where they are.
- **Parental influence** — Several said parents played a major role in encouraging them to register and vote, and believed parents should provide civic education and share news.

Issues Students Care About Most — Students emphasized concerns that directly affect their futures:

- **Student debt** and the stress it creates.
- **High cost of education**
- **Lack of support for student aid forgiveness**
- **Uncertain job market** — One student said, “We did what we were supposed to do... now we’re met with debt and a terrible job market.”
- **Financial instability** — Worries about not being able to live independently.

Social Media’s Role — Students had mixed feelings about social media:

- **Desensitization** — Constant exposure to content, including violence, can numb reactions.
- **Information overload** — Algorithms push unwanted content and political agendas.
- **“Best and worst thing to ever happen”** — It connects people but also overwhelms them.
- **Concerns about AI in politics** — Some felt AI-generated political content is unprofessional or harmful.

Views on Government and Politics — Students expressed frustration with the current political environment:

- **Polarization and rhetoric** — They feel political conversations have become hostile and unproductive.
- **Feeling ignored or undervalued**, especially among students of color.
- **Politicians acting like celebrities** — Students want leaders who behave like public servants, not entertainers.
- **Constant policy swings** — Frequent changes between administrations make it hard to rely on long-term policies.

What Students Say Politicians Must Do to Earn Their Vote — Students described several qualities and actions that matter to them:

- **Reach young people where they are** — Podcasts were mentioned as an effective way to connect.
- **Respectful behavior** — Students believe leaders should debate ideas without attacking each other personally. No drama, no personal attacks, and genuine listening.
- **Attention to overlooked issues** — One example raised was the agricultural industry, which students felt is often ignored.

- **Authenticity and relatability** — Leaders who communicate at their level and show they understand their lives.
- **Desire for representation** — They want politicians who look like them (younger politicians) and genuinely listen to young people.





LWVOP intern and event moderator Rylie Deweese alongside four student panelists: Alex Vega, Chase Rigler, Charlotte Griffin, and Taylor Burrus.

Voter Registration at Tri-County Technical College/Easley

Success! Members LWVOP the Upstate Vote: 2026 Team held the first voter registration event of the year on March 12. Carol Asalon led volunteers Bonnie Surface, Sharon Morgenroth Burns, Ruth Reed, and Marian Osborne Berky.

They spoke to and shared information on the importance of the upcoming Primary with 55 students. Results: 15 students scanned the online voter registration QR code; six students took a paper voter registration form with them; and all received a handout about the Primary that included a QR code for them to register later. Some did not have

the required information to register online (driver's license number and full Social Security number.)

According to Carol, "this was the most productive voter registration event I've attended at TCTC Easley. At one point, there were so many students, we broke them up into groups." Students, who were not aware of the upcoming Primary election, were receptive to listening and learning about its importance. The students were very interested in how to vote in South Carolina and were willing to share their personal thoughts with us about voter registration.

Some successes Carol shared:

- One student recalled a civic education class she took in the 6th grade. After taking the class, swore she would never register to vote. She registered yesterday.
- A Hispanic student who had repeatedly tried to register online months ago without success registered using a paper form. She also took one for her sister.
- The handout we shared with students suggests making a voting plan. A student asked, "what is a voter plan?" Among the things we mentioned was to make sure you review your sample ballot and take it with you when you vote. With a look of surprise, he said, "I had no idea that I could do that. Now I will be prepared when I vote.

Overall, teaching the students about the importance of voting in the Primary and checking their voter registration status online was a complete success.

Before we gathered up our material and left, I thanked my contacts at TCTC for their continued support of the League to visit their campus and share information with their young people. Also, thanked them for supplying the snacks, which the students loved! We plan to go back to TCTC Easley in the fall in preparation for the mid-term election.

Submitted by Carol Asalon



SKILLSHOP 12 p.m. - 3:14
AND ONLINE
Thursday, March 12
Innovative and Ethical Aldeas

LWV
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
• Register to vote
• Find your polling place
• Get your ID card
• Check the status of your voter registration

I have a question about the process and I need help
 I need a copy of my voter registration card

SCVOTES.GOV **VOTE411.ORG**



Notes from the Observer Corps

Oconee County Council, March

- \$12,000 is needed to upgrade heating and cooling systems in the administration building.
- The Humane Society is out of funds for their Spay and Neuter vouchers. The sheriff suspended the program and \$20,000 is needed to fund the program.
- Motion passed to move funds to administration and Sheriff departments to cover employee salaries. (Again, robbing Peter to pay Paul)
- Cooperation with ICE will be discussed at a future date.

Oconee County Planning Board, March 2, 2026

The last hour of this meeting was informative about Data Centers. These are points I took away as I understood them.

- Will the data centers be considered the same as high level businesses or something else? It will employ 25 to 30 people.
- Will a tax break be given as an incentive?
- Neither Duke nor Blue Ridge could supply enough energy to run a data center. Not enough water is available for cooling.
- DC could generate it's own power with turbines but would need a natural gas line. There are six sizes of data centers. The proposed center would likely be the largest. However, once it is built, it can be upgraded. (Bait and Switch?)
- The developers will need about 7,500 square feet for building and several acres for their generators.
- Will the county be notified ahead of any land purchase in the zone free area?
- Data centers discharge large amounts of heat.
- Noise will depend on abatement. There will be a large amount of noise when generators are tested. (The speaker kept referring to the noise as humming.)
- A DC that self generates power will not supply locally. The number of megawatts needed will determine the size of DC.
- Cooling the DC with water will be noisy whenever the tanks are being filled.

Because of all the information and questions, the Planning Commission will dedicate the May meeting to this matter alone. That meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 4, 6:00 p.m. in the County Council Chambers, 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla. Check the Oconee County Government website to confirm date and time, agenda, and background information.

Do you want to be a member of the Observer Corps? You already attend many of the Council and Commission meetings. All you have to do is take notes on a prepared sheet and send the report to the coordinators. The Corps shows the county that the League is paying attention and will be prepared to take action when it's needed. Contact [Sue Blount](#) for Oconee County meetings and [Sharon Morganroth Burns](#) for Pickens County.

Submitted by Sue Blount



Our League was the recipient of a grant that allowed for a Vote411 billboard. Look for it on your way into Seneca from the west, near the WalMart.

Membership Renewals

Wondering how you will know if it's time to renew your membership? You will receive an email notice from LWWUS shortly before your membership expires (one year from your last dues payment). To renew, go to LWVOP.org, click on JOIN/RENEW, and pay by credit card. If you have difficulty, contact [Janet Marsh](#) or [Ruth Reed](#). —*Ruth Reed*

Board Members

- [Pat Spurlock](#), President
- [Linda Gorry](#), Vice President
- [Margie Barnes](#), Treasurer
- [Carolyn Bishop-McLeod](#), Secretary
- [Carol Asalon](#), Webmaster
- [Janet Marsh](#), Membership Chair

- [Ruth Reed](#), Communications Chair
- [Kathy Barger](#), Board member
- [Sue Blount](#), Board member
- [Jane McLamarrah](#), Board member
- [Christine Prado](#), Board member
- [Janie Shipley](#), Board member
- [Cherie Walker](#), Board member
- Shelia Crawford, NAACP
- Sharon Morgenroth Burns, Observer Corps
- Meredith Burr, VOTE411

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](#).

[Learn More](#)

