

Message from the President

Election Day is just days away. With all the debates and media coverage of presidential candidates, one might think we are electing a president this year. Though that is not the case, there are many important local elections happening across the country and in our own communities. The people elected locally determine many of the everyday services you receive – maintenance of streets, water and other utility services, local parks. They make decisions on issues like noise ordinances that impact our quality of life.



Offices to be filled this November include many mayor and city/town council positions in Oconee and Pickens counties such as Walhalla, Westminster, Central, Pickens, Easley, Norris, Liberty, Six Mile and a few communities in Anderson County. Candidates for these offices are asking for the job of representing you. The decisions they make in office may influence public policy in these communities for years to come. Unfortunately, voter turnout is expected to be low. Last year's midterm election saw the lowest voter turnout in at least 40 years with 46.3 % of South Carolina registered voters actually voting. The previous low was 45% in 2006. Voters often do not give local contests in "off-year" elections the attention they deserve. Rooted in the movement that secured women the right to vote, the League of Women Voters has always been committed to registering, educating and turning out voters. As we approach our 100th anniversary, we hope you are planning to participate in your local elections and that you encourage others to do so as well.

Janie Shipley

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THE VOTER

League of Women Voter Clemson Area
P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633
www.lwvclemsonarea.org

OFFICERS:

Janie Shipley, President
Eleanor Hare, President-Elect, Webmaster
Holley Ulbrich, VP/Program & Action
Diana Stafford, Secretary
Bill Hare, Treasurer

ELECTED DIRECTORS:

Ellen Magee
Cheryl Lee
Nicole Paluzzi
Patty Warner
Lyn Norton
Sandra Gray

APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

Paula Appling, *Voter* Editor, Mem. Co-Chair
Elaine Laiewski, Publicity Chair
Janet Marsh, Membership Co-Chair
Rosellen Aleguire, Nominating Comm Chair

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tues, Nov 3	Municipal Elections
Tues, Nov 3	BOARD MEETING , Foothills Community Healthcare Boardroom, Clemson, 5:30 pm
Tues, Nov 17	NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING: On Water, OLLI, 7:15 pm
Tues, Dec 1	BOARD MEETING , Foothills Community Healthcare Boardroom, Clemson, 5:30 pm Refer to lwwclemsonarea.org for updates and current information

November: Water

At our monthly meeting on November 17th, we will hear Katie Buckley Giacalone of the Clemson University Carolina Clear Program and Director of the Center for Watershed Excellence, and Charly McConnell, an Extension agent with Clemson University, talk about problems of water quality both locally and internationally.

Katie has a background in monitoring, microbial source tracking, watershed restoration and storm water outreach. In August of this year, Clemson University joined with Anderson & Pickens Counties Stormwater Partners, a regional collaborative invested in the protection of South Carolina's valuable water resources.

Charly was hired by Clemson University to serve as the partnership's outreach coordinator. This collaboration aims to reduce the pollution transmitted to local waterways by rainfall, snow melt and excess irrigation. It has become a matter of public health and safety as much of the region's drinking water comes from surface water.

We will hear from Charly about how we can get involved in water preservation by using such techniques as rain gardens, rain barrels and low-maintenance landscapes.

Submitted by Sandra Gray

This is a gentle reminder to

Please Pay Your Dues

October Meeting Reviewed Part 1: Money & Politics

The October 20 meeting of the LWVCA on Money and Politics was well attended. Discussion centered around two consensus initiatives being developed at the national level: one on the substance of campaign finance reforms and the other on the process of implementing those reforms. The target for the former initiative is January/February of 2016, but the deadline for local chapter feedback for the former is December 1, 2015.

Cheryl Lee presented material developed by the Massachusetts League on campaign finance. She reported that in 2008, campaign expenditures totaled \$5.3 billion, but the 2016 campaign is projected to spend three times that amount.

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Fall Voter Registration

The purpose of our fall voter registration drive is to take advantage of the interest in our South Carolina Primaries. Students turning 18 on or before November 3, 2016 will be allowed to vote in the primaries if properly registered. The Democratic Primary is February 27, 2016 and the Republican Primary is February 20, 2016. We registered over 400 potential voters this spring, and I think we can do the same this fall.

One goal is to reach every high school student in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties. This will be a massive undertaking, as we have never visited all schools. Another goal is to conduct at least two consecutive days of registrations at nearby colleges and universities. With an all-out effort by the Clemson Area League of Women Voters, we can accomplish this goal. Call Cheryl Lee at 864-654-4283 to volunteer.

Submitted by Cheryl Lee

New Member Orientation

At 6 p.m. prior to the General Meeting on Tuesday, President Janie Shipley held a brief orientation, aided by Membership Co-Chair Paula Appling, President-Elect Eleanor Hare and Voter Registration Coordinator Cheryl Lee. Four new members and two soon-to-be members attended. Janie showed a 5-minute clip about the history of the League and talked about how we develop our positions, where our dues go and non-partisanship. Cheryl and Eleanor talked about volunteering opportunities. Learn more about our new members on this page and extend a welcoming handshake at our next meeting!

*www.youtube.com/watch?v=undHUR0ckQs

New Members: John and Pat Martin

Pat and John Martin moved from Huntsville, AL to Easley, SC when John was hired as a Project Manager by Engineered Custom Plastics. They were lifelong residents of Alabama and had lived in several locations across the state. After John's discharge from the Army, they began their married life in Auburn, AL, where Pat worked in the Purchasing Department of Auburn University while John completed his degree in Industrial Engineering.

They have three children and four grandchildren.

They feel it is important to make their voices heard in order to improve local, state and federal government. They have attended several LWV sponsored events in the last few years and have realized that the LWV will help them to do this.

New Members: Nigel and Cary Kaye

Nigel is in the Civil Engineering department at Clemson University and is from Australia. Cary is a lawyer but currently works as an editor for an academic journal. She is from Baltimore. They have two children. They joined the League with the hope of staying engaged in the community without being a part of partisan politics.



New Members at October's General Meeting: above: Dan Warner, right: Matt Saltzman, and below (l to r): Pat and John Martin and Daniel Correll – who is not a member ... yet!



Membership Committee Notes

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that it has new Co-Chairs: Janet Marsh and Paula Appling. Committee members are Aleta Robinson, Frances Plotnik, Carol Ward and Arlene Stewart. Twelve new members have joined LWVCA in the past year, and the committee is always on the lookout for more! The membership committee's goals this year are to continue to grow our membership and to support current members.

Annual Holiday Party

On Tuesday, December 15, you are invited to our annual LWVCA Holiday Party. It will be held at my home, 510 Bentbrook Lane, Clemson, at 7 p.m. Bring a finger food and your preferred beverage.

Submitted by Cheryl Lee

Consensus on Constitutional Amendments

A consensus on amending the constitution is due to LWVUS on December 1st. The issue is a hard choice between standing on process and fighting for our positions. Due to short notice, we will carry out this consensus by a multi-stage process. Questions and a background information sheet were distributed at the October meeting, posted on our website, and appear here, in the November VOTER. This issue was also discussed briefly at our October meeting. Members can return the completed response sheet to Holley Ulbrich via email (holleyulbrich@gmail.com) or via US Post (2 Birch Place, Clemson, SC 29631) or at the November 17th meeting. Holley will also host a brown bag lunch meeting at her house on November 19 from 11 to 1 to discuss the issue, after which the Program & Action Team and the Board will review the final consensus before it is submitted on November 30. Anyone needing a consensus form should visit our website, www.lwvclemsonarea.org.

General Background

(From LWVUS) In 1787, delegates from twelve of the thirteen states then in existence met in Philadelphia to revise the Articles of Confederation. Instead, they drafted a totally new document, what we know as the U.S. Constitution. It was unanimously ratified by the states. While this all seems very long ago, how the Constitution began and how the 1787 Convention was convened and conducted are cited in the current debate about calling a Convention under Article V.

Here's what Article V of the U.S. Constitution says about amending the Constitution: The Congress, whenever two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; . . .

So Article V provides two ways of proposing amendments to the nation's fundamental charter. Congress, by a two-thirds vote of both chambers, may propose constitutional amendments to the states for ratification. OR, the legislatures of two-thirds of the states (34 at present) may ask Congress to call a convention to propose amendments to the Constitution; this is commonly called an Article V Convention. Amendments proposed by either method must be ratified by three-fourths of the states, that being 38 at present.

The first method has been used by Congress to submit 33 amendments to the states, beginning with the Bill of Rights. Of these, 27 were approved; 26 are currently in effect, while one – the 18th Amendment (Prohibition) — was ultimately repealed by a second amendment, the 21st. The 21st Amendment was also the only one ratified by conventions in the states, rather than by state legislatures. In June 1920, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the U.S. Constitution provided for state legislatures, not citizen referendum campaigns, to ratify amendments.

The second method, an Article V Convention, has never been successfully invoked. There have been efforts to use it to rollback reapportionment of state legislatures and other entities, and also to pass a balanced budget amendment. The required number of states has passed the call, but some of them have since rescinded the call. Congress has to call the convention and set the ground rules, which are not provided in the constitution — issues like whether it can be limited to a particular proposal or can it be a “runaway convention” (as in 1787); how are delegates chosen, is it one state one vote or one delegate one vote, etc.

Continued on next page . . .

... Constitutional Amendment Questions continued from previous page ...

Here are the consensus questions and some brief comments on each one.

1. Which of these should or should not be a consideration in identifying an appropriate and well-crafted amendment?
 - a. Whether the public policy objective addresses matters of such acute and abiding importance that the fundamental charter of our nation must be changed
 should should not not sure/no consensus
Issue: striking a balance between stability and flexibility
 - b. Whether the amendment as written would be effective in achieving its policy objective
 should should not not sure/no consensus
Issue: is it clearly worded so as to avoid unintended consequences (like the 14th amendment being interpreted to make corporations persons)?
 - c. Whether the amendment would either make our political system more democratic or protect individual rights
 should should not not sure/no consensus
Issue: Most amendments have extended voting rights or protected voting rights or changed the electoral process (e.g., direct election of senators, limits on presidential terms, women's right to vote, protection for former slaves), but some proposed amendments would push back some of those changes (e.g., rolling back reapportionment at the state and local level)
 - d. Whether the policy objective can be achieved by a legislative or political approach that is less difficult than a constitutional amendment.
 should should not not sure/no consensus
Issue: is there an easier/faster way to do it?
 - e. Whether the public policy objective is more suited to a constitutional and general approach than a statutory and detailed approach.
 should should not not sure/no consensus
Issue: how detailed does it need to be and how hard to we want it to be to change it?
2. What conditions should be in place for an Article V Constitutional Convention initiated by the states?
 - a. The convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret.
 agree disagree not sure/no consensus
Issue: the public has a right to know, but some hard choices are better negotiated behind the scenes.
 - b. Representation at the Convention must be based on population rather than one state, one vote.
 agree disagree not sure/no consensus
Issue: are we a federation of states or should one person one vote apply?
 - c. State delegates must be elected rather than appointed.
 agree disagree not sure/no consensus
Issue: whom do you trust: the voters, the governor, the legislature, ??? Do we want expertise that we might not get with an election?
 - d. Voting at the Convention must be by delegate, not by state.
 agree disagree not sure/no consensus
Issue: states get the final say in ratification; perhaps here we need to let population be represented?
 - e. The convention must be limited to a single topic.
 agree disagree not sure/no consensus
 - f. Only state resolutions on a single topic count when determining if a Convention must be called.
 agree disagree not sure/no consensus
Issue: runaway convention or circumventing Congressional deadlock and unresponsiveness?

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... Money and Politics continued from page 2 ...

Campaign finance regulation must strike a balance between First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and of the press and the risk of undue influence and corruption stemming from direct and indirect monetary contributions to candidates. The consensus initiative focuses on identifying and protecting appropriate rights of individuals and organizations while mitigating the risk of corruption through transparency and fighting big-money contributions.

In modern campaign parlance, there are three kinds of funds: *hard money*, which represents direct contributions to campaigns; *soft money*, or contributions to political action committees (PACS) nominally not associated with particular candidates; and *dark money*, contributions to 501(c)4 and 501(c)6 nonprofit organizations, which can spend up to half their funds on issue advocacy and which do not have to disclose their donors. Recent Supreme Court rulings have eviscerated prior restrictions on donations and expenditures, particularly those on soft and dark money.

The standards applied by the courts for campaign finance regulations address the following questions:

- Is there a compelling interest in regulating the activity?
- Is the regulation the least restrictive possible to achieve the compelling interest?
- Is the regulation overly broad?

Key recent Supreme Court rulings addressing campaign finance include:

- Buckley (1976) eliminated candidate spending limits, but left in place limits on hard money donations to candidates.
- Austin (1990) upheld spending limits from corporate treasuries but permitted unlimited spending from separate funds.
- Citizens United (2010) eliminated corporate spending limits entirely.
- McCutcheon (2014) eliminated aggregate spending limits on individuals, but kept in place limits on contributions to individual candidates.

Objections to limiting campaign contributions center around First Amendment free speech concerns. Arguments in favor center on preventing the corrupting influence of money.

To ensure clean campaigns, states can work to ensure that voter rights are defended. They can propose clean-election reforms, and they can require disclosure of contributions and their sources. Individuals (this means you!) can learn as much as you can about campaign finance, attend candidate forums and raise concerns about this issue, avail yourself of League resources, and, of course, VOTE!

The consensus for this issue is due in January 2016.

Submitted by Matt Saltzman

... Constitutional Amendment Questions continued from previous page ...

- g. The validity of state “calls” for an Article V Constitutional Convention must be determined by the most recent action of the state. If a state has enacted a rescission of its call, that rescission should be respected by Congress.

agree disagree not sure/no consensus

Issue: Do legislatures get to change their minds?

3. Should the League oppose an Article V Constitutional Convention to propose amendments to the U.S. Constitution because of unresolved questions about the powers and processes of such a convention?

should should not undecided/no consensus

Issue: are we willing to trust the process or is it too risky to subject the Constitution to that risk, even with the safeguard of $\frac{3}{4}$ of states to ratify?

4. Should the League consider supporting a constitutional amendment that will advance a League position even if:

- a. There are significant problems with the actual amendment as proposed?

should consider should not consider not sure/no consensus

- b. If it is being put forward by a procedural process the League would otherwise oppose?

should consider should not consider not sure/no consensus

Issue: hard choice between standing on process and fighting for our positions.

October Meeting Reviewed ★★★ Part II: Constitutional Amendment Consensus

Holley discussed the process by which the U.S. Constitution can be amended. There are two processes for amendment. First, two thirds of the House of Representatives and the Senate can approve a specific amendment and then three quarters of the states can approve the amendment. Second, two-thirds of the states can call for a Constitutional Convention, which can approve amendments. These must then be ratified by three quarters of the states. The second method was used to replace the Articles of Confederation with the present Constitution. Otherwise, only the first method has been used.

The League is seeking a consensus on whether to call for a Constitutional Convention to consider an amendment overturning the Citizens United ruling of the Supreme Court. The main argument against is that such a Convention has few limitations on how it is conducted. Once the Convention is called by the states, there is little guidance in the Constitution itself. Congress might set rules for what is considered, or they might not. So there is a risk of a “runaway convention,” where many unreasonable changes might be proposed and approved. The main argument for a Convention is that the present process is so badly broken that failing to fix it would be worse than the risk associated with such a Confederation.

Holley will host a brown bag lunch meeting at her home on November 19 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to discuss the issue. Beverages and cookies will be provided. Details are on the LWVCA website.

Submitted by Matt Saltzman

For More Information on the Consensus Questions

More information on the Constitutional Amendment Study can be found here: forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/constitutional-amendment-study; the questions are here: forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/constitutional-amendment-consensus-questions

More information on the Money and Politics Study can be found here: forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/money-politics-action-states.

If you're interested in determining the status of campaign finance reform legislation in SC, visit forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/money-politics-state-template-campaign-finance-regulation

Pickens County Council Meeting Highlights, October 19, 2015

Landowners in Pickens County responded to receiving a request to pay a “vacant land fire fee” by packing the Council meeting room for a special called meeting at 5 p.m. About two dozen people stood in the hall after all the seats were filled. Many people spoke to Council in opposition to various aspects of the fee. Council responded by suspending the fire fee and sending it to committee.

During the public input, four people from the Pickens County Taxpayers Association asked the Council to prevent refugees from being settled in Pickens County. I spoke to the need to fund the temporary workers required in order to carry out elections. The administrator responded by saying that funding for personnel had been increased to \$17,500. The \$17,000 appears to be the line item for temporary workers in the current budget, a line item that was \$25,000 last year. "Increased" does not appear to be the applicable word. With four statewide elections instead of one, the Board of Registration & Elections had requested \$30,000 for temporary workers for the current year.)

Council went into executive session and people (including this observer) left.

Submitted by Eleanor Hare

Clemson City Council 1st and 3rd Monday, 6:30 pm
 Seneca City Council 2nd Tuesday, 6:00 pm
 Pickens County Council 1st Monday, 6:30 pm
 Oconee County Council 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6:00 pm

Anderson County Council 2nd and 4th Tuesday, 6:00 pm
 Pickens County School Board 4th Monday, 7:00 pm
 Oconee County School Board 3rd Monday, 6:00 pm
 Anderson Co. School Board 3rd Monday, 6:00 pm

Contribution Form

League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area LWVCA, P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email address _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Phone (opt) _____

____ I wish my contribution to remain anonymous.

____ I wish my contribution to be tax deductible where allowed by law. My check is made out to the "*League of Women Voters Ed Fund*" which is a 501(c)(3) organization.

____ I wish to support the League's action priorities. My check is made out to the "League of Women Voters" and is not tax-deductible.

Visit our website at www.lwvclemsonarea.org and contact us at lwvclemson@gmail.com.

League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

P. O. Box 802

Clemson, SC 29633