



THE VOTER

September 2016 Vol.43 No. 6

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area
Serving the Citizens of Pickens, Oconee and Anderson

Message from the President

This is my fifth venture into being president of the Clemson LWV. (Or possibly the sixth. I lost count.) Each time has been different. Twice I served a two-year term. Once I was a president elect, then president. Once I jumped into being president because there was no president elect. This the first time I have been a co-president. It is a pleasure to serve with my long time friend, fellow charter member, and fellow member of the original board of this League, Eleanor Hare. It is good to be able to share and divide the work. In the three short months we have been at it, we have both benefited from another ear to listen, another voice to suggest, another eye to read the letter or article and suggest changes. But most important is the division of labor in running the board meetings, writing the president's column, and taking turns responding to questions or attending committee meetings.

The same is true of the League as a whole. Sharing responsibility makes the load lighter and the work more enjoyable. We have a strong Membership team, ably co-captained by Paula Appling and Janet Marsh, a well-organized Program and Action team under the leadership of Catherine Watt, and a strong Voter Service effort led by Cheryl Lee. (We are overwhelmed with voter registration efforts in September and candidate forums in Late September and October, so if you can help, let Cheryl, Eleanor or me know.) A small but talented Finance and Fundraising team is at work already planning the wine-tasting. Last month we put the final team in place. We assembled a Communications team, consisting of all the folks responsible for communicating among us and to the public --our secretary (Ann Russell), VOTER editor (Diana Stafford), webmasters (Patty and Dan Warner), publicity person (Elaine Laiewski), and Facebook managers (Heidi Williams and Matt Saltzman). We had a good conversation about coordinating our communications efforts and being a more visible presence in the three county area. We're not quite ready for Instagram and Twitter, but watch for more Facebook postings as well as an updated web page and the dependable monthly VOTER. Let us know how we're doing!



Holley

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THE VOTER
 League of Women Voters Clemson Area
Serving the Citizens of Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson Counties
 P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633
www.lwvclemsonarea.org

OFFICERS:
 Eleanor Hare, Co-President
 Holley Ulbrich, Co- President
 Catherine Watt, VP/Program & Action
 Ann Russell, Secretary
 Bill Hare, Treasurer

ELECTED DIRECTORS:
 Lyn Norton
 Patty Warner
 Sandra Gray
 Cheryl Lee
 Janet Marsh
 Catherine Farris

APPOINTED DIRECTORS:
 Paula Appling, Mem. Co-Chair
 Elaine Laiewski, Publicity Chair
 Diana Stafford, Voter Editor

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, Sept 20, General Meeting 7:15 p.m., Apportionment Election Stuff) at OLLI
- Monday, Sept. 26, Earth Dialog 7:00 p.m., Moe. Joe's Coffee Shop *
- Tuesday, Sept 27, National Voter Registration Day
- Tuesday, Oct. 4, Board Meeting 5:00, p.m. Central-Clemson Library
- October, No general meeting , Candidate Forums
- Monday, Oct. 4, Earth Dialog 7:00 p.m. Moe Joe's Coffee Shop
- Tuesday, Nov. 1, Board Meeting 5:00 p.m., Central-Clemson Library
- Tuesday, Nov.8, **ELECTION DAY**
- Tuesday, Nov.15, General Meeting 7:15 p.m., (Higher Education)
- Tuesday, Dec 6, Board Meeting 5:00 p.m., Central-Clemson Library
- Tuesday, Dec 13, Holiday Party
- Tuesday, Jan 17, General Meeting 7:15 p. m., (Health Care Consensus) OLLI
- Saturday, Jan.28, **LEAD DAY**
- Tuesday , February 7 Board Meeting 5:00 p.m. Central Clemson Library

*Earth dialog topic 9/26 Encouraging Climate Change Conversations
Contact Ellie Taylor 864-654-1313

To find current changes in schedule contact

<http://www.clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org::>

Facebook: League of Women Voters- Clemson Area

September General Meeting

For the past 96 years, the League of Women Voters has tried, despite all obstacles, to protect the integrity of the political process from the influence of money, partisan politics, and voter apathy. The 2016 primary/election season has given us a lot to think about in terms of the process by which we select candidates. Two important elements in that process are the creation and redrawing of electoral districts and the decentralized, crazy quilt of caucuses and primaries that lead to nominations, especially for president.

The September meeting (Tuesday the 20th, 7:15 pm) will zero in on these two issues. Matt Saltzman will talk about the gerrymandering process by state legislatures that resulted in a lopsidedly Republican House of Representatives in spite of more than a million more votes cast for Democrats than Republicans in 2014 (and other years). Gerrymandering is a bipartisan sin, but Republican control of a majority of state legislatures has tipped the redistricting balance in their favor in recent years. Eleanor Hare will take this issue closer to home as Pickens is facing the prospect of expanding its school board and county council to include a seventh seat, and how that districting process will play out. She will also address the related issue of runoffs where there are multiple candidates and no one receives a majority.

Holley Ulbrich will walk us through the chaotic primary process that has offered some important pointers to where reform is needed, from closed primaries to lightly attended caucuses to an interminable primary season and the effects of winner take all on the outcome.

Join us in a lively conversation about making the electoral process more open, more transparent, and more democratic with a small d.

Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

A Story of Birds and Bees

One of the world's most deadly environmental disasters occurred in China in 1958, with the good intentions of Mao Zedong, head of the People's Republic, to rid the country of a pest, the lowly house sparrow. These birds were often observed in the grain fields of China. In an effort to increase the grain yield, Mao ordered the destruction of all the birds, and the people complied until there were no sparrows left in all of China. Soon the people's grain harvest was reduced to critically low levels, and 50 million people died from starvation. Why did this happen? Because that delicate balance in nature that keeps the earth productive was broken. The birds, you see, were in the grain fields eating the insects on the plants. With no more birds, that balance was broken, and the locust took over and devoured their crops.

(Continued on p 6)

Women's Equality Day Celebration

About forty people attended our Women's Equality Day Celebration at OLLI on August 23rd, including several potential members. This annual event recognizes and celebrates the passage of the 19th Amendment on August 26, 1920.

Six Chickens and a Beer once again provided great live music and Board members supplied the wine. Elizabeth Adams (LWVCA member and member of the band) led us in a 'moving' game of Suffragette *Trivia but not Trivial*.

Ann Russell won a backpack for moving across the room the most and giving all the right answers. Rosellen Aleguire and band member Jen Ruth won bottles of wine (donated by Catherine Watt; thanks, Catherine!); Claudette Bennett won a t-shirt with the slogan "Remember, we fought for the right to vote" and six lucky door prize winners went home with potted mums. We gained two new members, Louise Huey and Gretchen Saule, and a few others expressed interest in joining.

Many thanks to everyone who made this celebration a great success, including Six Chickens and a Beer, OLLI and Julie Vidotto, Lowe's in Seneca and Clemson for providing the mums and Zach Northrup for his good-natured willingness to help in the face of chaos. An especially heartfelt Thank You goes to brand new member Catherine Farris



Ed Broyles, guitar, Jen Ruth, bass, Mike Ellison, fiddle, and Elizabeth Adams, accordion.



for jumping in with both feet to coordinate food, provide decorations and do other stuff too! Great job, Catherine!

Voting We Can Trust 2

One Computer Scientist's Opinion by Eleanor Hare

SC Voting System Makes Hacking Difficult In this election season, amid concerns of hacked election data and possibly “rigged” elections, an examination of the South Carolina elections system should give us assurance in the integrity of our elections. Although our system is not without flaws, it benefits from good organization and non-partisan dedicated officials.

Non-partisan election officials. County and state elections officials are forbidden from taking part in or appearing to be involved in partisan political activity. This required separation of election officials from partisan activity is an essential protection of the system from improper manipulation.

Distributed Control. Each of the 46 counties operates a separate election. Votes are collected in the precincts and reported to the county office, where the votes from the precincts are collected before totals are reported to the State Elections Commission (SEC). The totals are collected by the SEC and posted by county to the state web site, www.scvotes.org.

Transparency. When votes are collected in the precinct, two copies of the results are printed. After checking that the total number of votes recorded matches the number of voters who signed in, a copy of the results is posted on the precinct door and the other copy taken to the county election office. Individuals can copy the totals from the posting on the precinct door.

At each stage of vote collection, individuals are able to check that the recorded vote is correctly entered into the totals. A spreadsheet, *detailxls.zip*, linked from “Reports” in the county data in *scvotes.org*, lists all votes by precinct.

Thus, it is possible to trace the totals from each precinct, to the county totals and then to the state totals.

Verification that all votes are collected from voting machines. Previous elections have been flawed by failure of poll workers to collect all the votes from the machines. That problem has been addressed and SEC now runs post-election audits that verify that all votes cast on the voting machines are reported to the county totaling process. These post-election audits are posted at *scvotes.org*.

Local involvement. An extensive system of small precincts, including experienced poll workers, who are acquainted with most of the voters in their neighborhood, provide an effective deterrent to voter impersonation.

Although the South Carolina voting system is not without flaws, understanding the strengths of the system should give voters confidence. The non-partisanship of our election officials, together with precinct voting, post-election audits of data and posting of election data provide safeguards against fraudulent attack.

The Birds and Bees (Cont. From P. 3)

We recently saw another example of man's good intentions ruffling up that balance. Zika, a virus transmitted to humans through a bite primarily by two mosquitos, *Aedes aegypti* from Africa and *Aedes albopictus* from Southeast Asia, is linked to neurological disorders such microcephaly in newborns and the rare autoimmune disease Guillain Barre Syndrome. Although no mosquito bites in South Carolina or surrounding states have resulted in Zika infection, according to DHEC, there have been 46 cases of travel-related cases of infection in people returning from outside the country.

Officials in Dorchester County proceeded with aerial spraying of their county with the insecticide Naled or, to use the long chemical name, 1,2-dibromo-2,2-dichlorethyl dimethyl phosphate, which has been approved for restricted use in the US since 1959. It is almost certain this neurotoxic, organophosphate insecticide, which is banned in all of European countries because of health concerns, killed quite a few of the adult mosquitos in the area. Unfortunately, it also killed 2.5 million honey bees, according to one farmer in the area who lost her 46 hives after the bees were exposed to the Naled.

That report is probably just the tip of the iceberg since most beneficial native bees, dragonflies, butterflies and the like are also killed by exposure to the insecticide. According to the Material Safety Data Sheet provided by the manufacturer, among other concerns, Naled "is toxic to fish, birds, and other wildlife."

Does this sound familiar? It seems a little like putting gasoline on the fire, using an insecticide associated with prenatal brain disorders to eradicate an insect that may or may not be carrying a virus that is associated with prenatal brain disorders.

This is all getting a little confusing, even contradictory, so let's get back to South Carolina and the bees. While it's doubtful that anyone will starve to death from the lack of honey production from a few million bees, the bigger problem of widespread pesticide exposure is the real environmental issue.

Locally, the counties of Oconee and Pickens have regular insecticide spray routines, usually from a truck during the summer, to protect us from the pesky mosquito. No fear, they are not using Naled in your community. These trucks are carrying the insecticide permethrin, another synthetic neurotoxin that the EPA has reported is highly toxic to fish, aquatic life and, yes, the bees. But that is a story for another day.

Submitted by Sandra Gray

This article has been edited for space considerations; the full article is available on the website. <http://www.clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org>

Candidate Forums

Thursday, Sept. 29, 6:30 p.m., Pickens County School Board District 3, Pickens Middle School, 140 Torch Lane, Pickens, SC. . Candidates: Shannon Haskett, Alex Saitta

Tuesday, Oct. 25, 7 p.m., Clemson City Council, Council Chambers, Clemson City Hall. Candidates: Mark Cato, Crossie Cox, John Ducworth, Eunice Lehmacher, Drake McNeary, Christine Minor, Jim Oswald

Other Forums may be arranged.

Tri-County Tech is sponsoring a Meet-and-Greet for Anderson County candidates, Wednesday, Sept. 28, 1:15 p.m. at the main campus. For more information, contact Lara Wrightson (lwrights@tctc.edu or 864-646-1386).

Opportunities

Help register voters for fall elections;

High school and college students; contact Cheryl Lee cheryl_lee1234@bellsouth.net

Recently naturalized citizens: contact Bonnie Holliday (864 654 3239)holaday@clemson.edu or Janie Shipley (864.885.1967) janrel@mindspring.com

Join focus groups

Environmental contact Sandra Gray (864 656 2645. sngry@clemson.edu

Good Government - contact Holley Ulbrich (864.654.6828) holleyulbrich@gmail.com

Education -TBA

Attend local governmental meetings to report to the ‘Observer Corps’

See times and locations on p. 8

Gentle Dues Reminder

Your membership dues for 2016-17 are now due since our fiscal year is June 1 through May 31.

Dues are \$60 per membership, \$30 for a second family member, \$25 for students.

Make checks payable to LWVCA

Mail to LWVCA, PO Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633.

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.

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