

Empowering Voters.
Protecting Democracy.

Newsletter for April 2023

REACHING LWVCM

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LWVNC 39th State Convention “Powering & Protecting Our Democracy” Comes to the Queen City in May



The LWVCM is thrilled to act as host city league for this year’s LWVNC Convention. We look forward to welcoming LWVUS President Dr. Deborah Turner, who will deliver the keynote speech at the Saturday evening banquet. Dr. Turner and LWVNC President Jo Nicholas will be on hand throughout the Convention, learning and sharing ideas along with the delegates and attendees.

Register for the convention [using this form](#). If you are unable to make the entire Convention, consider signing up for Saturday’s [BANQUET ONLY](#).

The Convention is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the League and all that we stand for. In addition to enjoying the company of Leaguers from across the state, we will hear from speakers on elections, public policy, local media, the ERA and more! Mayor Vi Lyles, County Commissioner Susan Rodriguez McDowell and LWVCM President Suzanne Elsberry will give official City, County and Host League welcomes. Dr. Michael Bitzer will provide an analysis of the 2022 Midterms revealing who is voting in our state (and who is not). Participants will also enjoy a talk by *Charlotte Post* Editor-in-Chief Herb White about the role of local media in public discourse, civics education and politics.

As the apocryphal saying goes: “May you live in interesting times.” We are likely to face new challenges on all levels—local, state and national—and the Convention is a wonderful opportunity to engage with other Leagues, build relationships and find new and innovative ways to continue to work at both within our home leagues and in partnership with each other.

Our Host City Convention Committee—chaired by Suzanne Elsberry with members Margaret Fritze, Linda Levy, Pam Liebman, Meg Rodgers, Hayne White and LWVNC Board Liaison Regan Aduddell—are working to ensure a successful and productive weekend. We will show our Queen City pride with nods to Queen Charlotte of Mecklenburg. Attendees will receive a LWV gift bag of meeting essentials and jewelry by Pam Liebman. LWVCM contributions to the state raffle include CLTFC swag and home game tickets and a custom Regan Aduddell LWV tote with tickets to Broadway show “Six: The Musical.”

The Convention begins Friday, May 19 with registration at 2:00 PM, 5:00 PM Cocktail reception and 6:00 PM Dine-around to Charlotte restaurants. “I am especially excited to hear from our accomplished and inspirational leader Dr. Deborah Turner,” says host committee member and Environment and Sustainability Co-Lead Margaret Fritze. “This convention will give us the motivation we need to get energized for the upcoming election season.”

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Find updates for League action and activities at goleaguego.org



[Register](#) to attend the 39th LWVNC State Convention today! Early bird registration runs through April 15.

Coming Events

Coming Up in April, May, and June

- **April 4, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting (Zoom)
- **April 12, 11:30am:** [Lunch with the League: "Fraud, Fallout and Financial Scam Prevention"](#) (MPBC)
- **April 15, 10am-3pm:** [Charlotte Earth Day](#) (First Ward Park)
- **April 22:** *Earth Day*
- **April 29:** [E+S Keep Charlotte Beautiful Street Cleanup](#)
- **May 2, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting (Zoom)
- **May 13, 9am-12pm*:** [E+S Adopt-a-Stream](#) Briar Creek Tributary Cleanup
- **May 19-21:** [LWVNC Convention: "Powering and Protecting Our Democracy"](#) (Charlotte)
- **May 20, 7pm:** [LWVNC Convention Banquet](#) and Keynote by LWVUS President Dr. Deborah Turner
- **May 30, 7pm:** LWVCM Book Club: Two book honoring Pride Month (Zoom)
- **June:** *World Pride Month*
- **June, TBD:** LWVCM Annual Meeting (MPBC)
- **June 25, 11:30am:** "Suffrage, LWV History, Empowering the Vote and Defending Democracy" by President Elsberry at Charlotte Friends Meeting (570 Rocky River Road West)

League Announcements

- The LWVCM accepted with regret the resignation of Board Treasurer Cindy Moore. Cindy provided wonderful leadership in her role the past years and the Board wishes her well. The Board extends their gratitude for her dedicated service and hard work. She will certainly be missed. As Membership Chair Margaret Howe-Soper put it best: "Cindy has been a dream to work with...and will be hard to replace."
- LWVNC Convention News: A Banquet-Only attendance option has been added! Those unable to attend the Convention in its entirety may still join us on Saturday night (May 20) for dinner, an awards ceremony and most importantly to hear LWVUS President Dr. Deborah Turner's keynote speech. The fee for the banquet option is \$50. [Fill out this form](#) to register for the Banquet-Only option.
- Follow us on our Outreach Circle page: [League in Action!](#) See what Actions you can take for the League and our Democracy. Current Actions include applying for the [LWV Specialty License Plate](#), pushing for the publication of the [ERA](#), signing up to participate in [Charlotte Earth Day](#), and writing to your elected officials in support of ERIC (Electronic Registration Information Center) a bipartisan controlled organization to securely maintain accurate voter rolls across state lines.
- Holding Out for a SHERO (or two!): 1) The LWVCM is looking for a Healthcare Action Team Lead to promote education and advocacy related to our health care reform goals, e.g. Medicaid for All and Reproductive Justice. 2) The Women's Issues Action Team is in need of a PR maven who can help garner press opportunities now through the publication of our Pay Equity Scorecard in August. [Interested in either opportunity?](#) Contact President Suzanne Elsberry at: dessuz@bellsouth.net



League Action & Happenings

State and Local Education Action Teams Join Forces Ahead of State Convention

The LWVCM and LWVNC Education Action Teams are collaborating on a presentation titled "Update on NC K-12 Education Issues Before the 2023 NC Legislature," for the upcoming State Convention. The State LAT will also introduce the formation of the "LWVNC Public Education Action Network" which aims to bring us all together with a strong, united, statewide LWV voice to advocate for public education and our local public schools. The presentation will be on May 20 from 11:15 AM – 12:00 PM. To register for the Convention, [click here](#).

On May 21, a caucus will be held during breakfast to further discuss the development of the LWVNC Public Education Action Network. Network members from across the state will join together to increase our effectiveness in advocating for public education issues at the state level.

The goals of the Network are to: 1. develop a statewide LWV member network to advocate for NC public education issues focusing on the NC General Assembly and the Executive Branch (Governor, State Board of Education, Superintendent of Public Instruction) and 2. address the need for legislators and state officials to hear from constituents across the state. The aim of the network is to coordinate our advocacy efforts and learn from each other how state issues are impacting local school districts in both urban and rural communities. We propose that the Network members will select 2-3 policy focus areas per year, which are aligned with the proposed Public Education Position Statement. Members from all chapters and members-at-large are encouraged to join.

April 12 Lunch with the League to Feature SVP at Truist Financial Will Voorhees

At this month's Lunch with the League, we welcome Will Voorhees, Senior Vice President and Head of Enterprise Fraud at Truist Financial who will speak about "[Fraud, Fallout and Financial Scam Prevention](#)."

Will, an international conference and events speaker on emerging technologies and financial fraud, will speak about financial scam prevention, including romance scams. He will answer your questions about the current banking fallout, payments in digital currencies (including Bitcoin), money-laundering, and anti-fraud measures and approaches. The discussion promises to be informative and timely.



You may bring your lunch or order a box lunch for \$12.00 (cash or check only at the door). Email your lunch preference to Meg Rodgers: megrodgers42@gmail.com

Menu:

Chicken or Egg Salad Wrap
Grilled Vegetable Wrap
Turkey Wrap
Specify Gluten Free, (without the wrap)
Chips, Pickles, cookie and drink included

LWVCM Environment + Sustainability Action Team to Participate in Charlotte Earth Day

The Charlotte Earth Day celebration is set to take place on Saturday, April 15* from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at First Ward Park. (*Note: one week before the actual Earth Day holiday.)

For those who attended last year, you'll recall that it was fantastic! Thirty five exhibitors joined with interactive tables for kids. Music, theater, puppet parades and presentations honoring area climate heroes kept us enthralled. And the day wrapped up with a marching jazz band.

LWVCM volunteers will again participate using the display created by the Environment and Sustainability Team that provides kids with a mock voting booth to vote for their favorite Climate Champion. We will also distribute native wildflower seeds, Vote411 pencils, and voter information to parents.

Volunteers are needed for this fun event! Please register to help at our table. Visit the events page on our website: leaguego.org or [click here](#) to register. Questions? Email E+S Team Co-Lead Margaret Fritze: margaretfritze@aol.com



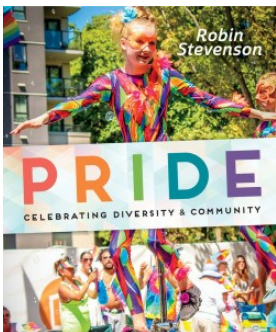
League Action & Happenings

Volunteer Opportunities Aboard this Spring with the Environment & Sustainability Team

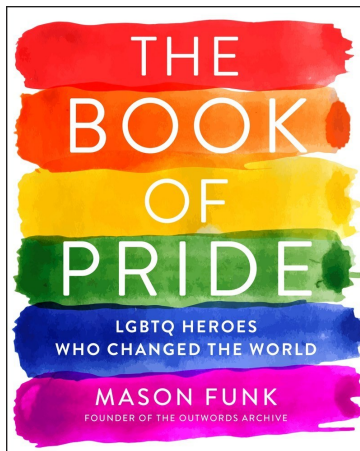
In addition to having the chance to contribute with the [Charlotte Earth Day](#) (April 15) table, those interested in helping with the LWVCM Environment and Sustainability Action Team efforts this spring have two wonderful opportunities. On April 29, members and their friends and family are invited to be part of our “Keep Charlotte Beautiful” Street Cleanup from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. (Note: This event was re-scheduled due to inclement weather.) On May 13, all are welcome to join the “Adopt-a-Stream” effort from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Both activities provide those who participate a fun day out with fellow Leaguers and a great sense of satisfaction upon completion. Join us for one or both of these great community clean up events!

LWVCM Book Club Announces Pride-Themed Selections for the May 30 Meeting

To kickoff World Pride Month, the LWVCM Book Club will read two selections for it’s late May meeting. The first selection is a young adult book called “Pride: Celebrating Diversity and Community” by Robin Stevenson. The second book is



“The Book of Pride: LGBTQ Heroes Who Changed the World” by Mason Funk.



These readings are sure to get us all inspired for our participation in this year’s CHARLOTTE PRIDE PARADE in August.

If you missed it, our March 28 title “Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men” by Caroline Criado Perez is a must read!

LWVCM Book Club meets every other month (Zoom). Our book club is registered with Park Road Books (4139 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209). At checkout, identify yourself as a LWVCM book club member and receive 20% off current book club titles.

Suggestions for future titles?
Email: goleaguego@gmail.com

It’s a Wrap: Civics 101 Program Concludes

The 2023 Edition of the LWVCM Civics 101 Program wrapped up on March 8 with a wonderful session about the role of local media in civic discourse. Robert Page, Director of Digital Projects and Advisor to Student Media at Queens University Knight School of Communication delivered a keynote. Participants then heard from a distinguished panel of local journalists pictured below from left: Diego Barahona (La Noticia), Katie Peralta Soloff (Axios), Joe Bruno (WSOC-TV), Herb White (The Charlotte Post) and Ann Doss Helms.



“Throughout our six week program, response from our audience was enthusiastic and positive,” says Team Lead and LWVCM 2nd VP Jane Hoffmann. “We plan to continue with the Hybrid model going forward.”

The next edition of our Civics 101 Program will run in early 2024.



From above left: Civics 101 Team Members Melody Myers, Helen Hossley, Shannon Mullaly, Team Lead Jane Hoffmann, Laura Zagoria, Kim Delher, Kelly Hofstatter, and Sara Baysinger. (Not pictured: Stacey Jenkins and Emilee Beuger)



This month, I am departing from my usual message by featuring an essay by a Michael H. the nephew of our Board Secretary, Pam Liebman. Michael is a Junior attending Western University in Bellingham, Washington considering a teaching career. Michael's essay focuses on the very timely topic of the history, origins and impact of the exploitation of fear as a means of control and manipulation. When questioned about what can be done to encourage young people to vote, Michael replied: "Make me see my vote counts." Pam relates that her brother is enjoying the dialogue resulting through his exchanges with his grandson about his essay.

It is important to recall what Edmund Burke, an 18th Century philosopher (also quoted in Michael's essay) said of fear: "No passion so effectively robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear." Unfortunately, we have witnessed Burke's observation play out in recent elections as some politicians have persuaded voters through fear tactics to favor a particular party or candidate. Studies have revealed that these messages exert almost two times the effect as straightforward messaging. In addition, the use of fear to influence voters negatively effects voter turnout. These exploitive attempts to influence voting include conspiracy theories which we observe infiltrating our news on a daily basis.

What can we do to combat this scourge? The answer may lie in educating our citizens on the underlying psychology of fear. Hopefully, this will lead toward a more informed voting public, who is less vulnerable to lies and appeals to their most deep-seated fears.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Elsbury".

**President, League of Women Voters
of Charlotte Mecklenburg**

An Essay on Fear by Michael H.

Fear can be one of the most powerful human emotions that drives us. Historically, fear has protected us from the dangers of the natural world; yet, as we emerge from the Industrial Revolution, those fears have largely been quenched by means of civilization. Fear, however, has not diminished. Today, many fears have come to fill that void. Sometimes these fears are of real threats; most of the time, however, they are imagined or imposed onto us by people in more powerful positions. 18th century philosopher Edmund Burke wrote, "When one is gripped by fear of a threat, real or imagined, their rational and higher cognitive functions shut down, making one easily manipulated by anyone that promises safety from the threat." Governments around the world have historically utilized fear as a means of controlling the masses. That is why I believe that in our global age, fear is the most powerful non-violent force elites can impose against a society. All our information comes from a narrative that certain people need to be upheld to maintain power. Whether it is Arab people as the antithesis of terror, or alternate ideologies like communism being condemned, our politicians want you to think a certain way.

([Click here](#) for the complete essay.)

League News

Welcome to New League Members

New Members March 2023

Annalise Tolley
Judy Warmingham
Kayla Peoples

Membership Renewal

Membership renewal dates for most of our members will be coming up in the near future. Our ClubExpress platform will deliver renewal notices directly to your inbox three times: 30 and 15 days prior to your renewal due date, and then one day after your membership has expired. While students and life members don't pay dues, they must renew their memberships too, so that we know they are still interested in the LWVCM! ClubExpress allows a six-week renewal grace period before moving a member from "active" to "inactive" status.

Renewals are now current for one year. New members who joined on February 1, 2023 or later will receive their notices in 2024. Anyone who was already a member as of January 31, 2023, will receive their notices in early June, 2023. For questions about renewals, please contact Margaret Howe-Soper, Membership Chair at: mhowesoper2014@gmail.com.

League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg Seeks Treasurer

Would you or someone you know like to contribute crucial leadership to the financial health of LWVCM by serving as our Treasurer? Working with our bookkeeper, you would provide oversight and management to align our mission with our organizational budget.

With the recent addition of ClubExpress administrative tools, the effort, which can be done remotely and scheduled around vacations and other commitments, can be easily managed in approximately 10-15 hours a month.

If interested, please contact LWVCM President Suzanne Elsberry at dessuz@bellsouth.net to discuss specifics. We hope you will consider this position as a satisfying and stimulating opportunity to serve as Financial Officer on our dynamic board.

ClubExpress Corner: Account Activation, Membership Renewal, and Volunteer Opportunities

We have been on ClubExpress as our member engagement platform since December. We know that for many, this platform and engaging with us in this way is new and can present some challenges as we shift to better serve you and our community. ClubExpress positions us to expand our messaging and present many exciting features to manage our League business. One of the exciting parts about ClubExpress is that event reminders and notifications are autogenerated. As a volunteer organization, having automated features like event reminders allows us to focus on what matters most, educating and informing our community.

ClubExpress will power our renewal process entirely online. When renewals begin this summer, renewal notifications will be sent directly to your inbox.

To prepare for the 2023 renewal process, we need to ensure that everyone has activated their account by accepting the member agreement. In December, all members were emailed their user name and temporary password. Many of you used that to login right away to set up your profile and select League areas of interest, but many did not. In the coming days, we will reset this function and the system will send out another notification with your user name and a new temporary password. If you have activated your account, you will NOT receive this email again. If you are a Lifetime Member, your membership expiration is 2050, but we still encourage you to activate your account. It is critical that you follow the prompts in the email and accept your member agreement. If you have questions once you receive the second attempt "welcome email," please contact ClubExpress Support directly. Their Help Team can assist you with any questions you may have about this process or any other account inquiries. We, LWVCM, do not have access to your password and cannot assist you directly.

As we work to build capacity in the League, we are looking for members who may be interested in joining the Communications team to serve as a co-Webmaster, learn more about our monthly newsletter (Voter), support social media, or join our strategy committee to offer a member's perspective. These are great opportunities for members who want to be active, yet need opportunities that can be done on their time, from any place as long as they have computer/phone access. There are extensive synchronous and asynchronous trainings, manuals, and virtual networking available via ClubExpress. No previous experience is necessary. If you are interested or want to discuss these opportunities in more detail, please email: communications@goleaguego.org.



Phone: 1-866-457-2582

Email: support@clubexpress.com

Support hours : 7:30 AM to 10:00 PM, M-F

League Action & Happenings

March League Talk Gave Participants Much to Think About Ahead of the LWVNC Convention

On March 14, LWVCM League Members heard from Asheville-Buncombe County President and National Popular Vote Action Team Lead Dr. Suzanne Fisher. Fisher



walked attendees through how the current system is rife with controversy and has the potential to sow mistrust. The League has held the position that presidents should be elected by popular vote for more than 50 years. We intend to restate the position during our State Convention in May.

Those who are interested to hear more from Dr. Fisher can read the [Op Ed](#) she had published last week in the Citizen Times where she concludes

“When we vote for every other office, the candidate who gets the most votes wins. It should be the same for president. Remember, ‘Your Vote is Your Voice’.”

Backlash Follows Walgreens’ Decision to Deny Oral Abortion Medication Mifepristone Access

Women’s Reproductive Rights undergo continual threats. The most recent is the decision by Walgreens, a major pharmaceutical chain, to deny customer’s access to the oral abortion medication called Mifepristone (also known as RU 486) in at least twenty-one US states, not excluding states where the procedure is legal. The backlash against the decision has been strong and pervasive.

Senate Democrats along with fourteen state governors are pressuring Walgreens to grant access to the pill. Social media giants such as Twitter and TikTok are responding along with the other groups advocating for Walgreens to allow access to the medication. In addition, the stock market is reacting with Walgreens’ stock suffering a 10% drop.

This route of medical abortion is chosen in more than half of the states in the country where surgical abortions are banned and it has become one of the residual options for those in areas with an absence of providers.

The movement to ban abortion in any form was successful in compelling Walgreens, but obviously will not stop with one company. Abortion opponents continue to target all large retail pharmacies and there is a likelihood that most, if not all, large pharmacy chains will submit to the demands.

—Suzanne Elsberry, LWVCM President

Frances Perkins: Social Safety Net Superwoman

As we turn the page on this year’s Women’s History month, we pause to remember a pioneer in American activism and politics, Frances Perkins. Perkins advocated for the safety and wellbeing of all people in her roles of chief investigator of a bipartisan commission formed improve worker safety in the aftermath of the Triangle Shirtwaist fire, New York State Industrial Commission appointee, and as the first female US Cabinet member when she became Secretary of Labor under President Franklin D. Roosevelt.



Women’s Issues Action Team Lead Cate Stadelman recommends the [March 25, 2023 edition of “Letters from an American” by Heather Cox Richardson](#) for those interested in learning more about Perkins—a fearless advocate and deft politician who worked tirelessly for the good of all.

Women’s History Month Events Roundup

LWVCM President Suzanne Elsberry was asked to address a group at the Mooresville Library as part of their Women’s History Month series. She spoke about the History of Women’s Suffrage, and included a brief history of both The League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg and North Carolina. A lively Q&A followed the talk.



Suzanne Elsberry with Mooresville County Library Associate Serena Sciarretta.

LWVNC State President Jo Nicholas and LWVCM President Suzanne Elsberry



LWVCM President Suzanne Elsberry was on hand to offer a hearty congratulations Jo Nicholas on being honored as a legend at the 15th Annual Lunch with Legends Luncheon held on March 22 at the Country Club of North Carolina in Pinehurst, sponsored by the LWV Moore County.

Want a new, easy way to engage with the League? [Click here](#) or scan the QR code at right to get started with our Outreach Circle App called League in Action.

It only takes seconds to join. And many of the actions our chapter has listed take just a few minutes to complete.


League members and volunteers wanting to stay connected will find this digital tool simple to use. Just hop on and start taking action for LWVCM and even the LWVUS.

This powerful tool is perfectly suited to add capacity and magnify our efforts to empower voters and defend democracy.

Try it today!

← Share

Have friends go to outreachcircle.com and search for **YBP438** or scan with a QR reader or iPhone camera



Or

Copy recruitment link to share with friends

<https://outreachcircle.com/YBP438>



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