

Empowering Voters.
Protecting Democracy.

Newsletter for October 2024

REACHING LWVCM

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2024 General Election Information You Need

Our hearts go out to our neighbors in the western part of the state for the devastating destruction caused by Hurricane Helene. League members interested in helping can refer to the [comprehensive resource list](#) compiled by WFAE. The [North Carolina Hurricane Relief Fund](#) tops the list.

VOTE411.org, the League's nonpartisan voter guide is now ready to be used by North Carolinians as we prepare to cast our ballots in the Nov. 5 general election. This comprehensive resource on voting information helps voters learn about the policy positions of candidates, get detailed instructions on registering to vote, find your early voting location (33 in Mecklenburg), confirm your Election Day polling place, learn about acceptable forms of voter ID, and take the guesswork out of the absentee-by-mail process. Voters can also access personalized candidate voter guides and information about referenda.



Our local team led by Carolyn Lyons has contacted all local candidates, not only in Mecklenburg County, but in Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Rowan, and Union counties as well. Candidates have been provided the opportunity to give voters their campaign information, responses to broad survey questions, and personal profiles. League members are encouraged to engage with the tool; share it with friends, family, and colleagues; post about it on your social media; and reach out to candidates who have not responded to the requests to fill out the candidate survey. [Review this video](#) for ways you can help promote this valuable resource.



The Voter Registration deadline is October 11. Use VOTE411 to confirm that yours is up-to-date and active. You can also use it to make your voting plan. Voting the full ballot is key! Many down-ballot races don't get nearly as much attention as something like the presidential or governor's races, but they really matter! And they are often decided by tiny margins! Make sure to spread the word about how crucial it is to vote the full ballot.

In addition to the candidates, North Carolinians have a Constitutional Amendment referendum on our ballots concerning noncitizen voting. The League urges voters to vote "Against" this unnecessary amendment.

Charlotte residents also have three bond referenda to consider: 1) Transportation, 2) Housing, and 3) Neighborhood Improvement.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF NORTH CAROLINA
Constitutional Amendment
Constitutional amendment to provide that only a citizen of the United States who is 18 years of age and otherwise possessing the qualifications for voting shall be entitled to vote at any election in this State.
○ For
● Against
THIS FALL, THE STATEWIDE BALLOT INCLUDES A COMPLETELY UNNECESSARY CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT THAT SEEKS TO CLARIFY THAT ONLY CITIZENS CAN VOTE. THE LEAGUE URGES YOU TO VOTE AGAINST.
Read more at lwvnc.org

2024 GENERAL ELECTION KEY DATES
Election Day: November 5 (6:30am-7:30pm)
Absentee Ballots: Request deadline is **October 29**
Early Voting: October 17 thru November 2

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Find updates for League action and activities at goleaguego.org



Coming Events

Coming Up in October, November, & December

- 10/1, 6:30pm: [2024 Nonpartisan Political Forum: Council of State](#) (Virtual)
- 10/1, 9pm: [Vice Presidential Debate](#) (CBS)
- 10/2, 10am: LWVCM Education Action Team Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- 10/3, 1pm: [Preparing for Post-Election](#) (LWVUS Webinar)
- 10/5, 2pm: [2025 Civics 101 Kickoff Meeting](#) (LWVCM Office)
- 10/6, 4pm: [Co-webmaster Interest Meeting](#) (Virtual)
- 10/7, 5:30pm: [GOTV Postcarding Event](#) (South Park)
- 10/8, 6:30pm: LWVCM Board Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- 10/8, 6:30pm: [2024 Nonpartisan Political Forum: NC Courts, NC House, and BOCC](#) (Virtual)
- 10/8, 7pm: [Investing in the Future: The Economic Power of North Carolina Public Education](#) (Virtual)
- 10/8, 7pm: ["Trustworthy"](#) film by Stephany Zamora (First Baptist Church-West)
- 10/8, 8pm: [Carolina IMPACT](#): "Seeking Unity" series to ft. Co-President Suzanne Elsberry (PBS Charlotte)
- 10/10, 5pm: [Bystander Training & Voter Intimidation](#) (LWVUS Webinar)
- 10/10, 7pm: [The Story of Charlotte's Greenways and How Your Vote Matters](#) (Patagonia Southend)
- 10/11, 5pm: *Voter Registration Deadline* (Voters may same-day register during EV.)
- 10/13, 4pm: [Co-webmaster Interest Meeting](#) (Virtual)
- 10/15, 6:30pm: NC Trusted Elections Tour (Virtual)
- 10/17: *First Day of Early Voting* (Runs thru Nov. 2 at 3pm.)
- 10/20, 4pm: [Co-webmaster Interest Meeting](#) (Virtual)
- 10/24, 10am: [North Carolina's Native Plants](#) (LWVCM Office)
- 10/25, 7:30pm: [Makin' Cake](#) production and reception (Queens University)
- 10/27, 4pm: [Co-webmaster Interest Meeting](#) (Virtual)
- 10/29, 5pm: *Absentee Ballot Request Deadline*
- 11/2, 3pm: *Early Voting Ends*
- 11/5: ***Election Day 2024!!!!*** (Vote at your assigned precinct from 6:30am-7:30pm.)
- 11/5, 7:30pm: *Absentee Ballots must be received at the Board of Elections*
- 11/6, 10am: LWVCM Education Action Team Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- 11/12, 6pm: [What's Next? Your League Membership Post Election](#)
- 11/12, 6:30pm: LWVCM Board Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- 11/15: *County Canvass for the 2024 General Election*
- 12/4, 10am: LWVCM Education Action Team Meeting (LWVCM Office)
- 12/7, 5:30pm: SAVE the DATE: LWVCM Holiday Party
- 12/10, 6:30pm: LWVCM Board Meeting (LWVCM Office)

League Action & Happenings

A Unique Evening of Theatre for Members

Join League members on Friday, October 25 for a one-night only staging of *Makin' Cake* at Queen's University. *Makin' Cake* is part of the Queen's Connected Campus Series "For the People: Democracy in Conversation" and as cosponsors, LWVCM is offering members a very special opportunity to attend the performance together with League colleagues, family, and friends in the Levine Theatre at the Sarah Belk Gambrell Center for the Arts and Civic Engagement.

The event, one of eight in a series examining democracy, features Wisconsin Poet Laureate, writer, performance artist and change agent Dasha Kelly Hamilton in her multi-media staging where baking becomes an exploration of equity, class and race in America. The production begins with a curtain time of 7:30 PM and ends with a cake reception at 8:40 PM.

League tickets are \$30 and are limited, so please purchase yours now through our website by [clicking here](#).



Makin' Cake

For most of human history, baking required patience, resources...and luck. Ingredients were scarce and expensive; chemistry was fickle; and the chain of procedures required days. When our nation began experiencing abundance for the first time, most Americans couldn't afford basic cake ingredients.

Makin' Cake is written and performed by Dasha Kelly Hamilton who cuts into a cake, revealing what its history and ingredients can teach us about race, class and equity in America.

This one-night only event includes delicious conversation after the show and cake for all.

Voter Engagement with the League

Over the past three months, new and long-time LWVCM volunteers have come together to support voter engagement. Their efforts have resulted in more than **1,000 non-partisan, handwritten postcards** ready to send to voters, reminding them about Early Voting and the November 5 election. This personal touch has brought warmth and encouragement to the Charlotte metro area, while empowering and informing voters.

In addition to the postcard campaign, League members have collectively given **more than 250 hours** of their time to register voters and answer questions about voting. The list of locations the League has been providing voter services is long; farmers' markets, libraries, civic celebrations, apartment blitzes and Crisis Assistance Ministry, to name a few. This work has had a significant impact, engendering confidence and participation locally.

And the work is not over yet! League members will continue writing postcards and registering voters until **October 11**, pushing forward with their mission to engage and inspire eligible voters in our community. Many League members will also serve at polling stations and offer vital voter support in the month ahead.

Let's keep up the momentum! The next postcard party is on October 7. Please sign up by clicking the link on the Events calendar. If you are interested in more information about these efforts, e-mail Mary Condon at Membership@goleaguego.org.



Members gather to write GOTV postcards together.



Membership Chair Mary Condon and member Kelly Hofstatter register voters at LUSH.

1,000+ GOTV postcards were written during our member parties.



League Action & Happenings

Environment Team: Native Plants

The Environment Team will be joining the BKDs on October 24 to hear landscape designer Daniel Jakobovits speak about using plants native to North Carolina in our local gardens. Daniel has made the environment his vocation and his profession for almost 30 years. Register using this link: [North Carolina's Native Plants](#).

The Story of Charlotte's Greenways and Why Your Vote Matters

Please join us for an evening of storytelling, adult beverages, and voter services at Patagonia on October 10 from 6pm-8pm. Gwen Cook, a Planner at Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, will share the story of how voters elected officials who collaborated among multiple levels of government to bring about the county's Greenways. She will share the spectacular map of the trails that run from North Mecklenburg to South Carolina.

League members will be on hand to register voters, share sample ballots, and Early Voting locations and hours. This is the perfect event for new or young voters to put together their voting plan in a hip, approachable environment. Tell your neighbors, family, and friends!

LWV Supports Voter Registration in High Schools

LWVCM's Education Team was asked by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) leadership to help make voter registration forms available for students, teachers, and staff in the 34 high schools and middle colleges.

With fewer than three weeks until the Voter Registration deadline, this required a coordinated effort with many team members distributing the forms in English and Spanish to the many schools, and making arrangements to pick up completed forms. CMS provided a flyer to the schools which linked to the [North Carolina State Board of Election website](#). The Education team hopes this will raise awareness for voter registration for 18 year old students, their teachers and staff who've had an address change.

Investing in the Future: The Economic Power of North Carolina Public Education

On Tuesday, October 8 at 7 pm, join the LWVNC for a virtual program that will take an important look at the state of public education in North Carolina. [Register here](#).

The guest speaker is Alexandra Forter Sirota, Director of the NC Budget & Tax Center where she leads efforts to advance economic opportunity and shared prosperity in our state. Alexandra works to connect the dots across policy areas and identify opportunities for building the base of support for policies that will deliver better outcomes for all North Carolinians. Access the NC Budget & Tax Center's ["Our Freedom to Thrive" 2024 Election Guide for Voters here](#).

Help Sustain Governor Cooper's Veto of HB10

Now is the time to reach out to North Carolina Senators and Representatives to say "Vote No" for the Expansion of Opportunity Scholarships ("vouchers"). This must be done prior to October 9. It is fiscally irresponsible to spend our public tax dollars on a voucher expansion while neglecting the many needs faced by our public school system.

The North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) passed an unexpected and controversial budget bill, HB10, when they met during the week of September 9. The bill bundled unrelated issues including immigration and private school voucher expansion. Governor Cooper vetoed the bill. A vote by the NCGA to override the veto could happen as soon as October 9 when they are next scheduled to be in session in Raleigh.

This bill expanded the funds for Opportunity Scholarships for private schools to clear the waiting list of all students who applied for the scholarships. Students who applied will receive the voucher money, no matter their family wealth. The bill provided \$248 million for non-recurring funds for this year and an additional \$215 million in recurring funds. Nearly all of the voucher expansion money is going to families who are too wealthy to have previously qualified for vouchers, many who already sending their children to private school.

Why Oppose Opportunity Scholarship Expansion?

- Public tax dollars should be supporting public schools which are currently underfunded. State legislators talk about how they are providing additional funding for public schools, but per-student state funding is down 3.8% from 2008 when adjusted for inflation.
- This use of tax dollars for Opportunity Scholarships hurts the rural counties the most. Students in these counties have limited access to private schools. The rural tax dollars will be shifted to the urban/suburban areas where there are more private schools.
- There are few requirements for private schools that receive the state funding and almost no accountability. North Carolina taxpayers should know how the monies are spent. Schools that receive voucher money should demonstrate that they are providing a quality 21st century education.
- Instead of funding vouchers, North Carolina could:
 - o Give teachers a 8.5% pay raise.
 - o Add a \$1,500 teacher retention bonus.
 - o Hire more teacher assistants, school counselors/ social workers, school psychologists, bus drivers.

LWVCM Presidents' Perspective



Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi recently said, "Diversity is our strength; unity is our power." As our General Election approaches, voters across our nation face intense political polarization, coupled with misinformation, hostility, mistrust, and disunity. History teaches that absent unity, progress ends. Most concerning is when political divisions lead to power struggles, violence can be the outcome. Believing that League members are in accord with the importance of finding ways to construct a stronger and more unified society celebrating diversity, unity, and strong relationships, we offer a few ways to facilitate these goals:

- Seek to build authentic friendships
- Encourage inclusivity
- Make certain all voices are heard
- Practice active listening
- Be Civil & tone down fiery rhetoric
- Employ empathetic and respectful communication practices
- Be aware that taking a stand is not discourse (your answer may not be the ideal or only one)
- Avoid defensiveness and taking things personally
- Expect these actions will not be simple or easy

Let's resolve together to work towards **MAKING UNITY A PRIORITY!**

Warmest regards,

Handwritten signature of Suzanne Elsberry in black ink.

Suzanne Elsberry

Handwritten signature of Linda Traum in black ink.

Linda Traum

**Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters
of Charlotte Mecklenburg**

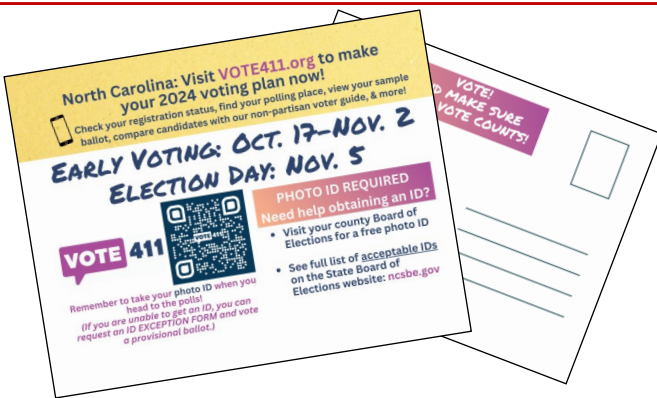
League News

Welcome to New League Members

New Members in September

Phyllis Fulton	Amrita Meda
Marilyn Stanwood	Linda Vanderbosch
Susan McClelland	Haley Tedder
Leslie Borel	Elizabeth Magan
Cathia Friou	Catherine Hunter

Welcome to all the recent new members of our League. We're glad you're here! Thank you for your interest, enthusiasm, and for rolling up your sleeves to help our Voter Registration and GOTV work, in particular, be as successful as possible.



It's Get Out the Vote Season!

Join fellow League members for one last opportunity to write GOTV postcards and help raise voter turnout in Mecklenburg County. Have a little fun while you're at it, catching up with your League colleagues enjoying some tasty bits and drinks. Bring a friend—the more, the merrier! Food, drink and postcards will be provided. Please bring postcard stamps or a donation to buy the stamps.

Mon., Oct. 7, 5:30-7:30PM (South Park)

RSVP to membership@goleaguego.org, using our [events calendar](#), or via Evite. If you cannot make this last gathering, but would like to write cards, still write to us so arrangements can be made to get you cards and sample messaging. All cards will need to be written and mailed a week prior to the start of Early Voting, October 17.

Civics 101 Kickoff Planned for Oct. 5 at 2pm

The 2025 Civics 101 program planning is getting underway. Come hear how you can contribute to a successful year. Civics 101 provides comprehensive and concise insight into the structures of governance in Charlotte-Mecklenburg County. The program consists of six evening sessions, one evening per week, covering the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections, Mecklenburg County Government, Charlotte City Council, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education, Mecklenburg County Courts, and a panel discussion of local journalists. The participant outcomes include:

- * understanding how local government works;
- * identifying which government departments to contact when you need help;
- * knowing where to direct your energy to inspire change.

In addition to supporting the in-person sessions, there are several areas in which you can engage and provide leadership:

- * Registration – establish and maintain the process for how to identify interested residents and maintain communications throughout the lifecycle of the program.
- * Budget – maintain and track expenses related to the program.
- * Planning – partner with government officials (both elected and hired) to define the agenda and participants for each session. Provide feedback on materials. Typically one League member per session supports this work.
- * Promotion – identify and execute advertising and marketing activities.
- * Logistics – on site program support; all team members contribute as available.

LWVCM Communications Team Seeks Co-Webmaster

Do you love keeping websites engaging and informative? Are you a team player who thrives in a collaborative environment? The Communications Team is seeking a passionate Co-Webmaster to join our team!

In this role, you'll be responsible for the **public-facing aspects** of our website, ensuring our online presence is up-to-date, informative, and engaging for our members and the public. Email communications@goleaguego.org to RSVP for a Co-Webmaster Interest Meeting (Sundays at 4pm until filled).

The LWVCM Seeks Women's Issues Team Head

Fun fact: 59% of our newest members expressed an interest in Reproductive Rights Advocacy. A similar percentage are interested in advocating for Equal Status Under the Law. To that end, the League is seeking one or more individuals who would be interested in shepherding the Women's Issues Team that is currently without a leader. Interested? Contact Suzanne Elsberry, LWVCM Co-President at: dessuz@bellsouth.net

League Action & Happenings

Mecklenburg County Commissioners Action

Budget Planning: Mecklenburg County Commissioners emphasized the value of the public participating in their annual budget workshops as they spoke about the recent grand opening of the new Knights View Recreation Center off Audrey Kell Rd. According to the commissioners, the center includes unique senior and recreation activities that were suggested by residents attending the budget workshops and public hearings as well as participating in the budget priority survey.

The board will be making announcements later this year about its workshops and surveys for next year's budget. League members should watch for them and take part.

County health concerns: Health Director Dr. Raynard Washington reported that the number of unvaccinated children in the county is rising. The state requires that all children be immunized prior to entering public or private school as well as those being home-schooled ([G.S. 130A-155](#)).

Public and private schools must report immunization compliance to the state health department and keep immunization records on file for periodic inspection. Parents of home-schooled students must keep an immunization record on site, but there is zero enforcement because a proposal to conduct random inspections was dismissed some years ago. Dr. Washington said he has no oversight of the private and home-schooled students. Dr. Washington also told the board that the department is continuing to work with the schools' government affairs team on getting the legislature to reinstate "opt out" permission slips for school health screenings which plummeted in the county last year.

Authorization to vote on sales tax for transportation: The board passed a resolution to ask the Legislature to allow a vote on levying a one-cent sales tax for transportation needs on a 6-3 vote after a lengthy discussion, primarily about lack of a firm plan.

More transportation issues: A week after endorsing the sales tax resolution, the board considered the NCDOT proposal to finance adding express lanes to I-77 from the city to the South Carolina line. Told that the state did not have enough money to finance the entire project, the commissioners expressed opposition to take on a public-private partnership that would benefit only residents who can afford tolls. It was pointed out by commissioners that the state has billions in unappropriated revenue. No votes were taken.

Commissioner comments: Commissioner Susan Rodriguez-McDowell lamented the General Assembly vote adopting HB10 which includes immigration rules which, she said, only promotes fear mongering and make communities less safe. In addition, she condemned the provision to provide millions more funds for private schools while "setting up public schools to struggle by underfunding."

—Lucille Howard

"Disagreeing with Dignity" on PBS

League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg Co-President Suzanne Elsberry was invited to join a panel for PBS Charlotte's Carolina Impact titled "Disagreeing with Dignity" wherein Republican voter Maria Elena Conway, Democratic voter Tony Bouche, and Elsberry representing the League discuss the state of our politics and elections ahead of the 2024 General Election. The panel was moderated by Dara Khaalid (pictured).



The segment is part of Carolina IMPACT's "Seeking Unity" series, and was produced on September 30. It will air on October 8 on PBS at 8PM.

Candidate and Issues-based Forums

Many forums are being held around the state ahead of the 2024 General Election. Here is a roundup of forums to consider:

Candidate Forums hosted by PBS's "State Lines"

- [2024 NC Secretary of State](#) (9/11/)
- [2024 NC Commissioner of Labor](#) (9/18)
- [2024 NC Commissioner of Agriculture](#) (9/23)
- [2024 NC Commissioner of Insurance](#) (9/25)
- [2024 NC Attorney General](#) (9/30)
- [2024 NC Superintendent of Public Instruction](#) (10/2)

Candidate Forums hosted by FMBC

- [2024 NC Council of State](#) (10/1)
- [2024 NC Supreme Court; NC Court of Appeals; NC House Districts 98, 99, 103, 104, & 105; Mecklenburg County Commission Districts 1, 2, 5, & 6](#) (10/8)

Candidate Forums for Supt. of Public Instruction

- [BEST NC moderated by Chris William](#) (9/12)
- [LatinxEd moderated by Xavier Adams](#) (9/13)
- [NC PTA and Public Schools First NC](#) (9/14)
- [NC Student Forum by Generation Nation](#) (9/25)
- [Hometown Debates Spectrum News](#) (9/29)

Issues-based Forums

- [Housing Bonds-Sarah Stevenson Tues. Forum](#) (10/1)
- [Investing in the Future: The Economic Power of NC Public Education](#) (10/8)

Your Membership After the Election

We're pouring blood, sweat, and tears into registering, engaging, and educating voters ahead of the 2024 Election. Once it's over, what's next?

Join an all-member social gathering for a special conversation about what's next. We invite members to register for this gathering that will take place on November 12 from 6-8PM using the following link: [What's Next? Your Membership After the Election.](#)



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

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Dated Material

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