

Empowering Voters.
Protecting Democracy.

REACHING LWVCM

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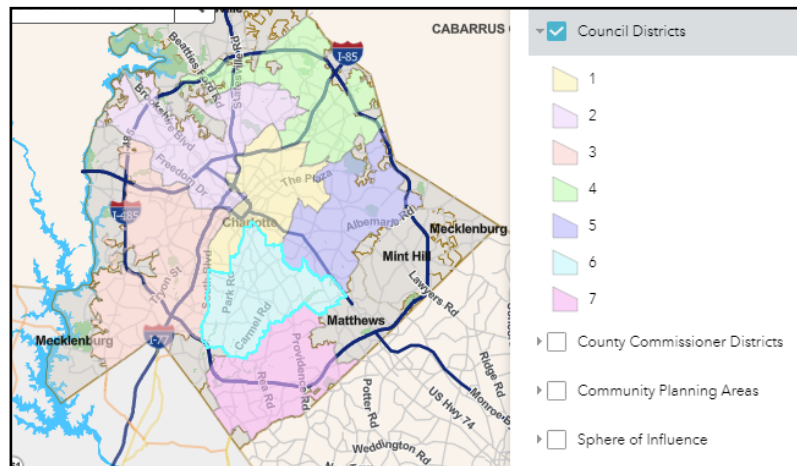
Newsletter for September 2023

Election Season: Let VOTE411 Online Voter Guide Be Your “One-Stop-Shop” for Election-Related Information

The VOTE411 online voter guide for the September 12 City of Charlotte primary election is now published and available to use. Users who notice missing candidate responses should reach out directly to those candidates and ask them to share their responses (they have all been contacted). Visit our website to learn more about VOTE411.



The City of Charlotte primary features a mayoral race, an at-large City Council race (six candidates are running for four seats), and races for districts 2 (two candidates), 3 (three candidates), 4 (three candidates), and 5 (three candidates). There are no primary elections in districts 1, 6, and 7 as the candidates are running unopposed and will go through to the General Election on November 7. An interactive map of the council districts can be found on the City of Charlotte Open Data Portal.



The League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg will provide a VOTE411 online voter guide for the October 10 municipal elections in Iredell County, as well as for the November 7 general election in the following counties: Mecklenburg, Union, Lincoln, Iredell, Gaston and Cabarrus.

Visit the LWVCM Website Homepage for a countdown to the polls closing. Please be aware that beginning with the 2023 elections, North Carolina voters will be asked to provide photo ID when casting their ballots. For more detailed information regarding photo ID requirements click [here](#).

One-stop, in-person early voting sites and hours for the September 12 City of Charlotte municipal elections can be found [here](#).

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- Find updates for League action and activities at goleaguego.org



Coming Events

Coming Up in September, October, & November

- **Sept. 5, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting
- **Sept. 9, 10am-4pm:** [“20th Anniversary Festival” at the Cornwell Center](#) (2001 Selwyn Avenue)
- **Sept. 12/Oct. 10*:** Primary Election for City of Charlotte (Early Voting thru Sept. 9 at 3pm.)
- **Sept. 14, 10am/6pm:** [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Training for Board Members/Team Leads: Module 1](#)
- **Sept. 15-Oct. 15:** *Hispanic Heritage Month*
- **Sept. 15:** *International Day of Democracy/Rosh Hashanah begins*
- **Sept. 19:** *National Voter Registration Day*
- **Sept. 19, 7pm:** [League Talk: Changes to Voting Laws with Meck. Co. BOE Director Dickerson](#) (Zoom)
- **Sept. 24:** *Yom Kippur*
- **Sept. 26, 7pm:** [LWVCM Book Club: Solito by Javier Zamora](#) (Zoom)
- **Oct. TBD:** Huntersville Commission Candidate Forum
- **Oct. 3, 6:30pm:** [LWVCM + FMBC Forum-CMS Board Candidates](#) (Friendship Ministry Baptist Church)
- **Oct. 4, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting
- **Oct. 5, 6:30pm:** [LWVCM + FMBC Forum-Charlotte Mayoral & City Council Candidates](#) (FMBC)
- **Oct. 10, 7pm:** [LWVCM + Mint Hill Woman’s Club-Mint Hill Municipal Election Forum](#) (Town Hall)
- **Oct. 11, 11:30am:** [Lunch with the League: Social Justice Poets](#) (MPBC, Conf. Room 250)
- **Oct. 12, 10am/6pm:** [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Training for Board Members/Team Leads: Module 2](#)
- **Nov. 7:** General Election (Early voting Oct. 19 thru Nov. 4 at 3pm.)
- **Nov. 8, 6:30pm:** Board Meeting
- **Nov. 9, 10am/6pm:** [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Training for Board Members/Team Leads: Module 3](#)
- **Nov. 11:** *Veterans Day*
- **Nov. 14, 6:30pm:** League Talk (Zoom)
- **Nov. 23:** *Thanksgiving*
- **Nov. 28, 7pm:** LWVCM Book Club (Zoom)

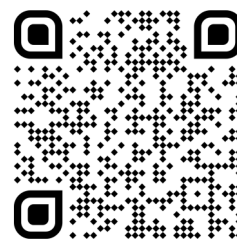
League Announcements



LIA for Google

[League in Action](#) is being used by our League to spread our message and provide opportunities large and small for getting involved and supporting the League’s mission. The free app can be downloaded wherever people get their apps and there is no need to be a League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg member to download and follow us on LIA.

Try it today!



LIA for Apple

League Action & Happenings

President Elsberry to Moderate Oct Forums

We are proud to announce that President Suzanne Elsberry will moderate several public candidate forums ahead of the general election on November 7. Upholding a League tradition, these forums provide an important service to the voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg. Please spread the word! Come out to hear the candidates' positions firsthand in order to make an educated decision with your vote.

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, (3400 Beatties Ford Road) will host **CMS Board of Education Candidates** on October 3 from 6:30 - 8:30 PM.

Mayoral and City Council Candidates will gather on October 5 from 6:30 - 8:30 PM, also at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church.

Mint Hill Women's Club has organized the **"Meet the Candidates Forum"** on October 10 from 7:00 – 8:00 PM in the Assembly Room at the Mint Hill Town Hall (4430 Mint Hill Village Lane).

Keep an eye on [our events calendar](#) as more forums are announced.

LWVCM Supports Pride Festival & Parade

Members of the LWVCM showed up to support the rights of LGBTQAI+ individuals in our community at Charlotte Pride with a two-day Voter Registration and Education booth and by marching in the annual parade. LWVCM Voter Services volunteers help dozens of voters register and/or change their mailing address ahead of election season. Although the weather was hot, members enthusiastically marched together and handed out Pride Vote411 bookmarks and computer stickers. They received many cheers and chants "VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!" from the parade watchers. For those interested in joining the event next year, email Regan Aduddell at: raduddell61@gmail.com to volunteer at the booth and Linda Traum at: ltraum1189@gmail.com for the parade.



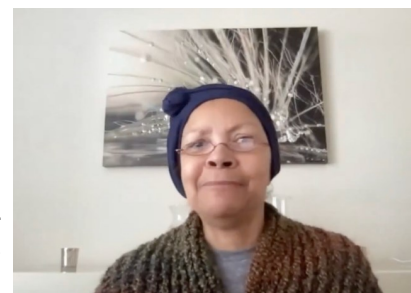
Charlotte Pride Parade participants, from left to right: Carol Gray-Adler, Meg Rodgers, MaryBeth MacKenzie, Jane Hoffmann, Sara Baysinger, Linda Traum, Carolyn Lyons and Jim Michaels.

Women's Equality Day Commemorated by the LWVCM in Special Video Presentation

A new [video tribute](#) to abolitionist, suffragette and Civil War hero Harriet Tubman features President Suzanne Elsberry and LWVCM member DonnaMarie Woodson.

The U.S. Congress established National Women's Equality Day in 1973 to commemorate the passage of the 19th Amendment. This year, on the 50th anniversary of the holiday President Biden issued a proclamation in Washington, while Governor Roy Cooper officially designated August 26 as Women's Equality Day in North Carolina.

As women in the U.S. continue to face inequities based on sex and gender, the LWVUS recognizes "Women's Inequality Day". [Sign the LWVUS petition](#) which urges lawmakers to protect women's rights to vote; ensure that the ERA is added to the Constitution; and restore reproductive freedom for all.



Woodson as Tubman

**Book Club Recognizes Hispanic Heritage Month with Selection by Author Javier Zamora**

On Tuesday, September 26 at 7:00 pm via Zoom, the LWVCM Book Club will discuss *Solito: A Memoir* by Javier Zamora, winner of the *Los Angeles Times* Christopher Isherwood Prize. *Solito* is a story of the author's harrowing migration from El Salvador to the United States at nine years of age.

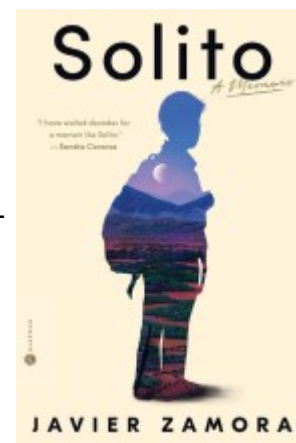


Javier Zamora

Members and nonmembers alike are welcome to join the discussion by registering

on our [EVENTS page](#). Read about previous book selections on the [LWVCM Book Club Page](#).

Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every other month via Zoom. The Book Club is registered with Park Road Books (4139 Park Rd. Charlotte, NC 28209). Mention the LWVCM Book Club at checkout to receive 20% off current book club titles.



League Action & Happenings

September League Talk: Changes to Voting Laws with Board of Elections Director Dickerson

On Tuesday, September 19 at 6:30pm (Zoom) we will hear from Michael Dickerson, Director of the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections about changes to the North Carolina voting laws and how these changes will affect local elections. The new Photo ID Requirement is concerning for citizens without driver's licenses. Read about the changes on the [Voter ID](#) page on the State Board of Elections site prior to the City of Charlotte Municipal Election on September 12.



Register for this League Talk on our [Events page](#). Share the link with friends and family. Members and non-members alike are welcome to attend.



Michael Dickerson serves as director of the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections. He is responsible for administering the election process for the U.S. citizens of Mecklenburg County, including voter administration, precinct management, absentee and early voting, candidate registration, and campaign finance.

He joined the County in 1998 as director. Previously, he served as a deputy assistant staff director for the Federal Election Commission in Washington, D.C.

Michael Dickerson

He holds a bachelor's degree from Guilford College.

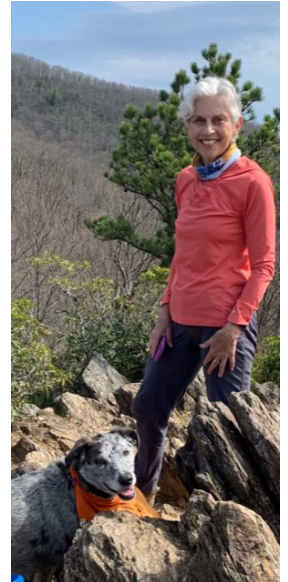
Mecklenburg County Board of Elections Needs You!

The Mecklenburg County Board of Elections needs volunteers to staff the upcoming elections. In particular, they are looking for people to work as Chief Judges, Judges, Provisional/Transfer Assistants and Equipment Assistants. Training will be provided. More information about these positions can be found on the [BOE website](#). If you are interested in working at the polls on General Election Day (November 7), you may access the [application form here](#). If you are able to work at Early Voting, [use this application form](#).

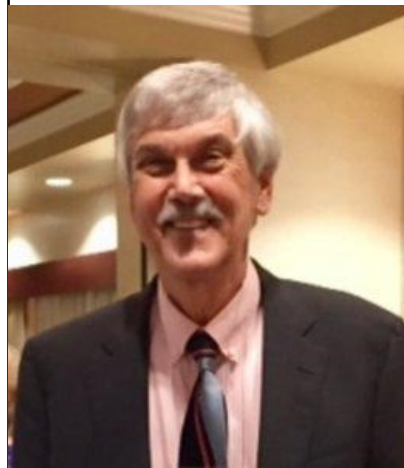
October Lunch with the League to Feature Two North Carolina Social Justice Poets

The October 11 Lunch with the League meeting will feature two North Carolina poets—Barbara Conrad and David Radavich—for selected readings of their poetry focusing on Social Justice.

[Barbara Conrad](#), a League member of the LWV Asheville-Buncombe County chapter, writes poetry, some of which focuses on the “hard truths of social injustice.” In addition to her work as a poet, she teaches workshops, conducts readings, and writes books and articles. Her books are *Wild Plums*, *There Is A Field*, *The Color Of Gravity*, and (as editor) *Waiting for Soup*. Her current book project (in process) is *Never Live Under A Tulip Poplar*.



Barbara Conrad



David Radavich

David Radavich is a socially committed poet, playwright and essayist. He has served as president of the Thomas Wolfe

Society, the Charlotte Writer's Club and the North Carolina Poetry Society. David currently administers the Gilbert-Chappell Distinguished Poet Series. His poetry collections include two epics, *America Bound* (2007) and *America Abroad* (2019), *Middle East Meze* (2011) and *The Countries We Live In* (2014). His latest book is *Unter der Sonne/Under the Sun: German and English Poems*. (Deutscher Lyrik Verlag, 2021). David and his wife, Anne, live in Charlotte and are members of the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg.

Access registration and event details for [Lunch with the League here](#). Invite friends and colleagues to join. This event is open to members and the public alike. Lunch will be held in Conference Room 250 in the Education Building of Myers Park Baptist Church at 11:30 AM. Participants are welcome to order their lunch ahead or bring their own.

LWVCM President's Perspective



In August, my message addressed the importance of voting and the potential for voter suppression inherent in the recent changes in our voting laws (see [August Voter](#)). As a follow-up, our September 19 virtual [League Talk](#) (6:30 pm) will feature Mecklenburg BOE Director Michael Dickerson who will inform us about the election calendar and changes in the voting laws, specifically Voter ID.

As a trusted nonpartisan grassroots organization, the League seeks to promote informed and active involvement in government, especially through voting. The outcome of elections directly impacts important areas of our lives, as we choose those leaders who will make decisions in our name. As we gear up for our upcoming municipal elections, LWVCM will again participate as key sponsors in several area nonpartisan candidate forums. These political forums allow us to hear candidate's ideas and stances on specific issues in advance of the elections through their responses to a series of questions. Research indicates that forum attendance not only impacts citizens' votes, but voters are more apt to vote when they are informed about the candidates. See pages 2, 3 and 7 for more information about the various forums and how to attend.

For additional voting and election information, please visit our online voting and election resource, VOTE411.org which includes candidate guides, voter registration and verification and other nonpartisan information in English and Spanish.

At the conclusion of our membership renewal period, I thank our renewing and new members and invite both to become engaged in LWVCM activities. Page 6 has a few ways in which you might choose to become involved ("Volunteer Opportunities Abound"). Whether your commitments are brief, moderate or on-going, your participation will help keep our league vital. Please contact us to volunteer in any of these or other areas of participation.

I encourage our members to view our recent video tribute to the iconic Harriet Tubman (skillfully portrayed by DonnaMarie Woodson) in celebration of this year's Women's (In)Equality Day. Many people do not recognize that in addition to her heroic efforts to free enslaved people, Tubman worked tirelessly for the cause of Women's Suffrage.

My personal note of thanks to our steadfast members who braved the oppressive August heat to represent LWVCM by marching in the Pride Parade. I was delighted to hear that our group received loud cheers of appreciation and approval as they passed by parade watchers!

On August 26, our Board and Action Team Leaders gathered for our annual Board Orientation. During the meeting, we reviewed LWVCM responsibilities, policies, bylaws, current programs and fiscal status and worked to plan our 2023-24 calendar of activities and objectives. This orientation, which represents an essential part of leadership participation, sets the tone for the coming year. The collective feedback from attendees is very positive and indicative of a productive and successful 2023-24. My sincere thanks and appreciation to our leadership for their continued hard work and dedication!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Elsbury". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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

League News

Welcome to New League Members

New Members in August

Jolie Short	Ruth Sherr
Shawn Cone	Mary MacKenzie
Suzanne Villar	Jennifer McGillicuddy
Nicole May	

Membership News

Lauren Voorhees has taken over as the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg's Roster Keeper. Margaret Howe-Soper will now have more time to concentrate on Membership Outreach.

The major renewal period for members whose membership expires as of July 1, 2023 has ended. Now that we are using Club Express as our administrative tool to track membership, member renewal will be on a rolling basis—members will hold current membership for a year from the date they renew or join the League.

Support the LWVCM with LWV Brand Gifts

The holidays are right around the corner and great LWV brand gifts can be found right now on our CafePress online shop: cafepress.com/lwvcm



Consider Making a Donation to the LWVCM

Our League is able to fund the work of empowering voters and defending democracy in part through generous contributions from supporters who believe in our mission. If you are interested in donating to the LWVCM (one time only, recurring amount, Will & Estate Planning, etc.), please visit our website: goleaguego.org.

Volunteer Opportunities Abound

*Support League Events: Check-in and hospitality at League Talks, Lunch with the League, Holiday Party

*Membership Engagement: Welcome new members

*Support Community Events: Candidate Forums, Charlotte Pride

*Register & Educate Voters

*Submit Stories to Our Newsletter, Post on social media

*Observer Corps: Attend City Council, County & School Board meetings

*Join an Action Team or the LWVCM Board

*Help with Fundraising and Grant Writing

If you are interested in learning about these opportunities in more detail, please email: goleaguego@gmail.com.

Environment and Sustainability Team to Resume

The Environment and Sustainability Action Team has been on hiatus over the summer. It is now time to see who might be interested in reforming the interest group and to decide on future action. If you are interested in being part of the team please contact Margaret Howe-Soper at mhowesoper2014@gmail.com.

Call for Records: Donate LWV Materials to the Archives

The North Carolina Room at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Library (CMPL) has select historical records of the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg. We are looking for League records that members have been holding that need to be organized and turned in to the Archives. If you are willing to donate your LWVCM materials, please contact retired librarian Margaret Howe-Soper (mhowesoper2014@gmail.com).

Healthcare Action Team Reemerges to Tackle Inequities

Board Member Kevan Woodson has been named Healthcare Action Team Lead. He will be joined by member Laura Cooper. Secretary Cate Stadelman and former Healthcare Lead Karen Bean have offered their support.



The team's mission is to educate members and the public about healthcare issues and urge action to improve local and state policies and practices. Their plans include partnering with other organizations for educational events and bringing a healthcare focus to League Talks. The team will tackle such issues as: Healthcare Justice, implementation of Medicaid and Medicare for All, loss of Medicaid as COVID supplements end, Maternal and Infant Mortality, support for those with Disabilities and Seniors, and long-term care/end-of-life issues. Interested? Contact kbwoodson1@msn.com.

League Action & Happenings

LWVCM Education Action Team Activities

Several members of the Education Action Team (Laura Cooper, Carol Gray-Adler and Linda Traum) observed the August 18 Charlotte **Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education Policy Committee Meeting**. School Board members discussed new school policies that were developed in response to new education legislation that was passed this session. Several Board members expressed concern about the harm to students that may be caused by the new policies.

Mary Klenz, Laura Cooper, Carol Gray-Adler and Linda Traum of the LWVCM Education Action Team partnered with the **Public School Strong** (PSS) organization and attended the August 22 CMS-BOE Meeting.

Three Action Team members (Laura Cooper, Carol Gray-Adler and Linda Traum) spoke to the Board during the Public Hearings that were held. LWVCM members interested in attending a [PSS training session should click here](#).

PSS is in the midst of a “September Surge” campaign to build support for public schools—they currently have participants in 61 (and counting) of North Carolina’s 100 counties.

LWVCM Education Action Team members Jeanne Smith, Mary Klenz, and Linda Traum traveled to a **Listening Session** in Arden, NC organized by the statewide Education LAT. A dozen League members, including chapter presidents and members concerned about public education, from Henderson and Buncombe Counties were in attendance. The group discussed the value and needs of public education in their local communities, and next steps in developing a plan of action to guide LWVNC Public Education Action Team advocacy efforts. The next listening session will be in Moore County on September 7.

As the LWVCM Education Action Team endeavors to learn more about **effective advocacy methods**, they met with two more NCGA members, State Representative Laura Budd and State Senator Mujtaba A. Mohammed. Both NCGA members provided valuable insights and responded to questions. Additionally, the Action Team met with the Charlotte Post Editor Herb White. He discussed the Post readerships’ primary concerns about public education, and he suggested



Civics 101 Planning to Begin in October

The Civics 101 Action Team will commence planning for the League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg 2024 Civics 101 Program in October. The Program consists of six evening sessions, 2½ hours each, offered both virtually and in-person. The Program is offered at no charge to the public during February/March. The topics include the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections, Mecklenburg County Government, City of Charlotte Government, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education, NC Courts, and a panel of Local Media Journalists.

The waitlist for the 2024 Program is now open! To attend, please email your name and phone number to: lwvcmcivics101@gmail.com. If you would like to invite a friend or family member, just let us know that, too. All are welcome. Once the dates are confirmed and registration opens (early December), we will invite everyone on the waitlist to register.

To join the Civics 101 Action Team to help plan and facilitate the Program, we would love to include you! It’s a great way to meet people and make a difference in our community. The number of hours you contribute is entirely up to you! Please email : lwvcmcivics101@gmail.com if interested. Jane Hoffmann, the Action Team Leader will contact you.

LWVCM Board Members and Team Leads to Partake in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Training

Members of the Board and Action Team Leads will participate in DEI Training. The five DEI training modules created by the LWVUS will be used to guide participants through thoughtful activities and conversation at once-a-month, in-person meetings in September, October, November, January and February.

LWVCM to Co-Host Huntersville Candidate Forum

The League of Women Voters of Charlotte Mecklenburg is making plans to co-host a Candidate Forum ahead of the Huntersville municipal election in November. Organizers of the nonpartisan forum intend to solicit questions from Huntersville residents ahead of the hybrid event. They will also record the forum in order to share it on LWVCM and Huntersville social media.

LWVCM Education Action Team Members to Serve on School Bond Campaign Volunteer Committee

This week, the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance kicks off the “Vote Yes for Bonds” campaign in support of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools \$2.5 billion bond referendum. LWVCM members will participate on a volunteer campaign committee that will meet bi-weekly until the November 7 election. The committee will work to share campaign information with the community and grow support for the bond.



We're counting down to Sept. 12! #ElectionDay is just days away! Are you ready to vote? Visit VOTE411.org now to view your personalized voter guide, check your local polling hours & get all the information you need to vote and encourage others to do the same.



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